COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Mannington City Council, with Mayor Lora Michael presiding, was held Monday, March 6, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at city hall. Council members in attendance were Kris Bates, John Craw, Ken Fletcher and Tim Fluharty.

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance and a prayer by Rev Charles Legg.

The minutes of the last regular meeting were approved in a motion by Fletcher, seconded by Bates and approved by all.

Chuck Cienawski from the Monongahela Soil Conservation Service read a letter thanking the city for their financial support. He said they were pleased to see that this mayor and council realize the importance of the Soil Conservation Service to their community. He asked Mayor Michael to read the letter she wrote to the Marion County Commission urging support for the SCS. Cienawski said they will be attending the March 15 commission meeting and any support would be appreciated.

Fire Chief Bob Dye said his department would appreciate council’s consideration of the items on their budget request. As for the light bars that are on tonight’s agenda, he said parts for their light bars are no longer available and they would like to purchase multi-functional light bars. The cost is $4,000. Craw made the motion to approve the purchase of light bars for Attack 95 and Rescue 98. Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried. Mayor Michael commended Chief Dye on his department’s 100% recertification rating and being awarded a Certificate of Excellence.

The FY 2023-24 General and Coal Severance Fund Budgets were presented for council’s approval. Fluharty made the motion to approve the Coal Severance Fund budget and the General Fund budget with a $1.00 hourly raise for the employees. Craw seconded the motion and all approved.

Michael said a pre-bid conference was held last week for the pool project and Thrasher Engineering asked if the city would waive the b&o taxes and building permit fees. She recommended that the building permit fees be waived. Fletcher made the motion to waive the permit fees but not the b&o taxes. Bates seconded the motion and it carried.

Mayor Michael said that she and the city council would like to take the police department in another direction and as a result, she is recommending the termination of Chief Jim Rigsby. Fluharty made the motion to terminate Jim Rigsby effective immediately. Several people, including Councilman Craw, questioned why this was not being done in an executive session. Michael said she consulted with the city attorney and he advised her in the proper procedure. She said any such action must be done in a public meeting, not an executive session. After everyone was given a chance to speak, Michael asked for a second to Fluharty’s motion. Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried 3-1. Craw said without a clear direction for the department, he was voting no. Michael asked Rigsby to turn in his badge, gun, equipment, keys, etc tomorrow at 8:00 a.m. Michael said the part time officers will be working more hours until a new chief is appointed.

The outstanding bills were reviewed. Bates made the motion to approve the payment of the bills. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Bates made the motion to adjourn. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.