

**CITY OF COVINGTON  
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 21, 2018**

**Council President McMath** 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, Sam O'Keefe  
and Patrick McMath

ABSENT: Joey Roberts

A Moment of Silence was observed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Sam O'Keefe.

**APPEARERS**

**Mayor Cooper** introduced Ms. Kelly LaRocca, who gave an update on the transition of the Covington Library during its renovation project.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Councilman O'Keefe made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded by Councilman Rolling. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) 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. 2018-06-02 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Declaring Surplus Property Owned by the City of Covington and Authorizing the Mayor to Execute Any and All Documents in Connection with the Donation of Said Surplus Property (O'Keefe)**

**Councilman O'Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2018-06-02.**

**Councilman Coner 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 O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Item No. 2018-06-02, seconded by Councilman Coner. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Item No. 2018-06-02. Item No. 2018-06-02 was adopted.**

**2. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2018-06-04 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Revoking the Utility Servitude in Square 1808, Division of New Covington, City of Covington, Louisiana (Rolling)**

**Councilman Rolling led a discussion on Item No. 2018-06-04.**

**City Attorney Rod Rodrigue stated that the alley has already been revoked and the utility servitude is not being used.**

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

**Councilman Rolling made a motion to adopt Item No. 2018-06-04, seconded by Councilman O'Keefe. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Item No. 2018-06-04. Item No. 2018-06-04 was adopted.**

**3. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2018-07-01 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Declaring that a Portion of the 20 Foot Alley Traversing Square 1504 and Lying Between Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, Division of New Covington, City of Covington, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, Abandoned, Vacated, Closed and Not Needed for Public Purposes (Planning Case No. 18-06-01STREET/ALLEY REVOCATION) (Rolling)**

**Councilman Rolling led a discussion on Item No. 2018-07-01.**

**City Attorney Rod Rodrigue stated that the petition was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission. Also, he stated that the property on either side of the portion of the alley proposed to be revoked is owned by the petitioner and there are no other property owners involved. The alley dead ends into an unopened street that cannot be constructed because it is a major drainage feature.**

**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 O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Item No. 2018-07-01, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Item No. 2018-07-01. Item No. 2018-07-01 was adopted.**

**4. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2018-07-02 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the Official Zoning Map of the City of Covington, Louisiana, to Reclassify a 32,071.98 Square Foot Parcel of Ground Located at the Southwest Corner of West 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North Florida Street, City of Covington, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, From CO (Commercial Office/Professional District) to CN (Neighborhood Commercial District) (Zoning Case No. 18-06-02REZONING) (Coner)**

**Councilman Coner stated that he owns the subject property and will have to recuse himself from voting on this item.**

**Councilman Coner commented that the subject property is currently zoned CO and CN. The entire property is one parcel of ground and should be zoned and classified in a unified zoning classification. In order to develop or market the property without difficulty, zoning classification should be the same for the entire parcel. The property directly across the street from this property is zoned entirely**

as CN. The same zoning classification should be provided to this property for consistency in the present zoning area. Also, he mentioned that this petition was unanimously approved by the Zoning Commission and a letter of no objection to the proposed zoning change was received from the Northshore Food Bank, a neighbor of the subject property.

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

**Councilman O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Item No. 2018-07-02, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call: Yeas – 5; Absent – 1 (Roberts); Recused -- 1 (Coner) to adopt Item No. 2018-07-02. Item No. 2018-07-02 was adopted.**

**5. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2018-07-03 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Declaring Surplus Certain Vehicles and Equipment Owned by the City of Covington (O'Keefe)**

**Councilman O'Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2018-07-03.**

**Councilman O'Keefe 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 O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Item No. 2018-07-03, seconded by Councilman Coner. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Item No. 2018-07-03. Item No. 2018-07-03 was adopted.**

#### **New Business**

**Items to be voted on:**

**1. RESOLUTION NO. 2018-20 -- A Resolution of the Covington City Council Appointing a Trustee of the St. Tammany Public Trust Financing Authority and Designating His Term of Office (O'Keefe)**

**Councilman O'Keefe led a discussion on Resolution No. 2018-20.**

**Councilman Rolling made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-20 appointing Council Member at Large Patrick McMath as a Trustee of the St. Tammany Public Trust Financing Authority, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Resolution No. 2018-20. Resolution No. 2018-20 was adopted in which Council Member at Large Patrick McMath was appointed as a Trustee of the St. Tammany Public Trust Financing Authority.**

**2. RESOLUTION NO. 2018-21 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Confirming the Reappointment of Ella Mae Davis Selmon to the City of Covington Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board for a Term of Three (3) Years (McMath)**

**Councilman O'Keefe commended Mrs. Selmon for her work on the Civil Service Board and for expressing a desire to serve another term.**

**Councilman O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-21, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Resolution No. 2018-21. Resolution No. 2018-21 was adopted.**

**3. RESOLUTION NO. 2018-22 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Confirming the Reappointment of William Victor Courtney to the City of Covington Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board for a Term of Three (3) Years (O'Keefe)**

**Councilman O'Keefe commended Mr. Courtney for his work on the Civil Service Board and for expressing a desire to serve another term.**

**Councilman O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-22, seconded by Councilman Coner. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Resolution No. 2018-22. Resolution No. 2018-22 was adopted.**

**4. RESOLUTION NO. 2018-23 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council in Support of the Amendment of the Garbage and Recycling Contract (Smith)**

**Councilman Smith led a discussion on the changes in the garbage and recycling pickup days in that the once a week collection will occur on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in designated areas of the City.**

**Mayor Cooper stated that beginning September 1<sup>st</sup> (first pickup day will be on Labor Day, Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>), there will be a new garbage and recycling pickup schedule along with a new green waste pickup schedule for the City. Both schedules and maps will be posted on the City's website and made available to the public.**

**Councilman O'Keefe made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2018-23, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call: Yeas – 6; Absent – 1 (Roberts) to adopt Resolution No. 2018-23. Resolution No. 2018-23 was adopted.**

## **COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

### **Council District and Committee Reports**

- 1. District A – None.**
- 2. District B –**

**Councilman Coner gave honor to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He recognized the August birthdays for City employees. He reminded everyone to shop locally to support our local businesses. His quote for this evening was, "The poorest of all men is not the man without a cent but the man without a dream."**

- 3. District C – Absent.**
- 4. District D –**

**Councilman Rolling announced that five new businesses applied for occupational licenses in July and August 2018. Upcoming events: Ultimate Tailgate Party sponsored by the Exchange Club of St. Tammany on Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at the Trailhead; New business ribbon cuttings on Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup>; Columbia Street Block Party on Friday, August 31<sup>st</sup> from 6:30 P.M. until 9:30 P.M.;**

Hoops for Kids sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club of Covington on Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at Rev. Peter Atkins Park; St. Tammany Art Association Second Saturday Art Walk on Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> from 6 P.M. until 9 P.M.; OnStage at the Fuhrmann presents, "Mike Super", on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 P.M.; Sunset at the Landing concert on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 6 P.M. until 9 P.M.; News with a Twist will be broadcasting live on Wednesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> from 4 P.M. until 7 P.M. at the Trailhead; Columbia Street Block Party on Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 P.M. until 9:30 P.M.; and the Farmer's Market every Wednesday and Saturday.

**5. District E –**

**Councilman Smith** mentioned that the CBA hosted the "White Linen for Public Arts" event last weekend and it was well-attended. Also, prior to the White Linen event, there was a ribbon-cutting for the Walker Percy statue in the Bogue Falaya Park. He thanked McMath Construction for its assistance in the installation of the statue and for the landscaping of the area surrounding the statue. Also, he reminded everyone that the Bogue Falaya River Sweep sponsored by Keep Covington Beautiful is scheduled for Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 9 A.M. at the Menetre (East 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue) Boat Launch. Volunteers are needed to help with the clean-up of the river. Also, he reminded everyone that schools are back in session and all school zones are "hands-free."

**6. At Large (Vice President) –**

**Councilman O'Keefe** commended the Covington Fire Department for its handling of a recent electrical fire on North Florida Street. Also, he commended the Covington Police Department for its handling of numerous motor vehicle accidents recently.

**7. At Large (President) –**

**Council President McMath** announced that there have been some revisions to the Council meeting schedule for October and November. The meetings scheduled for October 2<sup>nd</sup>, October 16<sup>th</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup> have been cancelled. The only Council meetings in October and November will be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and November 20<sup>th</sup>. Also, with regard to the rain event last week, he commended the City for its continued efforts in improving drainage and infrastructure. Also, he commended the City Council for its efforts in supporting the drainage improvements.

**Council President McMath** announced that the 2019 Budget Work Session will be held on Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 4 P.M. in the Council Chambers.

**Councilman Coner** responded that 4 P.M. may be too early for citizens to attend due to work schedules and recommended a later time to begin the work session.

After discussion among the Council members and Administration, the time was changed to 5 P.M.

**B. Administrative Comments and Reports**

**1. Mayor Cooper's comments:**

(a) He acknowledged the great events held last weekend – White Linen for Public Arts and the dedication of the Walker Percy statue. Large crowds attended both events and the weekend was a huge success. He thanked everyone who contributed to both events.

(b) He gave an update on the filling of the Fire Chief Position. Eight individuals who took the Civil Service test received passing scores and four

formal applications for the position were received. Interviews will be conducted this week. He hopes to make the appointment in the first week of September and present the individual to the City Council for confirmation in September.

(c) He mentioned that the Covington Rotary Foundation recently held its fundraiser, Quack-a-Falaya, in which it raised money for the Blueways/Greenways project on the Bogue Falaya River. He acknowledged and thanked the Covington Rotary Foundation for the generous donation of \$1,000.00 to the City of Covington to be used towards the bulkhead, kayak and canoe launch project in the Bogue Falaya Park.

(d) He mentioned that the 2019 budget process is underway and meetings were held recently with department heads and directors to review their budget requests. The proposed 2019 budget will be submitted to the Council on September 18<sup>th</sup> and the budget work sessions will be held in October. The 2019 Operating and Capital Budget will be considered for adoption by the Council on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

(e) He gave an update on some projects:

(1) Covington Sidewalk and Safety Improvements/Safe Routes to School (DOTD project) – Construction on North Filmore Street from West 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Columbia Street is scheduled to begin in September. This project is part of the Safe Routes to School grant.

(2) Public Works Maintenance Barn – A pre-construction meeting was held and demolition of the old barn is expected to begin by mid-September. Construction should begin soon after with completion in the middle of 2019. Public Works Administration personnel have moved into the second floor of City Hall during construction.

(3) 2017 Roadway Improvement Program – The contractor is finishing up the concrete panel replacements with a section remaining on South America Street. This is the final section of the last portion of the project and all work is expected to be completed in two to three weeks.

(4) Bogue Falaya Park Bulkhead, Boardwalk and Kayak Launch – Bids were opened recently and the contract in the amount of \$538,410 has been awarded to Gill's Crane and Dozer Service. Preliminary matters are currently underway and construction is expected to start in late September or early October. Work is expected to be completed in the spring of 2019.

(5) Sewer point repairs – These repairs are giving attention to the failing, older sewer infrastructure. A meeting was held with the design engineer to review the outstanding sink holes and sewer failures in some of our neighborhoods. Meyer Engineers is currently preparing the first task order for the sewer maintenance contract. The purpose of the contract is to rapidly address the sewer problems on an as-needed basis. The first task order will include sink holes on West 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue near Jackson, along with Independence and New Hampshire streets and the dead-end of East Guidry Street. Work in these three areas is expected to start next month.

(6) 2018 Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey – This project will focus on smoke testing and inspection of sewer lines in the downtown area and areas flowing to the New Hampshire Street sewer lift station. Quote requests will be sent to contractors with a response deadline of September 20<sup>th</sup> at 2 P.M.

(7) Additional sewer point repairs – This project includes approximately \$500,000 in sewer point repairs that were identified in 2017 inspections of areas between 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Rutland Street alongside South Jahncke Avenue. This area has high I&I issues (infiltration and inflow) of storm water and water other than sewerage due to the age of the system. Repairs will lessen the burden on the New Hampshire, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and St. Paul's lift stations.

Advertisements for public bids will begin on September 5<sup>th</sup> and bids will be opened on October 4<sup>th</sup> at 2 P.M.

(8) West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge at Mile Branch – Preliminary plans have been completed and the final plans are underway by the engineer. Bid-letting should occur in October, depending on receipt of the permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Scenic Rivers. Construction should begin by the end of 2018 or early 2019.

(9) Reverend Peter Atkins Park Restrooms – A project board was presented which depicted the new restroom facility. The low bidder was Steele-R Development LLC. Demolition of the old pool building is expected to start in September with estimated construction completion in January or February 2019.

(10) Old Fire Station Renovation – A project board was presented which depicted the completed renovation of the old fire station in Downtown Covington. The contractor for this project is Velvet Pines and the architect is MSH Architects. Due to some deteriorating rafters and crossbeams, the historic building was completely de-constructed all the way down to the concrete slab. A small addition for the restrooms and warming kitchen will require extending the existing concrete slab and the process is underway. Upon completion of the concrete slab, the building will be re-constructed utilizing 80% of the timbers and original wood and also will incorporate the use of the original wood windows. Completion is expected by the end of April 2019.

**Police Chief Lentz** announced that the Police Department has once again secured the F.A.T.S. (Fire Arm Training Simulator) machine and the public will have an opportunity to sign up for a turn on the machine next week.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 P.M.

  
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PATRICK McMATH  
Council President

  
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BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE  
Council Clerk