

**CITY OF COVINGTON
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 12, 2017**

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

Roll call was as follows:

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

ABSENT: None.

A Moment of Silence was observed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Assistant Fire Chief Gary Blocker.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous 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. 2017-11-02 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending and Updating the City of Covington Employee Handbook Dated April 2013 (O'Keefe)

Council President O'Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2017-11-02.

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

Councilman Coner made a motion to amend Item No. 2017-11-02 to read as follows:

“Section 1.2 Discrimination/Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure, Individuals and Conduct Covered, These policies apply to all applicants and employees, including elected officials...”

Seconded by Councilman Smith. Roll call was unanimous to amend Item No. 2017-11-02 as stated above. Item No. 2017-11-02 was amended as stated above.

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Item No. 2017-11-02, as amended, seconded by Councilman Smith. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2017-11-02, as amended. Item No. 2017-11-02 was adopted, as amended.

2. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2017-11-03 – 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 and Article III. Fire Prevention Code (O’Keefe)

Council President O’Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2017-11-03.

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

Councilman Smith made a motion to amend Item No. 2017-11-03 as follows:

Page 2, line 30, shall read: “...to extend later than 12:00 A.M. and may begin no earlier than 7:00 A.M...”

Page 3, line 17, shall read: “...in any case will not be allowed after 12:00 A.M...”

Seconded by **Councilman McMath**. Roll call was unanimous to amend Item No. 2017-11-03 as stated above. Item No. 2017-11-03 was amended as stated above.

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Item No. 2017-11-03, as amended, seconded by **Councilman McMath**. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2017-11-03, as amended. Item No. 2017-11-03 was adopted, as amended.

3. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2017-11-04 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Providing for an Increase in Compensation for the City Council for the City of Covington, Which Increase Will Become Effective on July 1, 2019 (Callahan)

Councilman Callahan made a motion to table Item No. 2017-11-04 until the next Council meeting which will be held on January 16, 2018, seconded by **Councilman Coner**. Roll call was unanimous to table Item No. 2017-11-04 until the next Council meeting on January 16, 2018. Item No. 2017-11-04 was tabled until January 16, 2018.

4. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2017-11-05 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the 2017 Operating Budget for Fire Salaries – Full Time, Salaries – Overtime, Health & Vision Insurance, Life Insurance, Retirement and Worker’s Compensation (O’Keefe)

Council President O’Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2017-11-05.

Chief Administrative Officer Gina Hayes mentioned that the City has implemented the state-required 52 week sick leave for fire employees and the budget amendment is necessary to cover the expenses associated therewith and retirement and health insurance increases for fire employees.

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

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Item No. 2017-11-05, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2017-11-05. Item No. 2017-11-05 was adopted.

5. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2017-11-06 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the Comprehensive Pay/Step Plan for the Covington Police Department (O’Keefe)

Council President O’Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2017-11-06.

Mayor Cooper mentioned that the original pay/step plan was established in October 2016 and due to an inequity in pay between the positions of Lieutenant and Deputy Chief, it was amended a few months ago. The current amendment addresses the inequity between the positions of Officer, Sergeant and Lieutenant and includes a five (5%) percent increase between those positions. Also, he pointed out that the effective date of this amendment is December 13, 2017.

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

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Item No. 2017-11-06, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2017-11-06. Item No. 2017-11-06 was adopted.

New Business

Items to be voted on:

1. RESOLUTION NO. 2017-25 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Appointing Diane Weiss as the Interim Councilwoman for District C (McMath)

Councilman McMath read Resolution No. 2017-25 into the record.

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2017-25, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2017-25. Resolution No. 2017-25 was adopted.

City Attorney Rod Rodrigue administered the Oath of Office to Mrs. Weiss.

Councilwoman Weiss joined the Council on the dais.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 2017-26 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Accepting the Land Use and Transportation Study, “New Covington” Sub-Area Analysis, Prepared by Digital Engineering and Imaging, Inc. in Association with Dana Brown & Associates, Inc. (Rolling)

Councilman Rolling led a discussion on Resolution No. 2017-26.

Mayor Cooper mentioned that a committee was formed to receive input from City government, LA DOTD District 62, the RPC and interested citizens with regard to traffic circulation and safety along a portion of South Tyler Street and the associated collector streets. After the information was collected and analyzed, the consultants presented the City with the Final Study which included recommendations for short- and long-term improvements.

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2017-26, seconded by Councilman Coner. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2017-26. Resolution No. 2017-26 was adopted.

3. RESOLUTION NO. 2017-27 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Confirming the Reappointment of Robert Celestine as the District A Appointment to the Covington Planning and Zoning Commission for a Term of Five (5) Years (Callahan)

Councilman Callahan made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2017-27, seconded by Councilman McMath. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2017-27. Resolution No. 2017-27 was adopted.

COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Council District and Committee Reports

1. District A –

Councilman Callahan wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Also, he encouraged everyone to be safe over the holidays.

2. District B –

Councilman Coner gave honor to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He recognized the December birthdays for City employees and extended his appreciation to all City employees for their notable work in 2017. Also, he extended his special thanks to Mrs. Bonnie Champagne for her work in the City Council office. He asked everyone to keep the people in California who are victims of the wild fires and the citizens of New York who are victims of the recent bombing in our thoughts and prayers. Also, he reminded everyone to shop locally to support our local businesses. He wished everyone a blessed and safe Christmas and New Year. His quote for this evening was, "Pick your friends but not to pieces."

3. District C –

Councilwoman Weiss expressed her appreciation and gratitude to the Council for the appointment as Interim Councilwoman for District C. She looks forward to learning and understanding City business.

4. District D –

Councilman Rolling wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

5. District E –

Councilman Smith reminded everyone about the "Let it Snow" family event on Sunday, December 17th from 1 P.M. until 5 P.M. at the Covington Recreation Complex. Also, he encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming West 30s Task Force Community meeting to be held on Thursday, January 25th at 6 P.M. at the Harrison Curriculum Center (Rosenwald Gym). He mentioned that the task force is working to make positive changes in the West 30s neighborhood. Also, he wished everyone a blessed and Merry Christmas.

6. At Large (Vice President) –

Councilman McMath congratulated and welcomed Diane Weiss to the Council. Also, he wished everyone Merry Christmas.

7. At Large (President) –

Council President O’Keefe extended his appreciation to all City employees for their work in 2017. Also, he complimented Mayor Cooper for his great Administration.

B. Administrative Comments and Reports

1. Mayor Cooper's comments:

- (a) He thanked Council President O’Keefe for his comments.
- (b) He congratulated Diane Weiss on her appointment to fill the Council District C seat on an interim basis. Also, he reminded everyone that the election to fill the seat is Saturday, March 24, 2018 with qualifying scheduled for January 3-5, 2018.
- (c) He commended the Covington Heritage Foundation for hosting the third annual “History and Holly Historic Home Tour” and thanked its Board and volunteers for their work.
- (d) He reminded everyone about the “Caroling at the Covington Trailhead” event to be held on Thursday, December 14th at 7 P.M. He thanked Amy Tucker from the Cultural Affairs Department for her work on the event.
- (e) He gave an update on some current projects:
 - (1) Reagan Crossing Apartment Complex – As of yesterday, all certificates of occupancy have been issued for the 288-unit apartment complex.
 - (2) Jefferson Avenue/West 21st Avenue Roundabout – He met with representatives from DOTD recently to discuss the project, which is 100% funded by DOTD. Final plans are under review and property surveys are currently underway. Since the utility relocation is the City’s responsibility, funds have been included in the 2018 budget and the work should begin between the middle and end of 2018. Bid letting is scheduled for September 2018.
 - (3) Safe Routes to School – The City received this 100% grant many years ago. This project involves sidewalks and other safety improvements on a section of North Filmore Street between Columbia Street and Pine View Middle School. Bid letting is scheduled for May 2018.
 - (4) Hwy. 21/South Tyler Street Short-Term Improvements – The consultants presented a report which included recommendations for short-term improvements on South Tyler Street from 13th Avenue to 21st Avenue. After reviewing the report, he sent a letter to DOTD requesting some of the short-term improvements. DOTD has scheduled and assigned a project number for asphalt milling, resurfacing and improving the signage and striping for this portion of South Tyler Street. The projected bid-letting date is June 2019 but he has requested that the state move the project up on its priority list.
 - (5) River Forest Paving and Drainage – This project includes the section of Lurline Drive from West 21st Avenue to the Karen Drive intersection. The project is underway and the contractor is replacing the drainage and cracked concrete panels. The project is on schedule with the completion date estimated to be early February 2018.
 - (6) 2016 Sidewalk Construction and Repair Project – The repairs on South Jahncke Avenue are almost complete and upon completion, the contractor

will begin the repairs on North Florida Street and West 29th Avenue as well as some intersections in downtown.

(f) He commended the Saint Scholastica Aqua Doves swim team for being undefeated in 2017 and earning their seventh consecutive state championship. He congratulated Coach Chris Prator and the 2017 Saint Scholastica Aqua Doves.

(g) He commended the Covington High School Lions football team for their outstanding season and for earning the Class 5A District Championship. He congratulated Coach Greg Salter, the football team and the student athletes at Covington High School.

(h) He discussed the changes to the fireworks ordinance and reminded everyone to follow the new guidelines.

(i) He wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Also, he thanked everyone for the great year in the City of Covington.

Council President O'Keefe thanked Bonnie Champagne for her work as Council Clerk and congratulated her on the birth of her new granddaughter.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 P.M.


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


BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE
Council Clerk