

**CITY OF COVINGTON
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 17, 2017**

Council President O'Keefe called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Roll call was as follows:

PRESENT: Jerry Coner, Mark Wright, Larry Rolling, Rick Smith, Patrick McMath and Sam O'Keefe

ABSENT: John Callahan

A Moment of Silence was observed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council President O'Keefe.

APPEARERS

Councilman Rolling introduced Ms. Lisa McKenzie and Ms. Becky Gilbert from the You Night Cancer Survivor Program. Ms. McKenzie discussed the mission of the program and its efforts to help women who have been diagnosed with cancer.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilman Wright made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded by **Councilman Coner**. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Callahan) to adopt the consent calendar. The consent calendar was adopted.

REGULAR AGENDA

Unfinished Business

Items to be voted on:

- 1. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2017-09-04** – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the Following Provisions of the Covington Code of Ordinances: Chapter 46 Fire Prevention and Protection, Article I. In General, Sec. 46-5. Fireworks (O'Keefe)

Council President O'Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2017-09-04.

Mayor Cooper mentioned that members of Administration along with Police Chief Lentz and Fire Chief Badon participated in the discussions with the Council on these amendments. Also, he stated that for the most part, fireworks are permitted in St. Tammany Parish with the exception of the city limits of Mandeville, Slidell and Abita Springs.

Councilman Coner made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by **Councilman Wright**. There were no objections to closing the public hearing. The public hearing was closed.

Councilman Rolling made a motion to adopt Item No. 2017-09-04, seconded by **Councilman Wright**. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Callahan) to adopt Item No. 2017-09-04. Item No. 2017-09-04 was adopted.

New Business

Items to be voted on:

1. **RESOLUTION NO. 2017-22** -- A Resolution of the Covington City Council Acknowledging the Authority of the Mayor to Execute a Tax Administration Agreement for Occupational License Tax Services (O'Keefe)

Council President O'Keefe led a discussion on Resolution No. 2017-22.

Chief Administrative Officer Gina Hayes commented that this is a renewal of the contract entered into in 2013 with the exception of a slightly higher service fee.

Council President O'Keefe read Resolution No. 2017-22 into the record.

Councilman Wright made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2017-22, seconded by **Councilman McMath**. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (**Callahan**) to adopt Resolution No. 2017-22. Resolution No. 2017-22 was adopted.

COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Council District and Committee Reports

1. **District A – Absent.**

2. **District B –**

Councilman Coner gave honor to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Also, he recognized the October birthdays for City employees. Also, he asked everyone to keep the victims and their families of the recent hurricanes, wild fires, Nevada shootings and police officer shooting, in our prayers. His quote for this evening was, "Authority makes some people grow and others just swell."

3. **District C –**

Councilman Wright recognized the National Night Out Against Crime tonight and commended the neighborhoods for hosting these events. Also, he congratulated those individuals who won the elections last Saturday and expressed his appreciation to those citizens who supported him in qualifying for the runoff.

4. **District D –**

Councilman Rolling congratulated Mark Wright on qualifying for the runoff for the State Representative seat and wished him the best of luck. Also, he announced there were a total of six occupational licenses issued in September and October and encouraged the public to shop locally to support our local businesses. Also, he mentioned that the seventh Business Resource Workshop was held recently and was a great event. He thanked the members of the business community who attended and the speakers who participated in the event. He announced that the eighth workshop will be held in the spring of 2018. Upcoming events: Wednesday, October 25th – Coffee with the Mayor from 9 A.M. until 10 A.M. at the Trailhead; Thursday, October 26th – New business ribbon cuttings starting at 9:30 A.M.; Friday, October 27th – Columbia Street Block Party at 6:30 P.M.; Saturday, October 28th – Trickin' and Treatin' Kids' event from 10 A.M. until noon at the Trailhead; Saturday, November 4th – St. Tammany Art Association will host its Art Market from 9 A.M. until 1 P.M. at the Trailhead; Saturday, November 11th-Sunday, November 12th – Three Rivers Art Festival from 10 A.M. until 5 P.M. in Downtown Covington; Thursday, November 16th – OnStage presents, "A Rocky Mountain High Christmas – A John Denver Music Tribute" at

7 P.M. in the Fuhrmann Auditorium; Friday, November 24th – Christmas in the Country in Downtown Covington; and the Farmer’s Market every Wednesday and Saturday.

5. District E –

Councilman Smith mentioned there was a house fire and explosion in District E this morning and commented how impressed and proud he was of the Covington Fire Department and surrounding communities for their response and efforts in containing and extinguishing the fire. Also, he recently attended a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Bogue Falaya Park Playground and thanked Champagne Beverage for sponsoring the event. Upcoming events: Rockin’ the Rails concert on Thursday, October 19th at 5 P.M. at the Trailhead; and Sunset at the Landing on Friday, October 20th at 6 P.M. at the Columbia Street Landing.

6. At Large (Vice President) –

Councilman McMath announced two upcoming events: (1) the first annual “Oxtober Fest” will be held on Saturday, October 21st from 3 P.M. until 6 P.M. at the Trailhead with the proceeds benefiting the Covington Boys and Girls Club. He thanked Cody and Nick Ludwig for organizing the event; and (2) the St. Tammany Art Association is hosting its Fall for Art on Saturday, October 21st from 6 P.M. until 9 P.M. He thanked local businesses for sponsoring the event.

7. At Large (President) –

Council President O’Keefe thanked the Mayor for meeting with members of the Council this morning. Also, he commended the Covington Fire Department and Police Department for their efforts in protecting the citizens of Covington. Also, he thanked the Mayor, Gina, Alisa and all department heads for their work on the 2018 budget. Also, he reminded everyone that a special Council meeting will be held on Thursday, October 26th at 10 A.M. in the Council office in City Hall.

B. Administrative Comments and Reports

1. Mayor Cooper's comments:

- (a) He reminded everyone about the budget work sessions scheduled on Monday, October 23rd and Wednesday, October 25th, both at 5 P.M. in the Council Chambers;
- (b) He discussed the low turnout for the recent election and reminded everyone about the runoff election on November 18th. Also, he mentioned that John Schroder from Covington is in the runoff for State Treasurer and City of Covington Councilman Mark Wright is in the runoff for the State Representative District #77 seat.
- (c) He mentioned that the Public Works Department has been cleaning drains and ditches and vacuuming catch basins across the City.
- (d) He gave an update on some projects:
 - (1) Covington Community Trail, Phase 1 – This project is another link in the six-foot wide sidewalk for jogging and walking on 15th Avenue between Tyler Street and Hubie Gallagher Park. The contractor is Gulf States Contractors and the project should be totally completed in the next two to three weeks.
 - (2) East 32nd Avenue between North Collins Boulevard and North Lee Road – Due to the poor condition of the concrete panels, the City and St. Tammany Parish are working together and sharing the cost equally for these improvements. Quotes were received today and St. Tammany Parish is handling the bid process. Work should be completed by the end of the year.
 - (3) 2016 Sidewalk Construction and Repair Program – The contractor is currently working on South Jahncke Avenue and should be completed in the next four weeks. Remaining items on this task order include sidewalks around Peter

Atkins Park and several handicap ramps in the downtown area. Task Order No. 2 is currently being drafted and undergoing final review. This task order will include sidewalks in the North Florida Street/West 29th Avenue areas.

(4) East 1st Avenue Lift Station – The contractor is currently working on this rehabilitation project and should be completed in three to four weeks.

(5) East 9th Avenue Sewer Lift Station – This is a conversion of an older lift station from above ground pumps to submersible pumps. Gottfried Contractors was awarded the contract and the project should begin before the end of the year.

(6) River Forest Paving and Drainage – This project includes the section of Lurline Drive between West 21st Avenue and Patricia Drive. The contract has been signed with Hard Rock Construction and the notice to proceed date is set for November 1st. The project should be completed within 90 days from that date.

(7) Wastewater Treatment Plant – Rehabilitation of the belt press, which is a critical component of the treatment train, should begin in the next two to three weeks, pending receipt of the specialized parts.

(8) West 29th Avenue Bridge at Mile Branch – Two bids for the project were received and the apparent low bidder is Stranco. An award letter will be issued in the next few weeks.

(9) Intersection improvements on W. 21st Avenue at Jackson Avenue and Van Buren Street – This project was to allow a better turn radius at these two intersections. A waterline relocation caused a delay, but the project should be completed either later this week or early next week.

(10) Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey – This program uses vacuum trucks with hoses to clean and inspect sewer lines in primarily the downtown area. The information obtained will aid in the rehabilitation priorities for the sewer system. Work should be completed within the next two to three weeks.

(11) Two projects are in the design phase and when completed, the bid process will begin:

(i) 2017 Roadway Improvement – This project will include many concrete panel replacements and concrete street repairs; and

(ii) Bogue Falaya Park Bulkhead and Paddle Launch.

(e) He mentioned that DOTD held a public meeting/open house recently with regard to the proposed roundabout at Jefferson and 21st Avenue. There was a great turnout from the public to review the proposed plans.

(f) He acknowledged that funds have been included in the 2018 budget for the Mile Branch improvement project. Also, per the City's request, St. Tammany Parish Government has included funds in its 2018 budget for improvements to Mile Branch. Meetings have taken place and will continue to take place between City and Parish officials to discuss the project and to formulate the cooperative endeavor agreement.

(g) He announced that the annual St. Tammany Parish Mayor's Prayer Breakfast which is sponsored by the Christian Businessmen's Connection and Life Resources will take place on Thursday, November 2nd from 7 A.M. until 8:30 A.M. at the Fleur de Lis Center in Mandeville.

Councilman Rolling inquired about the Hwy. 21 widening project and if the City has received any notifications from DOTD about the status of the project and if it has been totally completed.

Mayor Cooper responded that normally it is several weeks before DOTD performs the final inspection and releases the final payment. He mentioned that

work may still be ongoing on the synchronization of the traffic signals. He encouraged the public to obey all traffic signals and the speed zone.

Councilman McMath inquired about the rehabilitation of the belt press at the wastewater treatment plant and if any interruption in service is anticipated.

Mayor Cooper responded that this was a proactive measure to rehabilitate the belt press and the public should not experience any interruption in service.

Councilman McMath commended the City Administration and Public Works Department for their proactive measures in identifying and implementing many projects to improve the City of Covington.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 P.M.


R.S. "SAM" O'KEEFE
Council President


BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE
Council Clerk