

MINUTES

THE COMMON COUNCIL

February 11, 2020

6:30 P.M.

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF CHARLESTOWN WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, 02/11/2020 AT 6:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL WITH MAYOR, TREVA HODGES PRESIDING.

Council members present were: Ruthie Jackson, Brian Hester, BJ Steele, John Cox and Bo Bertram. Also present were Clerk Treasurer Donna Coomer, Common Council Attorney Michael Gillenwater and City Attorney Mickey Weber.

Pledge

Geography Champion- Dante F. Marsal

Invocation

LC McCawley

Agenda

Mayor Hodges asked for approval on the agenda.

Councilman Hester made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilman JT Cox. Approved 5-0.

Minutes, Claims and PR Voucher

A motion was made by Councilwoman Jackson to approve the January 06, 2020 Minutes, seconded by Councilman Hester. Approved 5-0.

A motion was made by Councilman Hester to approve the claims, seconded by Councilman Steele, Approved 5-0.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Jackson to approve the PR Voucher from 01/05/2019 to 02/09/2020, seconded by Councilman Steele. Approved 5-0.

Public Comment

None

Mayor Treva Hodges

Mayor Treva Hodges said the Council asked her to give her vision for the City of Charlestown over the next four years. Mayor Hodges said she doesn't want to think of it as a vision instead terms of action. Vision is the beliefs of one person. They become biased, problematic and can cause conflict. They see it as a setback instead of an open and fair engagement of ideas. Mayor Hodges said to answer this question. How do you intend to serve Charlestown over the next four years? Last year she had some action plans in preparation for this office. In order to see our city through with the changes coming with development it's very important for us to take care of people who live here. If we solve our problems, it demonstrates and shows people who don't live here we are worth their investment.

Financial strength: show we are financially healthy. We spend taxpayer money on the best and essential uses. She has worked with Clerk Treasurer Donna Coomer over the last month to identify a plan for a comprehensive report and review our finances. We approved at the Board of Public Works and at the next meeting we will engage a third party to perform a cost of revenue analysis of our wastewater and sanitation.

We will do a long term comprehensive financial plan that includes a five-year capital plan & budget analysis. She asked the Redevelopment Commission to perform an assessment of the TIF district. Make sure we are maximizing in accordance with Indiana State Statutes. We need to know we have the financial ability to achieve our goals, meet our needs and build upon our wants at the same time. With a letter of understanding of our financial health we can tackle some of our infrastructure needs. Mayor Hodges said she had the opportunity to attend the corridors of opportunity sponsored by River Ridge and the panelist consisted of Jerry Acy, Wendy Dant Chester of One Southern Indiana, Principal Hollenbeck, Andy Carp a large developer and Pharmacord.

Infrastructure is the most attractive feature for development. We have some significant problems with our infrastructure and it is imperative that we take action to fix them. We have significant problems and upcoming reviews will be a first important step to see where we are and getting a plan to move forward. We have done an assessment of the existing Wastewater plant to determine what discrepancies exists. There is a phosphorus problem that we are looking to solve. We need to make sure of our capacity because we can't grow residential or commercial without services in wastewater. If we can't provide services, we will hit a brick wall with any potential developers. In the next few months the city engineers will complete an assessment and bring a report to the Council on the status on the wastewater plant and bring a recommendation. We need to update our asset plan for roads and sidewalks. We have a history applying for grants like Community Crossing to improve sidewalks and streets. We keep our streets in good condition for our residents and developers. Drainage & storm water runoff is a significant problem and is a challenge. To impact the scope of the drainage issue we will host a drainage listening session at the A&E Center from 6 to 7:30 pm and residents can attend and talk with the engineers about their problems and experience at their own home or in their neighborhood.

This is the first formal announcement, it has not been released, but in March between 6:00 and 7:30 pm residents can speak to our engineers about problems they experience and from those conversations we can prioritize repairs based on feedback. These infrastructure improvements will make Charlestown more attractive for new residents and new businesses. Charlestown is situated in an area to all kinds of recreational interest.

Last week at the Board of Public Works it was voted to begin an assessment of the Civic Center We will have the structure reviewed for structural soundness and determine if it can be repaired. The city owns the land and building. We all can benefit from the use of an important asset. Before we get too far into it, we need a park master plan. We need to seek residents' feedback at listening sessions to make sure all recreational needs are met. There will be room for sports, trails, outdoor recreation and passive parks, where you can go for beauty and reflection.

We can offer social services like community outreach groups, schools or existing social services network to strengthen the community resources we have to offer. One concern is safety. We have to support our police department so they can do their job by providing equipment and officers to fill their shifts. If people don't feel safe in their community, then they don't want to live in our community. There are some areas where we struggle with such as opioid crisis. Pastors have reached out to help promote and provide resources to work with families. We have provided full transparency to our citizens by livestreaming all meetings. Number one complaint is talking into the microphone. So please speak up, we want them engaged.

We are launching a new city website where there will be updates and improvements to navigate the system easier. There will be online forms to navigate through the system for trash services. Mayor Hodges wants people to know she is available to hear their thoughts and concerns. She has meetings by appointment and will hold regular open office hours on Monday February 24, 2020 from 4:30 to 6:00 pm anyone can come in to talk or share an idea. She will hold dialog sessions on the first Saturday in March and with respect to the open door laws, we never want to have a council member present. If a Council Member wants to participate in an open door session, Treva said to reach out to her and maybe we can target each one's district so that you can participate and hear from your constituents.

She agrees with our government constitution "by the people" and "for the people" and we have amazing people in Charlestown. Her plan for the next four years is serve the community and meeting our needs. Welcome new residents and business. They will see we are a city that takes care of their people by recreational, infrastructure and all the basic necessities to make it a thriving community. Not only will they want to settle here but also thrive here. Treva ask if anyone had any questions and no one responded.

Resolution 2020-R-1

Councilman Hester made a motion to approve the Rules of Conduct Resolution, seconded by Councilwoman Jackson. Approved 5-0.

Councilman Hester read some highlights of the Rules of Conduct. He said the Mayor will be the chair. It takes at least three members to have a quorum. The Mayor is allowed to call a special meeting with president or a pro tem president and at least 2 council members. The Mayor or Clerk Treasurer can sponsor a resolution or ordinance.

Councilman Hester said the biggest change is public comment. The person who signs up prior to the meeting is allowed three minutes to speak. Public Comment should be about something on the agenda. There will be no more than 30 minutes at a meeting allowed for public comments. Everyone should show and have respect. The agenda will be out on Friday. Our meeting will be the first Monday of the month. If a special meeting is called it will be held on the third Monday of the month.

Ordinance 2020-OR-02

Ordinance 2020-OR-02 is an ordinance pertaining to checks over two years old. Five checks were written and never paid.

Councilman BJ Steele made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-OR-02 on the first reading, seconded by Cox. Approved 5-0.

Councilman Cox made a motion to suspend the rules on Ordinance 2020-OR-02, seconded by Councilman Steele. Approved 5-0.

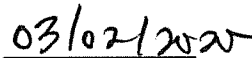
Councilman Hester made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-OR-02 for the second and final reading, seconded by Councilwoman Jackson. Approved 5-0.

Adjournment

Councilman Cox made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Steele. Approved 5-0.



MAYOR, TREVA HODGES




DATE

ATTEST:



CLERK TREASURER, DONNA S. COOMER



DATE