

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

AUGUST 14, 2023

Present: Mayor David Velegol, City Manager Joe DiBartolomeo and
City Clerk Dave Kurcina
Council: Tammy Johnson, Charles McCoy, Nick Cekinovich, Frank
Pedersen, John Casinelli and Wendy DeAngelis

Also: Police Chief Larry Rea

Absent: City Attorney Mike Gaudio

Place: Council Chamber

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Thank you and Congratulations

Randy Gasaway – He was a Girls Fastpitch Softball Pitching Coach, who helped a lot of girls from Follansbee and the surrounding area to enhance their pitching skills. Mr. Gasaway recently moved to Texas. Council signed a Thank You card for Mr. Gasaway.

Follansbee Blue Wave Swim Team – The Mayor read a proclamation honoring them for winning the 2023 Ohio Valley Swim League Championship.

Public Request

Eric Fythian (President of the Follansbee Chamber Commerce) – He handed out a list of upcoming events for the rest of the year.

Paul DiGiacinto (1423 Walker Road) – He would like for his Councilman to vote against making the Stop Sign at the bottom of Parkview Hill a permanent Stop. This item is on the Agenda.

Skip Cutrone (48 Eagle View Drive) – He owns a business in front of the proposed storage buildings that will be built by Empire Energy on State Street. He discussed the traffic issue on the ingress and egress of trucks for the storage buildings with their president Scott Ewusiak. He told Skip that he would provide flaggers on Main Street to help with traffic. Skip would like for Council to approve the use of State Street for the Storage Buildings on a six-month basis. If River Road turns out not to be an option for their truck traffic, he wants them to build their own road on Duquesne Street. He also stated that the City is desperately in need of businesses. Lastly, he questioned the dumpsters fees. He stated that the residents are putting their own trash into his dumpster

and it's costing him more money to empty it. He would like for council to look into the dumpster fees.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Charles McCoy to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2023 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimous

Motion by Nick Cekinovich/ 2nd by Wendy DeAngelis to approve the minutes of the July 31, 2023 Special Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimous

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Tammy Johnson to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2023 Committee As A Whole Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimous

Police Department Report

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd Tammy Johnson to approve the Police Report. Motion Carried Unanimous

Joe discussed the Mutual Aid agreement with the West Virginia State Police and the Brooke County Sherrif Department. He noted that they have a responsibility to serve the citizens of Follansbee. A Mutual Aid agreement should not be necessary.

Fire Department Report

Motion by Charles McCoy/ 2nd by Wendy DeAngelis to approve the Fire Department Report. Motion Carried Unanimous

Grant Writer Report

The Mayor noted that the Grant Report was the same as last Month.

Financial Data

Motion by Wendy DeAngelis/ 2nd by Tammy Johnson to approve the Financial Data. Motion Carried Unanimous

Wendy noted that the Revenue and Expenses are not matching on the Budget Report. Also, the Fire Department utilities are already over budget. Larry and Joe will meet on this issue. She would also like to see the overtime and wages listed separately.

Bills of Account

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Wendy DeAngelis to approve the Bills of Account.

UDAG Bills

There were no UDAG Bills.

New Business

a. Building Permits –

Empire - Farley Wood from Empire Diversified Energy was at the meeting to answer any questions concerning the storage buildings and the traffic flow situation. Joe stated that all of the drawings for the storage buildings have been submitted. Farley stated that they are fine with the 6-month time frame as mentioned earlier in the Meeting. He noted that it will take a couple of months to construct the storage buildings.

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Wendy DeAngelis to approve the Building Permit for the construction of 2 storage buildings by Empire Green Energy, at the former site of Follansbee Steel on State Street with the understanding that a flagger will be provided by Empire Green Energy for truck traffic and once the Certificate of Completion has been signed, the 6-month time limit will start and lastly, being that part of the Storage Buildings are on City Property, Council wants this piece of property swapped for a piece of their property of equal market value as determined by the City Attorney and the City Manager. Motion Carried Unanimous

Gumby's – Joe noted that they met with them and they have given the City their building plans. Jessica Gumm is going to work with them on the Building Permit. This item will be move forward to September's Agenda.

b. Public Works Director –

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Wendy DeAngelis to approve Bill Secrist as the Public Works Director and to make his salary the same as the former Director, retroaction back to July 1st. Motion Carried Unanimous

c. Street Department Supervisor –

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Wendy DeAngelis to create a Supervisor Position in the Street Department and to approve Mike Varlas to that position with a pay increase of \$10,000.00 per year, retroactive to July 1st and to create a Supervisor Position in the Water and Sewer Department and approve John Buono to that position with a pay increase of \$10,000.00 per year retroactive to July 1st. Motion Carried Unanimous

The Water and Sewer Board will also have to approve the John Buono as Supervisor.

- d. **Parking on Highland Hills** – The Mayor would like for Council to approve an Ordinance, for Highland Hills only, that would require residents to park their vehicles in their driveway or their garage and directly in front of their property. Wendy noted that she has received phone calls for and against this proposal. John doesn't want to pass an Ordinance that will cause more problems. He wants the City Attorney to clarify how this will be enforced. The 1st Reading of the Ordinance will be next month.
Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Tammy Johnson to adopt an Ordinance that would restrict parking only on Highland Hills. Motion Carried Unanimous
- e. **Fraternal Order of Police** – Chief Rea would like to have this topic moved to next month.
- f. **Police Hire**- Chief Rea would like to hire 3 Police Officers to have 2 Officers on each shift. The Mayor stated that the Chief should be the 2nd Officer on a shift. Larry stated that at the minimum he would like for Council to hire 1 Officer to replace Danny Casto. The Mayor stated that overtime needs to be minimized in the Police Department. He also stated that Council needs to talk about hiring another Police Officer. Larry would like to set up a meeting with Joe to discuss Safety Forces for the Police Department and the Fire Department. This issue will be on the Agenda for next month.
- g. **Police Retirement Options** – This would be no added cost to the City. The Chief stated that the Police Officer would pay towards his retirement; however, it has to be signed off by Council. Joe will research this topic.
- h. **Mark Avenue Stop Sign** – Nick stated that this is a security and safety concern. This Stop Sign is located at the top of Mark Avenue. He noted that a resident had their fence damaged by vehicles the past 2 years. John noted that it might be better to place posts instead of making it a full Stop Sign. Bill, the Mayor and the City Manager will look into this issue of either installing guardrails or posts. This item will be on next month's Agenda.
- i. **Yellow curb at 324 Marquette Avenue** – This request by Frank he would like to have the curb painted yellow at 324 Marquette Avenue. Chief Rea has no issue painting it yellow.
Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Frank Pedersen to paint the curb yellow at 324 Marquette Avenue contingent on if this has already been approved and indicated on the City Street Map. If this has not been already passed, Council will adopt and Ordinance to create a yellow curb. Motion Carried Unanimous

City Manager Comments

Joe informed Council that he will be giving Council a rough draft of the Personnel Policy within the next 6 months. He is also working on the Organizational Chart along with the pay wage for each position. In addition, he is working on a report that will list every tax and fee that the City is generating. Some of the fees and taxes need to be updated. John noted that the City does not fully charge the amount of B&O Tax compared to what the City is currently charging. A time frame for an Orientation of the City's Facilities for Council, is still being worked on. He read a West Virginia State Code that states that Council has total power and authority. This would have to be approved by Council, either by Resolution or Ordinance. He also wants to make sure that the Fire Department is prepared to handle an Emergency.

Ordinances

Water Project Ordinance -

Motion by Nick Cekinovich/ 2nd by Tammy Johnson to wave the reading of the Water Project Ordinance. Motion Carried Unanimous

Motion by Nick Cekinovich/ 2nd by John Casinelli to approve the 2nd Reading of the of the Water Project Ordinance. Motion Carried Unanimous

Sewer Project Ordinance -

Motion by Wendy DeAngelis/ 2nd by Tammy Johnson to wave the reading of the Sewer Project Ordinance. Motion Carried Unanimous

Motion by John Casinelli/ 2nd by Tammy Johnson to approve the 2nd Reading of the of the Sewer Project Ordinance. Motion Carried Unanimous

Motion by John Casinelli/2nd by Tammy Johnson to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Carried

David P. Kurcina, City Clerk