

**CITY OF COVINGTON  
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 3, 2019**

**Council Vice President Rolling** called the regular meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Roll call was as follows:

PRESENT: Peter Lewis Sr., John Botsford, Joey Roberts, Mark W. Verret  
and Larry Rolling

ABSENT: Cody Ludwig

*(Patrick McMath resigned from the City Council on November 26, 2019)*

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Mark R. Johnson, Chief Administrative Officer Gina Hayes, City Attorney Rod Rodrigue, Police Chief Stephen Culotta, Director of Finance Stephen Sanders, Utility Billing Director Cindy Samuel and Denise Windom, Administrative Assistant to CAO Gina Hayes

A Moment of Silence was observed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by former Councilman at Large Patrick McMath.

**Councilwoman Ludwig arrived at 5:02pm.**

**APPEARERS**

1. Councilman Botsford introduced Mr. Patrick McMath, who thanked the Council, Administration and City employees for their help during his service as Councilman at Large. Also, he expressed his appreciation to the residents of Covington who gave him the opportunity to serve and to continue to serve as an elected official.

2. Councilman Lewis introduced Mr. Donald Demas, who discussed the creation of the Pine View Tigers boys' and girls' basketball teams. Also, some of the members of the girls' basketball team introduced themselves to the Council, Administration and public.

**Councilman Lewis** thanked Mr. Donald, Principal Ledet and the parents of the students for their support in giving the students the opportunity to play basketball.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Councilman Botsford made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded by Councilman Roberts. 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. 2019-11-01** – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the Covington Code of Ordinances: Chapter 94 Traffic and Vehicles, Article I. In General, to Add Section 94-7. Maximum Speed Limit (Ludwig)

**Councilwoman Ludwig led a discussion on Item No. 2019-11-01.**

**City Attorney Rod Rodrigue stated that this ordinance sets the maximum speed limit at 25 miles per hour on all municipal roads unless posted otherwise.**

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

**Councilman Botsford made a motion to adopt Item No. 2019-11-01, seconded by Councilwoman Ludwig. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2019-11-01. Item No. 2019-11-01 was adopted.**

**2. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2019-11-03** – An Ordinance of the City of Covington Amending the Covington Code of Ordinances: Chapter 18 Buildings and Building Regulations, Article IV. Fill Regulations, Section 18-152. Fill Placement Requirements for all Zoning Districts and Flood Zones (Rolling)

**Council Vice President Rolling led a discussion on Item No. 2019-11-03.**

**City Attorney Rod Rodrigue stated that the intent of this ordinance is to allow property owners to install generators and/or HVAC units in their side yards without the necessity of filing a variance request with the Board of Adjustment.**

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

**Councilwoman Ludwig made a motion to adopt Item No. 2019-11-03, seconded by Councilman Roberts. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2019-11-03. Item No. 2019-11-03 was adopted.**

**New Business**

**Items to be voted on:**

**1. RESOLUTION NO. 2019-30** -- A Resolution of the Covington City Council Calling a Special Election (Rolling)

**Council Vice President Rolling read Resolution No. 2019-30 into the record and led a discussion on the resolution.**

**Councilman Botsford made a motion to table Resolution No. 2019-30, seconded by Councilman Roberts. Roll call was unanimous to table Resolution No. 2019-30. Resolution No. 2019-30 was tabled.**

**Council Vice President Rolling announced that there will be a special Council meeting on Monday, December 9, 2019 at 12:00pm noon in the Council office in City Hall, 317 North Jefferson Avenue, Covington, to consider and act on Resolution No. 2019-30.**

## **COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

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

#### **1. District A –**

**Councilman Lewis** reminded everyone about the Pine View boys' and girls' basketball games on December 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> starting at 5:30pm at the Harrison Curriculum Center Gym on W. 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Also, he announced another Stepping into Greatness Empowerment Conference hosted by Ashley Marissa with more information available on Eventbrite.

#### **2. District B –**

**Councilman Botsford** gave an update regarding the Northshore Food Bank: (1) Pallets With Purpose fundraiser was a huge success and he thanked the community for supporting the event; (2) the Therapeutic Food Pantry was launched in November and will be serving food to patients at the Cancer Center; and (3) the Food Bank's new building will be open and operational on January 2, 2020. Also, he encouraged the public to participate in the Toys for Tots program. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Happy Kwanzaa.

#### **3. District C –**

**Councilman Roberts** mentioned that the major concern in District C currently is the speed at which the green waste and debris from Tropical Storm Olga are being picked up. He appreciates the public's patience while Coastal works to remove the green waste and debris throughout the City. Also, he congratulated St. Tammany Parish Hospital on celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a member of the community.

#### **4. District D –**

**Councilwoman Ludwig** announced that the Covington branch of the St. Tammany Parish Library will have a soft re-opening in January but their formal ribbon-cutting will be held on Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 11am. Upcoming events: the Covington Heritage Foundation will host its Gala this evening at the Southern Hotel and its major fundraiser, the History and Holly Home Tour, will be held on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> from 2pm until 5pm; the Shop Local Artists week concludes this Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> from 9am until 5pm; the Deck the Rails kids' event will be held on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 4pm until 7:30pm at the Trailhead; and City Hall will be closed on December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas holidays.

#### **5. District E –**

**Councilman Verret** encouraged everyone to dine and shop locally to help our local businesses. Also, he commented that it has been his pleasure and honor to have worked with Gina Hayes and wished her good luck and best wishes in her new position with St. Tammany Parish Government.

#### **6. At Large (Vice President) –**

**Council Vice President Rolling** announced that the Council will be accepting resumes until Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm for any City resident who wishes to be considered for the appointment to the interim Council at Large position. He

added that the Council will review the resumes and a special Council meeting will be scheduled to appoint the interim Council at Large position. Also, he announced that five new businesses applied for occupational licenses in November 2019. Also, he announced that the Council meeting scheduled for January 7, 2020 has been changed to January 14, 2020. Also, he commented that he has enjoyed working with Gina Hayes over the past eight plus years and congratulated her on her new position with St. Tammany Parish Government. He wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

### **Administrative Comments and Reports**

#### **1. Mayor Johnson-**

- (a) He mentioned that he arrived a few minutes late for the Council meeting this evening because the Mayor's Art Gallery opening at City Hall was scheduled at the same time. He thanked the Council for its indulgence in allowing him to attend the gallery opening before the Council meeting.
- (b) He explained the process for having debris and green waste removed after a major storm event. Also, he mentioned that last week he instructed Public Works to scour the City and compile a list of the remaining piles of green waste. The list of approximately 400 piles has been forwarded to Coastal and they will begin removing the green waste over the next week or so. Also, he mentioned that as of about two weeks ago, Coastal had picked up over 600 tons of debris at no additional cost to the City or the taxpayers.
- (c) He announced that Chief Administrative Officer Gina Hayes has submitted her letter of resignation. He thanked Gina for her eight plus years with the City and for making his first six months as Mayor a truly enjoyable experience. He wished her the best in her new position as Chief Administrative Officer for St. Tammany Parish Government under President-elect Mike Cooper.
- (d) He wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Councilman Rolling** reported a low-hanging power line on Jefferson between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> avenues.

**Mayor Johnson** responded that it is a cable line and Charter is aware of it.

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

**Chief Administrative Officer Gina Hayes** thanked Mayor Mark along with the present and former Council members including the late Lee Alexius, for the privilege of serving with them and for their support during her tenure as Director of Administration/Chief Administrative Officer. She looks forward to her new adventure but it has been a wonderful experience working for the City of Covington and she will miss her Covington family.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.

  
LARRY ROLLING  
Council Vice President

  
BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE  
Council Clerk