

REGULAR MEETING ~ CITY COUNCIL
PRINCETON, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
October 13, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Princeton, Mercer County, West Virginia was held by teleconference on Tuesday, October 13, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were Mayor David Graham; Vice Mayor James Harvey; Council Members Marshall Lytton, James Hill, Jacqueline Rucker, Dewey Russell and Joseph Allen; City Manager Michael Webb, City Attorney Paul Cassell and City Clerk Kenneth Clay. A quorum was constituted thereby.

I. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member Marshall Lytton invoked divine guidance for the conduct of the meeting; offered up prayers for the victims of the corona virus and gave thanks for the City Manager, staff, City employees and all First Responders. Mr. Lytton also prayed for a quick recovery of those afflicted with the corona virus and that a cure be found soon to deliver the world from the pandemic.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor David Graham called the meeting to order.

III. PROCLAMATIONS ~ PRESENTATIONS

Proclamation: Christian Heritage Week – Mayor David Graham read a proclamation declaring the week of November 22-28, 2020, at *Christian Heritage Week* in the City of Princeton, invited all citizens to join him in this observance and requested all churches to participate with relevant Sunday School lessons, sermons, patriotic songs, youth programs and prayer meetings.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Without correction, Mayor Graham committed the Consent Agenda to the record, as follows:

Minutes of the September 14, 2020, Regular City Council Meeting.

VI. POLICY AGENDA

A. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. PUBLIC WORKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Jacqueline Rucker reported the Public Works and Recreation Committee of Princeton City Council met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on Wednesday, October 7, 2020, with the following to report out to Council:

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PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Public Work's Monthly Report for September – Assistant Director Eric Gatchell had offered the following report on behalf of the Public Works Department:

- Crews completed 21 service requests for special pickup orders in September;
- Completed construction of the new sidewalk on Bee Street next to Auto Zone;
- Completed repairs to the storm water system at Harrison and 7th Street and on Bee Street behind Princeton Towers; and
- Removed a tree at 503 Park Avenue that was obstructing the storm water system causing flooding problems and worked to remediate a drainage problem on Kee Street.

Resolution Approving the West Main Street Sidewalk Project Agreement – On the information and recommendation of the City Manager, the Public Works and Recreation Committee approved and recommended to City Council, **and Mrs. Rucker so moved**, approval of the following resolution authorizing City Manager Michael Webb to execute an agreement with the WV Division of Highways for the construction of sidewalks along West Main Street:

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the City of Princeton, West Virginia has applied to the West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, for a \$167,000 Transportation Enhancement Grant to construct sidewalks along West Main Street; and

WHEREAS, the West Virginia Department of Transportation has tentatively approved a \$167,000 grant contingent upon the City of Princeton's execution of the Agreement hereto attached and made a part of this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Princeton City Council is of the opinion that it is in the best interests of the citizens of the community for the project to be undertaken and the agreement executed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED:

That the Common Council of the City of Princeton, this the 13th day of October, 2020, authorizes Michael Webb, as City Manager, to execute the Agreement hereto attached.

David E. Graham, Mayor

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Joe Allen duly seconded the motion.

On the request of Council Member James Hill the aforesaid resolution was read by Mayor Graham.

On voting, the motion carried unanimously.

PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Recreation Director Amanda McCabe had provided the following report to the Committee:

Recreation Center – The Recreation Center continues closed except on Monday and Thursday evenings, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., for a karate class and to process the numerous shelter rentals. There will be no registration for any fall programs with an eye toward what happens in the school system, including the biggest programs of the year, the Boys Little League Basketball and Girl’s Cheerleading. Also, no programming for the spring is being planned at this time.

Appointment of Council Member Joseph Allen to the Park Board – The Public Works and Recreation Committee approved and recommended to City Council, **and Mrs. Rucker so moved**, the appointment of Council Member Joseph Allen to the Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners as one of the two voting members from the City Council.

Dewey Russell duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chairman James Hill reported the Public Safety Committee of Princeton City Council met after the Public Works and Recreation Committee, on Wednesday, October 7, 2020, with the following items to report out to Council:

CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

Chairman Hill presented Code Enforcement’s monthly report on behalf of Code Enforcement Director Ty Smith, as follows:

COMPUTATION OF COMPLAINTS

Summary – Property Maintenance

Initial Complaints	190
Cumulative Complaints to Date	38,792

Demolition/Renovation Programs Status

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Condemnations/Unsafe in Process	20
Demolitions in Process (out for bid)	1
Renovations in Process	0
Demolitions w/Notice to Proceed	1
Total Demolitions to Date	682

Animal Control

Complaints this Month	90
Impounded (dogs 6; cats 3; other 0)	9
Adopted	0
Euthanized	0
Reclaimed	2
Rescued	0

Building Inspection

Building Permits (Res. 20; Com. 12)	32
Total Inspections	12
Total Project Costs	\$416,876.30
Permit Fees	\$2,404.00

Flood Plain Management

Flood Plain Determinations	31
Flood Plain Permits Issued	1

Zoning Official

Certificate of Occupancy Applications	3
Certificate of Occupancy Inspections	2
Zoning Board Cases	1
Zoning Appeals Pending	2

Rental Compliance

Revenue in Sep: \$0; Total to Date: \$13,223.50
Registered Units Sep: Houses 0; Apts. 0; Single Units 0; Total Units 0
Cumulative Total: Houses 297; Apts. 505; Other 61; Total 863

Vacant Buildings

Registered Vacant Buildings Sep 0; Total 13.

Animal Control and Property Maintenance Comprehensive Report – Code Enforcement Officer Melissa Meachum had reported the following to the Committee:

Animal Control

<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>
Response Totals: 42	Response Totals: 25
Dogs Impounded: 10	Dogs Impounded: 8
Returned to Owner: 3	Returned to Owner: 1

Ms. Meachum further reported that she had been unable to impound or trap feral cats since July 7, 2020, due to the Animal Shelter being on lockdown since that date due to an excessive number of intakes and sickness.

Property Maintenance

<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>
Response Totals: 64	Response Totals: 81

Exterior Structure / Rental Compliance: 25
Inoperable Abandoned Vehicles: 16
Excessive Grass / Weeds: 47
Rubbish / Trash: 47
Swimming Pool / Fencing: 10

- **See complete report for further information**

Floodplain Review – Floodplain Coordinator Benjamin Love had presented the following comprehensive, status report to the Committee:

Files Review

697 Permit files reviewed Sept 2020 – Sep 2018
129 Floodplain files identified
5-year date is October 2015, (1,114 files to review)
Improving Floodplain file systems
Making Mitigation Plan for individual houses during review
Identifying issues that require immediate mitigation

- **See complete report for further information**

Adoption of State Building Code Updates – Under provisions of City Code §1717.03, the City Clerk is charged with notifying City Council Members of any amendments to the State Building Code, as adopted by the City of Princeton by reference. This provision applies to any amendments and new editions of the State Building Code.

Therefore, effective August 1, 2020, the following language will be considered for revision during the upcoming Legislative Rule Making Process:

4.1.j.l. Omit reference to International Fire Code and substitute NFPA Life Safety Code, 2018 edition.

4.1.k. The 2017 edition of the National Electric Code, NFPA 70.

4.1.k.1. For renovations in one and two family homes where no new square footage is involved, arc-fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) protection shall not be required, except in bedrooms. For renovations in one and two family homes where square footage is added, but no electrical service is installed, arc-fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) protection shall not be required.

The final entry code reads:

87-4-8

8-1. All building codes previously adopted by local jurisdictions are null and void.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

September Call Report – Fire Chief Chad Bailey reported that during the month of September the Fire Department responded to 90 EMS calls and 34 Fire Calls; conducted 29 inspections, issued 2 Certificates of Occupancy and 41 Fire Lane citations.

Fall Maintenance – Chief Bailey continued by reporting the Fire Department currently is in the midst of its fall maintenance program that involves the inspection and operational checks of all trucks, hoses and related equipment, as well as assisting in hydrant testing by the Water Company.

Pump Testing – Chief Bailey also reported, as required by the ISO, the Fire Department would be conducting pump testing this month.

Hiring Update – The Chief continued by reporting that one of the three candidates certified in August had not responded to notifications for an interview, which effectively requires that another test be conducted to establish a list of eligible candidates for the position of Firefighter. The Civil Service Code requires that three eligible candidates be called for interviews for each hiring process.

Therefore, another application period has been authorized by the Firemen's Civil Service Commission, followed by testing on October 17th, to identify qualified candidates to satisfy Civil Service requirements. Chief Bailey added that the response has been much better for this second round of applications.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

September Call Report – Police Chief Tim Gray reported that during the month of September the Police Department responded to 437 calls for assistance, made 28 arrests and issued 144 citations.

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SWAT Team Training – Chief Gray reported that the Police Department’s members on the Mercer County SWAT Team recently participated in an Advanced SWAT Course taught by Dave “Boon” Benton, the “Hero of Benghazi.” Princeton’s members trained as a team, together with SWAT members from the Mercer County Sheriff’s Department, and enjoyed the entire week’s training.

Grant – Chief Gray continued by reporting the Police Department was awarded a grant of \$15,270 from the Shott Foundation that will be used to purchase equipment for the Department.

Personnel Report – Chief Gray also informed that the Police Department would be replacing two officers in the near future: Sgt. Faris, who he believes will be elected as Sheriff of Summers County and Patrolman Wyatt, who resigned from the Department in March.

Trick or Treat in Princeton – Chairman Jim Hill reported that the Public Safety Committee approved and recommended to City Council, **and he so moved**, that Trick or Treat be observed on Saturday, October 31st, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., but with no organized activities and subject to any subsequent orders by the Governor. Also, social distancing and masks are required.

Jacqueline Rucker duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Police Chief Gray informed the Council that officers would be out in force on Halloween night.

3. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Chairman Marshall Lytton reported the Finance and Administration Committee of Princeton City Council met after the Public Safety Committee on Wednesday, October 7, 2020, with the following to report out to City Council:

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

September 2020, Financial Report – Finance Director Brian Blankenship reported that as of the end of September, the third month of FY2021, the actual revenues collected stood at 37.10% of the budgeted amount, while actual appropriations were expended at a rate of 32%, as compared to the budget projections of 24.99% forecast for the end of September. Total funds available for City operations at the end of September were **\$1,668,001.**

Mr. Blankenship next reviewed the noteworthy expenditures for September, as follow:

Phase II Contractor Costs	\$20,658
Fire & Police Pensions	\$30,573
Rainy Day Fund Deposit	\$250,000
Travelers	\$111,179

MOTION: Chairman Lytton continued by reporting the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended the September, 2020 Financial Statements to City Council, **and he so moved.**

Jacqueline Rucker duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

FY2020 Annual Reports for the Policemen’s and Firemen’s Pension and Relief Funds – The Finance Director reviewed and recommended to City Council the FY2020 Annual Reports for the Policemen’s and Firemen’s Pension and Relief Funds as follow:

Firemen’s Pension and Relief Fund

Beginning Fair Value		\$2,993,335.02	
Total Revenues	\$399,633.44		
Total Expenditures	<u>413,944.98</u>		
Net Income (Loss)		(14,311.54)	
Ending Fair Value			\$2,979,023.48

Policemen’s Pension and Relief Fund

Beginning Fair Value		\$4,466,263.21	
Total Revenues	\$697,726.63		
Total Expenditures	<u>579,944.71</u>		
Net Income (Loss)		<u>118,501.92</u>	
Ending Fair Value			\$4,584,765.13

Marshall Lytton continued by reporting the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council the FY2020 Annual Reports for the Firemen’s and Policemen’s Pension and Relief Funds, **and he so moved.**

Joe Allen duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Dates for the November Council Meetings – Mr. Lytton continued by reporting that, due to the General Election on November 3rd, the Finance and Administration Committee CC-10/13/20

approved and recommended to City Council, **and he so moved**, the rescheduling of November's Council Committee meetings to Friday, November 6th, at 1:00 p.m. However, City Council will meet on its regularly scheduled date of Monday, November 9, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.

Jacqueline Rucker duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ratification of Chuck Autry's Appointment to the Board of Directors for Princeton Health Care Center – Mr. Lytton reported the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council, **and he so moved**, the ratification of the appointment of Mr. Chuck Autry to the Board of Directors for the Princeton Health Care Center. Mr. Autry will replace David Kirk whose term on the Board has expired.

James Harvey duly seconded the motion.

Council Member Jacqueline Rucker inquired about Mr. Autry's qualifications to serve on the Health Care Center's Board.

Dewey Russell responded that Mr. Autry had been a certified public accountant for thirty years.

Joe Allen added that Chuck Autry had worked for Princeton Community Hospital, also.

On a roll call vote, Dewey Russell, James Harvey, Marshall Lytton, Joe Allen and Mayor David Graham voted to ratify Mr. Chuck Autry. James Hill and Jacqueline Rucker voted against the motion to ratify. Therefore, the motion to ratify Chuck Autry's appointment to the Board of Directors for Princeton Health Care Center carried on a vote of five (5) in favor and two (2) opposed.

Employee Attendance Bonus – Marshall Lytton **moved** City Council table action on the matter of the Employee Attendance Bonus at this time.

James Hill duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Vision Insurance – Marshall Lytton **moved** City Council table action on the matter of Vision Insurance for City employees.

James Harvey duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. Lytton presented the following report on behalf of Library Director Sheena Johnson:

The Princeton Public Library now is open from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and still is offering a full curbside service from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 pm., Monday through Friday, for those who do not yet wish to venture into the building.

For the month of October, the Library is offering programs such as Lab Squad Scientists (science experiments at home), Virtual Lego, Virtual Drop in Tech Time, Life Lessons Book Club, a Mad Hatters hat making video tutorial, Not Your Kids Pumpkin (creations for adults), Little Witch goody bag pickup, Great Pumpkin Decorating, Writers Workshop, and the regularly scheduled story times on Thursdays and Fridays, which are available through Facebook Live. Also, 25 pumpkins have been donated by Jim's Produce in Princeton for the Great Pumpkin event.

All materials for these programs are provided by the Library and available for pickup any time.

Everyone is encouraged to check out the Library's Facebook and Instagram accounts to keep up with what the Library is doing.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Mr. Lytton also presented the following Community Improvement Commission report on behalf of CIC member Sheena Johnson:

The CIC met briefly on Monday, October 5, 2020, at Princeton City Park.

The CIC discussed using a portion of the budget, \$3,750.00, to fund half of the boxes and flowers for Stafford Drive and Rogers Street, which will be placed out in April-May, 2021. The total cost is \$7,500.00, but half will be matched by another donor and fund-raised by the CIC. The cost is \$5,000.00 for the boxes and around \$2,500.00 for flowers, which need to be purchased in advance. This will provide a total of 22-23 boxes to spread out and will added some color to those sections of the City.

There is a new bike rack, which was discussed by the CIC some months ago, that now has been incorporated off Mercer Street in the parking lot across from Myra's Flower Shop. It had taken some time to find an appropriate bike rack as there was some difficulty finding a reasonable shipping cost, but it has been incorporated as of the last week of September.

B. CITY ATTORNEY
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The City Attorney had nothing to report to City Council.

C. CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mike Webb thanked everyone for participating in the evening's remote City Council meeting and urged them to stay safe during this latest surge in the Covid-19 pandemic.

D. CITY CLERK

The City Clerk had nothing to report to City Council.

E. HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources Director Wanda Donahue reported that a total of 20 City employees and Council Members participated in the flu vaccinations at City Hall as provided by nurses from the Mercer County Health Department. She also advised that City employees who did not participate still may visit the Health Center to receive the flu vaccine.

VII. COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE

Mayor Graham dispensed with the meeting's Council Roundtable until in-person meetings resume.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion, the October 13, 2020, meeting of Princeton Council adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

David E. Graham, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kenneth E. Clay, City Clerk