Council Meeting of August 21, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Mannington City Council, with Mayor Lora Michael presiding, was held Monday, August 21, 2023, at 7:00 pm at city hall. Council members present were Kris Bates, Anthony Fluharty, Tim Fluharty, Taylor Garrison and Robin Smith.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. A Fluharty made the motion to approve the minutes. Smith seconded the motion and it carried.

There was no old business.

In New Business, the first item on the agenda was the signature cards for the bank accounts. Michael said, at the last meeting, Smith was given the paperwork to sign checks as council at large. Michael said she noticed that she wrote down all of the account numbers and took them home. After thinking it over, Michael said she called Smith and asked her to return the list to city hall. In the meantime, she met with the bank officials to discuss the matter with them. Their recommendation was that the council at large only sign in the case of an emergency. If such an emergency happens and the mayor could not sign the checks, the city clerk and water clerk, as the other two signatories, would notify the bank and the council at large could sign the checks. City Attorney Peter DeMasters said everything should be kept in house and he agreed with the new method of signing the checks. He added that the city’s records are open to anyone but only visually. No one is to write information down or take pictures. Smith said she had no ill intent and was just trying to see if there were any duplicates. She apologized but said she thought the matter was blown out of proportion.

The next item of business was the re-appointment of Bill Hunter to the Sanitary Board. Bates made the motion to appoint Hunter to another 3-year term. Smith seconded the motion and all approved.

The Fall Clean Up Day was discussed next. Smith made the motion to hold the cleanup day on October 14. Garrison seconded the motion and it carried. Tim Fluharty made the motion to get two dumpsters for the cleanup day. Anthony Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Chief of Police Donnie Wheeler said Jason Lipps has passed all the necessary tests and has been accepted to the Fairmont State University Police Academy. He said Lipps is very motivated, and Fairmont State contacted him to say that Lipps is doing very well. He and Mayor Michael recommended that Lipps be hired as a full-time police officer. Bates made the motion to hire Lipps as a full-time police officer. Smith seconded the motion and it carried. Wheeler then recommended that Brandon Clyde be hired as a part time officer. He is currently a deputy with the Marion County Sheriff’s Department. Smith made the motion to hire Clyde as a part time officer. Garrison seconded the motion and it carried. Smith asked when Clyde plans to work and Wheeler said he will work in Mannington before he begins his shift for the Sheriff’s Dept.

Sheena Hunt and Rob Bolyard from Region Six PDC were present to get an update on the Water Tank Project. DeMasters said he will be sending a letter to Mark Carroll, who owns the proposed site of the new tank, offering him the appraisal value ($300) of his property. If he turns it down, then eminent domain action will be started. Hunt asked if the PSC will be involved with this project, Engineer Randy Watson said he will check.

Mayor Michael said Christina Shreve’s probation period is over and recommends that she be hired as a regular employee because she has been doing an excellent job. Bates made the motion to hire Shreve as a regular part time employee. Tim Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Aster Oilfield Services’ invoice for the demolition of 123 Buffalo Street was presented for payment. Michael said this will be paid from the city’s General Fund budget because it was an emergency demolition due to the unsafe condition of the building. Anthony Fluharty made the motion to approve the payment of $25,000 to Aster. Bates seconded the motion and all approved.

Visitor Kim Harris asked how the houses were selected for demolition. Michael said the code officer does outside assessments and if they are condemned, letters are sent to the owners ordering their demolition or they can sign the property over to the city.

Watson presented an agreement between the City and Thrasher Engineering for engineering services for the Ryan Manley water project in the Flaggy Meadow area. He said Manley plans to have a housing development with 6-7 houses that will be on the city’s water system. The engineering services include preliminary design ($3,000), final design ($1,125) and spot inspection during construction ($825) for a total of $4,950. He said they will run a 4” line to the housing development and it will loop around to Eickleberry’s house on Flaggy Meadow Road. The City’s total cost of the project will be approximately $10,000. Anthony Fluharty made the motion to accept Thrasher’s engineering services agreement. Tim Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

In the department reports, Superintendent Ted Nice asked for authorization to purchase speed hump signs for several of the roads that will be paved next month. Smith made the motion to okay the purchase of the signs for $1080. Garrison seconded the motion and it carried. Nice also said a new CPU Board is needed for the chlorine building. The cost is $911.34 from Aqua-Tabs. Smith made the motion to okay the purchase of the CPU Board. Garrison seconded the motion and all approved. Lastly, Nice said he would like to add Pine Lane and the alley between Poolside Drive and Fairfield Drive to the list of streets to be paid, if the money is available. Tim Fluharty made the motion to approve the addition of Pine Lane and the Hough Addition alley if the quote from Anderson Excavating is within the budget. Anthony Fluharty seconded the motion and all approved.

Wheeler read his report in which he noted they received 58 calls for assistance, made seven arrests and issued four citations. He and Mike Williams also boarded up three residences that were vacant but being occupied by unknown persons.

 Fluharty said she will have the financial report for July & August at the first meeting in September.

In the mayor’s report, she distributed a list of the six properties that were recently bid out to be razed in Phase 2 of the DEP REAP grant. Four contractors came to the pre-bid meeting and the bids were opened on August 23. A special meeting was set for Monday, August 28 at 7:00 p.m. to accept the low bid provided it meets all the stipulations.

Michael reported on a meeting with Jackson Porter concerning the DEP’s Brownfield grant. A public hearing will be held at a later date on this grant.

Senator Clements and a rep from the DOT also came to meet with the mayor concerning the Buffalo Street Bridge. She said the meeting was very fruitful and she hopes that the Community Block Grant will be re-examined, and the bridge will be considered for inclusion in the next round of funding.

Mayor Michael then reported on her trip to the WV Municipal League Conference and showed the All-Star Community Award the city received as a result of their efforts in securing the pool project funding.

Code Enforcement Officer Christina Shreve distributed copies of her monthly report.

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

 Tim Fluharty made the motion to adjourn. Smith seconded the motion and it carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.