

MINUTES
SMITHS GROVE CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
SMITHS GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024, 7:00pm

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

Members Present: Mayor David Stiffey, Commissioner Maurice (Buddy) Marr, Commissioner Jennifer Cartwright, Commissioner Eric Schroader, Commissioner Bob Buehl, City Attorney Hamp Moore, Police Chief Jason Franks, Deputy Police Chief Hany Elhubishi, Police Sergeant Rick Bessette, Assistant City Clerk Debbie Joyner

Members Absent: None

Invocation was given by Diana Stiffey

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Stiffey asked the Commissioners if there were any corrections or additions to the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2024. With no changes, the minutes were approved unanimously.

REPORTS

Treasurers Report – January 2024

A motion was made by Commissioner Schroader 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 stated that he received information from the City-County Planning Commission regarding an alternate zoning process that would be implemented on April 1, 2024. Rachel Hurt of CCPC stated either option is fine. Mayor Stiffey stated that he would like to keep operating under the current (traditional) zoning process but deferred to Attorney Hamp Moore to explain the difference in the two options. Attorney Moore stated that the City could change its mind at any time on the process they would like to use. Commissioner Marr asked Attorney Moore if he thought it was wise for the City to keep things as is and he responded yes.

Mayor Stiffey reported that Deputy Police Chief Hany Elhubishi has been on the force for two months and he would like to see his pay rate increased by \$1 per hour. This change would make Deputy Chief Elhubishi's hourly rate of pay go from \$26 to \$27 per hour and the change would be effective today, February 26, 2024. Mayor Stiffey made a motion to increase Deputy Chief Elhubishi's pay rate and Commissioner Schroader seconded the motion. The motion passed by 5 – 0 vote.

Mayor Stiffey reported that it had been two years since City Clerk Nancy Howard and Assistant Clerk Debbie Joyner had an increase in pay. Mayor Stiffey made a motion to increase the hourly pay rate of Clerk Howard and Assistant Clerk Joyner \$1 making the new hourly pay rate for Clerk Howard \$20 and Assistant Clerk Joyner \$19. Mayor Stiffey stated these new rates would also be effective today. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright and passed by 5 – 0 vote.

Public Works Report

Commissioner Marr stated the stop sign at Laurel and Main Streets had been run over and needs to be replaced. Commissioner Marr also mentioned the street lights which continue to change colors. Smiths Grove citizen Don Law stated that WRECC has changed some of the lights. Mayor Stiffey stated that WRECC is currently assessing the situation and Commissioner Marr reported this is a problem that is being seen across the country with LED lights. Commissioner Marr stated that paving is on schedule but he would like to wait until school is out in May so car rider lines wont be disrupted.

Police, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Report

Commissioner Schroader stated he had completed the Storm Watch Academy while he was recuperating from surgery and is now an official storm spotter. Chief Franks reported that the biannual Criminal Justice Information System audit had been completed and SGPD passed with no deficiencies. Mayor Stiffey announced that the newly purchased trailer was on display in the parking lot. Mayor Stiffey reported that Brian and Judy Gaul had used the trailer when spreading mulch at the Cemetery and City Hall and Sgt. Bessette will be taking the trailer to his barn for storage.

Cemetery Report

Commissioner Buehl stated that grass is beginning to grow and with that comes the mowing season. Commissioner Buehl reported that Hale Roofing repaired the roof on the Cemetery Chapel and he is waiting on a contractor to contact him about repairing the stained glass windows.

Code Enforcement Report

Commissioner Cartwright echoed Commissioner Buehl's comment about grass growing and the issues that come with the season. Commissioner Cartwright reported that Chief Franks is working on several violations. Chief Franks recognized Smiths Grove citizen Greg Roth who lives in The Meadows. Chief Franks reported that Mr. Roth walks daily in Smiths Grove and can be regularly seen picking up trash around town.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Jessie Varner-BRADD Aging Council Report

Mr. Varner reported that the Aging Council met February 21, 2024 and provided minutes of the meeting. Mr. Varner reported that some senior living centers had closed in the area and this should be troubling news for folks in the age group that will require their services in the future. Mr. Varner reported that it is estimated by the year 2034, adults aged 65 and over will out number the population of those 18 and under.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Stiffey introduced Emily Hatchcock, Associate Director of Planning and Development with BRADD. Ms. Hatchcock shared information about a training opportunity on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at the Cave City Convention Center. The training will be held from 10:30 am – 2:00 pm and lunch will be provided. Ms. Hathcock invited all to attend and Commissioner Schroader stated he had attended a training held last year and he highly recommends attending.

Mayor Stiffey stated that he would like to discuss purchase of a new Dodge truck for the Police Department from Don Franklin Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep in Somerset, KY. Mayor Stiffey reported this can be a lengthy process and he would like to get approval to order the truck and it would be paid for from the 2024-2025 budget. Estimated cost of the truck is \$39,977. Commissioner Schroader made a motion to approve purchase of the truck and Commissioner Marr seconded the motion. The motion passed by 5 – 0 vote.

Mayor Stiffey reported that Brian and Judy Gaul have done a great job of cemetery, City Hall, and right-of-way mowing. Mayor Stiffey stated he would like for the Commission to approve renewal of Brian Gaul's annual contracts with an increase of \$50 per mowing at the Cemetery and an increase of \$50 per right-of-way mowing. Mayor Stiffey stated the price of City Hall mowing will remain the same. Commissioner Buehl made a motion to approve the renewal of Mr. Gaul's mowing contracts and Commissioner Schroeder seconded the motion. Commissioner Marr stated that Brian & Judy Gaul are conscientious and take pride in their work. The motion passed by 5 – 0 vote.

Mayor Stiffey made a motion to reappoint Debbie Richey as the City of Smiths Grove representative to the City-County Planning Commission. Ms. Richey stated it is an honor for her to represent Smiths Grove. Commissioner Buehl seconded the motion and the motion passed by 5 – 0 vote.

Chief Franks congratulated Debbie Richey who has been chosen as a 2024 inductee of the Warren County Public Schools Hall of Distinguished Alumni. Ms. Richey completed a career of 39 years in the Warren County Public Schools system.

With there being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm by Mayor Stiffey.

APPROVED 
DAVID L. STIFFEY, MAYOR

ATTEST 
DEBBIE JOYNER, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

DATE 
Minutes were prepared by Debbie Joyner, Assistant City Clerk