

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

351

SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly Council meeting of the City of Saint Marys was called to order by Deputy Mayor Chris Pletcher on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in-person with an option for teleconference. Notice of this meeting was sent to Council on September 17, 2020, posted at City Hall and published in the Daily Press.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Deputy Mayor Chris Pletcher, Andrew Mohny, Bob Roberts, Joe Fleming, Gina Vrobel, Manager Timothy Pearson, Solicitor Tom Wagner, and Recording Secretary Lorrie Levenduski. Margie Brown dialed in.

Mayor Radkowski was excused.

Deputy Mayor Pletcher congratulated Mayor Radkowski on his ninth child.

City Staff: Dani Schneider, Parks and Recreation Director, Hannah Brock, HR Specialist and PR Officer, Tina Gradizzi, Community and Economic Development Coordinator, Kristi Wendel, Deputy Finance Director, Carol Muhitch, Finance Director and Darlene Nortum, Community Services Specialist.

VISITORS

Richard Sadley and Amy Cherry.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 17, 2020 – In-person and teleconference meeting
Motion Passed

Bob Roberts made a motion to approve the August 17, 2020 minutes, seconded by Joe Fleming and all were in favor.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION:
Parks and Recreation**

Danielle Schneider, Parks and Recreation Director explained even though the pandemic put a damper on the planned activities, they had a successful season. She gave a “shout out” to her phenomenal new team members. She noted the participation of 50 teams in the volleyball and basketball leagues. Youth activities included partnering with ECCOTA on projects. Day camps had 70 participants and there were 110 participants in the youth basketball programs. The pool memberships increased to 93 with an average of 113 patrons per day. Swimming lessons were not offered this year. She is waiting for approval from DCNR for a grant that would allow for a comprehensive plan for the parks and the pool. A grant was also submitted for a portable ice-skating rink at Benzinger Park and for an online management system that would track park and pool registrations. The system would provide an earlier distribution of scheduled programs to allow for parents to plan for the summer. A local Eagle Scout, Joe Wolf, was working on a gaga ball pit project. A dog park was also being looked at. She noted the parks and pool workers were a great team and had great people and she was excited to be part of it all.

It was noted the newly renovated Memorial Park clubhouse was a great asset and was utilized as much as possible.

Council and the Manager commended Ms. Schneider.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on agenda topics.

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MANAGERS REPORT

Manager Pearson provided the following report:

Downtown Park updates - asbestos removal was completed and demolition could begin at any time on the Depot Street properties. Topsoil was also being worked in the park. The recent Relay for Life event was the first event held at the new park and was a success.

Margie Brown questioned the upcoming snow removal in the downtown and Manager Pearson responded he would review that soon and provide Council a response.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Manager Pearson provided the following Treasurer’s Report for August, 2020:

Total revenue for the General fund was 72.5% of budget compared to 2019 of 73% of budget and in 2018 revenue was at 80% of budget. Expenditures were at 52% of budget compared to 2019 of 53% of budget and in 2018 expenditures were 54% of budget. Total real estate tax collections as of the end of August was at 95% of budget, for 2019 it was 94% of budget and for 2018 real estate collections were at 95.5% of budget. Earned Income Tax collected as of 8/31/20 was at 70.83% of budget, for 2019 it was 66.59% of budget and in 2018 EIT collections as of the end of August was 74.48% of budget. Pension plans continue to increase in value as of the end of August.

Manager Pearson noted the EIT collection was still significantly down.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

Consider for adoption:

Resolution No. 20-14 –
Authorizing the City to enter into a loan agreement with the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB loan)

Resolution No. 20-14 authorizing the City to enter into a loan agreement with the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB loan) was presented. Manager Pearson explained this was the 5th year of the City’s paving program, which includes the resurfacing of the previous 4 years of repaired (mill and fill) roadways.

Deputy Mayor Pletcher noted the liquid fuel tax funds are used towards the payment of the PIB loan.

Motion Passed

Bob Roberts made a motion to adopt Resolution No, 20-14, seconded by Joe Fleming and all were in favor.

Ordinance No. 319 – An Ordinance increasing the indebtedness by the issue of a general obligation note in the amount of \$1M

Ordinance No. 319 increasing the indebtedness by the issue of a general obligation note in the amount of \$1M was presented.

Motion Passed

Joe Fleming made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 319, seconded by Gina Vrobel and all were in favor.

2021 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for Pension Plans

2021 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for Pension Plans was presented.

Carol Muhitch explained a copy of the 2021 M.M.O. reports for the pension funds was included in Council’s packet. This report is done every year. Act 205 requires that it be submitted and approved by the governing body of the City of St. Marys by September 30, 2020.

The City was required to transfer the MMO to the pension plans through the General Fund. The City receives State Aid from the

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Commonwealth through ACT 205 to help cover this cost.

Total requirement for the police pension is \$200,505 and for the non-uniformed employee's pension is \$117,595 or a total of \$318,100. This was a \$10,720 increase from the total requirement for 2020.

In 2019 the City received from ACT 205, \$322,591 to help fund the MMO requirements. The City should receive the 2020 ACT 205 funding in late September - early October of this year.

Motion Passed

Gina Vrobel made a motion to approve the 2021 MMO in the total amount of \$318,100.00, seconded by Bob Roberts and all were in favor.

Tentative selection of 2020
CDBG projects

Tina Gradizzi, Community Economic and Development Coordinator presented the following tentative selection of 2020 CDBG projects.

Total Allocation:	18%	\$308,143	
Administration		(\$55,465)	
<u>Proposed Projects:</u>			\$252,678
Historical Society of St. Marys and Benzinger Twp:			
Removal of architectural barrier for handicap accessibility installation of elevator		(\$126,878)	
City of St. Marys:			
Purchase of handicap accessible amenities for parks		(\$50,000)	
City of St. Marys:			
Spot Blight demolition*		(\$15,000)	
Historic Preservation**		<u>(\$60,800)</u>	
			<u>(\$252,678)</u>
			0

TOTAL LMI Benefit: 70%

TOTAL Slum/Spot Blight: 30%

*Demolition of 123 Fourth Street property once ownership is transferred to City

**Work with the St. Marys Economic Development Corporation on renovating 45-47 Erie Avenue property/historical building.

Motion Passed

Andrew Mohny made a motion to approve the selection of 2020 CDBG projects, seconded by Gina Vrobel and all were in favor.

Consider for adoption:

Resolution No. 20-15 – 2020
Community Development Block
Grant application

Resolution No. 20-15 authorizing the submission of the 2020 Community Development Block Grant application was presented.

Motion Passed

Andrew Mohny made a motion to adopt Resolution No 20-15, seconded by Gina Vrobel and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 20-16 –
Disposition of City Records

Resolution No. 20-16 authorizing the Disposition of City Records was presented.

Manager Pearson explained this was a continuing effort to dispose of unnecessary City records as allowed by the Municipal Records Retention rules. Most of the files were from the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Motion Passed

Bob Roberts made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 20-16, seconded by Joe Fleming and all were in favor.

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Consider for publication:
An Ordinance amending City
Code Chapter 1 Administration
Part 1 I. Departments Sections
191 thru 197

An Ordinance amending City Code Chapter 1 Administration Part 1 I. Departments Sections 191 thru 197 was presented for publication.

Manager Pearson explained the following changes were being proposed to be current and accurate and will reflect the City’s current and future structure. Previous changes to the structure were never changed in the City’s Administrative Code. Council was provided a detailed list of changes for their review and/or comment. The following are the highlights of those changes:

1. The City shall be organized and operate through the following departments, headed by the following officers:
 - A. Administrative Department – City Manager
 - B. Community & Economic Development Department – Director of Community Development
 - C. Police Department – Chief of Police
 - D. Finance Department – Finance Director
 - E. Public Works Department – Public Works Director
2. In the absence of an appointed department head, the Manager shall be the department head for that department.

Each department listed above included the details of its duties and responsibilities.

Bob Roberts expressed his concerns with the elimination of two current department head positions and suggested those positions have the same protection as the other department heads. (Per the Home Rule Charter, the Manager shall not appoint or remove any department head without the prior approval of Council)

Manager Pearson agreed and will work with the Solicitor to provide a document or language that contains the same protection for the two mentioned department head positions.

Deputy Mayor Pletcher clarified the Manager would follow-up with the noted concerns.

Motion Passed

Andrew Mohny made a motion to approve the ordinance for publication, seconded by Bob Roberts and all were in favor.

An Ordinance amending City
Code Chapter 18 Sewers and
Sewer Disposal Part 3 Section
302 Sewer Rental Rates

An Ordinance amending City Code Chapter 18 Sewers and Sewer Disposal Part 3 Section 302 Sewer Rental Rates was presented for publication.

Manager Pearson explained this ordinance was to update the City Code regarding the sewer rental charges for residential properties. All non-residential (business and industry) would be addressed separately. This would allow a change to the fee structure for 2021 by resolution of Council. Currently, the sewer bills are billed for each water meter and based on water consumption plus a set base rate. The City receives readings from the Water Authority every quarter, which requires the City to estimate bills in between readings. The water meter-based billing does not allow for billing for more than one unit within a residential property if there is only one water meter. The ordinance was proposing to change the definition of service address to include each separate residential dwelling unit and the definition of occupied property. This change could potentially add over 300 customers that are currently not being billed. The ordinance also

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was proposing to change to a flat rate billing. He believed it would encourage more direct pay customers due to a consistent amount on their bill. The sewer billing revenue collected is used for the operational costs to run the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Joe Fleming questioned if seasonal residents would still be billed for a service when not using it and Manager Pearson responded there is an administrative burden to process those types of requests.

Deputy Mayor Pletcher noted the changes could possibly remove over \$30,000 from the wastewater treatment plant budget due to a reduction of the administrative burden.

Deputy Mayor Pletcher noted it would be beneficial to create a document that would address frequently asked questions for the residents of the changes and Manager Pearson agreed and would work with staff to prepare it.

Motion Passed

Gina Vrobel made a motion to publish the ordinance, seconded by Margie Brown and all were in favor.

2020 PML City voting delegate

The following 2020 PML City voting delegate was presented for approval:

- Voting delegate – Lou Radkowski, Mayor
- Alternate voting delegate Tim Pearson, Manager

Motion Passed

Joe Fleming made a motion to approve the delegates, seconded by Andrew Mohny and all were in favor.

Appointment to Recreation Board

The following appointment to the Recreation Board was presented for approval:

NAME OF AUTHORITY, BOARD OR COMMISSION AND LENGTH OF TERM	TERM EXPIRING	NUMBER OF VACANCIES	LETTERS RECEIVED FROM	RECOMMENDATION:
Recreation Board	To fill the unexpired term of Jim Higgins – 01/01/2022	1 Vacancy	Kelly Breindel	KELLY BREINDEL

Motion Passed

Andrew Mohny made a motion to appoint Kelly Breindel to the Recreation Board, seconded by Joe Fleming and all were in favor.

LERTA Application:2020-01 – DeLullo Trucking Corporation

DeLullo Trucking Corporation has submitted an application to the City of St. Marys in regards to the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act (LERTA) Program for a truck storage building at 1028 Delaum Road with a projected cost of \$135,000. The request has been approved by the Elk County Commissioners and the St. Marys Area School Board, via email.

Bob Roberts noted construction had already begun, which he believed was not allowed and Manager Pearson responded the application was received before construction started, which is allowable due to the time constraints of processing and obtaining final approval from the three taxing bodies.

Motion Passed

Bob Roberts made a motion to approve the LERTA application 2020-01, seconded by Gina Vrobel and all were in favor.

Manager Pearson noted the exemption from property taxes would

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occur after an assessment is done by the County Assessment Office and would only be for the portion of the increase in value based on the application.

Subdivision Application:
2020-07 – Destephano Family,
Rosely Road

Subdivision Application 2020-07 was received from the Destephano Family for property located on Rosely Road. The subdivision proposed to divide two lots from a 71.93ac parcel. Lot 1 was 1.456ac and contained an existing single-family dwelling with public water and private sewage disposal. Lot 2 was 7.525ac and was being consolidated with an adjoining parcel with an existing single-family dwelling with public water and private sewage disposal to the west. The residual parcel is 62.829 ac and is woodlands and cultivated fields. The surveyor was aware of a minor labeling error on the southern property line of the residual parcel, starting at the common corner with James Brown. The City was also described as a “Township” on the deed descriptions. These minor errors have been corrected by the surveyor. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision with the corrections mentioned above.

Motion Passed

Joe Fleming made a motion to approve the 2020-07 subdivision application, seconded by Gina Vrobel and all were in favor.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:
COVID-19 Virus
Updates/Actions

Deputy Mayor Pletcher stated COVID updates were continuing with members of the community. It was anticipated the entire \$2.7M of the State funds that were provided to the County would be utilized based on the amount of applications received.

Political Signs

Deputy Mayor Pletcher explained the topic was on tonight’s agenda due to a letter received from a resident expressing concerns with political signs being posted before the 30-day allowable time frame. This matter had been discussed by Council many times before.

Margie Brown believed the issue was partially resolved in 2017 and it was recommended not to pursue enforcement of those signs on private property, but if enforcement was going to occur it should be fair and across the board.

Manager Pearson explained the rules for political signs are under the zoning ordinance, which allows violators which are the property owners, 30 days to appeal it to the Zoning Hearing Board. Residents can place signs up to 30 days prior to election day and enforcement was not possible unless it exceeded 60 days. This was especially difficult this year due to the shifting dates for election day because of the pandemic. City staff was not directed to send violation notices due to the time-consuming nature of this regulation. The Manager and City staff recommended to eliminate the time constraints and only address signs that created a safety concern.

Joe Fleming agreed it was not using City resources wisely to enforce this regulation if the sign is not a safety concern.

Gina Vrobel believed the ordinance should be amended.

Solicitor Wagner believed it was best to eliminate the regulation and enforce safety concerns only. The biggest issue appears to be the political parties arguing over which candidate is following the rules.

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Deputy Mayor Pletcher believed a proposed amendment should occur before the next election in 2022.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
NON-AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on non-agenda topics.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Roberts noted the Rotary Club was hosting a drive thru trick or treat at Memorial Park instead of its normal annual parade due to the pandemic.

Councilman Mohny commended Tina Gradizzi for her work on the Erie Ave. properties.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deputy Mayor Pletcher made the following announcements:

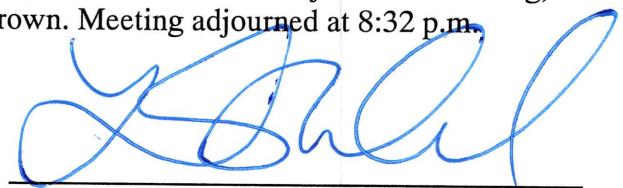
- Council's next regular meeting will be held on Monday, October 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
- "Trick or Treat" will be held on Saturday, October 31, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. by porchlight invitation only.

ADJOURNMENT

Joe Fleming made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Margie Brown. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.



Recording Secretary



Mayor