

City of Morgantown
430 Spruce Street, Morgantown, MD 26505

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
May 2, 2023

Regular Meeting: May 2, 2023: The regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Morgantown was held in the Monongalia County Commission Chambers on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at 7:03 pm.

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.

Approval of Minutes: April 18, 2023, Special Meeting minutes were approved by acclamation. April 18, 2023, Regular Meeting minutes will be on the next meeting agenda to be approved.

Correspondence:

Mayor Selin presented a proclamation to City Clerk Christine Wade, proclaiming April 30 – May 6, 2023, as Municipal Clerk’s Week in the City of Morgantown.

Mayor Selin presented a proclamation to Rickie Yeager and Drew Cantis, proclaiming May 2023, as Building Safety Month and Morgantown Preservation Month in the City of Morgantown.

Mayor Selin presented a proclamation, proclaiming May 9 – 20, 2023, as National Police Week in the City of Morgantown.

Public Hearing: None

Unfinished Business: None

Boards & Commissions: None

Public Portion:

Mayor Selin declared the Public Portion open.

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

Special Committee Reports: None

Consent Agenda: None

New Business:

An Ordinance Amending the FY 2022-2023 Annual Budget of the General Fund: The below-entitled Ordinance was presented for first reading.

An Ordinance Amending the FY 2022-2023 Annual Budget of the City of Morgantown as shown in the revised budget attached hereto and made a part of this Ordinance as the same applies to the General Fund

Finance Director Kevin Tennant explained. After discussion. Motion by Councilor Vega, second by Councilor Kawecki, to approve the above-entitled Ordinance to second reading. Motion carried 7-0.

An Ordinance Amending the FY 2022-2023 Annual Budget of the Coal Severance Fund: The below-entitled Ordinance was presented for first reading.

An Ordinance Amending the FY 2022-2023 Annual Budget of the City of Morgantown as shown in the revised budget attached hereto and made a part of this Ordinance as the same applies to the Coal Severance Fund

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Finance Director Kevin Tennant explained. After discussion. Motion by Deputy Mayor Trumble, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Ordinance to second reading. Motion carried 7-0.

An Ordinance Authorizing a Lease Agreement: The below-entitled Ordinance was presented for first reading.

An Ordinance Authorizing a Lease Agreement with the FAA at the Morgantown Municipal Airport

City Manager Kim Haws explained. After discussion, City Attorney Ryan Simonton explained. Motion by Councilor Kawecki, second by Councilor Harshbarger, to table and not vote by acclamation, on the above-entitled Ordinance due to lack of information received.

A Resolution Approving and Authorizing to submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) the FY 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan: The above-entitled Resolution was presented for approval.

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

A Resolution Authorizing a Supplemental Agreement with West Virginia Department of Highways for Walnut Street Streetscape: The above-entitled Resolution was presented for approval.

Assistant City Manager Emily Muzzarelli explained. Motion by Councilor Kawecki, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Resolution. Motion carried 7-0.

A Fair & Festival Permit for West Virginia's Birthday Party, June 17, 2023:

City Manager Kim Haws explained. Motion by Deputy Mayor Trumble, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Fairs & Festival Permit for West Virginia's Birthday Party being held on June 17, 2023. Motion carried 7-0.

A Fair & Festival Permit for Hops on the Mon, October 14, 2023:

City Manager Kim Haws explained. Motion by Deputy Mayor Trumble, second by Councilor Vega, to approve the above-entitled Fairs & Festival Permit for 6th Annual Hops on the Mon being held on October 14, 2023. Motion carried 7-0.

City Manager's Report: shared that he spoke with Director Vrabel regarding the lease agreement that was tabled tonight and that it was agreeable to place the agreement on the agenda in two weeks giving more time for council to review. City Manager Haws shared that the administrative executive staff of the city participated in the second quarterly executive leadership training academy this morning. This training began in January. They participated with presentation from the Leadership Institute from WVU who helped provide training to our staff and had great discussion, great involvement, and good energy. Today's session focused on individual strengths, and we took a string battery test, and were able to identify our top five strengths. We intend to use those in our annual performance evaluations over the next couple of weeks.

Report from City Clerk: shared stats from the most recent election. Joe Abu-Ghannam ended with 993 total votes. James Giuliani 592 votes. Louise Weez Michael ended with 1,230 votes. Danielle Trumble ended with 1,201. Marly Yniguez ended with 442 votes. Brian Butcher ended with 893 votes. Ben Mayle ended with 767. The turnout increase was almost 13% of our registered voters. We did lose a lot of registered voters, down about 6000. She shared that the extra notifications related to the election helped, although there were still folks who still had questions, but that is always going to happen. She thanked everyone who helped in making the signs, our directors for assisting with polling places, and their signage on their marquee. She provided information related to the responses from the Voters Satisfaction and shared that this is how we learn to do better next time.

Report from City Attorney: shared that we have a draft update to the vacant structures code that is intended to address some comments of council members over the past couple years. They will be meeting with the city manager's office and Development Services to get those final and they should be available for council thereafter. The whole set of those updates can be made before a new registration year begins for that program. He shared that they continue to work on updates to the various ordinances regulating encroachments in the streets and work in the public rights of way. Those encompass a lot of different areas. They are both general permission for any work in the right of way or facilities that might be installed in the rights of way as well as very specific provisions with respect to small wireless facilities or facilities that are involved in the delivery of broadband and include the safety standards and aesthetic standards that have recently caught up on our previous work in Morgantown. Attorney Simonton shared that City Manager Haws and Assistant City

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Manager Muzzerelli are going to be reaching out to other city managers. Attorney Simonton will be reaching out to other municipal attorneys and will be working with Development Services, Engineering, and Public Works to try to get something that works well here.

Report from Council Members:

Councilor Abu-Ghannam: he thanked the City Clerk for doing a good job with the 2023 Municipal City Election and appreciates all the hard work and dedication she put into it. He also thanked everyone that came out to vote and who voted for him. He thanked the Tree Board for donating 100 trees that were donated by First Energy and stated that 97 of the 100 trees were given away.

Councilor Kawecki: shared that Councilor Abu-Ghannam did an excellent job selling trees and was amazed how he was out there hustling and explaining what kind of trees they were. Councilor Kawecki Christine for a job well done for the Municipal Election and applauded her and appreciates what she does. He stated that he has been hearing a lot about voter turnout, but no one can blame the city for not getting the word out because mailings were sent to their house. His feeling is that in terms of local government, city, and county and national elections should be separate because it removes the importance of local government or local initiative, local issues and turns it into something that becomes more partisan, more in terms of national influence. He stated that things get lost and they shouldn't because it's important what happens here in your community, your neighborhood, and when you go vote, you make yourself aware of those issues. He sincerely hopes that the idea of moving the elections away from being city only doesn't really gain momentum, although he really does fear that there are people who are naive enough to believe that simply because they can turn out more people, they'll get a better product, and that's not what we're after. We are after the best product and it is important to pay attention to what's going on and be specific to those issues that are important. He shared that he had the pleasure of stepping outside of his ward into the sixth Ward and experiencing some delicious ice cream down at the corner of Brookway. It is an excellent place to go and they're doing wonderful things and they're ice cream is excellent. The South Park Association of Neighbors is up and running again and believe it or not, they have an activity that will be occurring this Saturday. There will be yoga in the park at 10 o'clock at Eaton Park, which is in the grassy area on Park Street, on the corner of Park and Moore Street and it's free.

Councilor Vega: shared that the Sister Cities Commission has been working very hard on hosting a Cinco de Mayo event. She invited everyone to attend the Cinco de Mayo event this weekend at Wesley United Methodist Church from noon – 4pm, admission is free and there will be food along with a fashion show, music, and dancing. MHS students and teachers along with friends of Guanajuato who is the Sister City to Morgantown. She noted that Cinco de Mayo is not Mexico's Independence Day, it is about the Battle of Puebla and typically not too many people celebrate it. It's going to be a great time and folks should all be there. There is a schedule of events but not an official program yet. She encouraged everyone to support some of your local Latino businesses here in Morgantown. She thanked all of our city staff who worked and poll workers who worked on election day. She also wanted to give a special shout out shout out to GIS Analyst Marvin Davis who has become something that she has heard a lot about since being in this position. She shared that she gets really excited when people bring it up because now she knows what it means. This is the reason we were able to have all those cool charts to be able to track the election and that was very cool. She appreciates all of the hard work that was put into the election. She stated that her last meeting as a 3rd Ward Council member will be May 16, 2023. She stated that she will be moving back to Chicago with her family.

Deputy Mayor Trumble: shared that it has been a pleasure serving with Councilor Vega. She shared that she cannot wait for the festivities this weekend, stating that we will treat them as a lovely going away party. Deputy Mayor Trumble thanked the staff, the voters, the candidates, the poll workers, and everyone who made the election successful, it was really a seamless election. We didn't have a whole lot of issues arise or anything like that. So, it was great, and she is thrilled that it is over. She has been attending a lot of events recently such as the Morgantown Area Partnership Dinner, a Legislative Session, an awards banquet for volunteers through the Center for Community Engagement at WVU, and 3 different neighborhood association meetings in the last week, none of which were her own. She shared that she had a really good time engaging with city staff lately. She attended the Morgantown Area Partnership Dinner where a lot of staff and their significant others attended with them, and an employee hot dog luncheon last week at City Hall. She mentioned that the homemade hot dog sauce by Marvin Davis was good. She stated that it was good and if you get a chance, you should try it at some point. She also attended an open house for Morgantown Adventure Outfitters and also went kayaking. She stated that the city staff who were present are really great people and are fun to be around. She announced that there will be an Arts Walk as Amy Loomis mentioned our May Arts walk will be next Saturday, May 13, 2023, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Councilor Harshbarger: thanked the City Clerk for what seemed to be a very well-run election and congratulated those that were elected. He wished Ixya Vega the best on her new journey. He attended the Greenmont Neighborhood Association meeting last week and stated it was a good time. New T shirts were handed out that are available for sale if anybody wants to buy one. He thanked the city for paying for the tables for the Morgantown Area Partnership Dinner. That was a really nice event, and a chance to get to hang out and talk to both counselors and city staff. He noted that the handmade market that was mentioned earlier was really a nice event on the rail trail for Earth Day on April 22. Despite the weather, there were hundreds of people that attended.

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Councilor Butcher: thanked everybody for coming out and voting and a big thank you to our city clerk and everybody else who volunteered at the polls. Speaking of local businesses and Latina businesses, he did get a chance to finally eat at Menorca recently, and he spent almost three hours there and ate nine menu items. He congratulated his son Jordan for passing his driver's test the other day. He also attended a meeting with Project Mushroom from WVU and he shared that they were very quite inactive in the kind of activities that they were doing. They are looking to get a lot more active in the future. Councilor Butcher stated that in two days from 6pm to 9pm, they will be having a private mini golf event at Mountaineer Mini Golf for Morgantown Pride. On June 4 they will be doing the planting and the fairy houses and such at Turtle park at 2pm.

Mayor Selin: congratulated Louise Michael who was elected as our newest 3rd Ward Council Member beginning of July 1, 2023. She thanked those that ran, but did not win, as without them we would not be having a democracy that excited people and gets people out to vote. She mentioned that on May 15 at the county courthouse square at 11am there is going to be all of law enforcement in this area for a presentation honoring National Police Week. Mayor Selin shared that MTEch will be having a signing day, and this will be the second year for this. It will be similar to athletic type signing days, but this signing day is for people to make a commitment to their future training and academic course. It is not just for those intending to go to WVU, it is also for those who are learning a trade for example in auto mechanics, nursing, an aide, or different kinds of medical professions. It is a really fun event. She attended last year and plans to attend again. The event does not mean a contract is signed, it rather means that they're making their commitment and they're moving forward in their life. Mayor Selin shared that the 13th of May is Botanic Garden Day and you have to sign up for it but there's a community orchestra presentation that evening. She reminded that our Botanic Garden is the state Botanic Garden.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to West Virginia State Code Section 6-9A-4(b)(12) to discuss matters protected by the attorney-client privilege. Motion by, second by, to go into executive session. Motion carried by acclamation. Time: 8:23 p.m. Present: City Council, City Manager, City Attorney, and Director of Communications.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to West Virginia Code section 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A) to discuss personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, motion by Councilor Vega, second by Councilor Butcher, to adjourn the meeting. Time: 10:15 p.m.


City Clerk


Mayor

