

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF MARSHALL, CITY OF BENWOOD,
CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING JUNE 27, 2023**

City Council of the City of Benwood met in Regular Session on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at the City Building in the Council Chambers. Mayor Walter W. Yates called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following council members were present: Ankrom, Fehr, Ferrera, Givens, Kazemka, Longwell, Lunsford & Mele. Police Chief Frank Longwell, Gary Williams Dave McLaughlin Director of Public Works, Tiffany Ankrom City Clerk & Eric Gordon City Attorney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Walter W. Yates led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

MINUTES

Councilperson Ferrera moved to approve the June 13, 2023 regular meeting minutes and Councilperson Longwell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Billie with V.I.P. was present to address council to discuss his high-water bill that council had denied to adjust, due to water entering sewer system and no signs of a leak. Mr. Billie would like his meter checked to see if it is faulty. City of Wheeling agreed to test the meter at no cost to the city. If the meter proves to be functioning correctly Mr. Billie will be responsible for the water bill and if not, he may be entitled to an adjustment.

Samuel Lisk with Globe Life Insurance was present to discuss the optional insurance for employees.

MAYOR ITEMS

No items to discuss

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF WATER/SEWAGE ADJUSTMENTS

No adjustments

**APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE EFFORTS OF
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES INC. IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE CITY**

Neighborhood Development Services would like to develop a safe and affordable housing complex in the City of Benwood.

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Councilperson Longwell made the motion to approve the resolution and Councilperson Givens seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION TO AGREE ON ENTERING INTO A LONG-TERM LEASE WITH BENWOOD SENIOR HOUSING LIMITED PARTNERSHIP FOR 50 PARKING SPACES FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE PROPOSED UNION SQUARE APARTMENTS

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to table this item to a later date, due to not having enough information. Councilperson Longwell seconded the motion.

APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BENWOOD, WEST VIRGINIA SETTING FORTH THE TERMS OF A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF BENWOOD MAKING THE CHIEF OF POLICE A POSITION APPOINTED BY COUNCIL AND PROVIDING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON ITS PROPOSED ADOPTION (FIRST READING)

Councilperson Mele made the motion to approve the ordinance and Councilperson Ankrom seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL TO ACCEPT \$18,000 FROM APEX FOR BREAKING THE LEASE

APEX has a lease agreement with the city they broke and would like to settle the debt by paying \$18,000 in back rent and also agreeing to accept the remaining balance owed as paid, due to the improvements they made to the garage owned by the city

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to accept the settlement and Councilperson Longwell seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION & APPROVAL OF AUTHORIZATION TO DRAFT AN ORDINANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WV MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS & FIREFIGHTERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Captain Bryan Handzus asked council for their authorization for Attorney Gordon to draft an Ordinance to participate in the WV Municipal Police Officers & Firefighters Retirement System.

Benwood Police Department currently has three officers this would benefit and it would allow the officers to retire at age 50 with 20 years of service. It would save the city .5% in retirement contributions for each officer.

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Councilperson Ankrom made the motion to approve for Attorney Gordon to draft and Ordinance and Councilperson Givens seconded the motion.

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION & APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BENWOOD, WEST VIRGINIA, PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE IN THE COMPENSATION PAID TO FULL TIME EMPLOYEES AND PART TIME EMPLOYEES (SECOND READING)

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to approve the ordinance and Councilperson Givens seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION & APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BENWOOD, WEST VIRGINIA, PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE IN COMPENSATION PAID TO GROUNDSKEEPER RON HARRISON FROM \$12.00 TO \$12.60 (SECOND READING)

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to approve the ordinance and Councilperson Longwell seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE & TAXATION

An ordinance entitled: "An ordinance to pay a claim against the city for work and other claims." Be it ordained by the Council of the City of Benwood, that the sum of \$120,552.00 be appropriated out of the funds belonging to the city, to pay a claim against the city, and that an order signed by the Mayor and Recorder be drawn upon the Treasurer for the above amount and that this ordinance takes effect from and after its passage. (See Copies of Supporting Accounts Payable Registers Attached)

Councilperson Ferrera moved to adopt the above ordinance on first reading, seconded by Councilperson Longwell. Mayor Yates called for roll call vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

Councilperson Ferrera moved to adopt the above ordinance on second reading, seconded by Councilperson Longwell. Mayor Yates called for roll call vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

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ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CHECK REGISTER REPORTS

Councilperson Ferrera moved to receive and file accounts payable check register reports totaling \$120,552.00 seconded by Councilperson Longwell. Mayor Yates called for a roll call, vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORT

Revenue/Expense Report and Financial Report as of June 22, 2023:

Cash Operating Report: General Fund \$1,988,708.71; Coal Severance Fund \$72,875.81; Garbage Fund \$9,183.13; Fire Fund \$19,092.40; Water Fund \$460,832.82 and Sewer Fund \$116,592.86; Total operating cash \$2,946,596.58.

Councilperson Ferrera moved to receive and file the Cash Operating Report and Financial Reports, seconded by Councilperson Longwell. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

WATER & SEWAGE PLANT OPERATION

Thrasher Engineering will be doing a water quality study on the water wells.

New pumps are working well

CITY OFFICES, PROPERTY, FIRE & POLICE

City Clerk's office continues to prepare for year-end & audit.

Preparing documents for Rick Barnett CPA to complete 2022 Financial Statement


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ADJOURNMENT

Councilperson Longwell moved to adjourn meeting, seconded by Councilperson Ferrera. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,


Tiffany Ankom City Clerk/Treasurer


Mayor Walter W. Yates