

**REGULAR MEETING ~ CITY COUNCIL
PRINCETON, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
October 16, 2023**

A Regular Meeting of the Common Council for the City of Princeton, Mercer County, West Virginia was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 800 Bee Street, on Monday, October 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were Mayor David Graham; Vice Mayor Joseph Allen; Council Members Jacqueline Rucker, James Hawkins, Dewey Russell, Marshall Lytton and James Hill; City Manager Michael Webb and City Clerk Kaitlyn Smith. Absent was City Attorney Paul Cassell. A quorum was constituted thereby.

I. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman Marshall Lytton presented the invocation by giving thanks for this day; gave thanks for watching over the city employees, department heads, along with the mayor and council members, City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney; be with our fire, police, first responders, nurses and doctors; asked for blessings and special prayer for Council Member Rucker for strength and healing; prayed for Marie Hill for healing so she can be back home soon; prayed for Pat Smith and Scooter Smith for speedy recoveries; prayed for Ukraine and Israel; prayed for those that have lost loved ones in those wars; asked for blessings over our country with wisdom, love and compassion; guide those that are in a position of authority and lead them to make the right decisions; be with Council this evening and asked that their decisions be pleasing in your sight.

Council Member 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. Resolutions – Proclamations – Presentations

A. Proclamations

- a. Representative Jonathan Hall from Congresswoman Carol Miller's officer presented Ken Clay with a flag of the United States of America, which was flown over the U.S. Capital, along with a Certificate of Recognition from the United States Congress.
- b. Mayor David Graham presented Ken Clay a Certificate of Appreciation from Governor Justice for 28 years of service to the City of Princeton.

IV. Public Input

Kelly Stanley and Christina Flanigan, chairs of the Southern Thunder Band Competition, wanted to give thanks to the City of Princeton for helping out during the competition. They went on to say that it had been a big week with several football games, so the stadium had been well used. Public Works showed up and started cleaning up the trash and brought disposable trash containers to help with the event and help highlight the town and the community.

Student Spencer Hawkins stated, "The 2023 Southern Thunder Band Competition was a huge success for participating bands and our Marching Tigers with 20 bands and over 800 students competing, it proved to be eventful, exciting and entertaining. It takes the effort of countless individuals to plan, prepare and carry out such an event and we appreciate all who made the day possible. On behalf of the Princeton Senior High School Marching Band, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to your support in cleaning and providing equipment for our successful event. Your assistance played a crucial role in ensuring the smooth execution of the event. The dedication and hard work of the band boosters, volunteers, community partners and the City of

Princeton created an environment that allowed the students and their families to fully enjoy the event. Your assistance in maintaining a clean and presentable environment has greatly contributed to the success of our band program. We are truly grateful for the efforts put forth by the city and ensuring our facilities were well kept throughout the entire day. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for your ongoing support and we look forward to continuing to work together to create memorable experiences for our students in the community. Again, thank you so much.”

V. Consent Agenda

- A. **Minutes of August 21, 2023 Meeting-** With corrections duly noted by the Clerk, Mayor David Graham committed the minutes of the meeting of August 21, 2023, to the record as corrected.
- B. **Minutes of the Election Canvas June 12, 2023-** With no corrections, Mayor David Graham committed the minutes of the meeting of June 12, 2023, to record.
- C. **Minutes of the Special Meeting April 18, 2023-** With no corrections, Mayor David Graham committed the minutes of the meeting of April 18, 2023, to record.

VI. Policy Agenda

A. Committee Reports

1. Public Works and Recreation

Public Works

Chairperson Jacqueline Rucker reported that the Public Works and Recreation Committee of Princeton City Council met on October 11, 2023, with the following to report out to City Council:

Public Works' Monthly Report – Public Works Field Supervisor Terry Blankenship presented the following progress report for September:

OLD BUSINESS:

- Continued mowing and maintaining the city parks.
- Awaiting the capital paving project bid assessments.
- Continued fixing several more areas in town that needed pothole repair and patchwork.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Public Works completed 27 Special Service Requests including 3 in coordination with Code Enforcement.
- Fixed a sunken spot on the side of the road on Mikee Street, we sawed that out and excavated and didn't find any issues so we packed back with gravel and re-asphalted.
- Milled and patched several places on Amber Lane.
- Dug out the ditch line on Amber Lane running towards Low Gap Road.
- Dredged out the ditch line behind the Robo Car Wash.
- Fixed a storm water issue coming off Oakvale Road running down into Grants Parking lot and restored the drainage ditches that had gotten filled in over the years.
- Built a new 30x30 drainage droplet on Monroe Street and built a concrete head wall for the end of the piping there.
- Fixed 2 drains, 1 of them at 7th street and Mercer and the other one at 8th Street and Mercer. The old metal grating was decayed and falling in making it a danger, they rebuilt the drains and patched some of the sidewalk in those areas around the drains.

- Brush hogged the large ditch line running along airport drive to South Walker and dredged out the ditch line there and resurfaced the ditch for future stability.
- Took down 2 large diseased Oak Trees on Bee Street that had become rotten and where a danger to traffic and pedestrian travel.
- We also cut down and removed another tree that was splitting and hanging over the road in the city park that was endangering the public.
- We have started sending out our Leaf Truck and already have begun collecting leaves.
- We are also already getting prepared for Christmas decorations for the year and getting involved in the planning for the upcoming Christmas parade.
- We have started work on securing the City Pool for this winter and ensuring we are in good shape and ready to go for next year.
- We provided traffic control and assistance for this year's Autumnfest.

Parks and Recreation Department

Assistant Director Melinda Edwards presented the Parks and Recreation Report for September:

OLD BUSINESS:

Programming

Games for the Itty and Bitty Basketball Leagues will begin Tuesday, October 17. League play will be 3 days a week and run through the end of November. There are a total of 145 children participating in the leagues.

Registration for the Youth Indoor Soccer leagues finished up last week. Practice begins in approximately 2 weeks with league play beginning in November. This third year program is still continuing to grow with 147 participants currently registered.

Registration for the Boys Little League Basketball and Girls Cheerleading program will continue through mid-November and begin following the holidays.

Community Playgrounds-Basketball Goals

In speaking with Chris Pierce with Empire Construction Company, there is not an exact timeline on the Park Board's basketball goal project. However, he did say that the project would move along quickly once they began and also assured that all of the goals would be installed by early spring.

NEW BUSINESS:

Community Foundation of the Virginias Grant Award

The Recreation Department was notified in September that it was awarded a grant in the amount of \$10,401. The funds would be used to purchase 3 more polycarbonate basketball goal systems and 1 pickle ball net system. The Park Board will determine the location of the courts.

Donation

The department also recently received a \$3,400 donation from Mountaineer Lifelines to purchase 7 more new trash receptacles for the city park. There were already 10 of these new receptacles installed in the park in 2022.

Vice Mayor Joe Allen noted that a Tom Jaynes, a gentleman who volunteered to run the sound system for Music in the Park, passed away unexpectedly. He states that he was a great gentleman and will be hard to replace.

Council Member James Hill said that he really embodied what the spirit of help means in the community.

Railroad Museum

Museum Director Pat Smith reported the following for the month of September:

Numbers for July: 329 in attendance; \$226.00 gift shop sales; \$600 in Donations; 53 RVs

Ms. Smith would like to publicly thank Public Works for helping set up the stage, canopies and chairs for the Railroad Museum's Birthday Celebration.

October 21: The PHS Sensational Sixties Reunion will be held October 20. Which includes the classes of 1960-1970. The Railroad Museum will feature a tour of local museums and grave sites off North Walker with several trolley ride tours and a brunch at the Museum. Expected attendance is about 90 for brunch.

Mr. Gary Skaggs is loaning the Railroad Museum his very expensive Virginian Models and it also giving the museum a shelving system to display. He wants to retain ownership of it now, but will give it to the museum when he passes.

Princeton Public Library

Mayor Graham presented the report for September on behalf of Library Director Laura Buchanan:

Library Stats

- 82 new library cards of the month of August.
- 4,522 items circulated

Programs

- The Library hosted 25 programs
- Interacted with 667 community members
- Participated in Autumnfest. The table located in front of the parking lot housed the Library's calendar of events, information about the Friends of the Library's Booktober Fest, had a button maker station, and featured Shelley. Inside the library, there was bracelet making station, Friends of the Library Book Sale, and the Library showed the Lego Movie.
- The Pondering the Past Program featured retired postal worker Joe Besenyei who provided insight into the operations of the post office, and gave a guided tour of the library in order to reflect upon the setup of the library back when it was the Post office. Railroad Museum Director Pat Smith was part of this program, providing information about the development of Princeton. Patrons left with a better understanding of the history of the Library building and the town.
- Overall, the programs are receiving good turnout and the feedback from participants has been quite positive.

Upcoming Programs for October-November

- The Teen Art Club will meet on October 24th at 5pm. Participants will have an opportunity to paint their own mask.
- Also on the 24th is Chess Club, they will meet at 6pm and this is open to all ages and skill levels. For those who want some extra practice, the library has several chess sets available for checkout.
- The Library will be holding the Guided Ghost Tours through the library again this year for Monster Mash. It is an opportunity for the public to experience the residential ghost and his friends. For those who do not wish to take the tour, candy will be given out at the front steps of the library.

- The Library is once again participating in NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writer's Month) to help promote the joy of writing. They will be hosting write-ins throughout the month of November with the first one taking place on November 2nd at 6pm.
- On November 13th at 5:30pm, Jim Holland will be presenting his book “My Fortunate Detour” which will be available for purchase at the end of his talk.
- The Princeton High School Madrigals will help kick off our holiday season by performing at the library at 1pm on November 16th.

These are just a handful of the many programs that the library is hosting. To see a list of all of the events, you may visit our website or stop by the library to pick up a calendar of events.

Miscellaneous

The Library Director also reported as follows:

I would like to give a big thanks to Princeton Public works for the assistance that they continuously provide in helping me keep the library functional and looking good. They go above and beyond in taking care of things, such as assisting Ms. Becky and I take down our canopy at Autumnfest. They had so much to tend to that day, but they stopped to help two short ladies. We truly appreciate all that you do for us and the community.

2. Public Safety

Councilman James Hill reported that the Public Safety Committee of Princeton City Council met on October 11, 2023, with the following to report to City Council:

Code Enforcement Department

Monthly Report for September 2023 – Mr. Hill reported the September report for Code Enforcement Director Ty Smith:

COMPUTATION OF COMPLAINTS

Summary – Property Maintenance

Initial Complaints	320
Cumulative Complaints to date –	48,422

AREA PATROL SUMMARY

Demolition/Renovation Programs Status

Condemnations/Unsafe in Process	3
Demolitions in Appeals Process	0
Demolitions w/Notice to Proceed	1
Total Demolitions to Date	766

Animal Control & Property Maintenance

Complaints this Month	121
Animal Control Cases	12
Impounded (dogs 3; cats 0)	3
Adopted	1
Euthanized	1
Reclaimed	1
Rescued	0
Property Maintenance Cases	109

Building Inspection (Zoning, PM, RC)

Building Permits (Res. 8; Com. 11)	19
Total Inspections	48
Total Project Costs	\$340,426.00
Permit Fees	\$2,407.00

Flood Plain Management & Property Maintenance

Flood Plain Determinations:	
Flood Plain Permits Issued	1
Property Maintenance Case Total	109

Zoning Official

Certificate of Occupancy Applications:	1
Certificate of Occupancy Inspections:	1
Zoning Board Cases:	0

Rental Compliance

Revenue in \$197.50; Total to Date:	\$32,732.95
Registered Units: New Units: 2 Houses 2 Apts.; RENEWALS:	1
Cumulative Total: Houses 377; Apts. 569; Other 83; Total	1,029

Vacant Buildings

Registered Vacant Buildings Registered	1; Total 42.
Vacant Building Fees Collected:	0

BILLING TOTALS FOR SEPTEMBER

Demolitions Billed: \$11,437.50	Payments Collected: \$315.00
Grass, Trash & Vet Billed: \$1,557.61	Payments Received: \$125.00
13 Invoices Total	

Fire Department

Fire Chief Matt Mould presented the following report for September 2023:

Emergency Calls for the Month: 118

- 4 Fire Calls
 1. 2 building fires
 2. 1 vehicle fire
- 16 Vehicle Accidents / Rescues
- 73 Emergency Medical Calls
- Total emergency calls for FY 23-24: **347**

Inspections:

- 5 fire inspections
- 1 certificate of occupancy
- 9 burning permits

Training:

- 551 training hours
 - Lt. A. Beeman completed Southern Highland's Crisis Intervention Team (C.I.T.) 40 hour training
 - Lt. Beeman and FF K. Nunn completed the C.I.T. instructor training
 - FFs A. Gunnoe and A. Peyton completed certifications in Swift Water Rescue Operations.
 - Other members participated in Pipeline Safety and Railcar Incident Response sessions provided by the WV Emergency Management Division.
 - These sessions were set up by Mercer County OEM Director, K. Gunnoe.

Vehicle Accident Billing:

- \$0 for the month.

Total for FY2023-24: **\$0**

Other Updates:

- Continued advertising and accepting applications for Probationary Firefighter.
- Began annual Fall maintenance
 - General vehicle maintenance
 - Hydrant testing and inspections
- Ladder 1 (the 75' ladder truck) is back after getting the repairs required by its annual inspection.
 - All other vehicles are in service.

Upcoming News:

- Fire extinguisher training with MCTEC in October.
- Fire Prevention Week, October 8th-14th
 - "Cooking safety starts with you! Pay attention to fire prevention."
- Hiring test was on Saturday, October 14. Six people turned out and three passed.
- C.A.R.E Event with Southern Highlands on November 2nd at City Hall. This care event gives children and adults that are under Southern Highlands Care a chance to interact with first responders.
- A 40-hour C.I.T. class will be held at the end of November.

Police Department

Police Chief Gray presented the following report for September:

Call Report – During the month of September Princeton Police Officers responded to 532 calls, made 23 arrests and issued 219 citations.

- The Police Department attended Flex Training for the new 911 system.
- The Police Department will attend the C.A.R.E. Event along with the Fire Department.
- Lt. Pugh went to a Tac Ops class that deals with less than lethal training such as bean bags, rubber bullets, CS gas, pepper spray, etc. He will be attend a class in Lynchburg and once that is completed, he will be able to teach this course.

- Chief Gray would like to recognize Patrolman Gibson, Patrolman Cook, Patrolman Jones and also K-9 Officer Kilo for conducting a traffic stop that lead to taking many illegal narcotics off the street. It was the biggest bust in department history.

3. Finance and Administration Committee

Finance Department

September 2023, Financial Report – Finance Director Brian Conner reported that as of the end of September, the third month of FY 2024, the actual revenues collected stood at 27.03% compared to the budgeted amount of 25.00%, while actual appropriations spent were 29.04%. Total funds available for City operations at the end of September were **\$2,513,302**.

Noteworthy Expenditures for September:

Traveler’s Insurance.	\$137,374.50
PEIA	\$73,463.30
Morgan Stanley	\$39,994.98
KS Statebank.	\$14,874.83

Fire and Police Pension
Two Police Cruisers

Chairman Lytton continued by reporting the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council the September 2023, Financial Statements and Report **and he so moved**.

Council Member James Hawkins duly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Audit Agreement-Chairman Marshall Lytton reported that the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council the Audit Agreement between the City of Princeton and Ferrari and Associates PLLC, and **he so moved**.

Vice Mayor Joseph Allen seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. & O. Tax Incentives – **ON MOTION**, Councilman Marshall Lytton reported that the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council the following businesses in the City for the 100%, 1 year, B. & O. Tax Incentive for new businesses and **he so moved**.

1. Sweet Babies Bakery – 514 Rogers Street – Sharon Ratliff;

Council Member Jacqueline Rucker seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Princeton Economic Development Authority

PEDA Director Sam Lusk reported the following for the month of September:

Grand Openings/Ribbon Cuttings: 22 scheduled in 2023 thus far and more upcoming to be scheduled:

- Sweet babies Bakery on Roger Street
- Valero Gas Company on Wickham
- Candle Shop Company Second Location on Mercer Street
- Vape and Smoke Shop at Athens Crossroads

Business Spotlight

Continuing to spotlight businesses on social media.

Newsletter

The June to December newsletter is in the design process. The newsletter will include similar items as the last one, incorporating letters Grand Openings, Ribbon Cuttings, and Business Spotlights. It will also again highlight the Beautification Grant, Princeton Business Works Grant, and the One Year Business and Occupancy Tax Forgiveness.

Press Releases

Continuing to create and send out press releases to all local media outlets.

Social Media

Sites for PEDA and City of Princeton results, last 28 days:

Post Reach: 22,760

Post Engagement: 5,681

New Page Followers: 179

Followers: 6,879

Reactions: 1,328

Shares: 463

Photo Views: 1,628

Other News

- This month PEDA received a \$33,000 USDA Rural Business Development Grant for the creation of a business asset map. PEDA will be working with Region 1 to create this tool for the community.
- PEDA intends to have one of the city transferred properties soon sold to an interested buyer. More details will be shared when the transaction finalizes.
- The Tennessee Tech University has recently extended the City of Princeton and opportunity for free electric car charging stations. The City Attorney and PEDA Director are reviewing this opportunity and will present more during next month's council meeting.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

- Toy Soldiers are in the process of being made at CMS
- New Winding Star Decorations have been shipped from Holiday Outdoor Décor
- A sizeable ambulance decoration will be added in front of the old City Hall with a police car and fire truck outdoor decorations.

Appointment of Floyd Ricks to Building Commission- Mr. Lytton reported that the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council the appointment of Floyd Ricks to the Building Commission, and **he so moved.**

Councilwoman Jacqueline Rucker seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Vice Mayor Joseph Allen expressed that he is happy to see Mr. Ricks appointed to the Building Commission, stating that if he is anything like he is for the Park and Recreation Department's board, he will be a mover and a shaker.

Councilman James Hill noted that Mr. Ricks is the one that is responsible for initiating Music in the Park.

Resolution for Build West Virginia Act- PEDDA Director Sam Lusk stated that the Build WV Act allows municipalities to apply to be a West Virginia designated district and that the district extends 20 square miles in each direction outside that city's municipal limits. Contractors would do work within the designated district and can apply through the state and if awarded, their project could gain incentives from the state and local municipality, such as sales tax exemption, B&O Tax exemption, etc. This resolution would express city council's support for Princeton to become a designated district. Lastly, he states that there is also an ordinance on the agenda for a first reading that, if passed, would allow for those projects within the city limits to have the sales tax and B&O tax exemptions.

Councilman James Hill asked if the project was outside of city limits, but the materials were purchased in city limits, would the exemption still apply.

Mr. Lusk stated that it would, as long as the project was within the 20 square miles.

Council Member Marshall Lytton made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilman James Hawkins seconded.

Councilman James Hill abstained, wanting to research this topic further.

The motion carried.

Rules Regarding Notice of Regularly Scheduled and Special Meetings- Mr. Lytton reported that the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council to have the City Attorney draft a policy regarding the rules and regulations of regular scheduled and special meetings, and he so moved.

Councilman James Hawkins seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Mike Webb said that at the end of the day, this will save the City some money regarding publication in the newspaper. Technology has changed so much that we can notify people of meetings and reach out online via multiple sources. He also wanted to note that this is just for meeting notices. Public Hearings and such, will still be published in the newspaper.

Resolution: Community Center Funds- Mr. Lytton reported the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council a revised resolution seeking \$1,133,630 in matching funds for the Community Center through Governor Justice's Congressional Directed Spending Non-Federal Project, **and he so moved.**

Vice Mayor Joseph Allen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Allen asked about the time frame and when would we hear back regarding the matching funds.

PEDA Director Sam Lusk said it would be a couple months.

Trick or Treat- Mr. Lytton reported the Finance and Administration Committee approved and recommended to City Council the trick or treat times for the City of Princeton be from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 31st, 2023, **and he so moved.**

Councilman James Hawkins seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney

City Manager Mike Webb read the following in the absence of the City Attorney:

First Reading of an Ordinance Adding 786.08 WV Build Act Exemption and 767.40 WV Build Act Exemption to the Codified Ordinances of the City of Princeton, West Virginia, regarding the exemptions related to the Build WV Act.

Mayor Graham asked if there was a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance Adding 786.08 WV Build Act Exemption and 767.40 WV Build Act Exemption.

Councilman Dewey Russell made a motion, with a second by Council Member James Hawkins.

Councilman Hill abstained to research more.

The motion carried.

Second Reading and Public Hearing- Cable Franchise Agreement between City of Princeton and Comcast of California/Maryland/Pennsylvania/Virginia/West Virginia.

Mr. Webb stated that this is a nonexclusive agreement just like the city has with current providers.

Councilman Russell asked when Comcast would get started in Princeton.

PEDA Director Sam Lusk stated that once the contract is signed, Comcast would begin building a network to accommodate what they need.

Mayor Graham left regular session at 7:37 p.m. and entered into a public hearing by title of Cable Franchise Agreement between City of Princeton and Comcast of California/Maryland/Pennsylvania/Virginia/West Virginia.

After no public input, the public hearing was closed and Council returned to regular session at 7:38 p.m.

Councilman James Hill made a motion to approve the second reading of Cable Franchise Agreement between City of Princeton and Comcast of California/Maryland/Pennsylvania/Virginia/West Virginia.

Vice Mayor Joseph Allen seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hill noted that he believes this will be a vast improvement in the area.

Mayor Graham agreed and stated Comcast will be a great addition.

Second Reading and Public Hearing on adding 1381.20 Homeless Shelters to the Codified Ordinances to the City of Princeton- No homeless shelter shall be allowed as a use in any zoning district if the homeless shelter is located within one-half mile (1/2) of any school, preschool, daycare, library or public park. Any homeless shelter not prohibited by this section must still comply with all existing regulations or requirements.

Mayor Graham left regular session at 7:39 p.m. and entered in to a Public Hearing for and Ordinance adding 1381.20 Homeless Shelters to the Codified Ordinances of the City of Princeton.

With no public input, Council returned to regular session at 7:40 p.m.

Councilman James Hawkins made a motion to approve the second reading of 1381.20 Homeless Shelters.

Council Member James Hill seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Second Reading and Public Hearing- An Ordinance Vacating, Closing and Abandoning Unopened Alley and Street (An Unopened Portion of Caperton Avenue) in the City Limits of Princeton, Mercer County, West Virginia.

Mayor Graham left regular session at 7:40 p.m. and entered in to a Public Hearing.

Mayor Graham states that this is an unopened portion of Caperton Avenue that is directly behind the CMS Building on Rogers Street.

Vice Mayor Allen asked if the plan was to add on to the building.

Mr. Webb confirmed that it would be for economic development.

Council returned to regular session at 7:41 p.m. after no public input.

Council Member Jacqueline Rucker made a motion to approve An Ordinance Vacating, Closing and Abandoning Unopened Alley and Street (An Unopened Portion of Caperton Avenue) in the City Limits of Princeton, Mercer County, West Virginia.

Councilman James Hill seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

City Manger

City Manager Mike Webb thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting. He states it was good to hear from the Southern Thunder group and the help that Public Works provided to them. He also congratulated Ken Clay for the years of service to the City.

City Clerk

City Clerk Kaitlyn Smith noted that she had worked on the “City Clerk” portion of the website and has upcoming meetings, events and legal notices posted on there for the community to access.

Human Resources Department

Human Resources Director Brian Blankenship stated he did not have anything to report, but he did want to mention that he enjoyed helping the Fire Department with their hiring test. He noted that during the physical ability test, he could hear the staff giving words of comfort and encouragement to the candidates.

Council Roundtable

Councilman James Hill started the roundtable out by saying he has been in EMS for 43 years in Mercer County and with the WVU agreement at Princeton's hospital, he believes that this will really help the community. He continued by saying the upcoming cruise will be the last one of the year and this event is a really good thing and has brought many people into the area each time.

Councilman Hill recently attended a drug class the week before and noted that it was a very informative class. He said information talked about in the class was eye opening and he would like to see the class back next year.

Council Member Marshall Lytton thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting and wanted to congratulate Ken Clay on a job well done for the City. Mr. Lytton had the pleasure of working with him for the last 20 years and Ken has done an excellent job and he really appreciates everything that he did. He asked Chief Gray to congratulate the officers involved in the raid earlier in the month. He noted that Public Works received several compliments throughout the evening and he wanted to thank them for everything they have done recently. Lastly, he thanked Jeff Harvey from Bluefield Daily Telegraph for attending the meeting.

Vice Mayor Joseph Allen thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and wanted to thank the Public Works Department for all that they do. Mr. Allen continued by congratulating the Police Department on the outstanding work they did on the drug bust. He congratulated Ken Clay on a job well done. Lastly, he wanted to remind everyone that COVID is still out stating that two in his household contracted the virus recently.

Councilwoman Jacqueline Rucker thanked those in attendance and a special thank you to those faithful attendees. She thanked Public Works and all other departments for all that they do, and thanked Jeff Harvey for always doing an excellent job. She encouraged those in attendance to get their friends and neighbors involved with the City.

Councilman James Hawkins thanked everyone in attendance. He also made note of the support the City gave to the Southern Thunder Band Competition that was held on Saturday, October 7th. Southern Thunder is a huge event for the community and a big fundraiser for the school. He stated he had spoken with the City Manager earlier in the week regarding barriers and the use of a digital sign to help with the event. Between football games and the weather, the grounds needed some help. He then noticed Public Works Co-Director Eric Gatchell, along with two other Public Works employees, walking around and cleaning up the area. He said they went above and beyond and he wanted to say thank you. He also wanted to thank the Police and Fire Departments for their presence that day as well, along with Princeton Rescue Squad.

Mayor David Graham thanked everyone that came out to the meeting. He also thanked all healthcare workers and first responders for keeping everyone safe with the resurgence of COVID in the area, and also the drug issues in the area. Mayor Graham stated that if it wasn't for the City employees, we would not have a City to be proud of. They go above and beyond what they are called to do every day and he, along with Council, appreciate every one of them. He added a Congratulations to Ken Clay.

Councilman Dewey Russell finished up round table by thanking those in attendance and a thank you to City Manager Mike Webb, City Clerk Kaitlyn Smith and Human Resources Brian Blankenship.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.