

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
COVID-19
(Facebook/Conference Call)
March 18, 2020**

The Second monthly meeting of Mansfield City Council met on Wednesday, March 18th, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the City Building.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the audience.

Councilman Lawrence led the audience in prayer.

ROLL CALL: The following answered present at roll call: Burns, Meier, Van Harlingen, Davenport, Lawrence, Taddie, Scott, Falquette, and Mears. (Note: Members present by conference call: Burns, Davenport, Falquette).

There being no objections, the reading of the Journal and Correspondence was dispensed with.

Public Comments:

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CHRIS BROWN: The only thing that I would say is that, as has been previously mentioned, these are trying times, but the City will do everything in its power to keep the City and its residents safe and follow the Law while doing so.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Well put, Deputy Director Brown. Thank you very much for that comment.

END OF DISCUSSION

MONDAY DEADLINE

COUNCILMAN LAWRENCE: I move with respect to Bill 20-67 that the rule requiring Legislation be submitted by Monday at 4:00 pm be suspended and the bill 20-067 be allowed on the floor this evening, seconded by Mr. Scott. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: 7 Ayes 1 Nay (Falquette)

SUSPEND RULES

COUNCILMAN LAWRENCE: I move with respect to all bills that come before Council tonight that the rule requiring reading on three different days be suspended and that each bill be read one time by title only, seconded by Mr. Falquette. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes: 8 Nays: 0.

POINT OF ORDER:

JEAN TADDIE: Mr. president may I make a point of order?

PRESIDENT MEARS: You may.

JEAN TADDIE: Thank you. I would first of all like to thank all of those who made extraneous effort to have us meet here tonight and that we have scaled back. I do hope that we'll be able to keep moving forward on city business as we refine the process. Um, and I appreciate this is a trial and we will learn and we will refine, I am certain, with everyone's help. I do have question from a constituent as well as myself is, how can we efficiently allow for Public Comment during City Council particular, this constituent had a comment for the budget. I request that you allow me to make that comment when we come back to that, but for the record could we offer the public the opportunity to, um formerly, make a public comment, um, by a certain time, about a certain bill, that could be read on their behalf, since they cannot be here? Um, I would like to be able to make sure we offer an opportunity for Public Comment going forward as we refine the process.

PRESIDENT MEARS: That's a good point taken, Councilwoman Taddie. I would refer a decision to Deputy Director Brown, because basically we're asking for a Public Comment by Proxy. Correct?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR BROWN: Um, in part that is correct. Uh, Councilwoman Taddie put it best when she said we will continue to refine this policy; however, we follow the guidance provided by the Ohio Attorney General and for this meeting in the public press release, we did state that if you did have any comment that if you did have any comment beforehand to please contact City Council Office by phone or email. Now it is President Mears' meeting to run, if he would like to allow those, he may. He is not required to. At least for this meeting I do realize that it was short notice, however, we feel that we are complying with the Law and what was provided in terms of guidance by the Ohio Attorney General. So, we did provide an opportunity for public comment beforehand via the press release. It may not have been perfect, and we will continue to refine as you said. So, Mr. Mears, not to kick it back to you but, yes, you do have that digression, if you would like to read comments on Facebook or accept text messages, you may. You are not required to since we did give notice before hand, and yes, these are very unique and emergency circumstances that we're operating under. As we move forward, I will probably continue to meet with President Mears and with the Mayor and the rest of the City Officials about how we continue to adapt to this Public Health Emergency.

JEAN TADDIE: I do appreciate that and it's a first time for everything and you get better as we go...

DEPUTY LAW DIRECTOR BROWN: Sure.

JEAN TADDIE: But, I read that press release to say that if you had any comments about the process, because it didn't state what was going to be voted on, that the press release would go out and say here's the legislation and here's where it's posted, if you have any comments about the legislation, here's the process. So, I thank you for considering that. We have a couple weeks to do that. Thank you.

DEPUTY LAW DIRECTOR BROWN: Yep.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Thank you, Deputy Director Brown. Absolutely, if constituents have contacted you with their comments, their feelings, their perspectives, absolutely, now's the time to share those prior to the Bills being voted on and of course we just have the two today. And again, it's been said multiple times we will continue to adapt to the ever fluid, changes and restrictions in the Laws, as we have. Okay.

END OF DISCUSSION

ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF MANSFIELD, OHIO, JANUARY 1, 2020

BY: MR. VAN HARLINGEN

An Ordinance making final cumulative annual appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Mansfield, Ohio for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2020 and declaring an emergency.

Upon motion by Mr. Van Harlingen, that Bill #20-062 be read and placed upon the floor for discussion, seconded by Mr. Lawrence. The bill was placed upon the floor for final passage, seconded by Mr. Falquette. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes: 6, Nays: 2. Falquette, Burns.

*A Motion was placed on the floor, in reference to Bill# 20-062, to remove the agency contributions in the amount of one hundred thousand dollars from this piece of legislation, this evening, for further consideration and investigation

for the sole purpose and the possibility of purchasing, the purchase of a or more police cruisers, was placed on the floor by Mr. Van Harlingen, seconded by Mr. Lawrence.

*The vote was taken on the motion and resulted as follows: Ayes: 8, Nays: 0.

The bill was placed upon the floor for final vote seconded by Mr. Davenport. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes: 8, Nays: 0.

DISCUSSION:

PRESIDENT MEARS: Councilman Van Harlingen.

JON VAN HARLINGEN: Mr. President, if you please. I would like to put a motion on the floor, in reference to Bill# 20-062, that I would like to remove the agency contributions in the amount of one hundred thousand dollars from this piece of legislation, this evening, for further consideration and investigation for the sole purpose and the possibility of purchasing, the purchase of a or more police cruisers.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Is there any discussion on the motion?

ALOMAR DAVENPORT: I'll second the motion.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Okay. We have a motion by Councilman Van Harlingen and a second by Councilman Davenport. Discussion following the motion? Yes, Councilwoman Taddie.

JEAN TADDIE: Would you allow this comment?

PRESIDENT MEARS: Absolutely. If you have comments, let's bring them forward.

JEAN TADDIE: Okay. So, this was emailed to the Council Members, but it...(inaudible) wasn't sure that it got to everyone, so Deborah Mount asked that this be forwarded, that it's pretty succinct and it ends with a question that I think you'll be able to answer, Chairman Van Harlingen. So, "City Council I was disappointed to see the public would be banned from the City Council meeting tomorrow night and the city has not provided a platform where citizens can participate in the meeting." Well we kinda did, because this is it and she's not on Facebook and therefore doesn't know if she'll be able to view it. She's very concerned about the City's budget's "exclusion of necessary capital expenditures for emergencies, namely that no police cruisers are intended to be purchased, in spite of over one point eight-million-dollar carryover" ... which you addressed previously, is not actually sitting there as funds, "in the safety funds, which cannot be

used for personnel, but can be used for capital expenditure. Is there a reason that you cannot buy the needed cruisers with this money? I also question the legality of not permitting public comment at a City Council meeting. Could you please revisit, revise, and revote on the budget after the bans are lifted and you can include input from the public?" I believe our timeline is rather fixed, so perhaps you could, for the record explain why we're voting on this tonight.

JON VAN HARLINGEN: For the final appropriations of the budget?

JEAN TADDIE: Yeah.

JON VAN HARLINGEN: By Law it has to be done by the end of the Month.

JEAN TADDIE: Right. This is our last meeting, before...

JON VAN HARLINGEN: We could...we could call an emergency meeting, hopefully everybody's schedule will allow to show, if we didn't have a quorum, we would have, we wouldn't be able to vote on it. I... I do not like having two meetings and we even scheduled the first one on an off night, intentionally, because we did not get the full readings this year that we could have. There's' always a reason why it's a little late; somebody's on vacation, there's the numbers... or it has to start with the administration before we get it, and we could only schedule two. We got the third one in just so the Finance Director had the whole night to herself.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Deputy Director Brown did you have a comment?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR BROWN: the only comment that I would make is based on the current Health Guidelines and Directives from all of the various authorities we've talked about tonight.

JEAN TADDIE: Sure.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR BROWN: It is still likely that such a meeting held before the end of this month would be closed to the public.

JEAN TADDIE: Yes.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Good point, Director Brown,

JEAN TADDIE: Thank you.

END OF DISCUSSION

THEN & NOW: ALLIED TECHNICAL SERVICES (51,394.85)

BY: VAN HARLINGEN

BILL # 20-067

ORDINANCE # 20-061

Authorizing the payment to Allied Technical Services Inc. in the amount of fifty-one thousand, three hundred ninety-four dollars and eighty-five cents (\$51,394.85) by affirming a Then and Now Certificate of the Finance Director, and declaring an emergency.

Upon motion by Mr. Van Harlingen, that Bill 20-067 be read and placed upon the floor for discussion, seconded by Mr. Lawrence. The bill was placed upon the floor for final passage, seconded by Mr. Falquette. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes: 8, Nays: 0

The bill was declared passed, signed by the President, approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

DISCUSSION:

CLERK VANESSA: I need to interrupt you guys just for a second.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Go ahead.

CLERK VANESSA: We're still getting complaints. You guys need to project, so when you use your voice you need to project a little, so I'm being asked to ask you guys to pretend like to pretend like you're on a playground I guess.

(Chuckles)

PRESIDENT MEARS: I think it might be best if we move up this way.

CLERK VANESSA: Yes. That would be good.

PRESIDENT MEARS: So, you can be heard, so I think we'll have to leave our seats and come up closer.

CLERK VANESSA: To vote?

Murmurs.

JEAN TADDIE: Could you possibly, when it's just voting, if that's all we have to do and we've been six feet apart for so long, could you just repeat the vote?

CLERK VANESSA: i.e.... Jean Taddie says yea, Jason Lawrence says yea or nay...

PRESIDENT MEARS: Oh, okay. That is an excellent idea. Fine. Take your seats for the vote. I'll just repeat the vote. I think we have Councilman Van Harlingen to vote on the bill.

CLERK VANESSA: I need to read the Bill.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes.

CLERK VANESSA: Are you ready?

PRESIDENT MEARS: Yes.

END OF DISCUSSION

CLOSING COMMENTS:

JEAN TADDIE: Can I make one more comment?

CONFERENCE CALL/ DAVID FALQUETTE: Move to close.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Before we have that Councilman Falquette, uh, Councilwoman Taddie has a comment.

JEAN TADDIE: I just wanted to thank all of our city workers who are coming in day to day; keeping the lights on, keeping the building open, keeping the streets safe, um, you know, digging us out of trouble, or keeping us moving slowly or quickly along, I really want to thank those; Oh, that are coming every day and giving it up for our city. We, we much appreciate that.

PRESIDENT MEARS: Thank you, for that Councilwoman Taddie. Before we adjourn, I would like to ask the Mayor to stick around just for a minute, briefly.

END OF DISCUSSION

ADJOURN: Upon motion by Mr. Van Harlingen, seconded by Mrs. Meier, and passed by voice vote, the meeting was adjourned.



Vanessa Gingerich
Asst. Clerk of Council



Cliff Mears
President