

**Regular City Council Meeting**  
Official Proceedings  
City of Virden, IL  
Virden City Council Chambers  
Monday April 1, 2024

Regular City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor George Murphy at 7:00pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call:**

- **The following Council Members were present:** Calloway, Mottershaw, Mitchell, Bertolino, Neighbors, Boster and Cunningham
- **Absent:** None
- **Also, present were:** Mayor George Murphy, Deputy City Clerk Karen Burgess, Bookkeeper/Deputy Treasurer Barry Liss, Police Chief Steven Snodgrass and Public Works Director Gary Etter
- **Guest:** Terry Davis, Mike Marsaglia and Bryce Michaels

**Approval of Agenda (4-1-2024):**

Bertolino would like to remove under water purchase of meter bases that was done last month, Motion made by Mitchell seconded by Bertolino to approve the Agenda (4-1-2024) as amended.  
Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** *Bertolino, Calloway, Mitchell, Neighbors, Cunningham, Boster, and Mottershaw*; **Nayes:** *None*; **Absent:** *None*

**Approve Consent Agenda:**

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes (Regular Meeting 3/4/24)**
- **Approval of Bills Payable:**
- **Treasurer's Report:**
- **Water Report (February 2024 Gallons report and March 2024 Collections report):**
- **Requests for use of Public Property:**
  - American Legion Post 386 Cookout – They ask for permission to use the southwest corner of the City Square for the use of their pork chop cookout fund raisers. (see attachment for dates)

Motion made by Bertolino seconded by Boster to approve the Consent Agenda.

Discussion: Mottershaw asked under use of public property is contingent on proof of insurance.

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** *Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Boster, Cunningham, Neighbors and Calloway*; **Nayes:** *None*; **Absent:** *None*

**Comments from Audience:**

**1. Bryce Michaels – Special Olympics**

Bryce Michaels says he is here with the Special Olympics Organization. There are 4 athletes out of Girard, none out of Virden. He says he is here to bring to our attention the need to bring in more athletes in the North Mac area. He is the spokesperson. They are going to be doing a Law Enforcement torch run. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of June, they will be running through Girard and Virden going to Bloomington. There are 3,000 officers that start the torch run and 400 that will meet up at the University to light the torch. Through donations they were able to get new jerseys and jackets. He says they have better sportsmanship than the Olympics. They are taught sportsmanship above all else. He has 2 Sportsmanship ribbons in basketball. He has 15 gold medals and has only competed for 4 years.

**2. Terry Davis – Water Commissioner**

Terry has info on chemicals called forever chemicals. One is called perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl. They are a large complex group of chemicals that have been around the world since the 1950s. They are an ingredient in various everyday products. These are called PFAS for short. EPA has conducted tests over the years and has concluded 45% of the water supply in the US contains these chemicals EPA tested our water and found no PFAS in our water.

Water main project for 16” new line they will be installing along 104. All the permits we applied for we have received from the railroad. We are waiting on permits from the EPA. We hope to have everything back by June 1<sup>st</sup>. We are 6-7 weeks behind because we had trouble getting easements due to a couple of them are in trusts. The trustees didn’t live in town, so they had to be contacted with certified mail and wait for a response back. We have all the easements now. The cost is going to be 5.6 million. At the time we thought we would be asking for a rate increase at 75¢ per 1,000 gallons, but we don’t need that much. It’ll be 60¢. We don’t know if the EPA will forgive us this loan. When you have your rate increase, it will be one time, it won’t be phased in. No, it will be one time.

- 3. Mike Marsgalia** wants to know if we have been contacted to fill E.D.’s spot. Murphy has gotten one contact so far. Mike wants to know the stance or what’s going to happen with the VSD letter. Murphy will be putting out a statement in a few days. There are some false statements in there. Mike agrees.

**REPORTS OF SUPERVISORS**

**City Engineer:**

1. None

**Director of Operations:**

1. None

**Chief of Police:**

1. Mottershaw asked chief if we are still going to the ordinance violation court. Chief said on some stuff yes.

**City Office Manager:**

1. Karen wanted to let everyone know today was the last day for applications for the cleaning lady or man. When did you want to look at them? Bertolino says to put them in everyone’s mailbox to look at them. Muphy says they can schedule interviews at the admin meeting.

**City Attorney:**

1. Murphy asked the attorneys to go to the admin meeting to go over properties for the IHDA demolition grant.

#### REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS

##### City Clerk:

1. Questions asked about when I work on minutes
  - a. When Karen was listening to the admin meeting, there were questions when she works on minutes. She works on minutes during her lunch hour and then when her kids are in bed, she works on them some more. She does send them occasionally when she is at work when there are no changes. It takes less than a minute.
2. Questions asked about how much I make
  - a. Then there was a question on how much she makes. As office manager, she makes \$18.00 an hour. She asked MaDonna since she is fulltime how much she is supposed to make as City Clerk. She asked George. George asked the attorneys and Karen believes Joe got back with him. He said since she works fulltime, she gets overtime and that's \$27.00 an hour. Murphy said it is more expensive than having a clerk. Bertolino said he was the one to ask those questions. Karen said yeah, she knows. That is fine. She just wanted to clarify because others weren't sure either.

##### City Treasurer:

1. None

##### Mayor:

1. Permission for Don Neighbors of Neighbors Black Powder to block off Vance St. from Springfield to Noble on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> from 8am – 4pm for Autumn Festival
  - a. It was recommended from the PW committee to give permission to block off Vance St from Springfield St to Noble St on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> from 8am-4pm for his Autumn festival.

Motion made by Mitchell seconded by Boster to approve permission to close off Vance St from Springfield St to Noble St on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> from 8am-4pm for the Autumn festival.

Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Boster, Cunningham, Neighbors and Calloway; **Nays:** None; **Absent:** None

#### REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

##### Finance:

1. Schedule appropriation hearing
  - a. For the appropriation, we have to have a hearing and it has to be published in the paper a minimum of 10 days in advance. Talking to Karen, scheduling it May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:45pm and be in the paper April 17<sup>th</sup>. We will have to wrap up the appropriation at the Finance meeting.

Motion made by Mottershaw seconded by Bertolino to schedule a public hearing on the appropriation on May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:45pm and published in the paper April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Boster, Cunningham, Neighbors and Calloway; **Nays:** None; **Absent:** None

2. Publish in Paper April 17<sup>th</sup>

\*See number 1 above\*

3. CD Renewal

- a. We have 3 CDs coming up this month. 1 at FNB which is General Corporate. 2 at CNB that are both water. The committee is recommending to renew the 2 CNB and transfer the 1 from FNB to CNB for 11 months special. The committee also recommended to combine the 2 water.

Motion made by Mottershaw seconded by Bertolino to renew the 2 CDs (0049 and 0048) and combine them for the 11 months at CNB at 4.85% and transfer CD (9312829) from FNB to CNB for the 11 months at CNB with signers to be Neighbors, Murphy, Liss and Mottershaw.

Discussion: Boster says we are going to renew the CDs from water when we lose \$4,200 a month in water because we can't figure out what the issue is. When is it becoming rainy enough for us to take action? At what percentage of loss in water is it going to be rainy enough in the day? Neighbors wants to know if we are close at figuring out anything? Nope. We have ruled out a lot of stuff.

Motion passed with majority in favor. **Ayes:** Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Neighbors and Mayor Murphy; **Nayes:** Calloway, Boster and Cunningham; **Absent:** None

4. Non-Union Employee Raises

- a. The majority of the committee agreed to these raises effective May 1<sup>st</sup>. Gary Etter: \$1 an hour raise; Ryan Calloway: \$1.50 an hour raise; Jessica Selhime: 75¢ an hour raise; Karen Burgess: 75¢ an hour raise; Steve Snodgrass: \$1 an hour raise; Dave Bounds: 75¢ an hour raise; Rebecca Hamrick: 30¢

Motion made by Mottershaw seconded by Bertolino to approve the non-union raises as of May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Discussion: Murphy passed out a paper with current wage rates on the non-union employees.

Murphy said the longevity was explained that any given time it includes the cumulative raises at the time of longevity. Bertolino asked if the longevity is included in this price. Yes, at this point in time. Karen printed out the minutes, but not a document that shows it. Mottershaw has a copy. It's just a paper. Murphy says it should be in the policy manual. It should be because we adopted it.

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Cunningham, and Neighbors; **Nayes:** None; **Present:** Calloway and Boster; **Absent:** None

5. Budget and Appropriation

- a. Mottershaw just wanted to ask the different departments that have the non-union raises to come up with a salary part and to have it at your respective committee meetings.

6. Water and Coffee for city employees

- a. Cunningham says she is new to the budget process, and it came to light that coffee, creamer, and bottled water is being paid for through the city budget. She recommends that it is no longer included as a perk for city employees. She says it shouldn't be allowed. SO, she asks if she has to make a motion to not allow that type of stuff to be paid for by city funds.

Motion made by Cunningham seconded by Boster to not allow city funds to purchase bottled water and coffee for city employees.

Discussion: Neighbors asks Pokey how much does that annually cost? Pokey says \$600.65.

Mottershaw asks if that's for all of it? Yes. Bertolino asks Steven how much his is? \$510.39. It's \$1,100 that you give us in a year. Bertolino asked why it needs to come up for a vote? It's roughly \$50 a month. It's a past practice. Calloway asks if any of the alderpeople get supplied coffee or bottled water at work. They say no. Mottershaw says he's not sure for that amount of money for a

year \$100 or less a month is just a little thank you for the job you do. A yes vote says you want to remove it and a no vote says you want to keep it.

Motion failed. **Ayes:** Bertolino, Boster and Cunningham; **Nayes:** Calloway, Mottershaw, Neighbors, and Mitchell; **Absent:** None

**Police:**

- 1.

**Public Works:**

1. **Streets & Alleys:**

- a. Authorization with vote that Gary Etter is authorized to enter into a contract for the CY2024-CY2025 Joint Purchase Master Contract for Rock Salt.
  - i. Pokey says basically the program we are in with CMS where he orders rock salt, he has to get it approved to stay in the CMS program. He does for the most part get a cheaper rate.

Motion made by Mottershaw seconded by Bertolino to authorize P. W. Director Gary Etter to enter into a contract for the CY2024-CY2025 Joint Purchase Master Contract for rock salt with CMS.

Discussion: Neighbors wants to know how much we saved this past year. We didn't save anything. When you are in the CMS program you have to judge how many tons you are going to use per year. You then have to purchase 80% of what you tell them.

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Boster, Cunningham, Neighbors and Calloway; **Nayes:** None; **Absent:** None

2. **Building & Grounds:**

- a. None

3. **Water:**

- a. None

4. **Parks:**

- a. None

5. **Miscellaneous:**

- a. None

**Administrative:**

1. Attorney Bills

- a. These will be discussed at the admin meeting. Basically, asking attorney to split up the bills where nuisance is on one bill and everything else on another with sending bills back if they don't conform.

**Other Business:**

1. We forgot Barry Liss raise so going to have it added to Finance.
2. Craven got another email from Rutherford. Rutherford is asking for a short extension on the agreement for a month or two until they get things lined up and he wants it to be for less than

\$3,000 a month. He would further like the employee expenses dealing with billing. If they are going in another direction, why do they need that explanation now? They also want to meet with Karen to see how all this works. Murphy started the response. We need to decide if we want to send it to all the customers besides putting it on Facebook. Yes, we need to put the facts out. No matter what happens we are going to be the bad guys. Murphy read what he has so far in his response letter. Discussed letter back and forth.

Motion made by Murphy seconded by Bertolino to enter executive session to discuss collective bargaining, buying and selling of land, and pending litigation at 7:49pm.

Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** *Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Neighbors, Boster, Cunningham and Calloway*; **Nays:** *None*; **Absent:** *None*

**Executive Session:**

1. Approval of Executive Session meeting minutes (5ILCS 120/2 (c) (21))
2. Collective Bargaining (5ILCS 120/2 (c)(2))
3. Buying and Selling of land (5ILCS 120/2 (c)(6))
4. Pending Litigation (5ILCS 120/2 (c)(11))

Motion made by Murphy seconded by Bertolino to exit executive session at 7:57pm.

Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** *Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Neighbors, Boster, Cunningham and Calloway*; **Nays:** *None*; **Absent:** *None*

Motion made by Mottershaw seconded by Bertolino to approve the executive session minutes from 3/5/24.

Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** *Mitchell, Bertolino, Mottershaw, Neighbors, Boster, Cunningham and Calloway*; **Nays:** *None*; **Absent:** *None*

**Adjournment:**

Motion made by Boster seconded by Bertolino to adjourn at 8:13pm.

Discussion: None

Motion passed with all in favor. **Ayes:** *Mitchell, Mottershaw, Boster, Cunningham, Ibberson and Neighbors*; **Nays:** *None*; **Absent:** *Bertolino and Calloway*

Karen Burgess  
Deputy City Clerk

Date Minutes Approved: