A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED AT 6:30 PM ON JUNE 25, 2024, IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIA WEB-X.

PRESENT: Mayor Robert R. Rappold, Interim City Manager Billie Trump, Interim Recorder-Treasurer Jessica Chandler, Mayor's Assistant Susan Miller, and City Attorney Bill File. Council Members: Janine Bullock, Kevin Price, Robert Dunlap, Tom Sopher, Sherrie Hunter, Bob Canter, and Cody Reedy. The following City employees were present: Director of IT Bill Kelly, Assistant Director of IT, Amy Evans, Anthony Martin IT, Chief Coughlin of BFD, Board of Public Works (BPW) Director Pam Frey, Captain of BPD Cheri Mullens, Director of Beckley Events Jill Moorefield, Outdoor Economic Development Director Mitch Lehman, Director of Parks & Recreation Leslie Baker, and Chief Code Enforcement Officer Donald Morgan. ABSENT: Chief Bailey.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The public had the option to join the meeting in person or listen by WEB-X from their computer, or listen by phone, using the weblink or phone number provided the day of the meeting on the City's webpage at Beckley.org or the City's Facebook page.

Council dispensed with the reading of the minutes from the Workshop dated June 10, 2024, copies of which had been distributed to each member. Council unanimously approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Sopher seconded by Councilwoman Bullock. Council dispensed with the reading of the minutes from the regular Council meeting dated June 11, 2024, copies of which had been distributed to each member. Council unanimously

approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Price seconded by Councilman Sopher.

Next was the receipt of requests for qualifications from engineering firms. The Mayor said that this request for professional services does not require the price submitted to be announced as only the name of each company that made a submission will be announced. The Mayor said that the Interim City Manager Billie Trump, the two Council persons at large, and Director of Board of Public Works Pam Frey will make a list for interviews and from that, price negotiations will begin. Once a recommendation has been made it will be brought before Council at a future meeting. Requests for qualifications were submitted from CTL Engineering, Inc., The Thrasher Group, Inc. Potesta, and Alpha Associates, Inc.

Next was the reappointment of Gail Garcia to the Beckley Beautification Commission. Councilman Sopher recused himself from voting as it pertains to the Beautification Commission as his wife, Teresa wishes to join the commission.

Council unanimously approved the reappointment of Gail Garcia, the appointment of Teresa Sopher, Kitty Mooney, and Gail McCray to the Beckley Beautification Commission. The term is three years. The motion was made by Councilman Dunlap seconded by Councilman Price.

Next on the agenda was the Resolution for longevity raises for City of Beckley employees. Mr. File read sections #3a – 3e, #4, and #5 of the resolution explaining the hourly raises. City Council has the option to grant longevity raises in June each year, but only if the City is in financial position to do so. Mr. Trump said the City can well afford the longevity increases. It is approximately $220-240K spread out over a twelve month period because everyone's anniversary date of employment is different. The resolution was unanimously approved on a motion by Councilman-at-Large Reedy seconded by Councilman Price. The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next on the agenda was the adoption of the Beckley Outdoors Economic Action Plan and Basecamp Beckley Branding Strategy. The Mayor said that Mitch Lehman and Corey Lilly are here to answer any questions. He asked members of Council if they had any questions. There were no questions. Councilman Sopher said he appreciates all the work Mitch and Corey have done and will continue to do and thanked the public for their attendance to the meeting tonight showing support for the Beckley Outdoors and Basecamp Beckley. Council unanimously approved the adoption of the Beckley Outdoors Economic Action Plan and Basecamp Beckley Branding Strategy on a motion made by Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter seconded by Councilman-at-Large Reedy.

Next on the agenda was the salary adjustment for the Interim City Manager. The Mayor appointed Billie Trump as the Interim City Manager at 10 a.m. this morning in Council Chambers. The Mayor said the Interim City Manager's position will be paid at annual rate of $130,000. Councilman Dunlap questioned when the salary was decided

upon as he was part of the City Manager Hiring Committee and does not recall the salary being decided on. Mr. File explained that it is outlined in the City Manager Form of Government Ordinance. Mr. File said that he and Mr. Trump have had several conversations regarding Mr. Trump accepting this position, as Mr. Trump recently announced his retirement. However, Mr. File said that Mr. Trump is qualified for this position and thinks $130K annually for his salary (for two to three months) is certainly warranted. Council unanimously approved the salary adjustment increasing Mr. Trump's salary to $130K annually on a motion made by Councilman Sopher seconded by Councilman Price.

Next was the approval of the City of Beckley entering into a contract with Frederick Hightower, Sr. to create a bronze sculpture of Bill Withers. The Mayor asked the Director of Beckley Events Jill Moorefield if she had any comments. She said that this has been a collective effort and thanked everyone for helping and it is now time to proceed with the sculpture. Council unanimously approved the City entering into the contract on a motion by Councilman Price

seconded by Councilman-at-Large Reedy.

The contract is hereby incorporated into

these minutes.

Next on the Agenda was the request from the Beckley Area Foundation requesting financial support of the Household Hazardous Waste Collection scheduled for September 28, 2024. The amount requested from the City is up to $20K. The Mayor explained that the County and City contribute to this regularly and it typically takes place approximately every six or seven years. He explained that it includes the collection and removal of hazardous wastes such as liquids but does not include tires. Mr. File explained that the County, the City, the Carter Family Foundation, and the Beckley Area Foundation are being asked to commit up to $20K. The total cost of the hazardous waste collection is $77K. Mr. Trump said the last waste collection did not cost the City $20K, it was approximately $17K. Council unanimously approved the City contributing up to $20K for the financial support of the Beckley Area Foundation Household

Hazardous Waste Collection on a motion by Councilman Sopher seconded by Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter.

OLD BUSINESS: The Mayor announced he appointed Jessica Chandler as the Interim Recorder-Treasurer at 10 a.m. in Council Chambers today. He said that she will still be the City Controller. Councilman Dunlap gave a packet of information from Just For Kids to Mr. Trump asking him to see if Just For Kids qualify for consideration of any of the opioid money the City received. If so, he asked that this item be placed on the agenda for an upcoming Council meeting. Councilman Sopher thanked everyone for allowing him to serve on City Council and said that he wants to remain a part of the Beckley Outdoors, the Cranberry Creek Overlook, and other projects. Councilman-at-Large Reedy asked Mr. File if he would explain why the lease for Fruits of Labor was removed from the Agenda. Mr. File said there are a few small

items that are still being worked on and this should be an item on the Agenda for the second meeting in July. Mr. File said that a final draft of the lease will be made available to the public and to Council prior to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: There were no comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mary West complained about speeding drivers on Larew Avenue and problems with overgrown alleyways. Natalie Coots said she attended WV Collectives Diary of a Wimpy Kid recently and the theme was drug prevention. She was pleased to see that it sold out the first night. She asked that the new Council and new administration be given the opportunity to have input regarding selecting the City Manager. Kimberly Milam said she is grateful New River Pool is open and there are a lot of positive aspects of having the pool open. She said the staff at the pool have a lot of great ideas and hopes Council has heard their ideas. She

does not want this to appear to be a negative time of complaining because she is grateful that it is open and great people work there. She said kids are being dropped off there without money to buy food and lifejackets are needed.

She said hot food such as a slice of pizza, hotdogs, and or nachos need to be made available for purchase. She said more security is needed every time the pool is open. She said the staff and lifeguards want to help these kids that come to the pool and are willing to do a drive to raise money for life jackets. She said her sixteen year old daughter works there and was attached Saturday by an adult guest. She said the staff are asked to diffuse situations and check coolers for alcohol and they should not be put in that situation and this takes time away from supervising swimmers.

Councilman-at-Large Reedy asked if Council could authorize an emergency hiring of security officers, such as Cramer Security.

Parks & Recreation Director Leslie Baker said that security will be

available in July. Cramer Security is short two officers. She said the District Manager of Cramer Security said that he would see what he could do. Ms. Baker said she is trying to get a couple of retired police officers to provide security. Councilman Reedy said that before the pool opens next year a security team needs to be put in place. Ms. Baker said that they tried having life jackets in the past and all of them disappeared within two weeks. She said the slide is closed and kids want lifejackets to jump into the deep water. She said every lifeguard has saved at least one life and some lifeguards have saved multiple lives. She said New River Pool has more lifeguards this year than it has ever had. Ms. Baker said the concession stand has not been upgraded and fryers need to be replaced. She said there is more to it than just getting food handlers cards to work in the concession stand. Ms. Baker said every parent there is asked if their child can participate in activities. She said when the pool reaches

capacity, the doors are closed and no one else is allowed in and a lot of harassment happens during these times. She said parents will let the lifeguards know that they are not happy about the doors being closed. She said alcohol has become an enormous problem there in the last ten days. She said many issues make the City liable and she has discussed her concerns with Mr. Trump and the Mayor and they are working on resolving them. She said Chief and Deputy Chief are out of town this week. Ms. Baker said the training the lifeguards received included instructing them to call the police rather than stepping into situations and they are not to be babysitters. Councilman Dunlap said parents should not be dropping their children off and leaving them unattended. Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter asked how juveniles coming in without adults are being supervised and does the City assume the liability when juveniles are there without an adult.

Ms. Baker said parents use the pool as a babysitter. Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter asked if a deposit could be accepted in order for swimmers to obtain life jackets. Ms. Baker said no one carries cash there, they all use cards. Councilman Dunlap said the New River Pool is in his ward and he has heard from people in the community who have identified problems there such as it being all concrete without chairs for people to use. He thanked Ms. Baker for taking his call just as she was leaving for vacation. Christina Baisden made the comment that City employees should not settle for crumbs offered to them with the longevity increase resolution that was presented tonight. She said other departments were recently granted raises and the rest of the departments in the City should also be given raises. She said the City employees need to organize and unionize. She said that a lease for Fruits of Labor should have already been presented. She said that a specific salary was not listed on the

copy of the City Manager Form of Government Ordinance she picked up from City Hall. Kandy Kozar said not having a lease for Fruits of Labor by now is not right. She asked if the pool at Black Knight is open. She said New River Pool closes too soon in the season and the people paying to come to the pool need to have the option to eat hot food. She suggested serving microwavable food. She said that there isn't anything for kids to do in this area and that the hiring process for the new City Manager is taking too long.

Council unanimously approved adjourning the meeting on a motion made by Councilman-at-Large Reedy seconded by Councilman Sopher. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

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Mayor
Recorder-Treasurer