

July 24, 2023

Council President Mr. Martin called the July 24, 2023 Belpre City Council meeting to order at 7:30 PM. The roll was called with the following members present: Mrs. Dennis, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Millhone, Mr. Null, Ms. Abdella and Mr. Wallace present. Also present were Mayor Lorentz, Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Cassady and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the meeting was Councilperson Mr. McClead

Council President Mr. Martin asked that everyone please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Police Chief Stump gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked that everyone turn off cellphones or turn them to vibrate so they don't interfere with the recording.

If you address council this evening, please rise, state your name and address clearly so that the clerk can record it for the minutes.

If you address council this evening, please do it in a respectful manner and I will ask council to be respectful in return.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked for a motion on the June 26, 2023 minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the June 26, 2023 minutes as presented and by the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except Mr. Null who voted nay.

President of Council Mr. Martin asked for a motion on the July 10, 2023 minutes. Ms. Abdella made a motion to accept the July 10, 2023 minutes as presented and by the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye except for Mr. Null who voted nay.

Reports of City Officials:

Mayor Lorentz reported that the property on Hill Street near the water tank sight is again on the market. As we discussed earlier in council, I could not make a firm offer without council approval, but I did say that our \$20,000 original offer was probably the top. No reply as of today. Our realtor friend had a heart attack and is not available. As I know more, I'll communicate to council.

On July 13th I sponsored the mayor's dinner for the Mid-Ohio Valley Mayor's association. In all we had approximately 65 in attendance. Belair's Bistro catered and the dinner was delicious. Thank you, Becky Hennen, for the wonderful cobbler.

July 14th Marietta Memorial made the announcement we all have been waiting for. Hopefully the council understands this will mean a couple hundred new jobs and opportunities for even more business and job openings.

The Service Director and Port Authority met with a property owner just west of town to discuss possible development. This could be residential or industrial or maybe both.

The Belpre Area Veterans are asking for more room at the front of Howes Grove Park to expand their veterans walk. Personally, I have no issue with this, but the council will need to draft legislation.

After a lot of miles and phone calls we finally found a suitable dump truck for our employees. The street foreman, S.S.D., and I travelled to Spencer WV. to try out a vehicle. As it turns out it was exactly what they wanted and needed. Hopefully we can take possession of it tomorrow.

I met this morning with the Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority to discuss public transportation needs in our area. As you know I have been looking for additional funding to allow MOVTA to run a route in town.

The United Way awarded the Sr. Center \$6,500 this year. Bonnie and I will accept the check the first week of August.

With us this evening is County Commissioner James Booth who would like to speak about the city's water line improvements. It is my understanding that the City of Belpre has received preliminary approval for a \$400,000 grant toward a 1.5-million-dollar project. The city would need to fund 1.1 million dollars. I 'm here to urge council to consider this for a couple of reasons. First this is a project that not only supports the new hospital and its future expansion but also other businesses and residents fed by this line. I understand the benefit to the new line that if a disruption ever exists on this line there would be no interruption in service. Second, now is the right time for the city to act because cost is only going up. Finally, there is the cost of borrowing the money. It is also my understanding that the Ohio EPA is offering to loan the City of Belpre 1.1 million dollars at 0% interest. If the city tried to borrow that amount of money on the open market the city would have to pay anywhere from 5 ½ to 10 percent. Thank you to the members of city council and I urge you to send a loud signal this evening that Belpre is open for business.

Luke Smith, part of the Executive Team for the Memorial Health System is present here this evening to represent the importance of the project for the health system. This is not only important for the new construction and ongoing construction at the Belpre Campus but also the current existing structures as there is no alternative for the water system and pressure has been an issue for some time. We have installed a

booster system for each building that comes at a cost of a little over \$100,000 per building. It's not only the cost but the efficiency and advocacy of having a water line to feed medical equipment as needed. For example, in order to run an emergency type of service you have to have a lavatory attached to it. The lavatory equipment has to have adequate water pressure to run lab results in a quick time for urgent needs. With building a hospital in a couple of years this will increase the risk. We will be increasing the type of hospital functions and the type of emergencies that we will be doing on that campus. Not only out-patient procedures but doctors' offices. Having a hospital there in addition to the emergency department further under scores the need to have a adequate water system as well as the backup. If the water system were to go out today, we would have to defer to other facilities as we would not be able to operate. The new water line would be very instrumental to us.

Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell announced that we are receiving a grant from SOPEC and Erin Stephens is here to talk about that grant. Erin stated that she was the liaison for SOPEC (Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council) and she is here with us this evening to talk about the grant money. She stated that every year that you are enrolled with us there is a certain amount of community grant money that comes to us that we put forth every year. Erin stated that Connie had contacted her about a pool emergency and wanted to know if they could utilize their grant money to help with that. Erin stated that you can because it is the community's money. The grant this year is just under \$25,000 and you will have money left over from that as well. We are just waiting on a few more estimates as to how much it will cost. At the General Assembly we were able to pass the ordinance up to \$15,000 that will be coming your way once we figure how much it will cost. Council will then have to exit those monies.

Erin stated that we also do the Electric Aggregation and we will be adding the Natural Gas Aggregation as well. Hopefully we will have that as we move forward with the Natural Gas Aggregation.

I'm also happy to say that SOPEC is a resident of the area with a double-digit savings to our customers. We hope to continue that in the future.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan reported that the June Utility Adjustment report was mailed to all members of council on Thursday, July 20th, 2023. Copies are on the back table and needs council approval. Ms. Abdella made a motion to accept the June Utilities Adjustment Report as presented. Ms. Abdella thanked Mrs. Nolan for answering all the questions she had in a timely manner. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

City Law Director Mr. Webster stated that his office has a couple pieces of legislation to prepare for the next meeting. I will work with the committee chairs to get them ready.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassidy stated that the June Treasurer's report is before you this evening and needs council approval. Copies have been placed on the back table. Mr.

Martin asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions:

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that the only thing he had was a letter for a revision of the alcohol license for Antonio's. The letter has been presented to Mr. Webster.

Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Ferguson reported that Finance/Audit Committee met prior to this evening's meeting to discuss the air condition system for the city building. This was taken off the committee assignment agenda. We also discussed the Senior Center Contract that I have asked the law director to draft legislation for the next meeting. We also discussed the environment coordinator position that has been tabled because of changes to the job description and the sewer plant legislation that was tabled. Mr. Ferguson stated that he would be calling another committee meeting to discuss the sewer plant legislation and the environmental coordinator position at a later time. Mr. Ferguson asked that the reappropriation of monies for the cruiser to infrastructure for this year, fire chief vehicle and the air condition for the city building be removed from his committee assignments.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee reported that the two items on the referral list is still in process. A future meeting regarding Panhandling in the City of Belpre and the Nuisance Ordinance will be planned. Mrs. Dennis stated that Jeff Greenly is here this evening and asked if he had a report this evening in which he did not.

Ms. Abdella, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer Committee reported that Barb Bradley was to be here this evening to give her quarterly report on the health department. I asked her to wait and come to the next meeting. Also, with us this evening is Steve Lehew who announced before council that Chemours has tentative plans to invest \$1 billion to expand a local plant that used to be Dupont.

This would allow the plant to produce materials needed for the future semiconductor chip plant that will open near Columbus.

The chips will be found in cars, computers, smartphones, and more. That chip is made out of PFA and we make it in Parkersburg.

With the expansion it could bring 200 permanent jobs to the area as well as employing hundreds or more construction workers.

Per Mr. Lehew the expansion of the first phase of the project depends on the federal EPA. A quarter of the potential billion-dollar investment is subject to their approval.

Mr. Millhone Utilities Committee reported that he had a couple of things to report tonight however we didn't get around to it. I would like to move that ahead to the next meeting. Mr. Millhone called a committee meeting for August 14 at 6:45 to discuss the Route 7 sewer line. I have passed out a packet for you to review and to know what we are discussing. A year ago, Bill Burton was here and I have called for him a couple of times with no reply. We will also discuss the Drinking and Wastewater Funding Mechanisms.

Mr. McClead Parks and Recreation Committee was absent. No report was given in his absence.

Mr. Wallace Planning and Zoning /Economic Development had no report.

Mr. Null Rules Committee had no report.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL - AGENDA items only ((President of items.))

Darien Lorentz addressed council thanking council and the officials and the audience for this opportunity to speak about the upcoming water legislation.

As we all know, the main things in the community are the inner structure, like POWER GAS WATER AND SEWER. We have seen the large amount of inner structure done by the POWER COMPANY, THE INSTALLATION OF new electric poles and electric lines, increasing the capacity of our town, we've also seen the GAS COMPANY increase the capacity of the PIPES.

And now we're coming to one of our most needed facilities, water inner structure. We have appropriated money for a new water reservoir and now we're looking for funding for the inner structure to connect the system.

We have heard, the water bills will go up \$100's dollars, is that fact, this will provide sewer or we don't want to pass this onto the next administration, that would leave us never moving forward.

And I would bet if you asked the candidates come up for election what they wanted you may be surprised.

We all are here to support the resolution.

Also appearing in support of the resolution on tonight's agenda: **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BELPRE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON**

BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELPRE FOR DESIGN AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF WATER FACILITIES: AND DISIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOANS is

Karen Waller 826 Walnut Street, Belpre representing the Board of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce.

Jim Nelson 529 Wirt Street, Belpre

Cathy O'Donnell 3 Bay Pointe Drive, Belpre

Bob Rauch 511 Ridge Street and business owner

Jeff Greenly 930 Pine Street and Superintendent of Belpre City Schools

Bill Locke 726 Tuttle Street, Belpre

Judy Drake 713 Oak Tree Lane, Belpre

Mario Coon 1111 Blennerhassett Avenue, Belpre

Jesse Rauch Executive Director of the Southeastern Ohio Port Authority.

President of Council Mr. Martin thanked everyone for their input.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: ((President of City Council will recognize that there is or is not any Unfinished Business this evening)).

Ms. Abdella brought before council for third reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BELPRE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELPRE FOR DESIGN AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF WATER FACILITIES: AND DISIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOANS.** Discussion followed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Ms. Abdella moved this be **Resolution #36, 2022-2023** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

President of Council Mr. Martin thanked everyone for their input. He stated that this project needed to move forward.

NEW BUSINESS: none

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Bob Rauch 511 Ridge Street addressed council asking that they consider making a three-lane road with sidewalks from the railroad track on Farson Street to Washington Boulevard. Mr. Rauch stated that we have pedestrians walking in the road.

Bill Locke 726 Tuttle Street, Belpre thanked everyone for coming to council this evening and supporting the resolution this evening. Mr. Locke also mentioned that the new UPS store in the shopping center is now open for business. It looks great!

Mr. Null thanked everyone that contacted him regarding the water line project. I campaigned about 40 people to get their opinion.

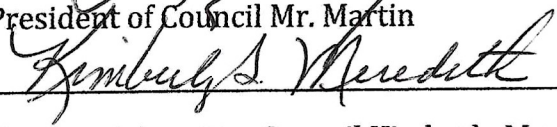
Ms. Abdella made a motion to excuse Mr. McClead from this evening's meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

ADJOURN:

Mrs. Dennis made a motion to adjourn at 8:19pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.



President of Council Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Kimberly Meredith