



CITY OF OAK HILL MINUTES

City Council Meeting – January 8, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Oak Hill City Council was held on January 8, 2024, in the Council Chambers at Oak Hill City Hall at 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Mayor Briscoe called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

City Clerk-Treasurer Valerie Vaughn called the roll.

PRESENT

Mayor Charles Briscoe
Council-at-Large Bill Hannabass

Ward 1 Councilmembers

Diana Janney
Roger Evans

Ward 2 Councilmembers

Chris Gill
Carlos (PJ) Elder, Jr.
Charles Smallwood, Jr.

ABSENT

Ward 1 Vacant

ALSO, PRESENT

Damita Johnson, City Manager
Bill File, Attorney
Valerie Vaughn, City Clerk-Treasurer

Invocation

The invocation was led by Reverend Mike Hicks – Jones Avenue Church of God

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Charles Briscoe

Reading and Approval of Minutes

Copies of the minutes from December 11, 2023, were provided to the council.

The Mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as being presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Council-at-Large Bill Hannabass.

No discussion. **The motion carried unanimously. 6-0.**

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the revenue, expenditures, and vendor checks for the month of December 2023 were provided to the Council. The mayor asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Evans. Seconded by Council-at-Large Bill Hannabass.

No Discussion. **The motion carried unanimously. 6-0.**

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

Citizens' Comments

No comments.

Unfinished Business

Mayor Briscoe deviated from the regular order of business going to item #4, with Attorney, Mr. File handling.

4. Consideration of Filling the Vacant Ward One Council Position Vacated by Christa Hodges

Attorney File explained that each councilmember would have the opportunity to nominate one person and the process of voting. It takes four votes to sit as member of council. Councilmember Janney nominated Saundie Smith, Councilmember Evans nominated Ronda Falk, Jay Keenan was nominated by Council-at-Large Hannabass and Councilmember Elder nominated Terry VanBuskirk.

Motion to close nominations was made by Councilmember Elder, seconded by Councilmember Janney.

A vote was taken by the raising of hands four separate times. Saundie Smith received one vote, Ronda Falk received two votes, Terry VanBuskirk received four votes in the final vote. Mayor Briscoe congratulated Mr. VanBuskirk and stated that his swearing in would be at the February meeting.

At this time Mr. VanBuskirk requested to resign from the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Councilmember Janney made motion to accept his resignation from the BZA, seconded by Councilmember Elder. Motion carried 6-0

Council-at-Large Hannabass made the motion to accept him as Councilmember for Ward 1, seconded by Councilmember Elder. Motion carried 6-0

1. City Park Project – Consideration to approve a change order that requires additional funding.

Sam from Thrasher was present to give an update on the park project and progress. He went over change order #6, which hadn't been approved yet. Original approved budget was presented on screen by Tyler Bragg. Other change orders were presented and discussed. There was discussion from Council of where this would be funded from. City Manager commented that this funded from ARPA.

A motion was made by Councilmember Gill to approve the additional funding, seconded by Councilmember Janney. Motion carried 6-0.

2. Planning Commission Land Classification Recommendation Change – 2nd Reading

- a. The request was approved by a 5-0 vote to move 218 Duncan Avenue from R1 to an R2, to allow the possibility of a level 2 Home Based Business for dog grooming.**

Councilmember Gill made the motion to approve the request to move 218 Duncan from R1 to an R2, seconded by Councilmember Janney. Motion carried 6-0.

3. Consideration to Appoint Members of Boards, Commissions, Committees

a. Planning Commission

Motion was made by Councilmember Gill to appoint Saundie Smith for Planning Commission, seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass. Motion carried 6-0.

b. Building Commission

Motion was made by Council-at-Large Hannabass to appoint Grant Campbell to the Building Commission, seconded by Councilmember Janney. Motion carried 6-0.

c. Board of Zoning Appeals

There are currently three vacant seats for the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Motion was made by Council-at-Large Hannabass to appoint Jack McClung to the Board of Zoning Appeals, seconded by Councilmember Elder. Motion carried 6-0.

Council-at-Large Hannabass made the motion to reappoint Adam Hodges to the Board of Zoning Appeals, seconded by Councilmember Elder. Motion carried 6-0.

Councilmember Janney made a motion to table the appointment of the third vacant seat until a later time. Motion was seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass. Motion carried 6-0.

d. Amphitheater Commission

Councilmember Gill made a motion to appoint Catherine Merritt to the Amphitheater Commission, seconded by Councilmember Janney. Motion carried 6-0.

e. Beautification Commission

Motion was made by Councilmember Gill to appoint Nico DiPietro to the Beautification Commission, seconded by Councilmember Elder. Motion carried 6-0.

New Business

5. Letter of Support for Traffic Regulation on Rt. 61

Delegate Pritt spoke on the problem of traffic regulations on Rt. 61 along with a presentation of slides showing accidents, traffic delays, etc. caused by the tractor trailer trucks travelling Rt. 61.

He explained that Department of Highways requires legislative action for action to be taken. *Councilmember Janney made a motion to supply a letter of support, seconded by Councilmember Gill. Motion carried 6-0.*

6. Review and possible updating of rules of the meeting procedure that would comply with the West Virginia Ethics Open Act, City Charter, and the Constitution of the United States of America.

Council-at-Large Hannabass motioned to table this matter until council had attended the WV Municipal League, Councilmember Janney seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

7. Oak Hill Police Hiring

Chief Whisman presented the recommendation to hire Daniel Ooten for one of the three vacant positions on the police force. *Motion was made by Councilmember Elder to hire Daniel Ooten, seconded by Councilmember Evans. Motion carried 6-0.*

8. Request for authorization to advertise for bids to demolish properties.

The City Manager informed council that these were properties to be demolished under the REAP program. Pictures were presented of five properties:

146 Minden Tipple Road	Oakville School (Harlem Heights)
217 Main Street (portion in back)	76 Arthur Street
229 Minden Road	

Motion was made by Councilmember Gill, seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass to authorize the City Manager to advertise for bids to demolish these properties. Motion carried 6-0.

9. Create and Appoint Members for an Appeal Board for Building Inspections

The City Manager discussed the reason for the need of an Appeal Board for Building Inspections and made the recommendation to appoint John Tuggle and Terry Dameron to this Board. *Motion was made by Council-at-Large Hannabass, seconded by Charles Smallwood to appoint John Tuggle and Terry Dameron. Motion carried 6-0.*

10. Consideration to direct the Planning Commission to develop a systematic zoning plan.

After some discussion Council-at-Large Hannabass motioned to request the Planning Commission to develop a systematic zoning plan, seconded by Councilmember Evans. Motion carried 6-0.

11. Consider request from SALS to write a letter of support for the Youthbuild program.

There were several questions from council on what this exactly pertained to. *Council-at-Large Hannabass made a motion to approve the letter of support for the Youthbuild program, seconded by Councilmember Janney. Motion carried 6-0.*

12. Fire Department Discussion on funding strategies

Council-at-Large Hannabass made a motion to task Chief Richardson, Clerk Vaughn and City Manager Johnson to investigate alternative funding sources for the Oak Hill Fire Department for the possible scenario that the Fire Levy fails to pass. And/or there is a better funding mechanism more reasonable and reliable for the citizens of Oak Hill. Councilmember Gill seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

13. Request to change February 12th meeting date.

The City Manager pointed out that the WV Municipal League Conference coincides with the February council meeting. *Councilmember Gill made the motion to change the council meeting to February 19th, seconded by Councilmember Janney. Motion carried 6-0.*

Department Reports

Police Report

Fire Dept. Report

City Manager Report – City Manager spoke on MS4, to not allow your leaves to go into the stormdrains causing the drains to become stopped up.

Director of Economic Development – Alison Ibarra and Rachel shared updates on the Oak Hill Business Owners Association. Alison shared her report thru the Sharefile drive to Council.

Motion made by Councilmember Gill to accept the department reports. Seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass. The motion carried 6-0.

Council and Mayor Comments

The mayor polled the council members, and the following items were discussed.

Councilmember Hannabass .

Councilmember Gill – Spoke on the city's website and how we could do better.

Councilmember Smallwood

Councilmember Janney

Councilmember Evans

Councilmember Elder

Mayor Briscoe - recognized former Mayor, Fred Nuedek, who was attendance of the meeting. Mayor Briscoe also thanked Sam Stalnaker and the WV DEP who made a generous donation of litter grabbers and garbage bags to help pick up litter.

Future Agenda Items

Announcements

There was no further business. The mayor adjourned the meeting.



Valerie Vaughn, City Clerk-Treasurer



Charles Briscoe, Mayor