

MINUTES
SMITHS GROVE CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
SMITHS GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, March 27, 2023 -7:00 p.m.

Mayor Stiffey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Commissioner Maurice (Buddy) Marr, Commissioner Eric Schroeder, Commissioner Bob Buehl, Mayor David Stiffey, Commissioner Jennifer Cartwright, City Attorney Hamp Moore, Police Chief Franks, City Clerk, Nancy Howard, Smiths Grove CCPC Rep,

Members Absent: Asst. Chief Bessette

Invocation was given by Casey Franks

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Stiffey asked the Commissioners if there were any corrections or additions to the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2023. With no additions or revisions, the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report – February 2023

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

Administration Report

Mayor Stiffey asked that all of us keep former Commissioner Steve Roney's family in our thoughts as his mother passed along with the families of the Nashville school shooting victims and tornado victims in Mississippi. In preparation for our new budget, the Mayor has received an estimate from SCRTC to upgrade our phone system with automated attendant functionality, voicemail, an additional separate line for the Police and new phones. Currently our monthly bill is about \$180. With a \$500 installation fee for the new phones our monthly bill for 2 lines and services will be around \$219 a month. This proposal upgrade will help direct phone calls to the right person and provide the ability for city staff to call into their voicemail to get messages more timely. The Mayor made a motion to approve this purchase estimate, Commissioner Schroeder seconded the motion and the vote was 5-0 to approve the purchase.

Public Works Report

Commissioner Marr stated that he had nothing to report at this time, but bids will be going out soon for paving estimates to be used in 2023-2024 fiscal year planning. Commissioner Marr thanked everyone who assisted with the recent windstorm cleanup, especially our Police, Mayor and various residents who stepped up to help. He thanked the Volunteer Fire Dept for their help at the intersection of 101/68 where powerlines had come down. He is continuing to work with various utility providers to replace poles that were damaged.

Police, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Report

Commissioner Schroader stated he had attended a FEMA class through BRADD and will ultimately be certified in FEMA management. He stated that rifle-mounts were installed in the 2 Police trucks whereby Police guns are locked in complying with safety regulations. He complimented L & W Emergency Equipment for their great service and products we have purchased for our Police Dept. Chief Franks shared information from the Operation Fight Fentanyl Forum, Monday March 20, held by the Attorney General Daniel Cameron and a panel. There have been more deaths in the US from fentanyl from 2012 to 2020 than all the American deaths from WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam wars. To save lives, everyone needs to explain to all family member the real danger of fentanyl being mixed in with other drugs.

Cemetery Report

Commissioner Buehl stated we have not received a bill from Security & Surveillance LLC for the replacement of the Cemetery camera computer hard drive. He stated that the pest control service notified the Clerk about an excessive amount of ladybugs dead in the Chapel and that he would be cleaning the Chapel. He noted that the Chapel pews' varnish is peeling and flaking bad enough to look into refurbishing them. He will get quotes for the refinishing of the pews.

Code Enforcement Report

Commissioner Cartwright stated that most residents have been good about property cleanup after the recent windstorm. In working with Chief Franks she is aware of a few pending violations that they will follow up on. Commissioner Marr commented on several broken telephone poles which have been reported to the utility owners for replacement (this took investigation as to who owned the pole). There is one pole behind Smiths Grove Methodist Church that Windstream has been called about. Commissioner Marr asked that residents call in about any poles they see which appear unstable and dangerous. Chief Franks suggested we contact utility providers to mark their respective poles so we know who to call when there are problems.

No Committee reports.

Old Business

The Mayor introduced 3 separate invoices for approval. Commissioner Schroader made a motion to approve the \$3850 for Applied Concepts, Police Lidar radar equipment. Commissioner Buehl seconded the motion and the vote was 5-0 to approve this expense. Commissioner Schroader made a motion to approve the \$1229.20 invoice for the 2 Rifle-mount locking vehicle stands and Commissioner Cartwright seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 to approve. Commissioner Schroader made a motion to approve the Smith Paint & Body truck repair expenses for a total of \$1759.40 and Commissioner Marr seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 to approve.

New Business

The Mayor introduced the topic of "any extra activities in the City of Smiths Grove" which are not a city sponsored events and asked that Attorney Moore provide a summary pertaining to the responsibility of an event organizer. Atty Moore stated that in the past the city has sponsored events such as the Christmas Parade or a festival.. There may be events such as farmer's markets, festivals, craft shows or even yard sales where the city is not the sponsor but the organizers have named it with the description of "Smiths Grove". He stated that the name "Smiths Grove" has no patent/licensing rights and that any business or organization may use the Smiths Grove description

as part of their event name. There may be an assumption that using the description of Smiths Grove implies that it is a city sponsored event. Having the description “Smiths Grove” does not make the City responsible for any risk liabilities. Anyone who organizes an event within the city should have the property owner’s permission, comply with the zoning requirements and a City of Smiths Grove business license if operating for profit. When the City sponsors the event, the event has been discussed and approved by the Smiths Grove Commission Board with any risk liability considered.

Commissioner Marr said he has been asked to attend in place of the Mayor at the March 12th Second Saturdays in Smiths Grove meeting at the Smiths Grove Travel Center. The organizers, several businesses and interested citizens attended the meeting. Comments directed at Commissioner Marr insinuated that the City was not supportive of community events. He responded that the city is definitely community minded and suggested that the organizers attend the next Commission meeting on March 27th where they could pose their questions and have open discussion on the topics of concern. His city concerns noted at the time were insurance liability risk insurance, whether the event was properly supervised and whether there were any security issues.

Commissioner Marr raised the question about the use of reoccurring events on the Smiths Grove Volunteer Fire Dept property whether the organizer could charge a fee and if there are any insurance liability issues. Kenneth Priddy, Smiths Grove Volunteer Fire Chief, responded that in the past when organizers had requested use of the property there has never been a fee charged. He said no one could charge a fee for county property that had been approved for an event use. He has been in communication with Judge-Executive Gorman and received approval for continuing with the process of supporting community events on the Fire Dept property, as he has in the past, with guidelines for parking and no fees charged.

Mayor Stiffey added that the City welcomes events and that guidelines regarding business licenses had been relayed to the organizers of Saturdays in Smiths Grove. The City is responsible for collecting business licenses fees but the organizer had been collecting business license fees without city knowledge for more than a year. When the money and license information was provided to the city it did not balance and had to be addressed.

Mary Jo Marr and Kenneth Marr, volunteer Fire Dept. representatives introduced the suggestion of “Saturdays in the Grove” hosted by citizens in order to help promote the City of Smiths Grove , local vendors and businesses as a fundraiser for the Smiths Grove Fire Department. Chief Priddy stated this would be a viable solution since he had received approval from Judge Gorman and that only donations would be received. Mary Jo provided an example Vendor registration form and example parking lot layout to address safety and security on the premises. She stated that registrants will be required to show their City of Smiths Grove business license at the time of registration. She said the event can be advertised through social media. This is not an official fire department or City function. Casey Franks stated that she would be willing to help Mary Jo Marr as needed. With no further discussion, this suggestion was met with agreement from the City and Fire Dept.

Mayor Stiffey asked that the Commissioners submit their proposed 2023-2024 Budgets by the April 24th Commission meeting. He also announced that Smiths Grove Methodist Church has been designated as a Polling Place for the May 2023 primary.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

APPROVED David L. Stiffey
DAVID L. STIFFEY, MAYOR

ATTEST Nancy Howard
NANCY HOWARD, CITY CLERK

DATE 4-24-2023
Minutes were prepared by Nancy Howard, City Clerk.