

Town of Mason Council

Regular Meeting

April 18, 2023, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall

The regular meeting of the Mason Town Council was opened by Mayor Kristopher Clark with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Present were Clark, Recorder Mindy Kearns, and council members Sarah Stover, Bob Reed, Jill Nelson, Steve Ohlinger and Barry Taylor.

Minutes from the regular meeting on March 14, 2023 were approved upon motion by Stover and second by Reed. Bills were approved to be paid following a motion by Reed and second by Stover.

Personal appearances:

Clifton resident Bill Hussell thanked the council for the “band-aid” fix for Clifton water customers but said there is still little pressure. The council is still searching for a contractor to repair the line in Hussell’s area until the larger water project can supply new lines to all of Clifton.

Mary Wise of Middleport told the council of that village’s plans for July 4. She invited the town to participate in their activities since the Mason celebration is planned for July 1.

Larry Daniel asked about the status of the neighborhood watch program.

Mayor’s Report:

Clark said the LED lights at the park are finished, and that the women’s prison crew has been working in town to clean the streets and paint the curbs.

Committee Reports:

Ohlinger said a ball team is wanting to do a glove drive taking up money on May 6 at the fire station. It will be parents and no children.

Reed asked about gravel at Brown and First Street but was told that is not a thoroughfare and people are not to be driving through it.

Kearns presented a Fair Housing Proclamation that was signed by Mayor Clark.

Unfinished Business:

The mayor said he had met with Triad Engineering on the proposed major Clifton water project. It will cost an approximate \$2.7 million and work is being done to secure all or part of the funding.

Timeline for the project includes June 2023, project design initiated; Nov. 2023, plans and specifications submitted; Jan. 2024, project advertised for bids; May 2024, contracts awarded; June 2024, construction begins; March 2025, project construction complete.

Ohlinger made the motion, with a second by Taylor, to allow Clark to sign the resolution for the project. Ohlinger made a motion, with a second by Reed, to allow Clark to sign an amendment for the Clifton project for a subcontractor in addition to Triad.

Mason Main Street will be held April 29 and it was announced vendors are still being accepted. Second Street from Center to Anderson will be closed during the event.

The newly renovated basketball court will open on May 6 with a ribbon cutting at 10 a.m., followed by a basketball camp for grades first through sixth until 1 p.m. The camp is free. Myers Paving will be striping the court, with the Mason County Commission to pay for the striping.

Discussion for a new town hall sign was tabled.

An update on the senior citizen center was given by the mayor, who said the floors are being filled with epoxy and should be completed in a few weeks.

Ohlinger made a motion, with a second by Taylor, to accept the low bid from Mitchell Construction of New Haven to replace the roofs on the pumphouses. The cost is \$4,000.

Discussion on the storm drain near Wyatt Street was tabled until estimates can be gathered for riprap.

Nelson made a motion, with a second by Reed, to have Myers Paving pave Third Street from Hickory to Center at a cost of \$52,500.

Clark said he had turned in a DEP grant application for the demolition of the town property formerly owned by Lew King, located behind the senior center.

New Business:

Ohlinger made a motion, with a second by Taylor, to allow Police Chief Colton McKinney and Sgt. Tyler Doss to attend a 2-day training in St. Albans for their continued hours. The cost will be \$329 per officer.

McKinney said he was going to sell the old police car with a minimum bid of \$2,500. He told council the siren had been placed in the new cruiser, and lights would be installed soon.

The chief also informed council that there is an anonymous police tip line available to residents at 304-358-0220.

Upon motion by Nelson and second by Ohlinger, the council agreed to get First Class Trash to supply the dumpsters for the spring clean up at a cost of \$1,100.

Stover made a motion, with a second by Reed, to hire First Class Trash as the town's garbage pick up provider at \$325 per month. This will save the town approximately \$1,000 per year.

Taylor made a motion, with a second by Nelson, to have additional electric service installed at the park and town hall, at a cost not to exceed \$7,900. The additional service will provide for food trucks, Christmas light displays, and other events.

Upon motion by Reed and second by Stover, the council agreed to hire Bobby Rice as a laborer at \$13 per hour. Upon motion by Stover and second by Taylor, the council hired Marsha Engle for the park attendant at \$150 per week.

Kearns presented municipal election poll workers as Kathy VanMeter, Cathy Ferguson, Pam Thompson, and Paula Gregory, with Darlene Roach and Reta Hendrickson as alternates. Taylor made a motion to accept the workers, with a second by Nelson. The motion passed.

Taylor made the motion, with a second by Reed, to pay election workers the same as in county elections including \$25 for training; \$175 for election day; and \$11 per hour for early voting. The motion passed.

Stover made a motion to allow Clark to sign the annual contract with the Mason County Health Department. Nelson seconded, and the motion passed.

A study done by the West Virginia Rural Water Association shows that the town is losing money in both the water and sewer departments. The association is recommending that the minimum water bill be raised from \$25.78 to \$33.78, and the minimum sewer bill from \$32.36 to \$43.71. Taylor made a motion to begin the process of raising the bills, Reed seconded, and the motion passed.

A coal severance budget revision was approved upon motion by Nelson and second by Taylor. A budget revision to the general fund was approved following a motion by Stover and second by Nelson.

Stover made a motion to lay the levy at a tax rate of 10.62 per hundred. Taylor seconded, and the motion passed.

The next meeting will be May 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Upon motion by Taylor and second by Nelson, the meeting was adjourned.