CITY OF MONESSEN

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

AUGUST 11, 2022 • 6:30 P.M.

City Council Chambers, City of Monessen, Pennsylvania

Executive Session Notice and Disclosure

The published agenda notified the public that Mayor Ron Mozer had requested an executive session for 5:30 p.m. in the Mayor's second-floor office to discuss employment matters involving the Recreation Board, the Deputy Treasurer position in the Treasurer's Office, and an assistant position in Code Enforcement. At the opening of the 6:30 p.m. public meeting, Mayor Mozer announced that the executive session had been held. Solicitor Joseph Dalfonso stated that Mayor and Council had discussed personnel matters concerning the Recreation Board and Civic Center, the vacant Deputy Treasurer position, and an assistant Code Enforcement Officer. No executive-session vote or formal action was reported.

Call to Order, Roll Call and Opening

Mayor Ron Mozer called the regular meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. Roll call established the presence of Mayor Mozer and Council members Anthony Orzechowski, Lois Thomas, John Nestor and Donald Gregor. All five members were present. In the absence of the scheduled pastor, Councilwoman Thomas offered the opening prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Councilman Nestor moved to approve the minutes of July 14, 2022. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously, 5–0. The July 28 minutes were not available for approval and were deferred. The administrator indicated that the July 28 and August 11 minutes would be presented at a subsequent meeting.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Resident Earnie Telegraphis questioned the detail provided on invoices for street repairs, including work involving Sixth and Eighth Streets, and asked that supporting billing schedules be accessible to the public. Mayor Mozer stated that detailed supporting information was required, that an emergency-repair payment was being held pending corrective work, and that he would follow up on invoice detail. Council and the administrator noted that bill lists were available with meeting materials and that copies could be provided.

Correspondence and Officers' Reports

No correspondence was presented for discussion.

Solicitor Joseph Dalfonso reported that the proposed tax exoneration ordinance had been drafted for first reading and advertising. He described the proposed joint City–School District committee, application process, fee and property-improvement requirements, subject to further review. He also reported progress on the zoning ordinance and forthcoming public-hearing requirements, and on USDA sewer-project insurance documentation and anticipated bidding.

Treasurer Gerry Saksun reported that approximately 4,700 school-tax bills had been mailed August 1 and that delinquent garbage accounts involving approximately 130 properties and $35,000 were being prepared for the County tax-sale process. He presented the July collection report, including garbage fees, real-estate taxes, earned income tax and Line Usage receipts. On motion by Councilman Nestor, duly seconded, Council unanimously accepted the Treasurer's July report, 5–0.

The City Controller was absent because of an injury; the Controller's report was deferred.

Mayor's Agenda: Motions and Business

1. Sewer Rehabilitation Phase 4, Application No. 1. Approved payment application No. 1 for Project MON-2021-22 and payment to Reynolds Brothers, Inc., $497,715.80, for submission to PennVEST through WEC Consulting Engineers.

2. Sewer Rehabilitation Phase 3, Requisition No. 4. Approved requisition No. 4 for WEC Consulting Engineers invoice No. 11, $6,629.53, to be forwarded to USDA Rural Utilities for payment.

3. Sewer Rehabilitation Phase 4, Payment Request No. 5. Approved WEC Consulting Engineers payment request No. 5, $14,637.63, for submission to PennVEST.

4. Purchasing Software. Approved purchase of Bellwether purchasing software and ten user licenses for $2,175, including training and the stated satisfaction guarantee. Council discussed electronic purchase requisitions, approval routing and purchase-order tracking.

5. Tax Exoneration Ordinance. Approved the first reading and proper advertisement and publication of the proposed tax exoneration ordinance.

6. Line Usage Fund Accounting and Audit. Mayor Mozer discussed the need to reconcile prior transfers and expenditures associated with the Line Usage Fund, including potential stormwater-related credits for street sweeping, vacuum-truck work and associated labor. Council discussed a proposed additional audit by Cypher and Cypher. Because a cost estimate had not been obtained, Councilman Gregor moved, and Councilman Nestor seconded, a motion to table the proposed audit authorization. The transcript does not clearly record a separate roll-call vote on tabling.

7. Mon Valley Sewage Authority. Approved payment of $196 for laboratory tests at 500 Donner Avenue.

8. Accessible Parking. Approved installation of a designated handicapped parking space for George McGrew of 420 Motheral Avenue.

9. Ninth Street Park. Discussed CDBG-funded park improvements, bids, paving costs, water access, tree watering and potential private donations to help cover additional water-service costs. No new authorization was recorded in this discussion.

10. Rodent Control. Discussed rodent problems and measures previously used in the City. Councilman Orzechowski agreed to investigate options and possible funding for future Council consideration; no expenditure was approved.

11. Civic Center Director. Approved increasing Civic Center Director Julian Napier's pay to $14 per hour, limited to 29 hours weekly.

12. Deputy Treasurer. Approved hiring for the vacant Deputy Treasurer position at $14 per hour, subject to appropriate applicant documentation, interview and background check, under the applicable AFSCME agreement. The name of the proposed candidate is inconsistently transcribed and should be checked against the original personnel record.

13. Code Enforcement Staffing. Approved a part-time Code Enforcement position at $14 per hour, limited to 29 hours per week or fewer as determined by the Director of Code Enforcement.

Except for the proposed audit item noted above, the recorded roll-call votes on the Mayor's formal motions were unanimous among the five Council members present. Motions were seconded before voting.

Accounts and Finance: Payments and Transfers

Councilman Anthony Orzechowski introduced the following eight individual motions. Each was seconded and approved by a 5–0 roll-call vote:

1. General Fund invoices (Attachment A). Motion to approve payment of General Fund invoices totaling $89,428.06. Motion carried, 5–0.

2. Recreational Account invoices (Attachment B). Motion to approve payment of invoices totaling $348.73. Motion carried, 5–0.

3. Parks Fund invoices (Attachment C). Motion to approve payment of invoices totaling $1,627.13. Motion carried, 5–0.

4. Liquid Fuels Fund invoices (Attachment D). Motion to approve payment of invoices totaling $3,728.24. Motion carried, 5–0.

5. Line Usage Fund invoices (Attachment E). Motion to approve payment of invoices totaling $15,790.00. Motion carried, 5–0.

6. Payroll transfer. Motion to transfer $65,129.68 from the General Fund to the Payroll Account Fund. Motion carried, 5–0.

7. Healthcare transfer. Motion to transfer $3,000.00 from the General Account to the Healthcare Account. Motion carried, 5–0.

8. Garbage Account allocation. Motion to allocate $750.00 to the newly created, separately designated Garbage Account Fund from the existing Garbage Account within the General Account. Motion carried, 5–0.

Councilman Orzechowski corrected a typographical error in the General Fund bill sheet and provided fund-balance information and commentary concerning the 2022 minimum municipal obligation and anticipated state pension aid.

Department Reports

Streets and Public Improvements: Councilwoman Lois Thomas reported downtown and City garbage collection, cold patching, Pennsylvania One Call responses, lot mowing, flower-bed maintenance, support for community events, weekly boat-launch restroom cleaning, vacuum-truck repair, street sweeping and assistance to Parks for July.

Parks and Public Property: Councilman Donald Gregor reported mowing City parks and ball fields, preparing pavilions for events and assisting Streets.

Public Safety: Councilman John Nestor deferred the formal public safety report to a subsequent meeting. He commented on prior fiscal-restraint efforts and acknowledged former Councilman Ron Chervelley’s contributions. Mayor Mozer also recognized Chervelley’s earlier attention to proper Line Usage cost allocation.

Public Comment on Any Item

Members of the public asked about the scope and history of Line Usage Fund auditing, whether a separate audit firm should be considered, staffing needs in Code Enforcement, and the possible use of town-hall meetings. Mayor Mozer and Council discussed the difference between the regular financial audit and a targeted historical Line Usage review.

Further discussion concerned how the purchasing software would handle continuing projects and additional costs without unnecessary duplicate purchase orders. Residents and Council also discussed water access, fountains, bottle-filling facilities and maintenance at City Park and Ninth Street Park.

Councilwoman Thomas conveyed congratulations and a presentation from City personnel to Mayor Mozer and his wife Bonnie on their wedding anniversary.

Adjournment

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was seconded and approved by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:39 p.m.

Prepared from the August 11, 2022 meeting audio transcript and the published six-page agenda. Speaker identification and some names in the automated transcript are imperfect; ambiguous details

have been qualified rather than assumed. These minutes summarize the proceedings and should be reviewed against the official record before adoption.