

**CITY OF COVINGTON
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 17, 2018**

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, Diane Weiss, 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 Covington Police Chief Tim Lentz.

APPEARERS

1. **Mayor Cooper** introduced Mr. Tim Burke and Mr. Joey Roberts, Candidates for Council District C. Also, he reminded the public about the runoff election on Saturday, April 28th with early voting taking place now through Saturday, April 21st.

Mr. Tim Burke, Candidate for Council District C, introduced himself and discussed his qualifications for the position of councilman. Also, he thanked the Council, Mayor and City employees for assisting him in learning about City government.

Mr. Joey Roberts, Candidate for Council District C, introduced himself and discussed his qualifications for the position of councilman.

2. **Mayor Cooper** recognized and congratulated the Covington High School Powerlifting Team for winning the National Championship. Also, he issued a proclamation in which he acknowledged the Powerlifting Team along with Coaches John Burford, Glenn Salter and Draven Collins for their accomplishments.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded by Councilwoman Weiss. 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. 2018-03-01** – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Lease Agreement with JCR Rentals, LLC for the Use of Its Property as Office Space for

the Criminal Investigations Unit and as Warehouse Space for the Covington Police Department (O'Keefe)

Council President O'Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2018-03-01.

Mayor Cooper clarified that part of the property is already leased by the City and a new lease agreement will be executed to include the back portion of the property which will be used for storage.

Police Chief Lentz commented that the City currently leases a storage facility outside the City limits of Covington which lease expires on May 31, 2018. Also, he stated that the City will incur a \$48 increase per month in rent for the new storage space.

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. 2018-03-01, seconded by **Councilman McMath**. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2018-03-01. Item No. 2018-03-01 was adopted.

New Business

Items to be voted on:

1. **RESOLUTION NO. 2018-04** – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Acknowledging Receipt and Compliance With the Louisiana Attestation Questionnaire from the Legislative Auditor's Office (O'Keefe)

Council President O'Keefe led a discussion regarding Resolution No. 2018-04.

Councilwoman Weiss made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-04, seconded by **Councilman Coner**. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2018-04. Resolution No. 2018-04 was adopted.

2. **RESOLUTION NO. 2018-05** – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Acknowledging the Authority of the Mayor to Enter into a Grant Agreement with the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program Through the Restore Louisiana Infrastructure: FEMA Public Assistance Nonfederal Share Match Program (Smith)

Council President O'Keefe led a discussion regarding Resolution No. 2018-05.

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-05, seconded by **Councilman Rolling**. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2018-05. Resolution No. 2018-05 was adopted.

3. **RESOLUTION NO. 2018-06** – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Approving a Grant Application by the City of Covington to the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (McMath)

Councilman McMath led a discussion regarding Resolution No. 2018-06.

Mayor Cooper stated this is a Safe Routes to Public Places grant up to the amount of \$350,000. He mentioned that Kelli Moore, Grants Administrator, is compiling information at this time and based on past studies, an area will be identified which will enhance traffic and pedestrian safety in our neighborhoods.

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-06, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2018-06. Resolution No. 2018-06 was adopted.

4. RESOLUTION NO. 2018-07 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Confirming the Capital Outlay and Encumbrance Rollovers from the 2017 Budget to the 2018 Budget (O’Keefe)

Council President O’Keefe led a discussion regarding Resolution No. 2018-07.

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-07, seconded by Councilman Coner. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2018-07. Resolution No. 2018-07 was adopted.

5. RESOLUTION NO. 2018-08 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Confirming the Mayoral Appointment of Billie Stanga to the Covington Tree Board for a Three (3) Year Term (Mayor)

Mayor Cooper stated that he discussed the vacancy on the Covington Tree Board with Ms. Billie Stanga and she indicated her willingness to serve. As a result, he requested the confirmation of her appointment to the Covington Tree Board for a term of three (3) years.

Councilman Coner made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-08, seconded by Councilwoman Weiss. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2018-08. Resolution No. 2018-08 was adopted.

COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Council District and Committee Reports

1. District A –

Councilman Callahan announced that there will be a Community Block Party on Saturday, April 21st from 3 P.M. until 6 P.M. at Peter Atkins Park. There will be food, music and games and everyone is welcome.

2. District B –

Councilman Coner gave honor to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He recognized the April birthdays for City employees. He reminded everyone to shop locally to support our local businesses. Also, he asked everyone to pray for peace in our community, in the country and in the world. His quote for this evening was, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Council President O’Keefe extended his thanks and appreciation to Diane Weiss for her service as the Interim Councilwoman for District C.

3. District C –

Councilwoman Weiss commented that it has been her pleasure to serve in an interim capacity and encouraged all of the residents in District C to vote on April

28th. She mentioned that she received two phone calls recently commending the City for the cleanliness of City streets and on behalf of the residents of River Forest, she expressed her thanks to the City. Also, she announced that the Monk Run which is sponsored by the 15th Street Flyers has been rescheduled to Saturday, April 28th at the St. Joseph Abbey and invited the public to attend the event. Also, she thanked everyone for the support during her service as Interim Councilwoman for District C.

4. District D –

Councilman Rolling thanked Mr. Burke and Mr. Roberts for attending tonight's meeting and looks forward to serving on the Council with either one of them. Also, he announced that nine new businesses applied for occupational licenses in March/April 2018. Upcoming events: Rockin' the Rails concert series continues on Thursdays in April from 5-7:30 P.M. at the Trailhead; Sunset at the Landing concert on Friday, April 20th from 6-9 P.M.; Covington Antiques and Uniques Festival on Saturday, April 21st and Sunday, April 22nd from 10 A.M. until 5 P.M. at the Trailhead; Coffee with the Mayor on Wednesday, April 25th at 9 A.M. at the Trailhead; Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra is presenting "Swinging in the Pines" on Saturday, May 12th at 6 P.M. in the Bogue Falaya Park with the rain date on Sunday, May 13th; Jumpin' into Summer Kids' event on Saturday, May 19th from 10-noon at the Trailhead; Columbia Street Block Party on Friday, May 25th; and the Farmer's Market every Wednesday and Saturday. Also, he thanked Diane Weiss for her service as the Interim Councilwoman for District C.

5. District E –

Councilman Smith thanked the Public Works, Police and Fire departments for their professionalism and courtesy shown to our residents. Also, he announced that the Firefighters Association is sponsoring a golf tournament fundraiser on Friday, May 4th at the Abita Country Club and encouraged the public to attend the fundraiser to support our firefighters. Also, he mentioned that the seventh annual "A Taste of Covington" hosted by the Covington Business Association was held last weekend and was a great event. He thanked all of the volunteers and sponsors for their contributions. Also, he extended his appreciation to the Public Works Department for their work in preparing the City for our events.

6. At Large (Vice President) –

Councilman McMath mentioned that the EOC Facility Advisory Committee met last month and toured the EOC Facility. The committee is still in a fact-finding phase and its next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 30th. He anticipates the committee will transition to a public-input phase in the near future. Also, he announced that the "Under the Big Top" fundraiser to benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Covington will be held on Friday, May 11th at the Club. He encouraged the public to attend the event and support the Club which provides a tremendous service to the community. Also, he thanked Diane Weiss for her time and service and has enjoyed serving with her on the Council.

7. At Large (President) –

Council President O'Keefe announced that the May 1st and June 5th Council meetings have been cancelled due to there being no ordinances or resolutions scheduled for public hearing and action. The only meeting in the month of May will be held on May 15th and the only meeting in the month of June will be held on June 19th.

B. Administrative Comments and Reports

1. Mayor Cooper's comments:

(a) He mentioned that several weeks ago, he requested that Public Works utilize the street sweeper in River Forest due to the box drainage and curb streets. Shovels were used to clean the streets in areas where the street sweeper could not be utilized.

(b) He announced two upcoming events hosted by Keep Covington Beautiful:

(1) Paper Shredding Day on Saturday, April 21st from 9-noon in the City Hall Employee Parking Lot; and

(2) National Arbor Day celebration on Saturday, April 28th from 9-noon at the Trailhead.

(c) He gave updates on projects that are currently underway:

(1) 2017 Roadway Improvement Program – This program has basically been concrete panel replacement. Work has been completed in the Ozone area, partially completed in the Savannahs and underway in Oak Alley. Work will soon begin in River Forest.

(2) Sidewalk Construction Repair – Work is being completed in the South America Street/West 14th Avenue area. City Engineer Daniel Hill is preparing the first task order and the next sidewalk project will commence soon.

(3) West 29th Avenue Bridge at Mile Branch – The subcontractor is completing the wing wall work this week. The remaining work consists of backfilling behind the bulkhead, resetting the bridge decking and installing new pavement and guardrails. Work should be completed in about four weeks depending on the weather. Once the bridge is open, the load limit will include buses and delivery trucks.

(4) East 32nd Avenue between Collins Boulevard and Lee Road – This is a joint project with St. Tammany Parish Government in which the broken concrete panels will be replaced. It is a 50/50 split between the city and the parish. Work should be completed either later this week or early next week.

(5) River Forest Paving and Drainage – This section of Willow Drive is basically between Lurline Drive and just south of where Karen Drive intersects Willow Drive. The Notice to Proceed has been issued for Monday, April 30th and the contract duration is 90 days.

(6) Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements – This is one of our largest capital projects this year and is under advertisement at this time. The plans and specs have been completed which include exterior painting of the treatment plant, rehabilitation of the belt press and chlorine buildings, replacement of the miscellaneous valves and equipment and demolition of portions of the plant. A pre-bid meeting will be held on April 26th and bids are due on May 16th.

(7) Sewer Point Repairs – The plans and specs have been completed and advertisement will begin next week. This contract will be for an amount not to exceed \$250,000 and will be utilized to provide a more rapid response to sewer issues that are not in the ability of our Public Works Department. A pre-bid meeting will be held on May 3rd and bids are due on May 22nd.

(8) Water Well Improvements (15th Avenue in River Forest and 16th Avenue by Hubie Gallagher Park) – Due to the age of the pumps and valves, they are at the end of their design life and replacement at the two water wells is necessary. Quotes will be received on April 19th. The 2018 Budget contains \$118,000 for this project.

(9) West 11th Avenue Bridge at Mile Branch – This project is in the preliminary design stage and upon completion, the permitting process with the Army Corps of Engineers will begin. Bid-letting should occur later this year.

(10) The Public Works Facility, the Restrooms at Peter Atkins Park and the Ernest Cooper Memorial Fire Station – The architectural work is approximately 90-95% complete and work on the structural engineering plans is underway. These projects are funded in the 2018 Budget.

(11) West 8th Avenue Traffic Study – This study is underway and preliminary information should be provided in the next week or so. Once the study has been reviewed by the engineers, the Council, along with the residents in the neighborhood around St. Tammany Parish Hospital and the staff from St. Tammany Parish Hospital, will have an opportunity to review the plans and provide comments.

(d) On behalf of the Exchange Club of West St. Tammany, he read a Proclamation into the record in which he declared the month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in the City of Covington and urged all citizens to use this time to better understand and recognize and respond to this grievous problem.

Chief Administrative Officer Gina Hayes announced that the City received a check in the amount of \$36,695.35 from the surplus sale proceeds.

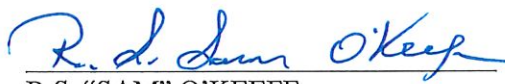
Councilman Coner congratulated Police Chief Lentz for being one of the recipients of the 2018 BGR Excellence in Government Awards.

Councilman Coner announced that according to a CNN report, the deadline to file federal income tax returns has been extended one day due to problems with the IRS computer system.

Police Chief Lentz thanked Diane Weiss for her service on the Council.

Police Chief Lentz announced that a law enforcement monument recognizing officers from St. Tammany Parish that have been killed in the line of duty will be installed in front of the Justice Center on North Columbia Street. The unveiling will take place on Tuesday, May 1st at 10 A.M. and invitations will be sent to all Council members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58 P.M.


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


BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE
Council Clerk