

November 3, 2021

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Winchester City Council held their monthly meeting November 3, 2021 at City Hall.

Mayor McIntire called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. with the following council in attendance: Lawrence Coultas, Ron Bell, Terry Gregory, Bill Jacquot, Sandy Long, Jeff Pittman, and City Clerk Teri Little

Also, in attendance were Wanda Cody, City Treasurer; Caleb Handy, Police Chief; John Paul Coonrod, City Attorney; Greg Hillis, Benton & Associates; John Simmons, City Supt of Public Works; Phill Night, Suez Water Systems; Carmen Ensinger, Scott County Times.

Sandy Long led those attending meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION: Lawrence Coultas moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to pay the bills as presented. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Mayor McIntire asked for any corrections for the minutes September 1, 2021 meeting.

MOTION: Jeff Pittman moved, and Lawrence Coultas seconded to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the regular October 6, 2021 meeting. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Greg Hillis, Benton & Associates advised that paperwork for the library has been returned except the insurance but should have this week as well as the bonds. Will dig as soon as notice has been received.

Hillis advised there is additional USDA grants/loans still available. After speaking with Simmons there are several undersized water mains that need to be replaced. With these types of grants there is a need for a PER. This is a preliminary engineering report. Grant can be 0-75% of project. If get lower percent can do a 40-year loan at 1.25% interest. This can be paid off yearly if possible but it would lock in the low interest rate for 40 years. The process is slow and a lot of paperwork. It could be a year before projects could start. By going ahead and starting the process now puts us in good position to get additional funds if they were to become available. It can all be a matter of timing and this would put the City in a good position to receive more grant money

Greg will get with John on what is needed and meet with water committee. Our odds in receiving are enhanced due to poverty level.

The Downtown Beautification grant is out there and 100% for utilities and roads. Council agreed to approve Greg to file for the grant.

Caleb Handy, Police Chief passed out his monthly report. His report is as follows: Animal Complaints – 1; Arrests – 2; Assist EMS – 3; Assist Outside Agency (police) - 5; Assist Fire Dept – 1; Burglary - 4; Domestic Disturbance – 6; Extra Patrol Requests - 2; Golf Cart Inspection – 1; Harassment – 1; Juvenile - 5; Paper Service – 3; Property Exchange – 4; Speak to Officer – 30; Stalking – 2; Suicidal Subject – 4; Suspicious Person – 3; Suspicious Vehicle – 3; Theft – 3; Traffic Accidents – 1; Traffic Stops – Citations – 2; Traffic Stops – Verbal Warning – 7; Trespassing – 2; Vehicle Complaint – 1; Well-being Checks – 3. Mileage for the month is 1498 miles.

The new police truck is ready still waiting on equipment. Hope to have by next meeting.

Advised that Chase will Graduate the academy on 12/3/2021.

Will advise of trouble areas and times to give to on-duty officers.

Bill Jacquot, City Alderman presented the financial report for the pool for the 2021 season. The report lists out all revenue and expenditures for the season. Revenue was \$34,521.44 and expenditures \$50,040.62 for a deficit of \$15,519.18. There were a few suggestions from the pool board meeting. Repair needs to be done for the slide, replace diving boards and ropes, shade concession area and hire a non-lifeguard employee to have a food license that would allow the menu to be expanded such as pizza and other items.

Wanda Cody, City Treasurer passed out the profit/loss statement for the month and the expenses.

Loan at UCB that was for mini excavator will be ^{7. 2022} paid off next month. There were late fees attached to the final payment as the mail was slow in delivering the payment. In the future, payments are able to go directly to the local branch. Jeff from UCB will be looking at reversing the late fees as this was beyond our control.

Lawrence Coultas, City Alderman reported that the purchasing committee met and chose Utility Pipe for the meter reading system. They looked over the 3 bids (Core and Main, Utility Pipe and Suez Water systems) and it was decided that over a 20 period it would be more economical to go with Utility Pipe.

Phill Knight, Suez Water Systems was present and was requesting why Utility Pipe was chosen. It was chosen due to overall cost and savings.

Coultas advised that the loan would be for 7 years and payments about \$60,000 a year. It was suggested that we may have to reduce the time limit as municipal loan limits were 5 years. Attorney Coonrod will check and see what the time frames are and advise.

Alderman Gregory asked what we can pay to lower the initial amount but payments will be covered by rate increase and more accurate readings.

MOTION: Ron Bell moved, and Sandy Long seconded to approve purchase of meter reading system thru Utility Pipe pending contract approval and subject to finance. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

John Simmons, Supt of Public Works report as follows: Locate tickets – 17; Work orders – 40; Funerals/grave digs – 1; Replaced gas meters – 4; Replaced water meters – 18; Poured concrete – 8 yards; Monthly brush picked up; Monthly meter reading; Monthly odorant report; Monthly sniff test gas; Mowing; Winterize pool; Ordinance Violations; Zoning Permits – 2; Gas Leak Calls – 2; Clean up lagoons and concrete around banks.

He is sending Derik and Leland Evans to the 2021 Pipeline Safety Conference on December 7th and 8th in Mt Vernon. It is \$325.00 and \$125.00 for room

Trevor's last day will be November 12th. He has taken a new job and will be moving to Lincoln.

John expressed that he would like to hire one person now and another person at a later date.

MOTION: Lawrence Coultas moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to advertise for street employee hire. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Jim will not be able to get his second water license till January 11, 2022 so the city will be running under Benton and Associates (Adam Fox) until we have a fully licensed employee.

Ad for employment will be posted in the paper and also online with applications due back in by November 19th.

Jeff Pittman, Building Supervisor stated that Amanda and Teri are working on the plans for the annual Christmas party. Supper will be provided and a white elephant game will follow. If interested in playing each person would need to bring a gift valued at no more than \$20.00. Door prizes will also be given.

Mayor Rex McIntire gave update on the Hedge Fund agreement. After speaking with Ron Reagan from UGM it was agreed to raise the usual 60% to 100%. This is to help with the inflation of natural gas prices this winter. This will help keep the bills more affordable for residents.

The city received a request from Krista Kuntz for advertising in the Winchester High School yearbook. Prices are ½ page \$200.00, ¼ page \$100.00 and 1/8 page \$50.00.

MOTION: Lawrence Coultas moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to purchase ¼ page ad for \$100.00. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Mayor McIntire requested that City Attorney Coonrod look into a hiring clause for new hires. This stems from the recent resignation of current water plant supt. Trevor Cawthorn. He is going to work for American Water. He was recruited at a water conference that he was attending for the city. These large companies are currently buying up small town water systems and hiring away employees of small towns as well. We need to ensure that once we pay for all training and license that the employee will remain with the city. He understands that younger employees

maybe swayed by the higher pay that, as a small town, we cannot compete with but we are paying to train people to move to other companies.

Information on the condemnation of the Drake house on Commercial St. is on hold as FS is still trying to get a meeting set with the family for purchase. They still want the property it is just the family is not responding to the mayor. No paperwork has started on the Cherry St. home as of yet. The Howland house on Green St. is in the process of being sold and this will allow it to be cleaned up or torn down. Several members of council wanted to discuss what could be done with the old Hotel property. One of the suggestions was that it could serve as parking for the square events and businesses.

Dollar General has signed purchase agreement. The city agreed to run the gas line from Commercial St. to the new store location. It has been requested that the 45-mph speed limit be extended to Coal Mine Rd since there will be a new business entrance/exit and also the subdivision in the works as well. Attorney Coonrod will check with IDOT on this.

The city has received a TIF Funds request from Stevie VanDevelde and Sonnie Hoover for the Winchester Depot. They would like to make inside renovations to the depot. No decision was made at this time as it will be reviewed

John Paul Coonrod, City Attorney passed out ordinance for Municipal Tax Levy. This needs to be looked over and will move to approve in December meeting. This will be a 4.5% total levy increase. Most of the increase will go into the IMRF fund.

The water rate ordinance is now on hold till maybe February as the council agreed to hold off on this as to not cause hardship on residents since price of natural gas is predicted to high this winter.

Coonrod gave update on Municipal Court cases. There were 2 cases for Winchester and 1 for Manchester. Manchester will pay 1/3 of the court costs.

Case 1 Railroad St-trash and debris at tenement house, fined Guy Lewis and approved to cite again.

Case 2 Arch and Cross St-inoperable vehicle-dismissed

Five notices sent out for violations and all have been cleaned up

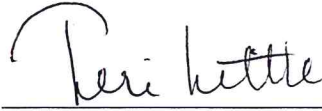
Speed limit ordinance was presented; however, it was decided to look at having just the trouble areas reduced and not entire town. The way signs would need to be posted to ensure a ticket would stand up in court would mean numerous signs posted at every street. This will be revisited.

No public comments.

MOTION: Bill Jacquot moved, and Jeff Pittman second to move to adjourn 11:10 pm. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.



Rex McIntire, Mayor



Teri Little, City Clerk