

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF MARSHALL, CITY OF BENWOOD,
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 12, 2023**

City Council of the City of Benwood met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 12, 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, Kazemka, Lunsford & Mele. Excused absence: Councilperson Givens & Councilperson Longwell. Others present: 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 August 12, 2023 regular meeting minutes & and Councilperson Mele seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

MAYOR ITEMS

Discussion of Halloween Trick or Treating Bags

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASING AUTOMATIONS WORKBENCH CALCULATION FOR ACCOUNTS RECIEVABLE \$1,995.00

Automations Workbench is a program that works with the city's accounting system to automatically generate an accounts receivable invoice for any outstanding B&O Tax & Business License.

Councilperson Mele made the motion to approve the purchase and Councilperson Givens seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MONETARY DONATION FOR CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

Central Catholic High School is asking for a monetary donation to help support CCHS Cheer Camp.

Councilperson Mele made the motion to approve of the donation and Councilperson Ankrom seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION OF PURPOSED WATER RATE INCREASE

This discussion is tabled until more information is available.

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APPROVAL OF SEWAGE RATE INCREASE PROPOSAL FROM MICHAEL GRIFFITH & ASSOCIATES

The City of Benwood, commissioned an accounting firm to analyze the municipal sewage rates and to recommend rates that will allow it to operate without running a deficit.

The proposed rates for Step 1 are as follows: \$22.80 per 1,000 gallons for first 2,000 gallons; over 2,000 gallons \$21.35 per 1,000 gallons. Minimum Charge for Metered Water Supply \$45.60 for 2,000 gallons; Flat-Rate Charge for Non-Metered Water Supply \$88.30 a month. Effective immediately after passage.

The proposed rates for Step 2 are as follows: \$26.60 per 1,000 gallons for first 2,000 gallons; over 2,000 gallons \$24.92 per 1,000 gallons. Minimum Charge for Metered Water Supply \$53.20 for 2,000 gallons; Flat-Rate Charge for Non-Metered Water Supply \$103.04 a month. Effective July 1, 2024.

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to approve the Step 1 increase and Councilperson Kazemka seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL TO PAY RESOLUTION FOR CSO II PROJECT

Resolution approving invoices relating to construction and other services for the proposed combined sewer system improvements Phase II Project and authorizing payment.

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

APPROVAL TO AUCTION MINERALS ON MAP 2 AS PARCEL 163, ON MAP 3 AS PARCEL 26, AND ON MAP 4 AS PARCELS 91 & 92 (FIRST READING)

City of Benwood has been contacted by parties expressing a desire to lease the oil and gas purportedly owned by the City of Benwood and shown on the records of the Marshall County Sheriff's Tax Office in Benwood Corporate District on Map 2 as Parcel 163, on Map 3 as Parcel 26, on Map 4 as Parcels 91 and 92.

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to approve the lease on the first reading and Councilperson Ankrom seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

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DISCUSSION OF LEASE FOR 1567 S. MARSHALL

Emily Monti would like to open a hair salon at 1567 S. Marshall and is interested in leasing the building. Ms. Monti would be making an estimated \$40,000 in improvements to the inside of the building and pay \$500.00 a month in rent and be responsible for all utilities.

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion for Attorney Gordon to draw up a lease agreement and Councilperson Mele seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION & APPROVAL OF ESTIMATE FROM BURCH CONTRACTING \$6,850 TO REPLACE FURNACE & AIRCONDITIONING AT 1567 S. MARSHALL

Heating and Airconditioning are not working at 1567 S. Marshall and need to be replaced.

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to approve the estimate and Councilperson Mele seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION OF INSTALLING 900' OF MAIN WATER LINE FROM 1400-1500 BLOCK OF MARSHALL STREET

Due to the expense of the project, this item will be tabled until further notice.

DISCUSSION & APPROVAL TO HIRE FULL-TIME CDL DRIVER/LABORER FOR STREET/WATER DEPARTMENT

Dave McLaughlin would like to hire Christopher Berry for the full-time position. Mr. Berry has his CDL permit and will get his CDL license within 6 months.

Councilperson Ferrera made the motion to hire Christopher Berry and Councilperson Lunsford seconded the motion. Mayor Yates called for roll call; vote was taken & motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION & APPROVAL TO COLLECT PAST DUE FIRE FEES, B&O TAXES & BUSINESS LICENSE

There are collections that need to be done to collect past due fees. Per Attorney Gordon the city can collect up to 10 years in un-paid fees. Fire Fees can be collected by notifying resident of non-

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compliance and then placing a lien on property. Council agreed to collecting fees 5 years in the rears.

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 \$218,974.82 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 Mele. 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 Mele. Mayor Yates called for roll call vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CHECK REGISTER REPORTS

Councilperson Ferrera moved to receive and file accounts payable check register reports totaling \$218,974.82 seconded by Councilperson Mele. 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 September 7, 2023:

Cash Operating Report: General Fund \$2,221,319.91; Coal Severance Fund \$74,324.47; Garbage Fund \$1,140.78; Fire Fund \$20,415.37; Water Fund \$398,689.36 and Sewer Fund \$87,277.05; Total operating cash \$2,798,739.16.

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

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CITY OFFICES, PROPERTY, FIRE & POLICE

Community Development Block Grant project will be starting Friday September 15, 2023, by having owners of dilapidated houses sign paperwork for them to be demolished.

Free concert on September 23 at the pavilion.

Councilperson Mele would like a sidewalk out on Boggs Run. We will be looking for funding opportunities for this project.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,


Tiffany Ankrom City Clerk/Treasurer


Mayor Walter W. Yates