



CITY OF OAK HILL MINUTES

City Council Meeting – December 11, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Oak Hill City Council was held on December 11, 2023, in the Council Chambers at Oak Hill City Hall at 5:30 p.m.

Call to Order

Mayor Briscoe called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

City Clerk 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 - Vacancy

Bill File, Attorney

ALSO, PRESENT

Damita Johnson, City Manager

Valerie Vaughn, City Clerk

Invocation

The invocation was led by Paster Greg Hurley

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Tyler Bragg

Reading and Approval of Minutes

Copies of the minutes from November 6, 2023, were provided to the council.

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

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

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

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the revenue, expenditures, and vendor checks for the month of November 2023 were provided to the Council. The mayor asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.
Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Councilmember Evans.
No Discussion. **The motion carried unanimously. 6-0.**

Correspondence

Correspondence received was uploaded to the OneDrive for Council
Mayor received Christmas Greeting from the Capito Family, Visit Southern West Virginia, & E.L. Robinson Engineering

Memorial Bench Decorating Contest

The Chairman of the Beautification Committee, Jason Gill presented the award for the Memorial Bench Decorating Contest to the Glenna Stone Family. Receiving the award was Debbie Holly & John Whitmore.

Christmas Parade Awards

Committee members Jacqueline Gill & Debra Davis presented the awards to:
3rd Place - Packs Branch Baptist Church
2nd Place – PMC Employee Activity Committee
1st Place – Campbell Tile
Judges Choice- New River Intermediate Student Council

Citizens' Comments

Nico Dipietro- Ask about how Hotel Motel Funds can be applied towards Tourism & Recreation.

Unfinished Business

1. Consideration to Appoint Members of Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Planning Commission – Aaron Kemlock

The City Manager spoke with Aaron Kemlock, and he agreed to serve on the Planning Commission if approved by the Council. Councilmember Hannabass moved to appoint Aaron Kemlock that it be opened for discussion. Councilmember Janney seconded it. Councilmember Hannabass voiced his concern about Aaron Kemlock's job could possibly be a conflict with Zoning in the City. **Motion was opposed 6-0. Motion did not carry.**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hannabass to table this until January so the City Manager can speak with Aaron Kemlock and receive clarification and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Janney. **Motion carried unanimously. 6-0.**

Structural Inspection Board- Terrance Damron

The City Manager Damita Johnson stated that Councilmember Smallwood recommended Terrance Damron. Councilmember Janney made a motion to appoint Terrance Damron to the Structural Inspection Board. Councilmember Smallwood seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

Building Commission

City Manager Damita Johnson did not have a recommendation for the Building Commission. Motion was made by Councilmember Janney to table an appointment to the Building Commission until the next meeting. Councilmember Evans seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

Amphitheater Committee- Saundie Smith

Mayor Brisco asked for a motion to accept Saundie Smith to the Amphitheater Committee. Councilmember Elder made a motion to accept Saundie Smith to the Amphitheater Committee. Councilmember Janney seconded the motion. **Motion Carried unanimously 6-0.**

Board of Zoning Appeals – Terms of Adam Hodges and Charles Flint expire January 1, 2024. Councilmember Hannabass made a motion to table the selection until the City Manager has a chance to speak with current members of the Board of Zoning Appeals on reappointments and suggestions. Councilmember Janney seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

2. Discussion on Future plans of the Former BB&T Building

Councilmember Hannabass discussed that there has been interest in the BB&T Building and that the property must be auctioned. Councilmember Hannabass made a motion for the City Manager to move forward and that the City Manager keep the Council informed if there is a potential buyer. Councilmember Elder seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

3. Hazard Mitigation Grant – Choose Appraiser for Minden Properties

1- Rick Goodall

2- Zaf Appraisals

Both Appraisers proposed price was \$650.00 per residential property. The City Manager recommended Rick Goodall who is local and has a city license. Councilmember Janney made a motion to that Rick Goodall be the Appraiser for the Minden Properties. Councilmember Evans seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

4. Consideration for Funding for Southern Appalachian Labor School (SALS) Located at 140 School Street.

Joe Webb & John David appealed the decision from the October meeting requesting \$10,000 funding for the roof at the Southern Appalachian Labor School.

Councilmember Gill entertained a motion to deny funding request indefinitely, with no stipulations or agreements to be met to obtain funding, for the \$10,000 dollars requested for roof repair, to Dr. John David, Volunteer Director, of Southern Appalachian Labor School, to the Southern

Appalachian Labor School also known as SALS, the Historic Oak Hill School, or any other names and organizations affiliated with the location at 140 School Street, Oak Hill WV. Councilmember Elder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 5-1 with Councilmember Janney opposed.**

After voting it was discussed by Councilmember Smallwood why there was a vote when it was on the agenda in November. Mayor Briscoe explained that he had told Dr. John David he could be on the agenda again in December. Once again Councilmember Gill entertained a motion to deny funding request indefinitely, with no stipulations or agreements to be met to obtain funding, for the \$10,000 dollars requested for roof repair, to Dr. John David, Volunteer Director, of Southern Appalachian Labor School, to the Southern Appalachian Labor School also known as SALS, the Historic Oak Hill School, or any other names and organizations affiliated with the location at 140 School Street, Oak Hill WV. Councilmember Elder seconded the motion. **With a show of hands motion carried 4-2 with Councilmember Janney and Councilmember Smallwood opposing.**

New Business

5. Planning Commission Land Classification Recommendation Change- 1st 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 Hannabass moved that council honor the recommendation of the Planning Commission to change 218 Duncan Avenue from R1 to R2. Councilmember Gill seconded the motion. Councilmember Gill discussed the Planning Commission meeting and discussed seeing multiple discrepancies in zoning in the city and suggested that Council recommends the Planning Commission to look at the zoning of the City of Oak Hill for reorganization of the zones. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0**

- 6. Consideration of an Ordinance to Restrict Vape Shops-** Alison Ibarra suggested that Councilmembers should be involved in crafting an ordinance that meets the objectives. Councilmember Hannabass advised this must come from the Planning Commission as a recommendation to council. Councilmember Hannabass moved that the consideration of an Ordinance to Restrict Vape Shops be moved back to the Planning Commission for a recommendation back to council. Councilmember Gill seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

- 7. Minden Park Survey-** The City Manager discussed the questions for the survey and how the survey can be filled out and requested any suggestions for the survey. The survey will be mailed to the Minden residents. There will also be an online option for filling out the survey. Councilmember Hannabass moved to approve the Minden Park Public Survey. Councilmember Janney seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0.**

- 8. Consideration of Filling the Vacant Ward I Council Position Vacated by Christa Hodges-** Councilmember Gill moved that this be tabled, keep current resumes on file and advertise for anyone in the Ward 1 area that maybe interested in serving on council. Councilmember Smallwood seconded the motion. **Motion carried unanimously 6-0**

Department Reports

Police Report

Fire Dept. Report

Code Enforcement Report

City Manager Report

Director of Economic Development

Motion made by Councilmember Hannabass to accept the department reports. Seconded by Councilmember Janney. **The motion carried unanimously. 6-0.**

MS4 Report by City Manager Damita Johnson- Discussed about coming up with a plan to control the candy being thrown during a parade and that there was a litter pick up afterwards along with the street sweeper.

Council and Mayor Comments

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

Councilmember Hannabass –Wanted to thank and appreciate a lot of people involved in the Christmas parade, the lights on the White Oak Rail Trail, the Christmas decorations throughout the City that was put up by the Street Department, thanked Tyler Bragg for the GIS training and Damita Johnson for the Financial Statements training. Also mention the Fire Departments Christmas Dinner that some members attended.

Mentioned that Aubrey Allen had his 100th birthday this month and lastly complimented Officer Wilshire for handling a family situation professionally and received three different calls from family members about how professionally Officer Wilshire was and thanked Chief Whisman.

Councilmember Hannabass also wanted a future agenda item to review and possible update rules of the meeting procedure that would comply with the West Virginia Ethics Open Meetings Act, City Charter and the Constitution of the United States of American. Possibly naming a committee.

Councilmember Smallwood- Asked about the Spirit of Oak Hill Award and that he turned in two names in October. City Manager Damita Johnson advised she had put that in her City Managers Report that the Spirit of Oak Hill Committee met, and they would like to start in 2024 they would like to award that every quarter. So, they will have the first award in March of 2024. The two nominated will be held until then along with advertising on the web site and social media for more entries. The committee will meet in February to select and award it in March.

Also asked about the correspondence on the Virginia Street sidewalk. City Manager Damita Johnson still hasn't heard from the State yet and is going to ask the Power Company if they are willing to move the poles from the sidewalks. Also asked about the City's involvement with the property behind Kroger. City Manager Damita Johnson advised that the NRGRDA group has backed out of the development a little, but Alison is working with that. Councilmember Smallwood asked why the minutes are not on the web site since 2019 from committee meetings. City Manager Damita Johnson advised that it was because of COVID and no

committees were meeting. Councilmember Smallwood advised there were other comments on the BB&T building about other issues such as abandon houses. Councilmember Smallwood asked about the Veterans Memorial, and he was advised the committee has not met yet.

Mayor Charles Briscoe- Thanked the Oak Hill Fire Department for the wonderful Christmas dinner and congratulated the fireman that won awards that night. Thanked everyone that participated in the events this past weekend it was a great turnout and a nice clean up afterwards.

Councilmember Gill- No comments

Councilmember Janney – No comments

Councilmember Evans- No comments

Councilmember Elder- No comments

Future Agenda Items

Review and possible updating rules of the meeting procedure that would comply with the West Virginia Open Meetings Act.

Announcements

No announcements

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



Valerie Vaughn, City Clerk-Treasurer



Charles Briscoe, Mayor