

# **Wellston City Council**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **November 2, 2023**

Meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by President Rick Hudson by asking Council and others in attendance to stand for the Pledge. He then called for the roll call.

Councilpersons answering the roll call included: Angela Spangler, Matti Vance; Lynley Carey; Teresa Lemaster; Walter Norris, and Roaby Browning. Fred Duby was absent.

**Excusal of Previous Absence(s)-** All in attendance approved the previous absence of Spangler, Norris, and Browning.

#### **Public Comments**

- none

**Minutes-** All those in attendance voted to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2023, meeting.

#### **Correspondence**

- none

#### **Reports of Special Committees**

- Finance- Spangler- Met prior to last Council Meeting. The topic for discussion was whether to financially support saving the Harvey Wells House. The Committee expects to see a Resolution regarding those recommendations in the near future.
- Health & Safety- Lemaster- none
- Public Service- Browning- none
- Planning Committee- Carey- none
- Community Action Liaison- Browning- none
- Recreation- Norris- none

#### **Old Business**

- President Hudson revisited the Mobile Home Ordinance as it pertains to trailer parks. He said the residents are now held to a higher standard regarding the age of the home and he believes owners of mobile home parks should be too. Mayor Brenner stated the City could adopt the State's standards. This information will be provided at the next Council meeting.
- President Hudson then inquired as to the status of the downtown parking lot which was previously discussed. The Mayor says the plans are to move forward with the parking lot, but other projects have kept everyone busy.

- Hudson asked if there has been any movement on installing a crosswalk. The Mayor stated this project will have to wait for next year due to the budget.
- Council member Lemaster informed the Mayor and Service Director that the traffic light at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and SR 93 needs a timing adjustment.
- Council member Norris requested a traffic study for McGhee Lane and stated there are many accidents as people are attempting left turns onto Pennsylvania Avenue. Mayor Brenner replied that the current traffic study does not reach that far south, but says General Mills is interested in a traffic study for their area. Brenner hopes in 2024 the City will receive another grant for a traffic study for McGhee Lane to General Mills. Everyone agrees the bridge is the issue since it causes the road to narrow.
- Norris inquired as to the status of the Lake Road property as it pertains to a Code Enforcement/Zoning-type complaint. The Mayor stated a law firm had been hired; however, the firm stopped communicating with the Administration. The Mayor is searching for new legal representation.

#### **New Business**

- none

#### **Legislation**

- Third Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-58- An Ordinance for the transfer of funds from the 201 Fire Fund to the New Equipment Fund and Declaring an Emergency.  
Sponsor: Duby  
Discussion: For the purchase of a Natural Gas Training Simulator with grant monies.  
A Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Spangler, seconded by Vance, and approved by all in attendance.  
A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Browning, seconded by Vance, and approved by all in attendance.
- Third Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-59- An Ordinance establishing a temporary pay increase of two dollars per hour to each Patrol Officer and Sergeant of the Wellston Police Department and Declaring an Emergency.  
Sponsor: Norris  
Discussion: Officer retention; Norris questioned the “temporary” verbiage. Mr. Kirby explained that this raise would hold until the contract is renegotiated, which is next year. On third read, Mayor Brenner explained originally the Finance Committee recommended a \$3 per hour raise; however, after speaking with the Auditor, a \$3 per hour raise would cause the additional money to be pulled from the General Fund.  
A Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Vance, seconded by Browning, and approved by all in attendance.  
A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Lemaster, seconded by Spangler, and a approved by all in attendance.
- Third Reading of Resolution No. 2023-60- A Resolution approving Additional Appropriations in the General Fund and Declaring an Emergency.  
Sponsor: Norris

Discussion: Treasurer's Salary plus Benefits

A Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Spangler, seconded by Browning, and approved by all in attendance.

A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Vance, seconded by Browning, and approved by all in attendance, except for Lemaster- who cast the only "no" vote.

- Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-61- An Ordinance authorizing payment of invoices with Then and Now Certificates and Declaring an Emergency.

Sponsor: Vance

Discussion: Auditor McWilliams explained the listed expenditures. On second read, Vance asked for more clarification on the list of expenditures. Mayor Brenner replied that they appear to pertain to the New York/Broadway improvements project.

A Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Lemaster, seconded by Spangler, and approved by all in attendance.

A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Norris, seconded by Lemaster, and approved by all in attendance.

- First Reading of Resolution No. 2023-62- A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute a contract between the City of Wellston and Milton Township to provide Fire Protection and Declaring an Emergency.

Sponsor: Lemaster

Discussion: Chief Pelletier asked that this legislation be passed as an Emergency on 3rd Read. This legislation will bring an immediate 100% increase in the cost of fire coverage for Milton Township, along with Washington Township as reflected in 2023-63. Both Townships will see a 3% yearly increase. The Mayor explained that the numbers reflected in the contract are based on the number of callouts and expenses to the Wellston Fire Department. Both Townships will pay the same amount.

- First Reading of Resolution No. 2023-63- A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute a contract between the City of Wellston and Washington Township to provide Fire Protection and Declaring an Emergency.

Sponsor: Spangler

Discussion: See 2023-62

- First Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-64- An Ordinance for the transfer of Line Items in the 201 Fire Fund and Declaring an Emergency.

Sponsor: Vance

Discussion: Pelletier explained this Legislation is for the transfer of unused funds to finish out the year for the Fire Training Academy.

A Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Lemaster, seconded by Browning, and approved by all in attendance.

A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Spangler, seconded by Browning, and approved by all in attendance.

- First Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-65- An Ordinance repealing and amending the City of Wellston's Codified Ordinance Section 33.1 regarding the Recovery Fee Schedule within the Fire Department and Declaring an Emergency.

Sponsor: Vance

Discussion: Pelletier explained these rates have not changed since 2017.

- First Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-66- An Ordinance authorizing the payment of invoices with Then and Now Certificates and Declaring an Emergency.  
Sponsor: Spangler  
Discussion: Brenner explained the money for the expenditures have already been approved; however, no one had written a PO for the invoice. This makes Then and Now Certificates necessary.  
A Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Lemaster, seconded by Spangler, and approved by all in attendance.  
A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Norris, seconded by Vance, and approved by all in attendance.

#### **Mayor**

- Mayor Brenner's first brought up the Harvey Wells House, which was discussed in the Finance Committee. He asked Council if they preferred the City to take out a loan to do the needed work, or if the project could be tackled in chunks of \$100,000 per year, which would give the Mayor more time to seek grant funds for the project. The total cost of the project is just over \$300,000. Options for the use of the facility include the Veterans Commission Office. Norris recommended the City seek donors for the project. As far as using the facility for solely a museum, Mayor Brenner warned Council would be revisiting this issue in another five years as there would not be enough traffic or people in the building to notice needed repairs. Council agreed this project should be completed in phases in lieu of securing a loan.
- Brenner announced the Water Plant Project is moving forward, but funding is an issue. Grants are not lining up as needed due to deadlines. This project will need to be phased to line up with grant dates and requirements. The waterline portion is expected to be approximately \$4 million and the building itself will cost roughly \$15-16 million. He followed by saying the Federal Funding is slow to be received and the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funding was not approved.
- The Broadway and New York Project is wrapping up. Paving is expected to begin soon.
- Hudson asked the status of the Louvee. Brenner replied that a \$20,000 grant application from the Ohio Department of Development is pending. These funds, if received, will pay for the removal of debris from the inside of the structure. He also informed Council the Louvee is part of the ACGP (Appalachian Community Grant Program) application for the City. The lead applicant chosen by the Mayor is Ironton Lawrence Community Action, whose primary focus for ACGP is ecotourism. Projects included in the City's application are the Louvee, RV Park, Pool, Bike Path, and Open-Air Market.
- The Mayor then broke down the millage for the Rec Levy and how the appraised value is determined for homes.

#### **Service Director**

- Paving for Vermont Avenue begins on Monday after a water line install.
- The Mayor brought up the Service Building because Council had never decided whether to list the property for sale or keep it as the City Garage. Currently the electric bill is approximately \$1,500 per month. He just applied for a grant to update the electrical in the building with a 400-amp system which would greatly reduce the bill. The building

currently holds a 1200 amp 3-phase system, which is unnecessary. Hudson stated the City should look into a salt barn. As far as the brick building on the same property, talk led to listing it for sale.

- Lemaster asked how many businesses pay for outside trash service and whether the City should seek out a truck that would safely dump dumpsters.
- Lemaster suggested a road closed sign further up New Hampshire to warn citizens of the closure.

**Law Director-** none

**Auditor-** reports received

**City Clerk's Reports-** reports received

**Treasurer's Report-** none

#### **Fire**

- Chief Pelletier is working with the Auditors to prepare the bid packets for a loan on the new fire truck that was ordered December 2021, which is slated to be received in April of 2024.

#### **Zoning**

- Rental Inspections are wrapping up for the year. High grass has been dealt with and everything is on track.
- Lemaster asked the difference between a vehicle being parked on the street and campers. Pelletier replied that anything parked on the street should be moved at least once every 48 hours as written in the Codified Ordinances.

#### **Police**

- Chief Robinson began by thanking Council for passing the pay increase Legislation.
- K9 Falk's last shift ended with a bulk methamphetamine bust.
- Trick or Treat went well. Robinson thanked the Fire Department for helping with keeping traffic moving at a slow pace for Halloween.
- There was an assault on Halloween night after Trick or Treat which happened behind the football field. Two men were assaulted and were sent to the hospital. The assailant has not been identified, but the case is being investigated. He believes this was an isolated incident.

#### *Additional Comments:*

- Lemaster thanked the Police and all those involved with the Block Party. 275 one-dollar bills were passed out and over 300 candy bars.
- Hudson reminded everyone to vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

  
Council Clerk

  
Council President

