COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF MONESSEN

CITY OF MONESSEN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCTOBER 27, 2022

6:30PM

Meeting called to order by Mayor Ron Mozer at 6:30pm

1. ROLL CALL OF ALL MEMBERS PRESENT. Anthony Orzechowski present – Lois Thomas present – John Nestor present – Donald Gregor present – Ron Mozer – present.

2. OPENING PRAYER OFFERED BY REV. TIM BURGAN, LEAD PASTOR, CHRISTIAN CENTER CHURCH, BELLE VERNON, PENNSYLVANIA. Pastor Tim not available. Prayer offered by Lois Thomas

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Lead by Mayor Ron Mozer

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SESSION, OCTOBER 13, 2022. Motion to approval minutes by John Nestor – seconded by Lois Thomas – Vote 5 - 0

5. OPEN FLOOR FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY.

Ernie Telegraphis – I am puzzled – we are waiting on a commitment from the Redevelopment Authority to assist financially with blight – they have no money – how are they going to help (Ron Mozer – they have some money from the sale to Aluminsource – they will pay a qualified person from a qualified company to assist) HUD distressed program (Ron Mozer – I will explain when we get there – there was a meeting on October 11th) Why was it not publicized, newspaper or website (Ron Mozer – not a public meeting) How about the county commitment (Ron Mozer – I will give updates for that as well)

6. CORRESPONDENCE - none

OLD BUSINESS N/A

7. **REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN -** There are two issues – the easements for the USDA project – a property is tax delinquent and vacant and another vacant property by McManon and Alaska is also tax delinquent – there may be other methods to take these properties

We have properties in Monessen not connected to the public sewage system – we have been in contact with the DEP to make sure this is handled correctly – the Act 537 plan must be amended – explains how sewage is handled – we reached out to approximately 60 properties – the initial response was they had septic systems - this will require Monessen to contract a Sewage Enforcement Officer to make sure the sewage is disposed of properly – not full time just on retained like the city engineer – the properties are not in one area – if these is a line close, they must connect

8. **REPORT OF THE CITY TREASURER OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN** – no report – report read at first meeting of the month

9. **REPORT OF THE CITY CONTROLLER OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN** – no report – report read at first meeting of the month

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Ron Mozer, Director of Public Affairs

a. Mayor Mozer is presenting a Proclamation to the Catholic Daughters of Americas to proclaim that December 10th, 2022 will mark the 100th Anniversary of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas with a Celebration in the City of Monessen. Read by Mayor Ron Mozer – presented to one of their representative

b. Discussion by Mayor Mozer of the recent Blight Planning Workshop and Planning Seminar, and the information and insights gained from the presentation at the Westmoreland Community College on October 14th, 2022 to assist the City of Monessen in their blight removal and redevelopment and revitalization efforts. Ron Mozer - myself and city administrator attended a meeting in Youngwood to get an update – we need to get a blighted plan for Monessen – Ligonier is the only one with an existing plan – we are going to look over their plan and use it as a model – keep in mind their blight scale is much smaller than Monessen's – we will continue to develop a plan and integrate it with our comprehensive plan – we have the data – just have to put it together – should be done soon

c. Discussion on the recent meeting with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Distressed Communities Technical Assistance Program, and the manner in which these resources may contribute and promote our current economic development activities within the City of Monessen. Ron Mozer – we had a meeting on October 11th – HUD was involved and a representative from HUD's Distressed Communities Technical Assistance Program was present – they don't give you money, but they contract for consultants to get plans and ways to get monies

d. Motion to proceed with the application for HUD's Distressed Communities Technical Assistance Program. Motion by Ron Mozer – seconded by John Nestor – There are no co-pay involved in this – Vote 5 - 0

e. Discussion on the commitment and support of the Monessen Redevelopment Authority to assist with financial assistance with the City of Monessen's Blight Removal Plans specifically related to Condemnation Reports and activities and coordination in these areas of support. There are several ways to handle properties for demo – get permission from the owner – through judicial sale with the Landbank – Act 90 through the City – just like we currently do through CDBG – Redevelopment Authority has agreed to pay for the condemnation reports to help the city

f. Discussion on recent interactions with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection relative to those with a disconnected sewer system within the city of Monessen, and the procedures and alternatives to remedy these issues. These issues center on the proper manner to address these matters in conjunction with the DEP representatives and enforcement officials, and the need for a Sewage Enforcement Official within the City of Monessen. Joseph Dalfonso covered this earlier

g. Discussion of transportation issues relative to 3rd and Donner, 5th and Donner, and issues of traffic safety on Hudson Street going into the Montraver Plan and Montraver Drive coming out now clearly marked with arrows on the road and very visible wrong way signs on Montraver Drive, as brought to the attention at the previous meeting of the Council of the City of Monessen. What has been done at the Montraver plan. There is no way someone can go the wrong way and not know it. There are arrows and signs on Montraver. You should be ticketed.

3rd Street and 5th Street and Donner – contacted Penn Dot - No Right on Red sign – removed for years – not sure who removed it

(Don Gregor – paint white line & sign – there is going to be an accident) (Mike Korposh – we have not heard back from Penn Dot) 5th from Donner no white line – will look into it

h. Motion to consent to the sale of property at Lot and Block Number 20-02-04-0-042 (26 Schoonmaker Avenue, City of Monessen 15062) to the Westmoreland County Land Bank. Motion by Ron Mozer – seconded by John Nestor – vote 5 – 0

I. Discussion on the Refuse Authority and Portnoff for the collection of delinquent bills. Garbage collect problems – collected about $90,000 less than our bill for the Refuse Authority – sewage and water authority shuts off when you don't pay – the garbage does not do that – any problems – they call Amy – Amy calls County Hauling – what is the problem with the billing – many bills are to blighted houses – 600 people did not pay garbage bills – ½ are blighted vacant properties – we should not be billed and they should not be sent bills – those who do not pay and should pay will be turned over to Portnoff – it will get very expensive if you do not pay this soon – can't collect from blighted property where there is no garbage -

j. Motion for first reading and advertising of the Portnoff ordinance for collection of delinquent garbage bills.

ORDINANCE APPROVING APPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR, INTEREST ASSESSMENT, AND ATTORNEY FEES AND COLLECTION FEES ADDED TO THE AMOUNT COLLECTED AS PART OF UNPAID MUNICIPAL CLAIMS FOR DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS. Ordinance Attached as "Exhibit 1". Motion by Ron Mozer – seconded by John Nestor – amended a few items – most are the same – the city gets what is owed to us – it is very important that people pay their bill – pay early, you get a discount – vote 5 – 0

Councilman Anthony Orzechowski, Director of Accounts and Finance

a. Motion to pay the following invoices from the General Fund in the amount of $97,786.21. All invoices are attached to this Agenda as Attachment "A". Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – vote 5 – 0

b. Motion to pay the following invoices from the Recreational Account in the amount of $476.96 All invoices are attached to this Agenda as Attachment "B." Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

c. Motion to pay the following invoices from the Line Usage Fund in the amount of $6,790.00. All invoices are attached to this Agenda as "Attachment C." Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 - 0

d. Motion to transfer $58,349.29 from the General Fund to the Payroll Account. Motion by Anthony Orzechowski – seconded by John Nestor – Vote 5 – 0

Account balances – Fire Escrow $18,410.00 – Liquid Fuels $248.84 – Grant $54,868.31 – 2023 Refuse $1,185.00 – American Rescue $420,359.47 – Debt Service $719,258.84 – General $235,504.92 – Healthcare $7,130.62 – Line Usage $548,518.16 – Recreation $3,410.95 – Park $7,564.14 – Payroll $3,230.78

Councilman Lois Thomas Director of Streets and Public Improvements

Streets and Public Improvement Report for month ending September 30, 2022. Emptied garbage downtown twice a week – answered 33 PA One Calls – cut city lots – fixed 2 catch basins – cleaned out several catch basins – got the arm tractor back up and running – Barts to inspect all truck and repairs – waiting for PO's for parts to start on salt spreaders for winter – answered complaints – helped parks as needed

Library news – Marsha Adams is retiring at the end of October – thank her for the dedication to the library and the child and youth – the library is selling $2.00 tickets – stop by library if you want tickets or want to sell tickets

(Donald Gregor – status on Vac truck) it is on hold – we are trying to get all the other truck up and running

Councilman John Nestor, Director of Public Safety

Police and Public Safety Report for month ending September 30th, 2022. Police Department receipts from parking permits $120.00 – miscellaneous collection for copies of police accident reports $105.00 **-** court receipts for District Justice office – vehicle code fines collected $641.01 – crimes code fines collected $421.96 – city ordinance collected $18.69 – code enforcement collected $206.42 for a total $1,293.08 from District Justice – total collected for September 2022 $1,518.08

Citations for September 89 – year-to-date 869

Code activity – habitation permits 9 – correction letters 23 – animal complaints 11 – misc complaints 18 – health inspections 2 – office meetings with residents 7 – zoning permits 8 – hearings 2

Fire Chief Report – Automatic Fire alarms 5 – public service 1 – structure fire 1 – wires down 1 – natural gas leak 1 – vehicle

accidents 3 – Landing Zone 2 – carbon monoxide 1 – electrical fire 1 – building collapse 1 – smoke scare 1 – water craft rescue 1 – structure fire Carroll Twp. 1 – structure fire Charleroi 5 – structure fire Belle Vernon 1 – building collapse Charleroi 1 – automatic fire alarm Charleroi 1 – total calls 28 – total responding 392 – average responding per call 14 – total man hours 419

No EMS report

Recreation Board meeting – just about communications – refund the group because of alcohol not permitted at civic center

(Ron Mozer – Pidich found a new lot in Monessen – they are picking up cars on the sides of the roads)

Councilman Donald S. Gregor, Director of Parks, and Public Property

Parks and Public Property Report for the month ending September 30th, 2022 Cut city parks and fields – got pavilions ready for events – fixed lights in the garage – helped the streets department as needed

Want to thank them for cleaning up the tennis courts – I am looking into resurfacing court

I would like to add a motion to the next meeting to sign and paint on 3rd street

(Anthony Orzechowski – personally thank everyone for their help with the Halloween parade – fire departments, police, chief and Ricky Dick – extremely successful)

(Lois Thomas – December 3rd Christmas Caroling – everyone welcome – will have practices on three Saturdays in November 5th, 12th and 19th at Mt Calvary 10am to 1pm)

(Ron Mozer – Recreation Board wants to start scheduling events – I asked them to share a calendar

January 20th is the Monessen Economic Meeting at the school – lay out all our plans, blight, improvements)

(Anthony Orzechowski – Saturday is trick or treat - #1 priority is safety – good weather – fire departments and police will be out – from 6pm – 8pm – wear reflective material or have a flashlight – 2pm to 4pm is trunk or treat – 4pm to 6pm is at the Civic Center)

11. **OPEN FLOOR FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM.**

Ernie Telegraphis – important – what is going on with Cyper and Cyper – process (Ron Mozer – they agree it is plus or minus $400,000 – we are looking at time cards so we can apply the time spent on the sweeper, vac truck and catch basin – general account paid for these items and should be paid from line usage account – they will be back to collect more information – should have the report by the end of November) three employees positions are vacant – what are we doing to fill them – (Ron Mozer – contract negotiations – we have people once the negotiations are complete and contract is signed – no one wants to work at $14/hour) the Refuse Authority (Ron Mozer – we are getting all the number together and will adjust them with the Refuge Authority – adjust our invoice) videographer – why is no one here – we are putting a curtain up – why is the paper not here (Ron Mozer – you can call the newspaper and see why they are not here – I'm sure they are watching it on Facebook and it will be in the paper tomorrow) we need transparency – if I put it in my paper you would not like what I print

Linda Lacey – last meeting I asked about 5th and Donner traffic light to be replaced (Ron Mozer – I have a letter from Penn Dot saying it was Ted Harhai that had it removed and it is now up to the municipality to put it back up – I applied for a grant and it was refused because we asked to take it down) that is not what they told me – I asked Ted if he removed it, he said no – I do my research (Anthony Orzechowski – Ted was not the mayor at that time – not single individual person could have it removed – it had to be a council decision) (Donald Gregor – it was not Ted Harhai – it is immaterial who it was because it is over) (Ron Mozer – the key is to get it back) you must drive past the stop sign before you can see – Chief how many tickets have been given out (Chief Yuhasz – I do not know the numbers now but would have to look it up) (Ron Mozer – how do we pay to get it back) Grande Blvd is like a race track – people complaining about how fast people are driving – 25 mph signs – fire station to Bart's – posted (Ron Mozer – even if it is unmarked the speed limit is 25 mph) I want to put Monessen back on the map – blight removal - hope you are not being bias and only helping certain people – you should be helping everyone not just one person – I will be watching you (Ron Mozer – we are helping everyone) (Anthony Orzechoswki – has City Hall been getting an influx of calls on the light for 5th and Donner – there had to be a study conducted by Penn Dot to determine if the light should be removed or not) (Donald Gregor – the was a study done – Penn Dot said it could go either way and it was up to the city – the city decided to remove it – the intersection does not meet Penn Dot standards – does not meet state standards and they are not enforcing it) (Joseph Dalfonso – control box is the major cost not the light – it's the timing system – there are grants) do I have to get a petition signed to get the

light back – can we use CDBG monies (Mike Korposh - when we had to replace the traffic control box damaged it was costly – not sure if we can use CDBG monies – we need to get together and compare notes – Friday is good for me) works for me too.

12. ADJOURNMENT John Nestor made motion of adjourn meeting at 7:36pm – seconded by Donald Gregor – Vote 5 - 0