

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 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, December 16, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. Notice of this meeting was sent to Council on December 12, 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, Nedward Jacob, Stephen Bagley, Anthony Gregory, Joe Sarginger, City Manager Joseph Fleming, Solicitor Lauren Brennen, and Recording Secretary Rachael Hughes.

VISITORS

Clythera Hornung, Matthew Pfeufer, Shanea Ehrensberger, Richard Sadley, Amy Cherry, and Martin Dornisch.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
November 18, 2024 – Regular Meeting
Motion Passed

Anthony Gregory made a motion to approve the November 18, 2024 minutes, seconded by Jerome Sorg, and all were in favor.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on agenda topics.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Fleming provided the following report:

- “The city is in the process of finishing up what is necessary as we look forward to 2025.
- The Street Department is in winter mode and will continue to ensure safe roadways.
- The City would like to announce that K9 Officer Nando, who has served with us for 8 years, is retiring. His dedication, skill, and partnership with Sergeant Shaffer have been invaluable to the police department and community. We are grateful for Nando's years of service and wish him all the best in retirement.
- Later this week, we will be introducing K9 Officer Draco, who will be taking over the duties and responsibilities.
- Gingerbread Dash was held yesterday with 141 participants.
- Feasibility Study for Community Pool to begin January 2025.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

- Pool Memberships for 2025 are currently running through June 2025.
- Movin' for Miles Walking Club in partnership with St. Marys Area High School on going with 115 participants. Registration is open throughout the month of March.
- Three grants have been submitted which include the LSA Grant for Fire Department's Station 2 Project, PA SITES Program for the Airport Industrial Park, and additional funding for the Rt 120 Connector Project.
- City offices will be closed December 25th and January 1st in observance of Christmas and New Years.
- I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Years!"

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

Total revenue for the General Fund as of November 30th, 2024, is \$8.21 million or 93% of Budget. Last year it was \$8.38 million (99%) and 2022 was \$7.91 million (96%). Expenditures for the General Fund as of November 30th, 2024, are \$8.5 million or 96% of Budget. Last year it was \$8.22 million (97%) and 2022 was \$7.78 million (94%). Total Real Estate tax collections as of the end of November are at 98% of budget. In 2023 it was 99% and 2022 was 99%. Earned Income tax collection as of November 30, 2024 is at 106% of budget. In 2023 it was 113% of budget and 2022 was 91% of budget. Pension plans increased in value for November 2024.

PUBLIC HEARING: Nero Enterprise LLC Conditional Use Application- Proposed Expansion of Non-coal Surface Mine at 208 Clay Road
Opened Hearing

Mayor Garner opened the public hearing for the Conditional Use Application- Proposed Expansion of Non-Coal Surface Mine at 208 Clay Road at 7:04 p.m.

Matt Pfeufer, Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer, explained the following:

The applicant is requesting Conditional Use approval for a surface non-coal mining / quarrying use of 5.27 acres at 208 Clay Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Conditional Use at its meeting on December 3, 2024. The Zoning Hearing Board granted variances to the applicant for fencing

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

(Section 441.5) and Screening and landscaping requirements (Section 441.9) on November 20, 2024.

Public Comment

Councilman Joe Sarginger questioned how deep the excavation will go as he is concerned it will ruin the water supply from surrounding wells.

Matt Pfeufer responded that he is unsure how deep, but he knows that area is mostly served with public water.

Councilman Joe Sarginger also asked what the plan is after excavation.

Matt Pfeufer responded that the state has requirements for restoring the site and they plan to restore and level the lot.

Joe Sarginger questioned why the Zoning Application was denied.

Matt Pfeufer explained that the Zoning Application is typically the first step in a Conditional Use Application, and as the Zoning Officer, he must deny that application because Conditional Use Applications can only be approved by Council.

Matt Pfeufer commented that there were questions raised about the proximity of the mine to the powerline, but the applicant was cleared by the power company.

Closed Hearing

Mayor Garner closed the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE ACTION:
Conditional Use Application –
Enterprise LLC – Proposed
Expansion of Non-Coal
Surface Mine at 208 Clay Road**

Jerome Sorg made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Application- Enterprise LLC- Proposed Expansion of Non-Coal Surface Mine at 208 Clay Road seconded by Anthony Gregory. All were in favor.

Motion Passed

**PUBLIC HEARING: 2025
City Budget
Opened Hearing**

Mayor Garner opened the public hearing for the 2025 City Budget at 7:09 p.m.

There were no public comments.

Closed Hearing

Mayor Garner closed the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE ACTION:
Consider for adoption:**

Ordinance No. 344, providing for the levy and assessment of taxes for the fiscal year 2025 was presented for adoption.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

Ordinance No. 344, providing for the levy and assessment of taxes for the fiscal year 2025

Manager Fleming explained there were no increases proposed from the City this year in the Budget and levy of taxes, so this is the same tax rate as last year.

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 344 for adoption, seconded by Stephen Bagley. All were in favor of the motion.

Resolution No. 24-24 for the 2025 City Budget for various funds

Resolution No. 24-24 for the 2025 City Budget for various funds was presented for adoption.

Manager Fleming clarified that there have been no changes to the Budget since the Budget Workshop in November, or since last year.

Motion Passed

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

**Resolution No. 24-25
Establishing the annual compensation for the Tax Collector and Deputy Tax Collector for the St. Marys Area School District**

Resolution No. 24-25, establishing the annual compensation for the Tax Collector and Deputy Tax Collector for the St. Marys Area School District, was presented for adoption.

Nedward Jacob asked to clarify if this was for the school district only, or if it was for the City as well. Manager Fleming responded that it is technically the City of St. Marys Tax Collector. Manager Fleming goes on to say that because the position will be open in the upcoming election, there is a committee that discusses and agrees on a wage scale for the next 4 service years. If someone were to run for Tax Collector this coming year, they would know ahead of time what the compensation would be.

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-25, seconded by Anthony Gregory, and all were in favor.

**Resolution No. 24-26 –
Revisions to City Fee Schedule**

Resolution No. 24-26, Revisions to City Fee Schedule, was presented for adoption.

Discussion

Manager Fleming stated this Resolution to the Fee Schedule is annual and decided in advance. There were increases for the Sewage Enforcement Officer, who does percolation tests and inspections; the Zoning Hearing Board for filing fees; and the Police Department for Police Video & Audio Recordings Requests.

Jerome Sorg asked Matt Pfeufer about the on-lot sewage disposal and if services such as a percolation test could be done by a private

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

person or outside organization other than the City's contracted Sewage Enforcement Officer.

Matt Pfeufer replied by stating he unfortunately does not know the answer to that question, but if that is something that was permitted, the person or organization would have to be a licensed Sewage Enforcement Officer.

Matt Pfeufer stated the filing fee for the Zoning Hearing Board also increased from \$300 to \$400.

Joe Sarginger asked why that price needed to be changed.

Matt Pfeufer explained that the Zoning Hearing Board must advertise each hearing and with the increasing cost of advertising, it is necessary. The advertisements must be in a newspaper with local distribution, so it is not something that can be shopped around for.

Jerome Sorg wanted confirmation that the City is not making money on the fees, that they were just to cover the cost of the service.

Manager Fleming confirmed that was correct.

Shane Schneider asked if an example of Police Recordings would be a hit and run, and insurance would want to see a video?

Solicitor Lauren Brennen stated that it is more along the lines of an individual submitting a Right to Know Request instead of a subpoena.

Motion Passed

Anthony Gregory made a motion to approve Resolution 24-26, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

**2025 Wage Schedule for
Management Employees**

The 2025 Wage Schedule for Management Employees was presented for approval.

Manager Fleming stated the following:
Basically, by default, the increase in wages for Management Employees was 3%. There are two employees who waived City benefits and had a slight larger increase at 5%.

Nedward Jacob asked for clarification on why there are two employees that do not receive benefits.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

Manager Fleming answered that those two employees declined City benefits because they receive benefits from their spouse's employer.

Motion Passed

Anthony Gregory made a motion to approve the 2025 Wage Schedule for Management Employees, seconded by Nedward Jacob, and all were in favor.

**Appointment of Director of
Community and Economic
Development**

Manager Fleming stated the following:

"Council, through searches and applications, I want to recommend Matt Pfeufer to be the new Director of Community and Economic Development here at the City of St. Marys. Matt brings much experience in Community and Economic Development, especially through planning, zoning, and subdivision assessments. Also, he previously held the position of CDBG Coordinator for the County of Elk prior to coming to work for the City. His skills in planning, grant management, and stakeholder engagement provide him with the qualities needed to move this department forward. I believe that Mr. Pfeufer is the ideal choice to lead the department. I would like to request that City Council approve of his appointment to this position."

Manager Fleming also stated that Matt Pfeufer agreed to keep working with zoning and subdivision, and a new Code Officer would be needed to fill the position he will be leaving.

Anthony Gregory questioned what the pay schedule will look like for Matt Pfeufer and if he would be compensated for two positions.

Manager Fleming stated he would be compensated for only the Director position currently, but that can be discussed in the future.

Motion Passed

Shane Schneider made a motion to approve Matt Pfeufer as Community and Economic Development Director, seconded by Anthony Gregory. All were in favor.

Mayor Garner congratulated Matt Pfeufer on his promotion.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

**Appointments to City
Authorities, Boards, and
Commissions**

BOARD	NUMBER OF VACANCIES	TERMS EXPIRING	LETTERS RECEIVED FROM	RECOMMENDED
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Benzinger Township Golf Authority (5-year term)	1	J. Stephen Bagley	J. Stephen Bagley	J. Stephen Bagley
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Motion Passed Jerome Sorg made a motion to reappoint J. Stephen Bagley for a 5-year term, seconded by Nedward Jacob, and all were in favor.

St. Marys Area Airport Authority (5-year term)	1	Scott Bennett – St. Marys position	Robert Wittman	Robert Wittman
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Motion Passed Jerome Sorg made a motion to appoint Robert Wittman for a 5-year term, seconded by Nedward Jacob, and all were in favor.

St Marys Area Water Authority (5-year term)	2	Michael Goetz William T. Gerg	Michael Goetz William T. Gerg	Michael Goetz William T. Gerg
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Motion Passed Shane Schneider made a motion to reappoint Michael Goetz for a 5-year term, seconded by Anthony Gregory, and all were in favor.

Motion Passed Nedward Jacob made a motion to reappoint William T. Gerg for a 5-year term, seconded by Jerome Sorg, and all were in favor.

St. Marys Municipal Authority (5-year term)	2	Thaddeus Sorg	Thaddeus Sorg	Thaddeus Sorg
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Motion Passed Shane Schneider made a motion to reappoint Thaddeus Sorg for a 5-year term, seconded by Joe Sarginger, and all were in favor.

Board of Health (5-year term)	1	George Castellano, MD	George Castellano, MD	George Castellano, MD
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**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

Motion Passed

Shane Schneider made a motion to reappoint George Castellano, MD for a 5-year term, seconded by Jerome Sorg, and all were in favor.

Zoning
Hearing Board
(5-year term)

1

Michael Gelsick

Michael Gelsick
Shanea
Ehrensberger

Michael Gelsick

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to reappoint Michael Gelsick for a 5-year term followed by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

Planning
Commission
(4-year term)

3

Bruce Gerber
Brian M. Fleming
Rebecca A. Schatz

Bruce Gerber
Brian M. Fleming
Rebecca A. Schatz
Shanea
Ehrensberger

Bruce Gerber
Brian M. Fleming
Rebecca A. Schatz

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to reappoint Bruce Gerber for a 4-year term, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to reappoint Brian M. Fleming for a 4-year term, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

Motion Passed

Stephen Bagley made a motion to reappoint Rebecca A. Schatz for a 4-year term, seconded by Joe Sarginger, and all were in favor.

Police Civil
Service
Commission
(3-year term)

1

Derek Hansen

Derek Hansen
Ashley Gerg
Shanea
Ehrensberger

Derek Hansen

Motion Passed

Shane Schneider made a motion to reappoint Derek Hansen for a 3-year term, seconded by Joe Sarginger, and all were in favor.

Shade Tree
Commission of
the City of St.
Marys
(3-year term)

2

Clythera Hornung
Robert M. Bauer II

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Robert M. Bauer II

Clythera Hornung
Robert M. Bauer II

Motion Passed

Stephen Bagley made a motion to reappoint Clythera Hornung for a 3-year term, seconded by Anthony Gregory, and all were in favor.

Motion Passed

Jerome Sorg made a motion to reappoint Robert M. Bauer II for a 3-year term, seconded by Joe Sarginger, and all were in favor.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Nedward Jacob stated that the owner of the West Wind restaurant proposed the idea of erecting a sign for the Industrial Park and he would like to add it to the next meeting agenda.

Manager Fleming explained that the funds to cover the installation of the sign were included in the City's 2025 budget.

Joe Sarginger questioned where the sign would go.

Manager Fleming stated the sign will be erected at the entrance off of Airport Road, but placement would be dependent on the size of the sign to ensure visibility and to not disturb the Airport fencing.

Nedward Jacob asked Matt Pfeufer if he could look into a visibility issue with the airport's fence due to a complaint he heard about the intersection of South Michael and Airport Roads.

Matt Pfeufer said he would look into the matter.

Nedward Jacob also asked Manager Fleming for an update on the progress of the pathway parallel to the highway.

Manager Fleming stated that during this time of the year, it is difficult to assess because of the weather. It is a favorable project that will be submitted soon as soon as funding opens. The City wants to ensure the best material is used with the least amount of maintenance.

Nedward Jacob commented that in previous years, it was decided not to construct a pathway due to maintenance concerns.

Manager Fleming responded that those opinions have changed. People now want the pathway and there is infrastructure in place for pedestrian walkability. It will be a great project and allow pedestrians to safely walk or bike off the highway.

In addition, Nedward Jacob mentioned the need for the airport runway to be paved, which is a \$2 million project. He stated that the Airport Authority is already using \$700,000 in funds, including airport improvement money, which goes through 2028, for the project. He explained that funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is not available for small airports such as the one in St. Marys.

Stephen Bagley questioned if paving the runway is a requirement at this time.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024

Nedward Jacob explained that there is a test for the runway, and St. Marys Airport is on the lower end of the spectrum. 100% is a brand-new runway and St. Marys is at 34%, so within the next 5 years it will need to be completed.

Jerome Sorg suggested that the Airport Authority look into whether any grants are available from the State Transportation Authority.

Nedward Jacob cautioned that they need to be careful about the grants that are secured for the project because grants are sometimes 50/50 or 75/25 and that is a lot of money to match.

Manager Fleming indicated that the City will look into the matter and see how they can help.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
NON-AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on non-agenda topics.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Joe Sarginger, Stephen Bagley, Nedward Jacob, and Anthony Gregory wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Shane Schneider wished everyone a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and safe travels over the holidays.

Jerome Sorg wished everyone a Merry Christmas and extended a thank you to those who volunteer for the Authorities, Boards, and Commissions. He also mentioned that there is still one opening for the Municipal Authority.

Mayor Garner wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Garner made the following announcements:

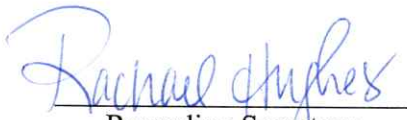
- Council will hold their next regular meeting on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Room at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Stephen Bagley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DECEMBER 16, 2024


Recording Secretary


Mayor