

City of Morgantown
389 Spruce Street, Morgantown, WV 26505

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
October 19, 2021

Regular Meeting: October 19, 2021: The regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Morgantown was held in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, October 19, 2021, at 7:16pm.

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.

Morgantown Cub Scout Pack 60 lead the pledge. Participating was Cubmaster Bill Hunt and cub scouts Sammy Setley, Alastair Trusler, Austin Randolph, and Austin Nicola.

Approval of Minutes: October 5, 2021, Special Meeting minutes and October 5, 2021, Regular Meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

Correspondence: Mayor Selin presented a proclamation proclaiming Monday, November 1, 2021, as Extra Mile Day in the City of Morgantown. Mayor Selin read a personal statement from Human Rights Commission Chair Ash Orr regarding the Conversion Therapy.

Public Hearing: An Ordinance amending article 153 governing the Human Rights Commission to prohibit Conversion Therapy:

Mayor Selin declared the Public Portion open.

Barry Wendell, 1319 Heritage Place, spoke in favor of the ordinance.

Andrew Schneider, Fairness WV, spoke in favor of the ordinance.

Mollie Kennedy, spoke in favor of the ordinance.

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

Unfinished Business:

An Ordinance amending article 153 governing the Human Rights Commission to prohibit Conversion Therapy: The below entitled Ordinance was presented for second reading. *(First reading 10/5/2021)*

An Ordinance amending article 153 governing the Human Rights Commission to prohibit Conversion Therapy

Motion by Councilor Vega, second by Deputy Mayor Trumble, to approve the above-entitled Ordinance. Motion carried 7-0.

Boards & Commissions:

Motion by Councilor Vega, to appoint, by consensus, Charlie Byrer to the Traffic Commission as the 3rd Ward representative for term 4/4/2021 – 4/3/2024.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Trumble, second by Councilor Harshbarger, to appoint Cal Shamberger to the BOPARC Commission for term

Public Portion:

Mayor Selin declared the Public Portion open.

Barry Wendell, 1319 Heritage Place, requested that the meetings be virtual due to COVID spikes.

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

Special Committee Reports:

Civilian Police Review & Advisory Board – Mayor Selin announced that applications are being accepted and can be found on the city’s website and in person at the City Clerk’s office. A small group is meeting monthly to discuss applicants and recruitment. She also encouraged folks to apply.

Special Committee on Unsheltered Homelessness – Members: Mayor Selin, Deputy Mayor Trumble, Councilor Vega, Councilor Harshbarger, and Councilor Butcher. The next meeting is on October 28, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Consent Agenda: None

New Business:

Consideration of Approval of A Resolution approving an agreement with the West Virginia Department of Highways US 19 (Beechurst Avenue) and Campus Drive Sidewalk Monongalia County: The above-entitled Resolution was presented for approval.

City Manager Kim Haws explained. Assistant City Manager explained. After discussion, motion by Councilor Harshbarger, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Resolution. Motion carried 7-0.

Consideration of Approval of A Resolution approving an agreement with the West Virginia Department of Highways Beechurst Avenue Corridor Improvement Monongalia County: The above-entitled Resolution was presented for approval.

Assistant City Manager Emily Muzzarelli explained. City Attorney Ryan Simonton explained. Motion by Councilor Butcher, second by Councilor Harshbarger to approve the above-entitled Resolution. Motion carried 7-0.

City Manager’s Report: shared information related to the ARPA meetings stating that committees have been organized and composition of those committees is ongoing to include the community. Some expenditures will be distributed as early as November. He stated that there will be a meeting Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at the Mainstreet Morgantown office to discuss visions and tools for downtown revitalization. The strategic priorities survey will be distributed to Council soon, and he is requesting to hold a Council retreat on November 17, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Report from City Clerk: shared city support of Breast Cancer Awareness month, the upcoming United Way Campaign, and the Board and Commission Orientation scheduled for Monday, October 25, 2021.

Report from City Attorney: shared regarding the discussion of the resolutions approving the agreements with the Division of Highways that they should have forthcoming an ordinance proposing annulment of a portion of the existing Campus Drive right of way and addition of new territory possibly at the November Committee of the whole. The traffic-related and street-related ordinances should be on track to go through the review by the commissions during the month of November since they weren't on those meetings in October and hopefully be presented to council on the same timeline, or at least be delivered with comments. The state legislature is in special session now. They are mostly doing appropriations and required redistricting, but have several legislative efforts underway as well. City Attorney Simonton advised that they are taking up legislation regarding Board of Health rules and approvals and that's when our Health and Wellness Commission and Council had questions about rulemaking relating to the forthcoming intermediate Appellate Court, which will be established as of July 1st next year. There is a bill that is still pending in the Senate Rules Committee regarding provisions of exemptions for any vaccination requirements for covid-19 for employers as drafted currently would require employers to provide exemptions for disabilities as well as employee certified religious exemptions.

Report from Council Members:

Deputy Mayor Trumble: wished Morgantown a belated Happy Birthday as October 17th was Morgantown’s birthday. She shared that they had a good cleanup in the downtown district last night. They painted, scrubbed, and picked up trash. The Fifth Ward is still looking for a traffic commissioner. She reminded folks that she will be moderating the discussion on services and promotional events in the downtown area on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 6 p.m. at the Main Street Morgantown office located at 201 High Street. Deputy Mayor Trumble invited everyone to attend and give their thoughts on our downtown district.

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Councilor Harshbarger: shared that in the sixth ward the South Hills Neighborhood Association will meet for the first time since covid. The meeting will be Wednesday, October 27, 2021, under the Marilla Pavilion from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., and everyone is invited. He stated that in response to the City Manager's request for high priority items that perhaps a better understanding of the paving schedule, and if there is a need how are streets prioritized against less traffic as he hears this from his constituents. He is excited about the BOPARC upgrades and Marilla plans.

Councilor Butcher: shared that this Saturday, October 23, 2021, the Morgantown Pride will be having their block party and there is a lot of things planned such as food vendors and activities for kids. Gritstone has committed to bringing some games for the kids to play and it will be a lot of fun. The event will be at the Farmers Market from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. He shared that the WVU libraries has started their Food Justice in Appalachia exhibit. Folks can visit the exhibit online at <https://foodjusticeexhibit.wvu.edu> to get some background and history on food insecurity and providing food justice throughout Appalachia.

Mayor Selin: thanked Clerk Wade for bringing in the Cub Scouts as it was a nice addition to the meeting. She shared that she participated with the representatives of student government on a safety walk on the Evansdale campus. They had a good walk, had lots of interesting things to say, and they noticed things like where the MUB storm drop top was loose and then larger things like lighting and sidewalks. She appreciates all the work being done by BOPARC particularly planning and looking forward to renovating the ice rink, as well as Marilla pool and other amenities in Marilla Park. They are now contracting for an action sports park upgrade that would include items for both boarders, bikes, and everything with wheels. She went to a small piece of the studio tour this past weekend and it was excellent. She looks forward to all the planning, both from our planning department and the MPO and BOPARC.

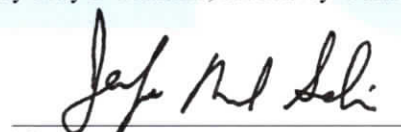
Councilor Abu-Ghannam: shared that the Arbor Day celebration was rained out this past weekend but was postponed to October 25, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. at Krepps Park and everyone is invited to come plant a tree. The First Ward meeting will be inside the Mtec School and out of the cold weather. He thanked City Manager Haws for addressing some concerns they had over on Madigan Avenue.

Councilor Kawecki: shared that he participated with the municipal league in their legislative committee and they had a letter that they had sent to Senator Manchin advocating for what the various cities would like to see and that the senator should pay attention to. Councilor Kawecki stated that is not unusual in cities, they were more infrastructure focused than more concerned with the idea of providing good water and sanitation. They suggested that the Senator should give consideration to a more social program. He would appreciate hearing everyone's comments on this. They will be moving their South Park Association of Neighbor meetings indoors because of the lack of daylight, and that will more than likely happen for their next meeting.

Councilor Vega: thanked RISE WVU for inviting her to their interactive panel stating that it was exciting to get to hear folks' opinion not only about what is happening in the University, but what their opinions are in the city. She hopes they can create more bridges with the university students and with the city. She shared that the Wiles Hill Neighborhood Association meeting is Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 7 p.m. and it's in the park near the Gazebo across from the Senior Center. Councilor Vega hopes to see folks there. On Saturday, October 23, 2021, there is a kids fall fun event with games and kittens at Jack Roberts Park, from 3 to 6 p.m. She shared that if your child likes kittens and they want some fall fun to be sure to attend. The Morgantown Pride annual block party is scheduled for Saturday, October 20, 2021, and there will be organizations there and student groups. She invited everyone to attend to see some of the things that are happening around our community, and to wear your mask.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, motion by Deputy Mayor Trumble, second by Councilor Vega, to adjourn the meeting. Time: 8:44 p.m.


City Clerk


Mayor