

**REGULAR MEETING – CITY COUNCIL
PRINCETON, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
January 8, 2018**

A Regular Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Princeton, Mercer County, West Virginia was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on Monday, January 8, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were Mayor David Graham; Vice Mayor Tim Ealy; Council Members Marshall Lytton, Jacqueline Rucker, James Harvey and James Hill; City Attorney Paul Cassell, City Manager and Acting City Clerk Kenneth Clay; and Assistant City Manager Mike Webb. Absent were Council Member Dewey Russell and City Clerk Deanna Burdette. A quorum was constituted thereby.

I. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Marshall Lytton invoked divine guidance for the conduct of the meeting. Councilman James Hill led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor David Graham called the meeting to order.

III. PRESENTATIONS

Certificates of Appreciation: Lori McKinney and Robert Blankenship – Mayor David Graham presented Certificates of Appreciation to Lori McKinney and Robert Blankenship for their “outstanding contributions to the City of Princeton” involving the many hours they had devoted to organizing and staging the 2017 Downtown Countdown, New Years Celebration on Mercer Street.

Lori McKinney of the Princeton Renaissance Project thanked City Council for the recognition and accepted both certificates, since Robert Blankenship could not be present, and also recognized Mr. Greg Puckett for his work on the 2017 Downtown Countdown.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

There were no speakers for public input.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

There being no corrections noted, Mayor Graham declared the Consent Agenda approved, as follows:

Minutes of the December 11, 2017, Regular City Council Meeting.

VI. POLICY AGENDA

A. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. PUBLIC WORKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Jacqueline Rucker reported that the Public Works and Recreation Committee

met on Wednesday, January 3, 2018, with the following to report out to Council for action or as information and called upon Public Works Director Bo Barker for his report.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Monthly Report for December – Bo Barker reported that Public Works responded to 20 service requests in the month of December, 2017. Also, he reported the ordering of a pick up truck that eventually would have a snow plow mounted sometime after it arrives.

Continuing, Mr. Barker reported that he had begun storing equipment at the former Dean Company property which means that no equipment or trucks at the garage must be kept outdoors. This enables a quick and easy startup first thing in the morning.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Monthly Report for December – With the Boy’s Little League/Girl’s Cheerleading program beginning, the Recreation Department is entering one of its busiest times of the year. The Department held a pre-season tournament before Christmas break and regular season play is scheduled to begin on January 11th. The 17 teams will compete five days a week.

The Rec Department was successful in securing 17 business sponsors for all the teams in the League, as well. Local businesses may sponsor a team for \$425 to support the program and Department. The business’ name becomes the team name. We are very fortunate to have so many businesses supporting recreational programming for the youth of our community.

The current sponsors are as follow:

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| ERA Advantage Realty | Princeton Elks | Godfather’s Pawn |
| Anonymous | Grants Supermarkets | Reel Catch |
| Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home | Patton & Associates | Pinnacle Mine |
| Pine Grove Builders | WV Pipeline | Southern Highlands |
| Virginian Asphalt & Paving | Wendy’s | Recycle WV |
| Hickman’s Pharmacy | Ramey Auto Group | |

RAILROAD MUSEUM

Railroad Museum Director Pat Smith reported that December had been a busy month for the Museum. A very significant event during the month was the donation of an antique **Velocipede**, a \$7,000 value that was featured in the January 1st edition of the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*. Ms. Smith explained that the Velocipede is a three-wheeled vehicle that was used as transportation for the maintenance of railroad tracks and equipment.

Director Smith continued by reporting that the 400 **Princeton-opoly games** sold out in just nine days resulting in a number of requests for the game being turned away. However, next year another installment of the game will be ordered with new businesses

featured on the game board.

Authorization to Expend Princeton-opoly Funds – Committee Chairperson Jacqueline Rucker reported that the Public Works and Recreation Committee approved and recommended to City Council, **and she so moved**, authorization that the \$15,000 in funds raised from the Princeton-opoly game be expended on Phase II construction of the Railroad Museum’s Model Train Display.

James Harvey duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chairman Tim Ealy reported that the Public Safety Committee of Princeton City Council met on Wednesday, January 3, 2018, with the following items to report out to Council and called upon the Code Enforcement Director to present his report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

Monthly Report for December 2017 – Code Enforcement Director Bill Buzzo provided the following report for the month of December:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Initial Complaints | 82 |
| Closed Complaints | 85 |
| Cases Active Currently | 38 |
| Cumulative Complaints to Date | 33,542 |

Demolition/Renovation Programs Status:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Condemnations/Unsafe in Process | 16 |
| Renovation in Process | 4 |
| Demolitions in Process | 12 |
| Demolitions (Planned for January) | 10 (238 Westview, 201 Lincoln Street, 406 McNutt Ave., 104 N. 3 rd Street, 105 Lower Bell, 214 Ritter Street, 307 Beckley Road, 521 Washington Ave., 520 Washington Ave., and 700 N. Wickham Avenue) |
| Total Demolitions to Date | 621 |

Animal Control

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Complaints this month | 42 |
| Impounded | 12 |

Building Inspections

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Total Building Permits | 23 |
| Total Inspections | 38 |

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Total Project Costs | \$131,439.81 |
| Total Permit Fees | \$ 747.00 |

Zoning Official

Certificates of Occupancy Applications: 3

- a. New Life Vision Center, 1127 Mercer Street
- b. Dixie Springs Resort & Spa, 152 Athens Rd.
- c. Community Connections, Inc., 215 South Walker St.

Zoning Board of Appeals Applications

Christopher Cook, to install a double wide, manufactured mobile home at 411 Kirk St.

Property Maintenance

The railroad property located at Westview and McKinley is being cleared of all trash and debris by the property owner.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Monthly Report for December - Fire Chief Chad Bailey reported that during the month of December 2017, the Fire Department responded to 54 EMS calls and 35 Fire calls, conducted 20 inspections and issued two certificates of occupancy.

Downtown Countdown – The Fire Chief reported that this year’s installment of the Downtown Countdown, New Years’ Eve celebration, was a success even with the very cold weather. The ball drop, which was supervised by the Fire Department, proceeded right on time with no fire related incidents occurring during the celebration.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Monthly Report for December - Deputy Chief of Police Tim Gray reported that during the month of December 2017, the Princeton Police Department responded to 429 calls for assistance, made 45 arrests and issued 157 citations. Also, he reported that just this same evening five more arrests were made before the Council meeting began.

3. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Chairman Marshall Lytton reported that the Finance and Administration Committee of Princeton City Council met on Wednesday, January 3, 2018, with the following items to report out to Council for action or as information:

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

December 2017, Financial Reports – Finance Director Brian Blankenship reported that as of the end of December, the sixth month of FY2018, the actual revenues collected stood at 59.23% of the budgeted amount, while actual appropriations were expended at a rate of 52%, as compared to the budget projections of 49.98% forecast for the end of December 2017. Mr. Blankenship added that the total funds available for City operations

at the end of December were **\$2,551,474**.

Mr. Lytton continued by reporting that the Finance and Administration Committee had approved and recommended the December 2017, Financial Report to City Council, **and he so moved.**

Jacqueline Rucker duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Budget Revision #7 for the FY 2018 General Fund – The Finance Director presented and recommended approval of FY 2018 General Fund Budget Revision #7 to appropriate **\$239,000** of additional money from other funds and anticipated proceeds from Princeton-opoly to be used for Capital Lease Equipment commitments and to start Phase 2 of the Railroad Museum’s Model Train Project. This revision brings the overall FY 2018 General Fund Revenue budget to **\$7,913,827**.

Expenditure adjustments include the following:

- Appropriate \$16,000 to the Railroad Museum to begin Phase 2 of the Model Train Project, and
- Appropriate \$223,000 for the Fire Department to begin their annual Capital Equipment lease payment.

Mr. Blankenship concluded by explaining that these changes in appropriations create a net increase of **\$239,000**; thereby increasing estimated expenditures to **\$7,913,827** and creating a balanced budget.

Mr. Lytton continued by reporting the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council Budget Revision #7 for the FY 2018 General Fund, **and he so moved.**

James Hill duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution Authorizing USDA Grant Application – The Finance and Administration Committee had approved and recommended to City Council, **and Mr. Lytton moved,** authorization for submission of an application to the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Community Facilities Grant Program, for a grant in the amount of \$28,366.25 to assist in the purchase of police department emergency equipment and designating Assistant City Manager Mike Webb as the official to act in connection with said application and the administration of the grant, as follows:

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the City of Princeton wishes to submit a U. S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Facilities Grant application to seek funding for the Princeton Police Department to purchase department emergency equipment; and

WHEREAS, the additional level of emergency equipment to this essential “community facility” will enhance the ability of the Princeton Police Department to provide essential services to the general public residing within the City of Princeton; and

WHEREAS, the City of Princeton must give assurances that the USDA Rural Development Authority, Community Facilities Grant Program Regulations related to grant administration, civil rights, and other applicable State and Federal laws will be followed; and

WHEREAS, the City of Princeton must designate an official representative to act in connection with the application and execute all necessary program documents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Common Council of the City of Princeton hereby authorizes the submission of an application to the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Community Facilities Grant Program, for a grant in the amount of \$28,366.25 to assist in the purchase of police department emergency equipment for the Princeton Police Department.
2. The City of Princeton will comply with all laws and regulations pertaining to the program.
3. Mike Webb, Assistant City Manager for the City of Princeton, is designated as the authorized official to act in connection with the application and administration of the grant as well as to provide any additional information or clarification along with supporting documentation that may be required.
4. The Assistant City Manager is authorized to execute all forms necessary to obtain a grant from Rural Development including, but not limited to, the following forms:
 - * Form RD 1942-54 – Applicant’s Feasibility Report
 - * Application for Federal Assistance – SF-424
 - * Standard Form 424B – Assurances Non-Construction Programs

David Graham, Mayor

Jacqueline Rucker duly seconded the motion.

On inquiry, Assistant City Manager Mike Webb advised that the grant would be used to purchase radios and related equipment.

On voting, the motion carried unanimously.

Resolution Authorizing a Flex-E-Grant Application – The Finance and Administration Committee had approved and recommended to City Council, **and Mr. Lytton so moved**, authorization for the submission of a Flex-E-Grant application through the West Virginia Development Office for funds not to exceed \$10,000 for the City of Princeton to develop a Way Finding and Streetscape Study in 2018, and for the City Manager to sign said application and any agreement necessary to obtain and administer the funds, as follows:

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Flex-E-Grant Funds are available through the West Virginia Development Office for capacity building projects with maximum project budget of Ten Thousand Dollars; and

WHEREAS, the City of Princeton would be required to match fifteen percent (15%) of any Flex-E-Grant funds awarded; and

WHEREAS, an application for a Flex-E-Grant to fund a Way Finding and Street Scape Study must be made to the West Virginia Development Office; and

WHEREAS, the West Virginia Development Office requires that a local government unit sponsor said application; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PRINCETON, WEST VIRGINIA that the City Manager is authorized hereby to make application for Flex-E-Grant funds totalling up to, but not to exceed, Ten Thousand Dollars through the West Virginia Development Office for the City of Princeton to develop a Way Finding and Street Scape Study in 2018 and that the City Manager be empowered to sign the application and any agreement necessary to obtain and administer these funds.

David Graham, Mayor

James Hill duly seconded the motion.

Mr. Hill requested Assistant City Manager Mike Webb explain the purpose for which the grant funds would be used.

Mr. Webb explained that since it had become rather busy downtown with new businesses and attractions, this grant would pay for professional consultants to design the best pathway to events and attractions in the City and the best sites for the placement of signs to guide visitors to their destinations in Princeton.

On voting, the motion carried unanimously.

PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY

In the absence of Library Director, Brittany Rothausen, Mr. Lytton presented a summary of Ms. Rothausen's report to the Finance and Administration Committee on January 3, 2018, as follows:

Crochet for Beginners – Enabling visitors to the Library to learn a new craft, the Library will be hosting “Crochet for Beginners,” a free class on Thursday, January 18th, by which participants will learn the basics of crochet. An assortment of hooks and yarn will be provided for use during the class.

Yoga for Beginners – The Library will present a class, “Yoga for Beginners,” on Saturday, January 27th. The class is free, but registration is required for the 12 opens slots and may be done by calling 304-487-5045. Participants must be 18 years of age or older.

Monthly programs offered by the Library include the Library Gaming Club, the Friends of the Library Used Book Sale, and the LEGO Club: Self-Portraits.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Chairperson of the Princeton Community Improvement Commission, Lori McKinney, described the process that led to the branding of a section of downtown Mercer Street. Ms. McKinney explained how the consultant involved organized and gained input from various interests in the City, including City Council, that led to the eventual branding of the portion of Mercer Street from Bee Street to North Fifth Street as the “Grassroots District.” Ms. McKinney also informed that fifteen banners soon would be erected featuring the new logo for the Grassroots District, a spreading tree with a large root system.

Council Member James Hill commented that the Community Improvement Commission needs to look at Stafford Drive when doing Christmas decorations next year.

Public Works Director Bo Barker explained that the new poles on Stafford Drive were erected to accommodate the Recycle Center and explained that no new additions may be made to those poles. Also, any electric service to the remaining poles along Stafford Drive would be very expensive to install.

Lori McKinney added that the Community Improvement Commission discusses many options for enhancing the Stafford Drive area

B. CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Paul Cassell reported that he had two ordinances to present to City Council for second readings and public hearings, as well as a lease agreement, as follow:

1. Mr. Cassell presented for a second reading, by title, and a public hearing AN ORDINANCE AMENDING §1341 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES FO THE CITY OF PRINCETON, WEST VIRINGIA: “ZONING DISTRICTS AND MAP ESTABLISHED.”

Mr. Cassell noted that this ordinance will rezone the lot at 1424 South Avenue from R-2, Residential to C-2, Commercial upon the petition of the property owner, Mr. Kevin Steele, and the recommendation of the Princeton Planning Commission.

Public Hearing – Mayor David Graham moved City Council into a public hearing on the aforementioned ordinance at 7:00 p.m. and called for public comments in favor or opposed to the ordinance.

There being no comments forthcoming, Mayor Graham closed the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. and called for a motion on the ordinance.

MOTION: James Hill **moved** City Council adopt the ordinance.

Jacqueline Rucker duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Cassel then presented for a second reading, by title, and a public hearing AN ORDINANCE AMENDING §1345.01 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PRINCETON, WEST VIRGINIA: “DISTRICT USES.”

Mr. Cassell explained that, on approval, this ordinance will correct an omission in an ordinance authorized earlier that amended the “Schedule of District Uses and Controls” within the Zoning Code of the City of Princeton by removing Massage Parlors from the list of prohibited uses within the City.

Public Hearing – Mayor Graham moved City Council into a public hearing on the aforementioned ordinance at 7:01 p.m. and called for public comments in favor or opposed to the ordinance.

There being no comments forthcoming, Mayor Graham closed the public hearing at

7:01 p.m. and called for a motion on the ordinance.

MOTION: Jacqueline Rucker **moved** City Council adopt the ordinance.

James Harvey duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Lease Agreement in re: 746 Mercer Street as a Police Substation

City Attorney Paul Cassell presented for City Council's consideration an Agreement of Lease between First Property Solutions, the Lessor, and the City of Princeton, the Lessee, regarding the property at 746 Mercer Street for use as a Police Substation.

MOTION: Vice Mayor Tim Ealy **moved** City Council approve the lease agreement with First Property Solutions as presented.

James Hill duly seconded the motion.

Mr. Hill commented that Assistant City Manager Mike Webb had identified the site on Mercer Street for the substation after several futile attempts to find a suitable location.

Mr. Webb explained that the location is ideal and will assure a police presence on Mercer Street on a regular basis and also provide ample storage space for the bicycle patrol and other equipment.

On voting, the motion carried unanimously.

C. CITY MANAGER & ACTING CITY CLERK

City Manager and Acting City Clerk Kenneth Clay remarked that he was looking forward anxiously to the return of City Clerk Deanna Burdette who had been on extended medical leave.

D. ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

Assistant City Manager Mike Webb remarked that the City of Princeton just had concluded a good year and is moving in the right direction. Mr. Webb then expressed his desire for the City to continue this trend in 2018.

E. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Human Resources Director Wanda Donahue reported that she had completed the web-based registration with the federal government by updating the City's profile. This, she explained, is required for the City of Princeton to qualify for any grant funding.

VII. COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE

James Hill – Council Member James Hill commented that budget time is coming up and he would like to see funds appropriated to purchase mobile radar signs. Also, he expressed that everyone should be excited because of all the positive things happening in Princeton and added that the City Council and department heads are working together to move the City forward.

Mr. Hill further commented that a lot of demolition liens were outstanding and those property owners should come across with their obligations to the City. He added that 620 residential and commercial structures had been removed by the Code Enforcement Department and those vacant lots need to have replacement structures on them.

James Harvey – Council Member Jim Harvey thanked Lori McKinney for her efforts on staging the Downtown Countdown, as well as all the other endeavors in which she is involved on behalf of the City. Mr. Harvey acknowledged the excellent work of the City's department heads and employees, adding that it is an honor to live in Princeton.

Vice Mayor Tim Ealy – Mr. Ealy commented there is no other place he would want to live than Princeton with its low crime rate and friendly, welcoming residents.

Marshall Lytton – Mr. Lytton thanked Robert Blankenship and Lori McKinney for all they do on behalf of the City. He then commended the Princeton Fire and Police Departments for their presence and work on the Downtown Countdown and expressed his regret at being unable to attend the celebration.

Mr. Lytton continued by congratulating Assistant City Manager Mike Webb and Railroad Museum Director Pat Smith on the success of the Princeton-opoly fundraising project.

In continuing his comments, Mr. Lytton thanked City Manager Kenneth Clay for filling in for City Clerk Dee Burdette.

Lastly, Mr. Lytton conducted a polling of the audience as to their preferences in the Alabama – Georgia College Championship.

Jacqueline Rucker – Council Member Jacqueline Rucker thanked those present for attending the Council meeting and urged them to return. She commended the City's department heads for their work and acknowledged *Princeton Times* reporter Jeff Harvey for this diligence in attending and reporting the City Council proceedings.

In conclusion, she commented that one of the best things Council had done was to hire Kenneth Clay and Mike Webb and thanked them for their efforts.

Mayor David Graham – Mayor Graham thanked all those present for attending the

Council meeting.

The Mayor expressed his appreciation for the Downtown Countdown and those who made it possible, adding that it had been an honor to initiate the ball drop ushering in the New Year. Mayor Graham added that Lori McKinney, Robert Blankenship, Greg Puckett and Deputy Police Chief Tim Gray all deserve a pat on the back for their contributions to the success of the Downtown Countdown.

Continuing, the Mayor remarked that the City's budget continues to look good and the City Hall Project is proceeding in good order.

Lastly, he thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and invited them to come again.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council Member James Hill acknowledged Assistant City Manager Mike Webb for working to have the project to repair the Thorn Street Bridge moved up on the WVDOH's schedule.

Mr. Lytton commented that the WV DOH was seeking information from local residents on the history of the Bridge, including its construction.

Assistant City Manager Mike Webb informed that he had received word that the Brick Street Bridge would be replaced in 2020.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, City Council adjourned its January 8, 2018, meeting at 7:15 p.m.