

## COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

The first regular monthly meeting of the Mannington City Council, with Mayor Lora Michael presiding was held Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at city hall. Council members attending were John Craw, Chris Efaw, Tim Fluharty and Ray Shadrick.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Councilman Efaw asked Chief of Police Jim Rigsby for clarification about remarks he made while explaining the new regulations for police officers. It was agreed to change the wording in the minutes to state that uncertified officers can ride in cruisers but it must be with a certified officer. Shadrick then made the motion to approve the minutes with the amendment. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Mayor Michael recognized city employee Mike Williams with a certificate for his work in submitting the readings from the Dent's Run Dam to the DEP monthly. According to DEP's Aaron Tonkery, the report from Mannington is the only one that is submitted on time each month. Superintendent Ted Nice added that Williams is very dedicated and always makes sure the job is done even when he is on vacation.

Gary Leeson asked what could be done about the lights that are aimed at his house and the loud music at his neighbor's house. Michael said she will check the code to see what can be done but suggested mediation for the two neighbors.

In Old Business, Michael said the Dent's Run Dam project is progressing nicely. The valve was installed in two days and the projected end date for the project is October 30. She talks to Danny Ford, Thrasher Engineering's inspector, daily to get updates.

In New Business, Michael said she would like to hold a Fall Clean Up Day on October 16. She is also looking into having a tire collection in conjunction with the clean-up day. Shadrick made the motion to okay the Clean Up Day on October 16. Craw seconded the motion and it carried.

Kirsten Ice's term has expired on the Park Board and she would like to be reappointed. Fluharty made the motion to reappoint Ice to another 3-year term on the Park Board. Craw seconded the motion and all approved.

A proposed COVID policy was distributed for council to review. Discussion followed about using sick time if an employee contracts COVID. Fluharty said Mylan's policy stated if the employee tested positive, Mylan paid for the leave but the employee must be off ten days or under quarantine. Efaw made the motion to table any action on the COVID policy. Shadrick seconded the motion and it carried.

A proposed social media policy was also distributed for council's review. Craw expressed concern that council members would not be allowed to have Facebook pages for their individual precincts. City Clerk Michele Fluharty is to check with the city attorney's office for their interpretation.

Michael asked council members to submit any suggested amendments to the COVID or social media policies by Friday.

Mead Fund budget revision #1 for fiscal year 2021-22 was reviewed. The excess money left over from the previous fiscal year was divided between demolition and contingency. Shadrick made the motion to accept budget revision #1 for the Mead Fund. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Michael said she received two applications for the code enforcement officer position. She recommended Jordan Gump be hired at the rate of \$15 per hour with a 50 cent raise when he gets certified. He must get his certification within two years. Discussion followed about the pay rate. Michael said she has been in discussion with the mayor of Farmington about possibly sharing the costs. Efaw said he thought the position should be paid at a rate below the lowest paid police officer. Efaw then made the motion to accept the mayor's recommendation and hire Gump at \$14.00 an hour not to exceed 20 hours per week. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

The next item on the agenda was hiring a full time police officer. Michael asked Rigsby to address council. Rigsby said he recommended Matt Castleberry as

the full time officer to fill Philip Stewart's slot. Michael said she agreed with the recommendation. Shadrick made the motion to hire Castleberry as a full time police officer. Craw seconded the motion and it carried.

Rigsby then distributed a letter asking that Don Sides be appointed as sergeant in the police department. Michael said she also recommended the appointment. Efaw said he felt this was an oversight on the last council's part. The amount of a raise to go with the appointment was then discussed. The city clerk said the General Fund is already \$30,000 plus in the red due to the increase in the liability insurance. Efaw made the motion to appoint Sides, effective March 1, 2021, as sergeant with a \$1.00 an hour raise. Craw seconded the motion and all approved. Shadrick said the City needs to find money to pay the police more money and suggested a work session to discuss increasing the municipal service charge. Michael said a sewer rate is being discussed and the 1% sales tax will be proposed soon and she would hate to see Mannington residents be hit with additional charges.

In department reports, Rigsby said that he recommends that Officers Mitchell and Castleberry be sent to the academy at the same time even if it leaves only two officers to cover the town. He said once they graduate, everyone will be certified and they will be back to four full time officers. Mayor Michael said she spoke to Sheriff Riffle about sending up a county officer on the weekends to help the city with the manpower shortage. Shadrick said he would like to see midnight shift covered during any manpower shortage. Rigsby showed pictures of a recent stop by Castleberry that resulted in a drug arrest. In other reports, Rigsby said they received 190 calls during the last 30 days, the Explorer is leaking antifreeze and there may be an issue with the water pump. They have transferred the canine to the Dodge truck and a new cage donated by DevNik Towing has been installed. Michael told Rigsby to call Corwin Ford tomorrow to make an appointment to get the Explorer repaired as soon as possible.

Nice reported that due to help from Senator Manchin's office, the EPA's violation has been waived and the City will not be required to send out notices to all their water customers since the fault was with Reliance Labs. Michael thanked

Nice for spearheading the campaign to get the violation waived and for contacting Manchin's office. Rigsby asked Nice about using the building at the water plant to house impounded vehicles. Nice said they use it to store equipment and there would be room for one or two vehicles only. Michael said she would like to look into an impound yard for the city.

The outstanding bills were reviewed. Shadrick made the motion to pay the bills as presented. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Shadrick made the motion to adjourn. Efaw seconded the motion and it carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.