

**CITY OF COVINGTON  
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 15, 2016**

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

Roll call was as follows:

**PRESENT:** John Callahan, Jerry Coner, Mark Wright, Larry Rolling, Rick Smith and Sam O'Keefe

**ABSENT:** None.

**Council Vice President O'Keefe** asked everyone to remember the family of Lee Alexius and Michael Doherty, who is the St. Paul's football player injured last Friday night. A Moment of Silence was observed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Dianne Baham.

**APPEARERS**

**Council Vice President O'Keefe** introduced Ms. Dianne Baham, Executive Director of STARC, who presented a piece of artwork to the Covington City Council which was created by one of the STARC artists. Also, she discussed the millage renewal proposition to benefit STARC and COAST which will appear on the December 10<sup>th</sup> ballot.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Councilman Smith** made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded by **Councilman Rolling**. 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. 2016-07-01** – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Enlarging the Boundaries of the City of Covington, Louisiana, Describing the Property to be Annexed and Added Thereto as a 1.397 Acre Tract of Land in Section 38, Township 6 South, Range 11 East, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, Said Property Being Located at 2003 Ronald Reagan Highway, Covington, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, and Also Classifying This Property as CR-Regional Commercial Zoning District Under the Zoning Laws of the City of Covington (Zoning Case No. 16-06-02ANNEX) (O'Keefe) **TABLED ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2016 AND OCTOBER 18, 2016**

**City Attorney Rod Rodrigue** announced that the St. Tammany Parish Department of Permits has issued the Certificate of Occupancy for the newly-constructed commercial building located on this property.

**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 Wright made a motion to adopt Item No. 2016-07-01, seconded by Councilman Rolling. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2016-07-01. Item No. 2016-07-01 was adopted.**

**2. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2016-09-01 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Setting the Compensation for the Mayor of the City of Covington for the Year 2017 (O’Keefe)**

**Council Vice President O’Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2016-09-01.**

**Councilman Wright 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 amend and adopt Item No. 2016-09-01 as follows:**

**Page 1, line 24, shall read, "Annual salary of \$87,147 representing a 3% increase..."**

**Seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to amend and adopt Item No. 2016-09-01 as set out above. Item No. 2016-09-01 was amended and adopted as set out above.**

**3. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2016-09-02 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Adopting the 2017 Operating Budget and the Five Year Capital Outlay Budget for the Years 2017-2021 for the City of Covington (O’Keefe)**

**Council Vice President O’Keefe led a discussion on Item No. 2016-09-02.**

**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 Wright made a motion to amend and adopt Item No. 2016-09-02 as reflected in the November 3, 2016 printout, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to amend and adopt Item No. 2016-09-02 as reflected in the November 3, 2016 printout. Item No. 2016-09-02 was amended and adopted as reflected in the November 3, 2016 printout.**

**4. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2016-09-03 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Enlarging the Boundaries of the City of Covington, Louisiana, Describing the Property to be Annexed and Added Thereto as Regina Coeli Road, Which Property is Located in Sections 20, 29 and 45, Township 6 South, Range 11 East, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana (Wright)**

**Councilman Wright led a discussion on Item No. 2016-09-03.**

**Mayor Cooper** stated that earlier this year, the City made a request to the Parish of St. Tammany to allow the City to annex a portion of Regina Coeli Road that is not currently in the City, but which borders property that is in the City limits along Privette Boulevard. The City made this request so that it may maintain the streets and speed limits and extend utilities from Privette Boulevard to Oak Alley and other developments in the area. Also, he mentioned that the St. Tammany Parish Council issued a resolution of no objection to this annexation request.

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

**Councilman Wright made a motion to adopt Item No. 2016-09-03, seconded by Councilman Callahan. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2016-09-03. Item No. 2016-09-03 was adopted.**

**5. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2016-10-01 – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the 2016 Operating Budget for Recreation Salaries (O’Keefe)**

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** led a discussion on Item No. 2016-10-01.

**Mayor Cooper** clarified that when he appointed Pam Keller as Director of the Recreation Department, sufficient funds for her compensation were not in the Recreation Department’s budget. In addition to the compensation funds, there were other expenses for the Recreation Department which necessitated a budget amendment.

**Councilman Smith 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 Coner made a motion to adopt Item No. 2016-10-01, seconded by Councilman Wright. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2016-10-01. Item No. 2016-10-01 was adopted.**

#### **New Business**

**Items to be voted on:**

**1. RESOLUTION NO. 2016-19 – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Confirming the Appointment of Tom Huval as the District C Appointment to the Covington Board of Adjustment to Fill an Unexpired Term (Wright)**

**Councilman Wright** led a discussion on Resolution No. 2016-19.

**Councilman Wright made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2016-19, seconded by Councilman Rolling. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2016-19. Resolution No. 2016-19 was adopted.**

**2. RESOLUTION NO. 2016-20** – A Resolution of the Covington City Council Authorizing the Use of a Portion of the Unconstructed Right of Way on West 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Between South Jackson and South Monroe Streets, as a Driveway (Rolling)

**Councilman Rolling** led a discussion on Resolution No. 2016-20.

**Councilman Rolling** made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2016-20, seconded by Councilman Wright. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2016-20. Resolution No. 2016-20 was adopted.

**3. RESOLUTION NO. 2016-21** – A Proclamation of the Covington City Council Calling a Special Election (O’Keefe)

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** led a discussion on Resolution No. 2016-21.

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** read Resolution No. 2016-21 into the record.

**Councilman Smith** made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2016-21, seconded by Councilman Wright. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2016-21. Resolution No. 2016-21 was adopted.

**4. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM COUNCILMAN AT LARGE**  
(O’Keefe)

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** led a discussion on the appointment of the Interim Councilman at Large to fill the unexpired term of Councilman at Large Lee S. Alexius, who passed away on October 28, 2016.

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** opened the floor for nominations for the Interim Councilman at Large position.

**Councilman Smith** nominated Edward J. Fielding, III to fill the Interim Councilman at Large position. There were no other nominations for the Interim Councilman at Large position.

**Councilman Wright** seconded the nomination of Edward J. Fielding, III to fill the Interim Councilman at Large position. Roll call was unanimous to appoint Edward J. Fielding, III as the Interim Councilman at Large.

**Items to be discussed:**

**1. 2017 Council meeting schedule (O’Keefe)**

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** discussed the 2017 Council meeting schedule.

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** announced that due to the holiday season, the Council meetings scheduled for December 6 and 20, 2016 have been cancelled. The only Council meeting in the month of December will be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2016.

## COMMENTS AND REPORTS

### A. Council District and Committee Reports

#### 1. District A –

**Councilman Callahan** wished everyone a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

#### 2. District B –

**Councilman Coner** recognized the November birthdays for City employees.

Also, he announced that there will be a Drinking Water Protection Program Community Meeting on Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 6 P.M. at the Mandeville City Barn at which time DEQ will answer questions about the local drinking water. Also, his quote for tonight was, “The bridge you burn now may be the one you later have to cross.” Also, he reminded everyone to shop locally to support our local businesses. Also, he wished everyone a blessed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s holidays.

#### 3. District C –

**Councilman Wright** mentioned that he attended the Three Rivers Art Festival this past weekend and it was a great event. He thanked everyone involved in planning and presenting the event. Also, he reminded everyone that the Rotary Club will host its fundraiser luncheon to benefit the “Feeding the Needy” program on Tuesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> at St. Paul’s Briggs Center and the featured guest will be Governor John Bel Edwards. Also, he congratulated Mr. Fielding for his appointment as the Interim Councilman at Large. Also, he commented that this is the first Council meeting since Lee Alexius passed away and he is very grateful to have worked with Lee over the past five years. Also, he remarked that Lee was the purest public servant that he had ever met.

#### 4. District D –

**Councilman Rolling** reminded everyone that there will be a District D meeting on Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at 6 P.M. in the Council Chambers. Also, he discussed the recent DOTD update on the Highway 21 roadwork project. Upcoming events: November 25<sup>th</sup> through the month of December – Christmas in the Country in the shops on Lee Lane and Columbia Street; Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> – OnStage series will present, “A Christmas Carol,” at 7:30 P.M. in the Fuhrmann Auditorium; Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> – Deck the Rails children’s event from 10 A.M. until 12 P.M. at the Trailhead and a showing of the movie, “It’s a Wonderful Life,” at 4 P.M. at the Trailhead; Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> – the Covington Heritage Foundation will host its second annual Holiday Home Tour; and the Farmer’s Market every Wednesday and Saturday. Also, he commented that the weather was beautiful for the Three Rivers Art Festival and it was well-attended. He commended the City and all of the volunteers for their work in planning and presenting the festival. Also, he mentioned that he will always be grateful for Lee Alexius’ leadership on the Council and for mentoring him over the past five years. Also, he remarked that Lee had a huge heart for the City and will be truly missed.

#### 5. District E –

**Councilman Smith** mentioned that the City was complimented for the success of the recent Three Rivers Art Festival. Also, he announced that Keep Covington Beautiful needs some volunteers on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 10 A.M. until Noon to help with the re-planting of the downtown planters.

#### 6. At Large (Vice President) –

**Council Vice President O’Keefe** commented that Lee Alexius was an impeccable and dedicated individual who was the heart and soul of the City of Covington. He is grateful to have been mentored by Lee when he first came onto the Council. Also, he mentioned that Lee’s wife, Kathy, is in the audience tonight and he recited the saying, “Behind every great man is a great woman.”

**B. Administrative Comments and Reports**

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

- (a) He congratulated Mr. Fielding for his appointment as Interim Councilman at Large and looks forward to working with him over the next few months.
- (b) He thanked the Council for adopting the budget and the department heads for their work on the preparation of the budget.
- (c) He commented that the Three Rivers Art Festival was a great event, which included over 200 artists from 25 states.
- (d) He gave an update on some local projects:
  - (1) The 2016 Roadway project is underway across the City and should be completed before the end of the year.
  - (2) The new public parking lot on East Gibson Street is under construction.
  - (3) Quotes from contractors for the street-striping in downtown are due on November 30<sup>th</sup> and a contractor will be selected soon thereafter.
  - (4) The road and drainage improvements on West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue in River Forest are basically complete.
  - (5) West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge at Mile Branch – The concrete for the bridge is completely poured and work is being done on the side rails. The project should be completed in the next several weeks.
  - (6) West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Washout – DOTD is reviewing the updated plans and will expedite the bidding and awarding of the contract. The updated plans will include increasing the size of the culverts.
  - (7) A waterline improvement project at West 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and South Van Buren Street to install an eight inch waterline which will help to provide adequate water supply and fire protection to the residents. The project should begin in the next week or so and be completed by the end of the year.
  - (8) The repainting of the fence at Cemetery No. 1 was started several weeks ago and was mostly completed on November 1<sup>st</sup> with some touch-up painting still to be done.
- (e) He mentioned that tomorrow, Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 11 A.M. at Cemetery No. 1, there will be a wreath-laying ceremony hosted by the Wharton Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution at the grave of John Wharton Collins, who was the founder of the City of Covington.
- (f) He reminded everyone that in addition to the STARC/COAST parish-wide millage renewal, there are two additional parish-wide millage renewals on the December 10<sup>th</sup> ballot – one to benefit the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Department and the other to benefit the St. Tammany Mosquito Abatement District. Also, he mentioned that the runoff for the U. S. Senator position will appear on the same ballot. He announced that early voting will be held from Saturday, November 26 through Saturday, December 3, excluding Sunday, November 27.
- (g) He wished Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

**Councilman Wright** requested some information as to why the washout on West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue is covered by DOTD due to being designated as a federal aid route but not other street repairs on West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**Mayor Cooper** responded that it was due to the emergency nature of the washout on West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue but he will provide some more information on the matter.

**Edward Fielding** thanked the Council for appointing him as the Interim Councilman at Large and commented that he looks forward to serving the City.

**2. Gina Hayes, Director of Administration-Absent.**

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

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

  
BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE  
Council Clerk