

REGULAR MEETING September 3, 2019: The regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Morgantown was held in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, September 3, 2019, at 7:12 pm.

PRESENT: City Manager Paul Brake, City Clerk Christine Wade, Assistant City Manager Emily Muzzarelli, City Attorney Ryan Simonton, Mayor William A. Kawecki, and Council Members: Deputy Mayor Rachel Fetty, Zackery Cruze, Jenny Selin, Ron Dulaney, Dave Harshbarger, and Barry Wendell.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kawecki.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August 20, 2019, Special and Regular Meeting minutes, and August 27, 2019, Committee of the Whole meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Conventions & Visitors Bureau Presentation: Susan Riddle presented the annual report to council and provided them with recruiting documents. The annual report has been recorded in the City Clerk's office.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:

Motion by Selin, second by Dulaney, to reappoint, by consensus, Deputy Mayor Fetty to the Morgantown Housing Advisory Commission.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Mayor Kawecki declared the Public Portion open.

Hayden Moran, WVU Sophomore Chemistry Major, he is serving as the local Governance Liaison for the West Virginia Student Government Association. He stated that this is the third year that they have been working on projects with the City and County representatives and looks forward to working with council in the near future. Elizabeth Sneathen, 179 Bluegrass Village, spoke in opposition of the MUB waterline route through White Park. James Giuliani, 256 Prairie Avenue, spoke in opposition of the MUB waterline route through White Park. He also shared that he feels he has no property rights as it pertains to some of his properties.

JoNell Strough, 608 Hess Street, spoke regarding the trees that will be removed. She provided sample replacement values.

Rick Landenberger, 55 Manville Street, spoke in favor of the waterline route from Mississippi to route 3. He spoke in opposition of the original route 3 and in favor of route 8. He recommended a connector to route 3.

Judy Semler, 536 Madigan Avenue, spoke in favor of route 3 or alternate route 3. She recommended council to vote in favor of route 3 or alternate route 3.

Jim Kotcon, PO Box 4142, spoke in support for the resolution for Climate Action Week.

Rick Landenberger, 55 Manville Street, spoke regarding the use of Decker's Creek water and the cost associated with using it.

Twila Medding, 450 Washington Street, spoke in favor of route 5 as it does not travel into White Park.

There being no other speakers, Mayor Kawecki declared the Public Portion closed.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

CONSENT AGENDA: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MORGANTOWN PROCLAIMING SEPTEMBER 20-27, 2019, AS THE WEEK OF WEST VIRGINIA CLIMATE ACTION: The above entitled Resolution was presented for first reading.

City Manager explained, after discussion, motion by Dulaney, second by Wendell, to approve the above entitled Resolution. Motion carried 7-0.

CITY OF MORGANTOWN'S GIFTS AND MEMORIALS POLICY:

City Manager explained, motion by Selin, second by Dulaney, to approve the above entitled policy. After discussion, motion by Cruze to amend the policy at section 5.2.10.1. Motion carried 7-0. Motion to approve the amendment. Motion carried 7-0.

SUPPORT FOR MUB'S RAW WATER LINE ROUTE 3 or 3-8

City Manager explained. Council suspended the rules to allow MUB General Manager Tim Ball and MUB Assistant Manager Doug Smith speak and answer any questions. After discussion, motion by Selin, second by Harshbarger, to choose two of the eight routes to run the Raw Water Line. Motion carried 7-0.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CITY OF MORGANTOWN HOME RULE PLAN AUTHORIZING AN ALTERNATE AUDIT REPORTING DATE FOR THE LAND REUSE AGENCY

City Manager explained, motion by Fetty, second by Selin, to approve the above proposed amendment. Motion carried 7-0.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

New Business:

1. Set hours for Halloween Trick-or-Treat

City Manager explained that Halloween falls on a Thursday this year. He shared that City Council previously established the hours for Trick-or-Treating within the City. Last year, City Council set the hours from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. He shared that starting at 6:00 p.m. allows younger children to be able to Trick-or-Treat with some day light and before bedtime, while extending the hours to 8:00 p.m. allows older children to Trick-or-Treat later/in the dark and also accommodates parents who may work later. Staff recommended that City Council approve the set Trick-or-Treat hours.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Fetty, second by Selin, to approve Trick-or-Treating hours from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

REPORT FROM CITY CLERK: shared that there are some things going on at the Morgantown Fire Department and the Morgantown Police Department. She shared that there are promotions coming up soon within both departments which means there will be promotional exams as well in the very near future. Those promotions will be shared with everyone once they have been established. The Morgantown Police Department is accepting applications for entry level Police Officer. Applications can be received in the City Clerk's office. They can also be found on the city's web page. To search for the application type in "police officer" in the search field and it will take you right to the link to that job description and give you all the information.

REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY: shared the ongoing process of implementing the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan presented by the City's Human Rights Commission. He shared that he met with representatives from the commission last week to discuss a few options for how they would like to see those policies implemented within the city code and they expressed their preference to have those adopted by ordinance and in a discreet place within the code so that everything is located in one area for easy reference and it seems to them that the best fit within the city's Personnel policies. He shared that he will be working on preparing those documents in accordance with that instruction and working with the city's Human Resources Department in reviewing and looking at implementation. There was a discussion regarding having representatives come to the September Committee of the Whole meeting, noting that the commission will be meeting on September 19, 2019. The tentative target is the end of September, however there are several policies involved. He shared that he believes their preference is to handle all in one comprehensive update. A brief status update that Council adopted tonight, the Gift and Memorial policy, that he is working on a brief procedural policy for how the Council and staff will consider requests for placing things like proclamations on the agenda. One of those policies for example from the Human Rights Commission is proposed for inclusion in the code. He stated that this is an area where the City can do more if Council prefers to establish and present to counsel written policies and maybe even organize a little better to the extent it helps people to conduct business here. The Home Rule Ordinance passed on the first reading tonight and there will be a public hearing at the council's next meeting on the 17th, if passed after that hearing it will be presented to the Home Rule Board at its meeting currently scheduled for October 9, 2019.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

DEPUTY MAYOR FETTY: began her report by leading everyone in song to wish our City Manager a Happy Birthday. She shared that it has been a pretty good week in Morgantown, and it was a very busy one. At times and in some ways, it was very challenging and difficult. She noted that last Wednesday was the first for her in that she was in meetings from 8:30 in the morning until 8:30 at night noting that she spent a lot of time with the Mayor and also with many other folks talking about some very challenging issues such as housing and encampments in the park. She stated that she was grateful for her appointment to the Housing Advisory Commission and wants to let folks know that they are trying to address housing issues in the context of many other difficult cultural issues that are making things more challenging for cities across the country. She stated that she hopes that they will be able to bring these conversations to our next Committee of the Whole as many members of our city council have been working on these issues. She commended city council for taking these very serious issues to heart and noted that if only folks out there knew how many hours their very diligent city council has been spending and working on these issues that they would be proud. She announced that the next First Ward Neighborhood Association meeting will be at MTech as they carry out the fall and winter meetings at that location. She shared that Mr. Hathaway is the President of the Association. The social justice group in town will be having their picnic at Scott's Run this week on the 8th and it begins at 4:00 p.m. She shared that she hopes folks will come out and have a chance to meet their neighbors as they are some of the hardest-working neighbors who are working very hard to make a community more equitable and more fair.

COUNCILOR CRUZE: shared that at the last Main Street meeting that some members of Main Street wanted to thank the City for the recent cleaning of the sidewalks. On August 30, 2019, the Friendship House had an Overdose Memorial ceremony. They had art, music, and spoken words, and it was a really great event. He shared that there were about 75 people in attendance. The Friendship House is doing some good things to partner with the community. He shared that on September 4, 2019, from 7pm to 8pm at 207 Willey Street the Alpha Pi Alphas and the Alpha Zeta Lambdas are hosting their soup and substance event which will include conversations on topics that affect the black community and Delegate Danielle Walker will be their featured speaker. On September 5, 2019, at 6:30pm the library is having a Grandparents Day event with crafts and ice cream and fun times for Grandparents. In correlation with the library the Appalachian Prison Book Project, which is housed out of the Aull Center directly beside the library, connects inmates with books that they may be requesting. He shared that the inmates are always requesting, so if you have any soft copy dictionaries that you would like to donate to the Appalachian Prison Book Project you can take them to the second floor of the Aull Center.

COUNCILOR SELIN: shared that on the fourth of September Wednesday evening from 6:30pm to 7:30pm, the Evansdale Neighborhood Association will meet, and they meet in the lobby of Percival Hall. Also, we just had the Suncrest Neighborhood Association meeting and that was very interesting. We talked a lot about issues such as the need for a crosswalk in front of the middle school now that the sidewalks are in. There was interest in finishing work on the Krepps and Baldwin sidewalks and the City has been very responsive when called upon. There was also interest on the street signs being put back up and the roundabout. She stated that one thing that everyone needs to know is that Baldwin will remain a two-way. There was a request about street cleaning, and she believes that people are not aware that the streets are being cleaned in the middle of the night or during the day. She would love to see advance notice of scheduled street cleaning so that people can move cars and prepare. Notice right afterwards would be fine too. Another street she would like to see clean is Mon Boulevard/Beechurst between Advanced Auto and Evansdale campus as there is a lot of dirt that comes off the Hillside and it is an entrance to town and an exit out of town. She reiterated that people are welcome to come when this committee meets this Friday in Council Chambers to talk about the elements that are going to go into the contract with MUB regarding route 3. If people want to have input, please attend or send your written comments to her or to the City.

COUNCILOR DULANEY: shared that the Woodburn School Redevelopment Commission met last week. A few things are in the works that are exciting. The lower parking lot was recently paved. The Commission understands that the City is reviewing a second set of bids for the ADA improvements and those include a common entry, an elevator, and accessible toilet rooms. The Commission wants to continue to encourage the City to address fully the maintenance issues brought to its attention by the upper level 10, especially which is Pop Shop. Council may recall that there was a water infiltration problem through the top of the Northwest exterior wall, and that was addressed back in February of 2018. Unfortunately, the crumbling and falling has caused plaster damage along that wall and it has not yet been addressed. As a reminder, these are spaces that are occupied by Pop Shop daily. He shared that after the meeting they toured through the facility and there was noticeable leakage on the Southwest exterior wall. It is similarly leaking and damaging the interior plaster. He noted that the Southwest wall is in dire need of attention at this point and with winter coming, which is only going to exacerbate the water infiltration with the freezing and thawing, it be great to go ahead and take care of those problems especially now that school sessions are back in.

COUNCILOR HARSHBARGER: shared regarding the homeless that he was in Detroit this past weekend and one of the things that Detroit has started to do is build tiny homes to do a rent-to-own program with them. He noted that they are typically 250 to 400 square feet and on a 10x30x100-foot lot approximately. They are building something like a mini community within the community. He stated that this was an interesting approach. The 6th Ward will be having the Norwood and Jerome park annual picnic this Saturday from 4pm to 7pm, and in South Hills the picnic is on Sunday from 4pm to 7pm. There is a washout issue where the new Suncrest Elementary School's sewer line runs down to the rail trail. The sand has escaped, and it has come all down to the trail and it has completely encased a culvert. He shared that the Department of Environmental Protection is scheduled to investigate on Wednesday, September 4, 2019. As well, he is being asked a lot about White Avenue if we know when that work will be done as for many of the residents in South Hills when there's snow on the ground that's the least treacherous way to get off the hill.

COUNCILOR WENDELL: Provided the following.

“In the last two weeks, I attended meetings of MUB, the Urban Landscape Commission and BOPARC about the proposed pipeline. I was not entirely convinced of the need to go through the park, although all three groups voted for MUB's proposal, if certain conditions are met. MUB has expressed a willingness to adopt proposals from Mon County Greenspace Coalition, and that's good.

I visited with Working Families Party Thursday evening, not an actual political party but the local branch of a national group that advocates for more progressive policies and endorses candidates. They endorsed me in the last election. I left early to attend the Suncrest Neighborhood meeting, where there were questions about traffic, parking and the proposed roundabout at Collins Ferry and University Avenues.

This past weekend, I had lunch with President Gee at his home before the football game. I didn't go to the game because Rabbi Joe married a couple at Stonewall Resort in Lewis County Sunday, and they asked us to be at the rehearsal and dinner Saturday night. I had never been to Stonewall before, and it is a beautiful place, with a helpful and friendly staff. The couple lives in Morgantown, but their families and friends are from all over the United States and Canada, and West Virginia showed its best face to our visitors.

Mountaineers for Progress sponsored a picnic at our lovely Marilla Park in beautiful weather yesterday. Today I met with the Greater Morgantown Interfaith Association to plan events for the coming year.

The catalog is out for Osher Life-Long Learning at WVU. The term starts late September. I will be teaching a class about popular music in 1967.

I saw two threads on Facebook, one from people who don't like the City Council, and one from people who do. Both threads were about downtown: about stores closing, people accosting others and openly using drugs, and leaving syringes in our parks and on our streets. One group blamed City Council and one blamed property owners. I've traveled a lot, and the problem of vacant store fronts is common in cities throughout our region, and even tiny Kingwood, according to today's Dominion-Post, has a problem with drug abuse, squatters and litter. We are not unique, and it's not helpful to blame either us on Council or downtown property owners. We need to work together, without assigning blame, to make our downtown safer and to confront the drug use in our community.

Nationally, I've called our Congressional representative and Senators several times in the last two weeks: to complain that children are being kept apart from their parents and are not being vaccinated against contagious diseases, and to wonder if our representatives thought it was okay that our President said that Jews were "disloyal" if they did not support him. I also wondered if they agreed that children of our military born abroad should not automatically have United States citizenship. I did not get an answer from them on these issues.

I fear for our city and state, our country, and the world in general."

MAYOR KAWECKI: shared regarding Grandparents Day that all Grandparents out there who need an ice cream fix to celebrate at the library on September 5, 2019, at 6:30pm. There is a Friday Family Walk at the Botanic Gardens and that's no cost at all. Also to learn all about the locks on the Morgantown Lock and Dam on Saturday, September 7, 2019, from 10am to 2pm, take a chance to experience the Locking process close up and learn how to navigate our River safely, talk to operators and kayakers, and meet Bobby the Water Safety dog. He noted that there is an Audubon walk that same day at the Botanic Gardens. The Botanic Gardens has several things to do with birding and bird walks in particular. He suggested to visit their site and look at all the things there are to do. If you're interested in Old Time dance, on September 14th at the Marilla Center for only five dollars you can have a good time with good exercise.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, motion by Wendell, second by Dulaney, to adjourn the meeting.
Time: 9:03 p.m.


City Clerk


Mayor

*** ALL COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE ON DVD IN THE CITY CLERKS OFFICE***