COUNCIL MEETING OF APRIL 18, 2023

The second regular monthly meeting of the Mannington City Council, with Mayor Lora Michael presiding, was held Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at city hall. Council members attending were Kris Bates, John Craw, Tim Fluharty and Roger Russell.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Bates made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Russell seconded the motion and it carried.

Visitor Becky Williams, representing Mannington Main Street, distributed an activity report for the Wintergarden Park and requests for street closures. Michael said they would review the requests but didn’t see any conflicts for the Wintergarden Park activities.

April Fittro from Mannington Refuse said she had a copy of the city’s social media policy and one of the city employees had threatened her business by saying she planned to call the PSC. Jennifer Barker questioned how that could be considered a threat. Fittro then distributed a list of her customers who do not have garbage service and said it was the city’s responsibility to see that they sign up for service. Michael said she did not know that was the city’s responsibility. Fittro said the code enforcement officer should know that and come to her office to get the list of people who have no service. She said Mannington Refuse cannot even send out notices to these people. Fittro added that everyone needs to work together.

Jamie Trowbridge asked if the new speed sign could be set on High Street to curb the speeding. Michael said it has to be set off the state’s right of way and they are looking for a location that will satisfy the state.

The first item of business was the public hearing on the levy rates for the FY 2023-24 budget. City Clerk Michele Fluharty said these rates determine how much of the county’s taxes are allocated to Mannington. There was no comment. Tim Fluharty made the motion to approve the levy rates. Craw seconded the motion and all approved.

In Old Business, Michael reported the bids for the pool project came in high due to inflation and the timeline for submitting those bids was too tight for some of the contractors. As a result, only one bid was received, and it was over the budgeted amount. $900,000 was received in grants and $842,000 was raised by the city. The plan now is for the city to purchase some of the equipment/supplies and then re-bid the project. The splash pad has already been ordered. Park Board President Lenny Stafford said he believes it was greed, not inflation that resulted in the high bid, but he guaranteed that the new pool will be open next year. Randy Watson from Thrasher Engineering said the new bid notice will be in the newspaper on April 28 or May 5. The new pool will have stainless steel walls. He said it should be open by Memorial Day 2024.

Mayor Michael introduced Christina Shreve who she is recommending for the code enforcement officer position. She said Shreve currently works for FEMA and has a very impressive resume. Michael said Councilman Fluharty has agreed to help her since he is currently working in code enforcement for Fairmont. Craw made the motion to hire Shreve as the code enforcement officer. Bates seconded the motion and it carried.

Silvia Jones’ recent bequeathment of $50,000 to the city was the next item in New Business. Michael read the section of her will that stated the city is to put it in an interest-bearing account and use only the interest. Craw made the motion to authorize the funds be deposited into an interest-bearing account. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Michael said that with the recent passing of Coach Roy Michael, the city has lost someone who helped to put Mannington on the map. During his tenure as football and wrestling coach at Mannington High School, his teams won many state championships and awards. That was followed by his North Marion Husky teams doing the same. She said he was an important person in the lives of Mannington’s kids and adults. She said to honor him, she would like to name the road around the Hough Park football field as Roy Michael Drive. Russell said he would like to make that motion. Bates seconded the motion and all approved. His family will be notified.

In department reports, Superintendent Ted Nice said he has contacted several contracting firms to get quotes on repairing the upper corner of the old city hall building. He also said the paving bid notice will be in the newspaper shortly so that the contractors can begin work in July.

The city clerk said the new online bill pay system, Nexbillpay, is now up and running smoothly. There have been a few glitches, but they are being worked out. She also noted that the State Auditor has approved the FY 2023-24 budget.

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

Fluharty made the motion to adjourn. Craw seconded the motion and it carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.