COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2022

The first regular monthly meeting of the Mannington City Council, with Mayor Lora Michael presiding, was held Monday, February 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at city hall. Council members attending were Kris Bates, John Craw, Ken Fletcher, Tim Fluharty and Roger Russell.

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance and a prayer led by Jerry Bush.

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Craw made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Ken Witt, chairman of the Mannington Planning Commission, reported that the Commission voted to recommend an amendment to the zoning regulations that would allow hot spots as a conditional use in the C1 District. Witt said that would allow input by the surrounding property owners before any such business is approved. Fletcher made the motion to accept the Commission’s recommendation and forward it to the city attorney to develop an ordinance implementing the amendment. Russell seconded the motion and all approved.

Bobby Monroe, representing DataMax, explained that he wants to bring revenue back to the city. He said they go after businesses that are operating in Mannington without paying taxes. Most of these businesses are selling their products inside another business, such as greeting cards, flowers, etc. He will submit a list to the city clerk monthly. Data Max is performance based and they will be paid on a 50/50 split of the revenue that is brought in for the first two years. They also pursue delinquent fines. Mayor Michael said the City would be interested in that also, but Monroe said that is a difference policy. Craw made the motion to ask the city attorney to review the agreement with DataMax. Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried.

Michael said the City’s COVID policy needs updated. Fletcher made the motion to change the wording to state that the City will follow the current CDC guidelines. Bates seconded the motion and all approved.

The ATV/UTV permit policy was reviewed. Michael asked why the license checks could not be handled by the clerk’s office. Chief of Police Jim Rigsby said the 911 Center will not release that information to anyone outside of law enforcement. It was then suggested that when payment is made for a permit, copies of the license and insurance certificate be made and placed in Rigsby’s tray for him to review and approve. The actual permit can then be picked up within two days. Fletcher made the motion to approve the change in the ATV/UTV permit policy. Craw seconded the motion and it carried.

In New Business, Mayor Michael said proposals from two engineering firms were received in response to the ad for the water tank project. She asked Councilmembers Russell and Fluharty to join her in interviewing the firms on February 22 beginning at 6:00 p.m. They will then make a recommendation to the full council.

City Clerk Michele Fluharty asked for permission to open a new checking account for the Burt Hill tank project. Fletcher made the motion authorizing the new account to be opened. Russell seconded the motion and it carried.

Michael said she would like to proceed with the Water Barrel Project in conjunction with the Watershed Improvement Branch of the DEP. The project will help with the ongoing problem with infiltration at the sewer plant and help residents use less water since the water saved in the barrels can be used to water plants and gardens, wash vehicles, etc. Michael said she also has a WVU intern who can work up to 30 hours managing the project at no cost to the city. Fletcher made the motion to approve the WVU intern for the Water Barrel Project. Fluharty seconded the motion and all approved.

The first reading of Ordinance #465 which sets an auction for the 2004 Mercury Marquis was the next item on the agenda. Fluharty made the motion to read the heading only. Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried. The auction was set for March 5 at 10 a.m. Michael read the heading. Fluharty made the motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance #465. Russell seconded the motion and it carried.

The city recently received notification of several properties that are being sold for taxes. Michael said she would like the city to buy the Mitchell property on Buffalo Street and tear it down since it has partially fell in. Fletcher said if it is collapsing and is in eminent danger, the city can tear it down without purchasing it. He will give her the name of a structural engineer to inspect it.

In department reports, Rigsby said his department received 48 calls. Ten of those calls were answered by the Marion County Sheriff's Department and the other 38 calls by Mannington. Rigsby said he may have a couple prospects for new officers. He also said he is gathering quotes for cameras.

Superintendent Ted Nice reported on the recent problem at Dent’s Run Dam when a large amount of rain was received which resulted in water flowing over the spillway. Since the spillway is in the process of being lowered, there was concern that it may be unstable, but everything was checked out and there was no problem. Michael said after seeing the county’s response and equipment, she is confident the county is prepared for any emergency. Fluharty praised Nice’s crew for their work plowing snow this winter.

The outstanding bills were reviewed. Fletcher made the motion to pay the bills. Russell seconded the motion and all approved.

Fluharty made the motion to adjourn. Craw seconded the motion and it carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.