

City of Morgantown
430 Spruce Street, Morgantown, WV 26505

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
April 18, 2023

Regular Meeting: April 18, 2023: The regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Morgantown was held in the Monongalia County Commission Chambers on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 7:14 pm.

Present: City Manager Kim Haws, Assistant City Manager Emily Muzzarelli, City Attorney Ryan Simonton, City Clerk Christine Wade, Mayor Jenny Selin, Deputy Mayor Danielle Trumble, and Council Members Joe Abu-Ghannam, Bill Kawecki, Ixya Vega, Dave Harshbarger, and Brian Butcher.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Selin.

Approval of Minutes: April 4, 2023, Special Meeting minutes; April 4, 2023, Regular Meeting minutes were approved as printed, by acclamation.

Correspondence:

Vanessa Reaves Special Projects Coordinator presented Earth Day coming up this Saturday, April 22, 2023, and urges all to come out for clean-up and recycling at the riverfront.

High School Student Report. MHA students, Kaylee, Maddie and Emily provided everyone with updates on what is happening at their school as related to the different programs they have to offer for their classmates.

Public Hearing: An Ordinance authorizing Execution of a Lease Agreement with POPSHOPWV, Inc. for space within the Woodburn School Building

Mayor Selin declared this Public Hearing Open.

There being no appearances, Mayor Selin declared the Public Hearing closed.

Public Hearing: An Ordinance Authorizing Acceptance of a Deed Release from the Federal Aviation Administration and Conveyance of a Quit Claim Deed to West Virginia Department of Transportation Division of Highways for Real Estate along West Run Road

Mayor Selin declared this Public Hearing Open.

There being no appearances, Mayor Selin declared the Public Hearing closed.

Public Hearing: An Ordinance Annulling a portion of First Street and providing for dedication of additional Right-of-Way to First Street

Mayor Selin declared this Public Hearing Open.

James Giuliani spoke in opposition to this Ordinance.

There being no appearances, Mayor Selin declared the Public Hearing closed.

Unfinished Business:

An Ordinance Annulling a portion of First Street and providing for dedication of additional Right-of-Way to First Street (First reading 4/4/23)

City Manager explained. After discussion. Motion by Councilor Kawecki, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Ordinance. Motion carried 7-0.

Boards & Commissions:

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Motion by Councilor Harshbarger, second by Councilor Kawecki, to reappoint, by consensus, Barry Dickson to the ICC Building Code Board of Appeals, to a 5-year term 5/1/2023 – 4/30/2028.

Motion by Councilor Butcher, second by Councilor Harshbarger, to appoint, by consensus, Trevor Lloyd to the Fire Code Board of Appeals for a 3-year term 5/1/2022 – 4/30/2025.

Public Portion:

Mayor Selin declared the Public Portion open.

James Giuliani spoke regarding his candidacy for the City Election.

There being no other individuals to speak, Mayor Selin declared the public portion closed.

Special Committee Reports: None

Consent Agenda:

- A. An Ordinance authorizing Execution of a Lease Agreement with POPSHOPWV, Inc. for space within the Woodburn School Building: *(First reading 4/4/23)*
- B. An Ordinance Authorizing Acceptance of a Deed Release from the Federal Aviation Administration and Conveyance of a Quit Claim Deed to West Virginia Department of Transportation Division of Highways for Real Estate along West Run Road: *(First reading 4/4/23)*
- C. An Ordinance Annulling a portion of First Street and providing for dedication of additional Right-of-Way to First Street: *(First reading 4/4/23)*

Motion by Councilor Kawecki, second by Councilor Vega, to move item C to Unfinished Business for additional discussion. Motion approved by acclamation.

Motion by Councilor Butcher, second by Councilor Harshbarger, to approve items A and B. Motion carried 7-0.

New Business:

Rates of Levy Laid by the City of Morgantown and approved by the State Auditor for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2023, in accordance with Chapter 11 Article 8 of the West Virginia Code

Finance Director Kevin Tennant explained. After discussion, motion by Councilor Vega, second by Councilor Harshbarger, to approve the above-entitled Ordinance to second reading. Motion carried 7-0.

A Fair & Festival Permit for the Jim Dunn Run, July 13, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

City Manager Kim Haws explained. After discussion, motion by Deputy Mayor Trumble, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Fairs & Festival Permit for the Jim Dunn Run. Motion carried 7-0.

A Catering Permit to provide beer and wine vending as part of the Ruby Summer Concert Series at Hazel Ruby McQuain Park

Vincent Kitch, Director of Arts & Cultural, explained. After discussion, motion by Councilor Vega, second by Councilor Harshbarger, to approve the above-entitled Catering Permit to Almost Heaven. Motion carried 7-0.

City Manager's Report: shared information related to the need for improvements to the airport terminal. It was built in 1963 and has not had any significant changes since that time. The mechanical system has far outlived its life and the infrastructure is very insufficient in that it allows for a great amount of energy leakage because of poor insulation and the windows are in bad shape. That being the rationale for moving forward. He shared that there has been a terminal feasibility study initiated and it is in progress to help determine what the best direction is for the city to take, whether it is to renovate and improve the existing facility or to just start over. Once that

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study is completed, we'll have the data necessary to go after major grants to build one if necessary. There's been some discussion about the hiring of a new museum manager. The process for filling this position was started last fall actually and our director has tried for months and has interviewed many prospective candidates. In fact, the position has been offered two or three times and has been declined each time. There is great effort and diligent effort being made towards filling this position. We will continue to monitor this and if we need to do something to make it more competitive, we will do that. Additionally, we talked about in the past was the streetscape projects on pleasant and walnut streets. The Pleasant Street project will go between High Street and University Avenue, and it will be the replacement of existing sidewalks, trees, and lighting. The funding is in place for the project and has been awarded for construction. It's likely to be completed at the end of this year.

Report from City Clerk: shared information on early voting numbers and turnouts. The numbers are up for early voting this election. She shared that poll workers are still needed, but there are enough for Election Day, training is still available. Signs were placed around Morgantown for voting. The city's website www.morgantownwv.gov has all the details about voting and Election Day if you hover over the word "Government". She provided information on absentee ballots. The City Clerk also spoke on how to locate your polling place.

Report from City Attorney: shared that last week they had working group meetings to discuss the city's implementation of the recently passed alcohol legislation allowing for creation of what are now termed private outdoor designated areas. That legislation is modeled on some legislation that's been successful with communities in Ohio and so the group looked at how Athens Ohio, Ohio University in Marietta, Ohio, and Marietta college were implemented. He shared that some staff, council members, and Main Street representatives were present to address this. That group will be getting a poll out to private clubs that might be able to participate in that area and we'll look to put together some draft language that would meet those initial requirements for the ordinance going forward and then reconvene. Councilor Butcher had raised the status of opioid litigation settlements and how those will be distributed and used. Council will recall that the city is participating in the statewide settlement and memorandum of understanding for the distribution and use of funds in settlements with manufacturers distributors that have been resolved by the Attorney General's office and attorneys representing local governments. A portion of those funds (24%) is distributed directly to municipalities and counties according to their determined shares under that agreement, but the bulk of those funds will be distributed to a newly created opioid foundation to receive 72.5% of the total funds. The foundation will be controlled by a board with 11 members, five appointed by the governor's office and six appointed one each by the local regions. Morgantown is a part of region four, along with several other surrounding counties and municipalities, and we will get to council a total of the funding percentages of all the participating entities in our region.

Report from Council Members:

Councilor Abu-Ghannam: thanked students, Kaylee, Maddie, and Emily for coming in and presenting. He expressed his appreciation for them coming in and sharing with everybody everything going on. There is an event coming up which will be on the rail trail this Saturday. He will be with the tree boards in participation with the handmade market from 12p to 5p, and if you are one of the first to get to there the tree board will be giving some things away. He thanked the public for voter turnout.

Councilor Kawecki: shared that there is a County Commission meeting with the West Virginia DOH District Board tomorrow at 1pm here in this room if anyone is interested in attending. Members of the MPO were invited and he plans to attend. He thanked the newspaper for their recent editorial about voting, sharing that it is nice to see that kind of publicity for this election. He believes that in terms of what is done in government, having it at this level is the one place that affects folks most, and residents can do something about it. Councilor Kawecki stated that your participation will be more than welcome. He thanked the City Clerk for her efforts in making this well known.

Councilor Vega: spoke about collecting needles around town. She discussed Health Right and how they help the community with situations with needles. She said to connect with them at 304-292-8234 if you have any questions or feel like you need answers. If you need her to connect you with someone, she is more than welcome.

Deputy Mayor Trumble: shared that Health Right is great with needle collecting and handling as she runs the trash cleanup groups and organizes a lot of cleanups. She has been well trained by Health Right in sharps disposal and they have provided training for different groups for her in the past and she is appreciative. She shared that they are always very willing to hand out sharps containers and things like that for us. She and Councilor Kawecki participated in the city employee and volunteer cleanup last Thursday. She went out behind City Hall with some of the city employees and it was great. They connected and picked up trash together while talking about their work. The Woodburn Association of Neighbors is meeting tomorrow, Wednesday, at 7pm at the Woodburn Community Complex. They are anticipating a more in-depth update from Morgantown Area Partnership and the Mon County Development Authority on the Richwood project. If anyone is interested, please join. Deputy Mayor Trumble shared that a group of them convened at Hazel's House of Hope last week and have already begun discussions on what next year's warming shelter will look like because it's going to look different next year. Salvation Army, Morgantown Community Resources, Bartlett House, Health Right, United Way, and the manager of this winter's shelter, met and were talking about other groups that they may need to bring in such as the National Guard, Red Cross, or MECCA to

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see what some options are for next winter because it looks like the level of funding that it took this winter is not necessarily going to be available next winter.

Councilor Harshbarger: thanked Councilor Kaweck, Vanessa Reeves, and Deputy Mayor Trumble on efforts with cleanup and the City Clerk for her efforts with the election. He talked about cleanup and trail events happening in our community and notified the public about blasting starting at the airport extension tomorrow beginning at 2p. The cleanup event is scheduled for the following Saturday from 9a to 11a.

Councilor Butcher: shared that he met this past Thursday with the ACT program of WVU to see what kind of barriers they experience. These folks provide direct home services for behavioral health conditions. He was told that they had a lot of issues treating people who are unsheltered, and for them to bill Medicaid, they need to contact these folks four times a week and this is quite a bit, especially for unsheltered people. He brought up the idea that if the City Ambassadors make contact that they could assist in collecting names because the name of the individual is needed. They also indicated that they would like to present to council at a Committee of the Whole meeting, and a study of housing issues in general that we might have. Our neighborhood met to talk about the local pocket park, the Turtle Park, and neighborhood issues. They will be meeting again on June 4 at 2pm, specifically to start planting at the rain garden. Kids will be able to bring small fairy shelters or houses to place inside of that back garden. If folks would like more information about this, please contact Councilor Butcher or Matthew Cross with our neighborhood association. The neighborhood would also like to place a sign at the park.

Mayor Selin: shared that she had a visit with a company that would like to set up shop in Morgantown in the city limits. They came first to Charleston to meet with the Governor and make a big announcement that they're coming, and then they came to Morgantown, and they met with the city staff. It was amazing to meet people who come here like they're on a mission to produce insulin at a good cost. They're trying to figure out possibly how you would give discounts to West Virginians, which we're not even sure whether you can do that or not. But it's amazing to have a company come and bring with them some of their municipal officials. They are very excited to meet with the Governor and his dog, and then to come to our city hall and meet with staff and see who they will be working with as they set up shop here. The location that they've chosen is West Virginia University's research park and the property is straight across from the Suncrest Towne Center. They want to work with WVU, and the hospital, and they are looking for a long-term relationship. They're just very excited and on a mission to produce insulin in West Virginia. There are a series of light poles in front of Seneca Center that are on regular old telephone poles but face Seneca center, the bulbs are out. This is something that's been going on for six months or more. They have contacted our engineering department, and they have not been changed yet, so whatever we could do as an entity to facilitate that. Charleston is looking at changing out all of their lights and upgrading them and making them LED and perhaps it would be smart for us to explore whatever kind of relationship we could have with our specific utility and see how many of our lights we could get changed over to LED as a project.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, motion by Councilor Vega, second by Councilor Butcher, to adjourn the meeting.
Time: 9:01 p.m.

City Clerk

Mayor