

MINUTES
SMITHS GROVE CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
SMITHS GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2019, 7:00 PM

Members Present: Mayor David Stiffey, Commissioner Bob Buehl, Commissioner James (Mickey) Jones, Commissioner Maurice (Buddy Marr), Commissioner Steve Roney, and City Attorney Hamp Moore

Absent: None

Mayor Stiffey called the meeting to order at 6:58 pm
Invocation was given by Pastor Casey Mathias
All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mayor Stiffey welcomed guest Mike Bell from the Warren Rural Electric Company and asked the Commission to change the Agenda order to allow Mr. Bell time to present his information on the New Business topic of LED street lights. Commissioner Marr explained that he had inquired about the cost savings of changing over current street lights to LED and Mr. Bell was present to explain the process, costs and his proposal for Smiths Grove.

Mr. Bell provided a 2-page handout with description information on the current street lights (High Pressure Sodium or Mercury Vapor -various wattage) and the two types of LED replacement lights, along with a map of Smiths Grove's current light placements. He explained there were 75 smaller street lights to replace and 54 larger lights for a total of 129 fixtures to replace. Mr. Bell provided two proposals: 1) There are 27 lights on Main Street from Vincent Street to Sixth Street and that by replacing those large fixtures with LED fixtures there would be a slight reduction in the overall bill as the energy savings offsets the cost of the fixtures. 2) Replacing all the city light fixtures; large LED fixtures on Main Street and smaller LED fixtures on other streets would have the effect of an overall increase in the cost of street lights for Smith Grove of approximately \$18 per month. The project time would take a couple months for this one-man task of replacing all fixtures with LED fixtures. These two proposals do not include the subdivision of The Meadows.

After discussion and questions answered by Mr. Bell, Mayor Stiffey made a motion to replace every street light in Smiths Grove with the LED fixtures, beginning with Main Street, per Mr. Bell's proposal. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The roll call was 5-0 affirmative to replace every light with LED light fixtures. Mr. Bell estimated the start of the project to begin April 1st.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of Regular Meeting (January 28, 2019). Mayor Stiffey requested that the records reflect the minutes had been reviewed by the Commission and were approved by acclamation.

REPORTS

Treasurers Report (January 2019)

A motion was made by Commissioner Marr to accept the Treasurers Report as read and was seconded by Commissioner Buehl. The Treasurers Report was approved by 5-0 vote.

Administrative Report

The Mayor pointed out that both months, January 2019 and February 2019, had positive cash balances as insurance premiums and final property taxes come in. He stated that the Speedway project will start in the summer. He informed the Commission that he and Commissioner Marr had met with the owners of the land development behind McDonald's to listen to their potential ideas. There are no locked in plans as of yet, but they are hoping to use the land for a restaurant or hotel or other commercial business. Commissioner Marr added that he had discussed his concern over the potential traffic issue with the only access to that land area being the road that runs between McDonald's and Crossroads IGA. Attorney Moore stated that he had not heard anything about this development at the City/County Planning Commission, but that he and Planning Commissioner Albert Rich would keep the traffic issue in mind when the project is introduced to the CCPC.

Public Works Report

Commissioner Marr stated there are several concrete street markers that need to be removed as soon as the weather allows. Mayor Stiffey added that the City needs to contact Scotty's regarding the resurfacing of Laurel Avenue to get on their schedule since the weather will improve soon. Commissioner Marr added that repair is needed where the railroad and College Street intersect and there may need to be some widening of the street apron at that point. The Mayor reminded the Commission that we will want pavers to finish resurfacing Vincent Street after the Speedway project is complete.

Police, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Report

Commissioner Buehl stated he did not have anything to report but asked Chief Vance if he did. Chief Vance explained that this Thursday, February 28, 2019, the Kentucky League of Cities insurance auditor would be here to audit the Police Department and vehicles as part of their insurance coverage audit. He has made all the necessary preparations for that audit which is executed every 4 years. This audit impacts the cost of insurance for the Police Department insurance policy. Chief Vance said his other pending issue is the hiring of a replacement officer due to his desire to retire at the end of the year. This is will be discussed in the Old Business.

Cemetery Report

Commissioner Roney stated that he had met with Brian Gaul regarding the cemetery maintenance and listed the recommendations he received from Mr. Gaul including; minimize the clutter to keep items off the ground that would be run over by the mower, requesting more control of what is put out on graves in order to make maintenance safer and more efficient, and improve awareness of the Cemetery rules by sending annual notices to keep everyone informed. Commissioner Roney will be meeting with Commissioner Buehl soon to follow up on the transition of duties concerning the Cemetery.

Code Enforcement Report

Commissioner Jones stated there was clean-up progress on the 218 Sunset Avenue property after Chief Vance warned the tenant. He would like Chief Vance to follow up with the property owners at Highland/Laurel where there is an abundance of trash bags on the porch. The occupant has cleared off the porch in the past but now it is back to the same situation.

Committee Reports – None

Old Business

- Discussion on closing alleyway between Mr. & Mrs. Gary Vincent and their neighbors on adjoining property

Mayor Stiffey asked City Attorney Moore to provide an update on the closing of the alleyway between Gary Vincent's property and his adjoining neighbor. Per Attorney Moore, Mr. Vincent would like to have the portion of the alley between Main Street and the T-intersection at Witherspoon and Rumsey closed. Attorney Moore contacted the other neighbor to acquire the plat information. He states that Mr. Vincent has agreed to be responsible for the financial costs involved in working with the Planning Commission, revision in Deeds resulting in each neighbor, north and south, being deeded portions of that alleyway. All requests for applications for closure must go through the City/County Planning Commission (CCPC) who will follow up with the property owners and with potentially effected emergency providers or utility providers pertaining to easements. The CCPC would then have a hearing and a resulting recommendation forwarded to the City of Smiths Grove Commission to consider for approval and issuance of an Ordinance for the Right-of-Way closure of that section of the alley. This process has an approximate 60-day time-frame.

Commission Marr stated he was not in favor of any closing of any alleys in Smiths Grove. Mayor Stiffey stated that the City should not incur any costs related to this endeavor to close an alleyway. The City would pursue reimbursement from Mr. Vincent for the \$500 cost of the paved apron at the entrance of the alley paid by the City in the past. Mr. Vincent would be responsible for all the legal fees, including the publishing of the Ordinance, involved in this right-of-way closure. Attorney Moore recommended that the Application for Right-of-Way closure be applied for by both property owners adjacent to the alley. A motion was made by Commissioner Buehl to proceed with the alleyway closure process at Mr. Vincent's request and cost responsibility. This motion is meant to pursue the process and not meant to be a final vote of whether to approve the closure per the results of the Planning Commission's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jones. The roll call vote was 4-Yes and 1-No to pursue the closure process.

- Discussion of hiring/interview dates for new Police position

Chief Vance restated his plans to retire at the end of this year or first part of 2020 and will meet with the KY State Retirement Board in October. He would like to hire a full-time officer who would be a good candidate to replace him upon his retirement. He hoped to have this position hired by April 1 and that the extra cost would be covered by remaining budget funds due to Officer Wright leaving the department in September 2018. Per Chief Vance, Officer Greg Claywell wants to leave his position with the City at the same time as Chief Vance. Chief Vance stated it was important to fill the position with someone who would be the best candidate to come to our city. He has a couple applicants who are tied to our community and would like to form a committee panel for interviews to get things underway since it takes some time for the hiring process. Mayor Stiffey stated the Commission would need a formal retirement letter with an exit date in order to determine the hiring timeframe. Discussion ensued on how the timeframe is determined for hiring, certification verification with the KY Department of Criminal Justice

Training and whether the City's budget was sufficient for two full-time officers within that estimated timeframe. Commission Buehl suggested tabling this topic in order to gather information for budgeting purposes. The Mayor stated the current budget is locked in and we would not want to revise it and re-publish a revised budget, but the Commission can review and plan finances for the new budget that begins July 1, 2019. Commissioner Buehl wants to meet with Chief Vance and Mayor to discuss what a reasonable timeframe is. Commissioner Marr stated it was important to fill the position with someone who would be the right fit. He said the following things need to be determined: 1) When do we want to bring in a new hire? 2) How long will it take for the new hire to be acclimated and up to speed? 3) What the cost per month will be for the City and how many months can the City afford? The discussion ended with that summary.

New Business

The agenda topic of updating the City street lights was discussed at the beginning of the Commission meeting.

With there being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. by Mayor Stiffey.

APPROVED 
DAVID L. STIFFEY, MAYOR

ATTEST 
NANCY HOWARD, CITY CLERK

DATE March 27, 2019
Minutes were prepared by Nancy Howard, City Clerk.