

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

JULY 15, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly Council meeting of the City of Saint Marys was called to order by Mayor Lyle Garner on Monday, July 15, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. Notice of this meeting was sent to Council on July 11, 2024, posted at City Hall and published in the Daily Press.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Mayor Lyle Garner, Deputy Mayor Shane Schneider, Jerome Sorg, Stephen Bagley, Joe Sarginger, City Manager Joseph Fleming, Solicitor Lauren Brennen, and Recording Secretary Lorrie Levenduski.

Anthony Gregory was excused.
Nedward Jacob entered late.

City Staff: Tina Gradizzi, Director of Community and Economic Development and Kim Andrus, Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development.

VISITORS

Richard Sadley, Dawn and Brady Hornburg.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES
June 17, 2024 – Regular
Meeting
Motion Passed**

Jerome Sorg made a motion to approve the June 17, 2024 minutes, seconded by Joe Sarginger and all were in favor.

**UPDATE ON WILDS ARE
WORKING (WAW)
PROGRAM**

Kim Andrus, Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development, provided the following update on the Wilds are Working Program:

“St. Marys was one of the two communities piloting a new remote work program called the Wilds Are Working: Recreation and Technology in Rural PA with the PA Wilds for Entrepreneurship.

As one of the two communities participating in the pilot, St. Marys is preparing to welcome the remote workers and their families and showcase its vibrant downtown, local attractions, and access to outdoor recreation.

This project aims to position St. Marys and the entire PA Wilds Region as a location that these workers would like to move and continue working in. Cameron County did this last year and had one family move to Emporium.

We have chosen four participants and their families. 6 adults and 6 children.

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I have been working very hard at preparing these workers for their stay for the entire month of August. I have secured housing and office space. I have been collecting donations and making welcome baskets with locally owned items to support our small businesses. These participants will be given a stipend to spend only at locally owned businesses. They will not be able to use these at any chain stores, (Walmart, McDonalds, etc.) They will use these Yiftee cards as they would a credit card. However, the business must be signed up for this program. Businesses are being signed up as we speak. Local businesses are encouraged to sign up if they haven't already."

She thanked a long list of businesses for their donations and thanked the Welcome Committee members.

"As we move closer to them arriving things continue to get busier preparing for them to arrive. We have three events planned at the beginning, middle, and end of their stay. The welcome event will be at our local park, the second will be at the Elk Visitor Center, and the third will be at Straub's Visitor Center."

Council thanked her for the information.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on agenda topics.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Fleming presented the following Manager's Report for June 2024.

- "I hope everyone had a great 4th of July holiday and want to thank the St. Marys Chamber of Commerce for their annual fireworks display.
- The Center Street Sidewalk Replacement Project is completed for the year.
- Contracts are being finalized to get the sewer replacement project and the pedestrian pathway project underway. I am hopeful that they will begin in the next couple of weeks or so.
- Just want to let residents know that when the construction begins for the sewer replacement project, the area in front of City Hall will be a mess and there will be lane restrictions being placed. For any City Hall business matters only, the parking lot behind city hall will be available for residents during the construction.

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- Oil and chipping is set to start next month. We have been helping out with the restroom project for Shawmut Park and able to complete the drainage system.
- The elevator at the parking garage is up and running. There was a malfunction in the switchboard that needed to be rebuilt. The HVAC system replacement project for city hall is waiting on a couple specialized parts. Once they are received, the system will be replaced.
- Union negotiations have begun for all non-uniform members, once there is an agreement. The contract will be placed before Council for approval.
- Our auditors have received all of the necessary paperwork to complete the 2023 Audit, and should be completed later in the year to keep us on track.
- National Night Out is set for August 6th from 5pm to 8pm.
- Close to 300 kids participated in Inner Park Day at Benzinger Park last week and want to thank John Salter, Jeff Bucheit, and Greg Snelick for their coverage of the event.
- Pertaining to the new playground being installed at Memorial Park. The playground equipment is set to arrive within the next couple of weeks. Prior to the installation of the equipment, the actual site needs prep. While this construction is going on and all the equipment present, there will be changes to the parking availability while this project is going on. I do not have any confirmation dates, but as soon as I do, the information will be pushed out to the public on any restrictions. It's wonderful to see all the construction and progress in the city, but of course, there is a lot more to do.
- There are a lot of activities going on in the city and there will be a great influx of visitors especially with the sports events, legion baseball tournament coming up, little league majors baseball sectionals at Memorial Park, which is taking place as we speak, and next week will be Little League Minor Softball State Tournament. I want to wish our local teams the best of luck."

TREASURER'S REPORT

Manager Fleming, provided the following Treasurer's Report for June 2024:

Total Revenue collected for the general fund as of June 30th is \$4.9M or 55% of budget. This marks the halfway point of the year. Last year, the City collected \$5.2M or 61% of budget, Revenue for 2022 was \$4.5M or 54% of budget, and for 2021 revenue collected was \$4.7M or 63% of budget. Total

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expenditures for the general fund were \$4.8M or 54% of the Budget. Expenditures for 2023 were \$3.9M or 45% of budget: for 2022 they were \$3.4 million or 41% of budget. This reflects the \$750,000 transferred to Capital Reserve in June. Total real estate taxes collected was 94% of budget and 94% of budget was collected for last year. Earned income collected was 37% of budget and for last year we collected 27% of budget.

Nedward Jacob entered at
7:13pm

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

Approval of 2024 C.D.B.G.
Projects

Tina Gradizzi, Director of Community and Economic Development provided the following information:

Approval of the 2024 C.D.B.G projects were being presented tonight as a follow-up to Council's June 17, 2024 meeting which, presented the proposed 2024 CDBG projects:

- Administration
- Spot/Blight
- Sidewalk Replacement Program
- Rental Housing Renovation Project

She confirmed with the grant management staff that the rental housing renovation project that was proposed does not qualify for CDBG funding. However, there are other grant resources that we can research to implement this type of project.

During the public comment period, comments were received for a request for historic preservation/code deficiency projects under the Spot/Blight category.

Based on the information presented above, we are asking for Council's approval to move forward with the recommended projects:

Administration	\$56,000
Spot/Blight Demolition/Clearance	\$51,553
Historic Preservation/Code Deficiencies	\$25,000
Sidewalk Replacement Program	<u>\$178,625</u>
TOTAL 2024 CDBG ALLOCATION	\$311,178

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to approve the 2024 C.D.B.G. projects, seconded by Stephen Bagley and all were in favor.

Consider for adoption:

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Resolution No. 24-13 – 2024
C.D.B.G projects application

Resolution No. 24-13 – 2024 C.D.B.G projects application was presented for adoption.

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-13, seconded by Shane Schneider and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 24-14 -
Multimodal grant application
request - 120 Connector Project
Motion

Resolution No. 24-14 - Multimodal grant application request - 120 Connector Project was presented for adoption.

Jerome Sorg made a motion to adopt resolution No. 24-14.

Discussion

Tina Gradizzi explained the application was a request for additional funds for the project due to increasing costs. An archaeological study added costs and project prices continue to increase.

Joe Sarginger stated his concerns with handicapped parking.

Shane Schneider stated he believed there were regulations for that type of concern.

Manager Fleming stated he would look into his concerns.

Motion Passed

The motion was seconded by Shane Schneider and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 24-15 –
Additional grant request for
DCNR Leathers Playground
Rehabilitation Memorial Park
Project

Resolution No. 24-15 – Additional grant request for DCNR Leathers Playground Rehabilitation Memorial Park Project was presented for adoption.

Tina Gradizzi explained this grant request was for additional funding for the project.

Motion Passed

Shane Schneider made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-15, seconded by Jerome Sorg and all were in favor.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

A referendum to amend the City Charter to revise Section 1403 Limitations on Tax Levies Part F. An annual tax, not exceeding 1/2 mill, for the purpose of making appropriations to nonprofit community ambulance services and rescue squads.

A referendum to amend the City Charter to revise Section 1403 Limitations on Tax Levies Part F. An annual tax, not exceeding 1/2 mill, for the purpose of making appropriations to nonprofit community ambulance services and rescue squads was presented for discussion.

Shane Schneider explained during last year’s budget workshops, the St. Marys Ambulance requested an increase in their millage in order to support their operations. In 2023 their millage was set at .1 mills and Council increased it to .4 mills. Currently the

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maximum millage allowed by the City Charter is .5 mills. If they would request additional funding Council could only increase to the maximum allowed of .5 mills which is equivalent to approximately \$120,000. In order to increase the amount the request would have to be placed on the ballot as a referendum to be voted on by the citizens. He suggested Council consider amending the Charter. Due to the recent closure of Labor and Delivery services at Penn Highlands Elk and with no known plans to increase their services in St. Marys, he believed it was important to have a stable and well-equipped ambulance service to transport residents to Penn Highlands Dubois or any other medical facilities. He suggested to increase the maximum to 2 mills.

Nedward Jacob stated his concerns with the proposed increase, since he believed the maximum millage for the City was 25 mills and we are currently near 20 mills. This would limit an increase for other City millage rates, including the General Fund.

Shane Schneider commented he was open to a lower increase in millage for the ambulance fund.

Nedward Jacob stated his concerns regarding the support provided to other municipalities and not receiving any funding from them.

Mayor Garner clarified the proposed increase was only to increase the maximum and was not committing to an increase at this time.

Council briefly discussed the procedure for the referendum and the ballot cycles.

Motion

Jerome Sorg made a motion to have the Solicitor draw up a draft referendum to vote on at the next Council meeting.

It was determined the motion should include the amount of the increase.

Amended Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg amended his motion to draft the referendum to include a not to exceed amount of 2 mills for the ambulance service, seconded by Shane Schneider and all were in favor.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
NON-AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on non-agenda topics.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council had the following comments:

Shane Schneider was thankful for tonight's discussion and was glad to see all the progress on numerous projects in the City.

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Jerome Sorg commented Council should consider reviewing the Zoning Ordinance regarding animals in the future.

Nedward Jacob reminded everyone of the upcoming Aviation Festival on August 17th.

Joe Sarginger suggested everyone enjoy the summer with all the warm weather we are having.

Stephen Bagley requested support for the National Night out activities.

Mayor Garner encouraged everyone to attend the 50th Anniversary of the Potato Pancake Dinner on July 21st.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

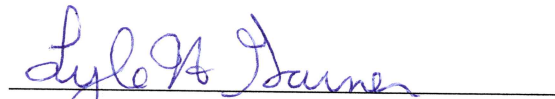
Mayor Garner made the following announcements:

- The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, August 19, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Stephen Bagley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Nedward Jacob. Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.


Recording Secretary


Mayor