CITY OF OAK HILL
MINUTES

City Council Meeting – July 10, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Oak Hill City Council was held on July 10, 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 at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call
City Clerk Ronda Falk called the roll; a quorum was present.

PRESENT	ALSO PRESENT
Mayor Charles Briscoe	City Manager Damita Johnson
Council-at-Large Bill Hannabass	Attorney Bill File
Ward 1 Councilmembers	City Clerk Ronda Falk
Diana Janney	
Roger Evans	
Christa Hodges (Via Zoom)	
Ward 2 Councilmembers	
Chris Gill	
Carlos (PJ) Elder, Jr.	
Charles Smallwood, Jr.	

Invocation
The invocation was administered by Rev. Charles Blackmon, First Baptist Church, Harlem Heights.

Pledge of Allegiance
Councilmember Janney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reading and Approval of Minutes
Copies of the minutes from June 12, 2023, and the Special meetings on June 21, 22, 23, and 28th were provided to the council by ShareFile.

Motion- ***Dispense with the reading of the minutes; amend and approve the minutes. Amendment: Strike a former member of council's statement that is at the end of the minutes of June 12, 2023.***
Motion made by Council-at-Large Hannabass. Seconded by Councilmember Janney.
No Discussion.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the revenue, expenditures, and vendor checks were provided to the Council for the month of June by ShareFile.

Motion- ***Accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.***
Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Councilmember Gill.
No Discussion.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

Correspondence

No correspondence was received.

Citizens' Comments

Former Councilmember Steve Hayslette inquired on the status of the Minden Park deeds. As a former member of council, he requested to sit down with the mayor and discuss plans for the Minden parks and flood plain mitigation that will help move Minden forward. Hayslette invited everyone to the 100th Anniversary celebration of the Minden Missionary Baptist Church on July 16, at 11 a.m.
Jim Ayers acknowledged the Municipal Election has generated a new mayor and three new council members. He expressed hope for the city to work together, promote the city, and move in the right direction.
James Birt, a member of the HubCAP Core Team suggested the possibility of using the former BB&T Bank building to open a Southern West Virginia Heritage Museum and pursue preservation grant money. He invited the council to put a committee together to develop project ideas and get the community's support behind them. As President and CEO of Housed-Up Inc., he explained his proposal of a planning grant to build a single room occupancy housing project that is designed to move participants from homeless to housing. He requested a letter of support to help with planning and implementation grants for the project.

Unfinished Business

1. **Consideration to Enter a Contract for the Municipal Building Renovations with Dan Hill Construction**

   The City Manager informed the new council that the bids were opened at the council meeting on June 12, 2023, and Dan Hill Construction was the low bidder. However, the city has not entered into a contract with the low bidder. The city manager was waiting for the council's decision on whether to proceed with the project.
   Dan Hill emphasized he appreciated the council's consideration and remarked he understood some individuals are against renovating the building. He added that he worked hard to get the bid and the renovations will not get any cheaper due to the economy, inflation, labor, materials, and supply issues. The bid is good for sixty days.

   Motion – ***Table and discuss and explore other options for the municipal building.***
   Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Councilmember Gill.
   Discussion: The previous Council voted to award the contract to Dan Hill Construction at the regular

Council meeting on June 12, 2023. Attorney File recommended the council move quickly because it has been acted upon; he suggested placing the item on the next agenda if the council decided not to go forward with the contract.

Motion carried. 6-1.

Voting Yea: Council Member Janney, Council Member Evans, Council Member Hodges, Council-at -Large Hannabass, Council Member Gill, and Council Member Elder.

Voting Nay: Council Member Smallwood, Jr.

2. Planning Commission Recommendation to Approve the Rezoning to B-2 to Allow the Existing Building to be Torn Down and Moved Over and a New Station and Subway be Build – 2nd Reading

Timothy Ball, the owner of the Oak Hill Shell Gas Station located at 1525 East Main Street requested a change in Land Classification from Resident District R-2, to General Business District B-2 on a part of lots located behind 219 Mahan Street. He plans to rebuild a gas station and a Subway.

Motion – ***Accept this as the 2nd Reading and adoption to rezone the lots as B-2 to allow the existing building to be torn down and moved.***

Motion made by Council-at-Large Hannabass. Seconded by Councilmember Elder.

Discussion: There was a short discussion on the notification of the surrounding property owners.

The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

3. Consideration to Adopt the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code – 2nd Reading

The City Manager advised the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) will assist the city in the removal of dilapidated structures much easier. Building Inspector and Flood Plain Manager Ben Love explained he was certified to inspect houses and condemn buildings under the IPMC. He further explained the IPMC provides the regulation and safe use of existing structures on the interest of the social and economic welfare of the community.

Motion – ***Accept this as the 2nd Reading and adoption of the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code.***

Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Councilmember Smallwood, Jr.

No discussion.

The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

4. Consideration of the Hiring Process for the City of Oak Hill Prosecuting Attorney

Upon the resignation of Prosecuting Attorney Brian Parsons, the City Manager received resumes from two qualified attorneys. City Manager Johnson inquired if the Council would like to interview the two individuals or advertise for more applicants.

Motion – ***Advertise on social media for a short period of time.***

Motion made by Councilmember Hodges. Seconded by Councilmember Elder, Jr.

Discussion: 1) The council discussed the probability of attracting more applicants by advertising. 2) A motion was made at the last council meeting to advertise the position and a committee was appointed to review the applicants and make a recommendation to the Council. But the position has not been advertised. Attorney File recommended a motion to rescind the action would need to be on the agenda if the council decided against advertising the position. 3) According to the West Virginia Judicial Ethics Committee, if an attorney accepts the position, he/she would not be able

to represent any defendants in the state. However, an attorney can request to be removed from the list of court appointments if the applicant is chosen. 4) a recommendation was made to get someone on board quickly because a few cases have been delayed.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

Motion – The mayor appoint Chief Whisman or his Deputy Chief, Attorney File, and City Manager Johnson to serve on the Prosecuting Attorney Review Committee.
Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass.
Discussion: The council assessed and acknowledged some of the committee members appointed during the June council meeting was no longer on the Council.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

New Business

5. Bid Opening for Paving of the Following Streets: Washington Ave., Summerlee Ave., 2nd Street, Sidney St., and Brentwood Place

Two bids were received from the Mandatory Pre-bid Conference held at 10:00 a.m. on June 27, 2023, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The City Manager opened the sealed bids.

AAA Paving and Sealing, Inc., PO Box 975 Princeton, WV 24740 Bid: $132,275.00
Southern WV Paving, Inc., PO Box 7305 Beckley, WV 25802 Bid: $139,000.00.

Motion – *Award the bid to AAA Paving and Sealing, Inc. pending the Public Works Director and the City Manager's review.*
Motion made by Council-at-Large Hannabass. Seconded by Councilmember Gill.
Discussion: The City Manager requested the Public Works Director review the low bid to confirm the specifications have been met. GIS Coordinator Tyler Bragg displayed the city streets paving projects that have been paved beginning with year 2020.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

6. Re-appointments for the Following Administration: City Manager-D. Johnson, City Treasurer-V. Vaughn, City Clerk-R. Falk, City Judge-W. Toney, and Chief of Police-M. Whisman.

Motion – *Re-appoint the following individuals to their respective positions:*
City Manager, Damita Johnson
City Treasurer, Valerie Vaughn
City Clerk, Ronda Falk
Oak Hill City Judge, Wilbur Toney
Oak Hill Police Chief, Michael Whisman

Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Councilmember Gill.
No discussion.
T**he motion carried unanimously. 7-0.**

7. Police Hiring

Three months ago the Council approved the hiring of Samuel M. Jasper under the ninety-day emergency plan. The Civil Service Commission is recommending transferring his position to full-time status.

Motion – ***Transfer Samuel M. Jasper to full-time Status.***
Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass.
No Discussion.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

Chief Whisman received a resignation from Officer Kenneth Cullum with an effective date of Friday, July 14, 2023. The Chief of Police in agreement with the Civil Service Commission is recommending the City Council hire Brian Jacob White contingent upon Officer Cullum's leaving on July 14, 2023.

Motion – ***The City of Oak Hill hire Brian Jacob White contingent upon the departure of Officer Cullum.***
Motion made by Council-at-Large Hannabass. Seconded by Councilmember Evans.
Discussion: The Police Department will be fully staffed with the hiring of Office White.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

8. New River Gorge Convention and Visitor Bureau (NRGCVB) Annual Report

Becky Sullivan, Executive Director of the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce and the NRGCVB informed the Council the city contributes 50% of the Hotel Occupancy Tax to the CVB as required by the WV State Code. Ms. Sullivan presented the 2022 annual report which includes a mission statement, visitor center data, Tourism in Fayette County, and marketing campaigns with the Bear Scavenger Hunt Campaign being the most successful.

Motion – ***Accept the annual report as presented.***
Motion made by Councilmember Janney. Seconded by Council-at-Large Hannabass.
No Discussion.
The motion carried unanimously. 7-0.

Department Reports

Police Report
Fire Dept. Report
City Manager Report
Beautification Commission Report
Code Enforcement Report
MS4

The department reports have been provided to the Council by ShareFile. There were no questions concerning the Police, Fire, and City Manager reports. There was a short discussions on the following: 1) the job duties of the Code Enforcement Officer Bill Light and the Building Inspector Ben Love. 2) establishing a Board of Appeals for the City of Oak Hill. 3) all reports are digital and there is no further need to have hard copies. 4) Each council will

receive an iPad. 5) The Council will receive training from Tom Heywood on August 21, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. The training will be in relation to the Council's role, responsibilities, and the Open Meetings Act. 6) Request to review the commissions and committees' that are inactive. 7) Alison Abarra will give oral reports during the Council meetings. 8) The City Manager outlined signs of illicit discharge in the MS4 report. 8) Consideration to move the August meeting date to August 7, 2023.

Council and Mayor Comments

The mayor and each council member expressed their gratitude to the citizens of Oak Hill.

Announcements

The mayor announced the West Virginia 54th Annual Municipal League's Conference will be held at Oglebay Resort in Wheeling, WV on July 31 through August 2, 2023.

There was no further business. The mayor adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:50 p.m.

Ronda Falk, City Clerk

Charles Briscoe, Mayor