

REGULAR COUNCIL SESSION
609 29th Street, Vienna, WV 26105
October 13, 2022
6:00 P.M.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Invocation was given by Bryson Morlan. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Kim Williams.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Vienna City Council met in Regular Session on October 13, 2022. Mayor Rapp called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

ROLL CALL:

Attendance was taken by Mayor Randy Rapp with the following Council members present: Kim Williams, Tom Azinger, Jim Leach, Roger Bibbee (via phone), Chris Mancuso, Recorder Melissa Elam, City Attorney Russell Skogstad, and Mayor Randy Rapp. Absent: None.

Chief Mike Pifer recognized the Family Crisis Intervention Center and the important work they do serving victims of domestic violence.

Mayor read the Proclamation of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Brenda Powell (1409 31st Street): Very concerned still about the feral cat problem. She would like to see grants attained to help care for cats. Concerned about funding and financing for the pool.

Chad Emrick (2806 10th Ave.): Gave insights and helpful questions for dealing with communication and requests for information between liaisons, department heads, and others.

Mike Pifer (VPD): Recognized police officers that have recently received awards. Officers Sheaves and McFee received the Medal of Merit for their quick and effective detainment of an armed suspect at Walmart. The entire department received the award for Top Productive Police Department in the state of West Virginia and Officer Britton was recognized for being the most productive officer in the state. Mayor Rapp also acknowledged that Chief Pifer himself received the Chief Ray Friendly Award at the Chiefs of Police Conference.

Tami Rhodes (4604 6th Ave.): She is concerned about how the vape shop at the corner of 34th Street and Grand Central Ave. was approved. She asked for information on if procedures were followed.

REPORT OF THE MINUTES:

The minutes of the Regular Council Session scheduled on 9/22/2022 have been printed, posted, and circulated. Approved as posted.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER:

Councilman Jim Leach reports that accounts appear to be in order and the city is financially sound.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **PRESENTATION: Lloyd Roberts – Bike and Hike Parkersburg**

Volunteer with Alternative Transportation Council. Trails are great for property values, make cities economically competitive, healthier, and are low cost.

Provided a map of a potential bike trail that would connect Williamstown and Parkersburg.

2. **PRESENTATION: Chief Mike Pifer – Incentives for Hiring Police Officers**

Efforts to recruit police are still not going well with the current incentive plan. He is proposing a \$.35 per year of service incentive up to five years for an already certified officer. He believes it will be a unique way to recruit certified officers. He made clear he is taking the \$10,000 bonus off the table.

Currently we are budgeted for 21 officers and we have 19. One of them has not gone through the academy yet.

Mayor Rapp would like to add the ability to transfer the vacation certified officers have already earned to their service here for Vienna. Chief Pifer likes the idea but just wants to make sure it is fair to the officers currently here.

Councilwoman Williams asked if we could keep the sign on bonus and the new incentive. Chief Pifer thinks it would work for recruiting but again cautioned about fairness to current officers.

Chief Pifer asked for a resolution to be on the next agenda addressing the incentive program.

3. RESOLUTION: Requiring Council Members To Advise Liaisons Regarding Substantive Communications Between Council Members And The Department Head The Liaison Represents

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VIENNA that:

WHEREAS, Council Members who serve as Liaisons to Department Heads are charged with assisting Department Heads in communicating with Council and otherwise facilitate efficient and effective communication concerning the business of governance by City Council, and;

WHEREAS, fulfilling requests for information from City employees, including Department Heads to Council Members, can serve to aid in the performance of the duties of Council Members, but;

WHEREAS, Council Members have no supervisory or administrative authority over any employees of the City of Vienna, including Department Heads, and therefore have no authority to command performance of any specific task or assignment;

Therefore, Council Members who request information from any City employee, including Department Heads, that bears on the business of the City shall communicate that request for information to the City employee and also copy the request to the appropriate Liaison to that City Department. Any affected employee(s), including Department Heads, may refer the request to the Department Liaison or the Mayor to establish a time for performance, if any, or to respond to the request per this Resolution.

Councilman Jim Leach moved to approve the Resolution Requiring Council Members To Advise Liaisons Regarding Substantive Communications Between Council Members And The Department Head The Liaison Represents. Motion seconded by Councilman Roger Bibbee.

Councilwoman Kim Williams said it is not clearly defined. Substantive is subjective. She stated the liaison is not a filter. She feels it is unnecessary.

Mayor Rapp agrees with the time for performance concept because at times the job has to be scheduled.

Councilman Jim Leach believes if our department heads feel burdened they should be able to go to the mayor or the liaison. He believes this process should be formalized.

Recorder Melissa Elam proposed that department heads already have the freedom to contact their liaisons. She isn't sure the resolution fixes anything, or that anything was broken. Stated that we are people and sometimes we need a course correction.

Mayor Rapp is in favor of the resolution. He believes it is a courtesy.

[There was conversation about the property at 34th and Grand Central. Mayor Rapp stated it is grandfathered as a commercial property in a residential zone. He explained that because the owner left the utilities on, it continued to be a business and could not revert to the residential zone. Councilwoman Williams questioned the logistics of how the property was transferred from one owner to the next and if there was an active business license in place. Attorney Skogstad explained that if a commercial landowner just can't find a tenant they are not penalized.]

Councilwoman Williams has no problem copying liaisons but she doesn't believe the liaison should be a barrier. She does not want to engage in a battle.

Recorder Elam said it is easy to regulate the email copying, but phone calls and direct communication can't be copied. If this goes forward this is a challenge that would need addressed.

Councilman Leach moved to table the resolution. Motion seconded by Councilman Roger Bibbee.

Roll call vote taken by Recorder Melissa Elam. Councilwoman Kim Williams, Councilman Tom Azinger, Councilman Jim Leach, Councilman Roger Bibbee, Councilman Chris Mancuso, Recorder Melissa Elam, and Mayor Randy Rapp voting "yes". Vote: 7-0.

