

**MINUTES**  
**SMITHS GROVE CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**  
**SMITHS GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**  
**MONDAY, January 28, 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 7:01 pm  
Invocation was given by Commissioner Marr  
All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Stiffey welcomed guests Warren County Sheriff Brett Hightower and Eric Evans, Associate State Directory Advocacy and Outreach at AARP Louisville, Kentucky Area

Mayor Stiffey asked Chief Johnny Vance to formally introduce Sheriff Hightower. Sheriff Hightower stated he looks forward to working in the area and his department is currently evaluating changes that will be made, including the hiring of four additional deputies. He stated patrols will be stepped up at the intersection of Hwy 101 and Hwy 68-80 since this is a dangerous intersection.

**Aging Committee Report**

Jessie Varner stated he did not have a report at this time but introduced Eric Evans of AARP. Mr. Evans gave a brief presentation on AARP Age Friendly Livable Communities.

**READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of Regular Meeting (December 10, 2018) and minutes of Special Meeting (January 7, 2019). Mayor Stiffey requested that the records reflect the minutes were approved by acclimation.

**REPORTS**

**Treasurers Report (December 2018)**

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

**Administrative Report**

- The Mayor reported property taxes were being paid with a good percentage of all taxes paid. The Mayor also recognized Clerk Howard for attending COA academy in Owensboro last week.

**Public Works Report**

Commissioner Marr stated there are several concrete street markers that need to be removed if they are damaged. He mentioned the possibility of switching street lights to LED if not cost prohibitive. He feels the LED lights would be of better quality and would use less electricity.

Mayor Stiffey recommended he contact Mike Bell at WRECC for information on transitioning to LED lights.

### **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 stated his plans are to retire at the end of this year or first part of 2020. He would like to hire a full-time officer who would be a good candidate to replace him upon his retirement. He stated he knew this would be an added expense but feels it is important that we attract a candidate that would be a good fit for the job. He stated attempts to replace a part-time officer in 2018 did not get many applications due to the low pay rate. He would like to hopefully see the position filled by March. Commissioner Marr stated it was important to fill the position with someone who would be the right fit. Commissioner Buehl agreed and mentioned we would anticipate Chief Vance's replacement to be here long-term.

Chief Vance stated the transmission in Officer Claywell's vehicle (2011 Ford Crown Victoria) was replaced by Darrell Miller at a cost of \$1,385. Commissioner Buehl asked how many miles the vehicle is driven and Chief Vance estimated 6,000 miles annually. He also stated the vehicle currently has approximately 60,000 miles on it. He stated the nature of police business, sitting for long periods of time with the car running, is hard on the transmission.

Chief Vance asked Officer Greg Claywell if he had anything to add. He announced that 2019 will probably be his last year with the department. He stated while he loves living and working in Smiths Grove, he feels it is time to step away.

### **Cemetery Report**

Commissioner Roney stated he did not have a report at this time but would be meeting with Commissioner Buehl soon to compare notes and get up to speed on cemetery matters.

### **Code Enforcement Report**

Commissioner Jones stated there was one item to report on 218 Sunset Avenue due to an excess of garbage in the yard. Chief Vance said he would warn the tenant.

### **Old Business**

Mayor Stiffey stated discussion was needed regarding the request by Mr. & Mrs. Gary Vincent and their neighbors to close the alley next to the Vincent home that runs between Main Street and Witherspoon Street. Attorney Moore stated Bobby Richardson of SCRTC is willing to approve closing of the portion of the alley alongside property owned by the Vincents but, they want the alley on the Witherspoon Street end to remain open. Mayor Stiffey asked what needs to be done for this to be accomplished. Attorney Moore stated closing of the alley would require an ordinance and he would outline what needs to be done and will forward to the Mayor and Commissioners in advance of the next meeting for their review. Mayor Stiffey asked if we do this, should the costs associated be the property owner's responsibility? Connie Law, citizen of Smiths Grove, stated when she and her husband went through this process, they were responsible for payment of associated charges. Commissioner Marr stated he didn't think we should close any alleys and used emergency vehicles as a reason why. Commissioner Buehl stated we need to find out if property owners will agree to pay associated costs. Attorney Moore said he would contact the Vincents. Mayor Stiffey asked if the commission wanted to table the item and

Commissioner Jones said more research is needed before a decision is made. He also stated if the alley remains open, it should not be used for vehicle parking and should remain clear at all times.

**New Business**

Mayor Stiffey made the motion to approve emergency transmission repairs mentioned by Chief Vance earlier in the meeting. The transmission in the 2011 Ford Crown Victoria was rebuilt by Darrell Miller at a cost of \$1,385. Commissioner Buehl seconded the motion and it passed by a 5 – 0 vote.

Mayor Stiffey stated he would like the Commission’s thoughts on seeking new bids for cemetery, City Hall, and right-of-ways mowing. He stated Brian Gaul currently has the mowing contract for the city and does a great job. He stated Mr. Gaul has asked for an increase for cemetery mowing from \$700 per mow to \$750. Mayor Stiffey stated the mowing contract for City Hall could be changed from per month to as needed. Currently we pay \$160 per month for City Hall mowing and savings could be realized if we change that contract and should offset the increase in cemetery mowing. The Mayor would also like to move City Hall mowing to administration. It is currently falls under cemetery. The amount for right-of-ways mowing will stay the same. The Mayor stated Mr. Gaul would also like to make changes to the rules at the cemetery (no wire frames, no obstacles to mowing, etc.). Commissioner Buehl stated we need someone conscientious of head stones and respectful of graves. He stated he has always been pleased with Mr. Gaul’s work. Attorney Moore stated that the Mayor can extend the agreement, negotiate, and bring changes back to the Commission for approval.

Mayor Stiffey brought up the subject of adjusting the Assistant Cemetery Sexton position pay from \$150 to \$175 per month. He stated it has been several years since a pay increase for this position and \$2,100 annually is reasonable. Mayor Stiffey made the motion and Commissioner Roney seconded. Motion passed by a 5 – 0 vote. Commissioner Buehl complimented Fred Wurst’s work quality and the Mayor mentioned some of the things Fred works on outside the cemetery (Smiths Grove Days Festival and Christmas Parade).

With there being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m. by Mayor Stiffey.

APPROVED   
DAVID L. STIFFEY, MAYOR

ATTEST   
DEBBIE JOYNER, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

DATE 2-28-19

Minutes were prepared by Debbie Joyner, Assistant City Clerk.