A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED AT 6:30 PM ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2024, IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIA WEB-X.

PRESENT: Mayor Ryan Neal, Interim City Manager Ann Worley, Interim Recorder-Treasurer Jessica Chandler, City Attorney Bill File, and the Mayor's and CM's Assistant Susan Miller. Council Members: Natalie Coots, Nancy Shoemaker-Dingess, Frank Williams, Kip Buchanan, Janine Bullock, and Council persons at Large Sherrie Hunter and Cody Reedy. The following City employees were present: Director of IT Bill Kelley, Assistant Director of IT Amy Evans, Anthony Martin IT, Chief Coughlin of BFD, Director of Board of Public Works (BPW) Pam Frey, Chief Bailey of BPD, Director of Parks & Recreation Leslie Baker, and Chief Code Enforcement Officer Donald Morgan.

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 Council meeting dated August 27, 2024, copies of which had been distributed to each member. Council unanimously approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Williams seconded by Councilwoman Bullock. .

Next was a presentation for information purposes by Kellie Gunnoe with the Family Support Center (FSC). She wanted to bring awareness to the community and to Council that the FSC

focuses on helping the youth in our area by being involved in various areas and by providing drug use prevention for the youth.

Next, Mr. File read an ordinance by title, Ordinance Authorizing City Of Beckley To Grant And Convey To Beckley Sanitary Board An Easement And Right Of Way Over, Across And Through Certain Real Estate Of City Of Beckley Between S. Eisenhower Dr. And Clarence W. Meadows Memorial Blvd. He explained that this is the first reading of the ordinance and if passed at this meeting, the second reading and public hearing will be at the September 24, 2024, meeting.

He summarized the ordinance explaining that the Beckley Sanitary Board (BSB) is requesting the City of Beckley (COB) to grant and convey by Special Warranty an easement and right-of-way over, across and through certain real estate of Grantor located between S. Eisenhower Dr. and Clarence W. Meadows Memorial Blvd. for the purpose of installing, maintaining and operating a storm and/or sanitary sewer, including stormwater management pond. The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions.

There were no questions.

Council unanimously passed the ordinance on a motion by Councilman Buchanan seconded by Councilwoman Coots. The ordinance is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Mr. File explained the next item on the Agenda is the first reading of an ordinance titled below and if passed at this meeting, the second reading and public hearing will be at the September 24, 2024, meeting. Mr. File explained that this ordinance will allow the City of Beckley to convey this property commonly referred to as the Pinecrest Industrial Park to the Raleigh County Commission which has agreed to fund the infrastructure on this property making it ready for development with pad ready sites. Mr. File said that there are covenants and restrictions that control what can be done on this property and are on record in the Raleigh County Clerk's Office. The approximate acreage of the property is 131.47 acres of real estate. Mr. File read the ordinance by title, First Reading Of Ordinance Authorizing City of Beckly To Convey 131.417 Acres Of Real Estate, More Or Less, Located In The Pinecrest Industrial Park In Beckley, Raleigh County, West Virgina, To The County Commission For The Purpose Of Economic Development Of This Real Estate. Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter said that she would like to make a motion to amend the ordinance.

Mr. File asked Ms. Hunter if she is requesting to amend the ordinance as presented. She said yes. Mr. File said that there must first be a motion and a second to adopt the ordinance then she can make a motion to amend the ordinance if she so chooses. Councilman Reedy moved to adopt the ordinance on first reading and Councilman Buchanan seconded the motion. The Mayor asked if Council had any questions or comments. Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter made a motion to amend the deed and give the Raleigh County Board of Education the cross-country course for youth development, community engagement, and community comradery and deed the remaining property to the Raleigh County Commission for economic development. Mr. File asked Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter how many acres she is referring to. She said thirty acres or less. The Mayor asked for a second to Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter's motion to amend the ordinance. Councilwoman Shoemaker-Dingess seconded the motion. The Mayor asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. File said that Ms. Hunter made the motion to amend the ordinance and Councilwoman Shoemaker-Dingess seconded the motion. Following a lengthy discussion by Council, the Mayor called for a vote of all in favor of the amending the ordinance motioned by Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter. There were no Council members in favor of amending the ordinance. Council unanimously voted to oppose the amendment to the ordinance. The Mayor then called for a vote on the original motion by Mr. Reedy to adopt the ordinance on first reading. The motion unanimously passed.

The ordinance is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next on the Agenda was the Resolution regarding a Parking Committee. Mr. File said that Council and the community have expressed interest in reinstituting the Parking Committee. The Parking Commission will consist of seven members of Council, the Mayor and the Recorder-Treasurer. This committee will meet immediately following the second Council meeting of each month. Mr. File read the resolution by title, Resolution Activating The City Council Committee On Parking Facilities. The Mayor asked if any member of Council had any questions. There were no questions. Council unanimously approved the resolution on a motion by Councilman-at-Large Reedy seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next on the Agenda was the Resolution Of The Common Council Of The City Of Beckley To Permit The Open Burning Of Vegetation. Mr. File said that the open burning of vegetation can occur within the corporate limits of the City and is permitted between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. from October 1, 2024, until December 31, 2024. Mr. File read the portion of the resolution that sets forth the terms for burning in the City. Chief of the Beckley Fire Department, Joe Coughlin requested that any resident of Beckley call the BFD in advance to let them know when and where a resident has planned open burning of vegetation. The BFD logs the information in case a concerned neighbor would call. If the smoke would cause health concerns for individuals the BFD would visit the resident having the fire and ask them to extinguish it. Council unanimously approved the Resolution Of The Common Council Of The City Of Beckley To Permit The Open Burning Of Vegetation on a motion by Councilman Williams seconded by Councilwoman Coots.

The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next on the Agenda was the appointment of Council members to the Audit Committee. Interim Recorder-Treasurer Jessica Chandler said the City forms an Audit Procurement Committee annually in order for the City's Auditor to be chosen. This is for the 2023-2024 audit year. The audit is due by March 15, 2025. A Request For Proposal (RFP) is sent to all CPA firms in WV that are approved by the State Auditor's Office. Once the bids are received, the Audit Committee will meet to select the firm to conduct the audit. The Audit Committee has code requirements that require no less than three but no more than five members on the committee. The code defines several of the members and two Council members may serve on the committee. The first member needs to be from the entity's governing body and this year the City is recommending that the City Manager be a member, the second member is someone with working knowledge of the accounting system and the City is recommending the Recorder-Treasurer be a member. The code requires that a member be a citizen that is knowledgeable in the field of accounting and auditing.

In the past, the City has asked Beverly Rinehart-Cook to be a member. She was formerly the Controller for the City. The City recommends that Beverly remain on this committee. She has agreed to serve on this committee if approved. Councilpersons Nancy Shoemaker-Dingess and Frank Williams volunteered to be on this committee. Council unanimously approved Councilwoman Shoemaker-Dingess, Councilman Williams, Beverly Rinhart-Cook, the Recorder-Treasurer and the City Manager to serve on this committee on a motion by Councilman Buchanan seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

Next, Council unanimously approved the appointment of the (Interim) City Manager, or designee, to serve on the Board of Directors for the New River Transit Authority on a motion by Councilman-at-Large Reedy seconded by Councilman Williams.

Next, the Mayor read a Resolution whereby the DMV approved granting the City $364,900.00 for the WV Governor's Highway Safety Program to be used for the Southern Regional Highway Safety Program. Interim Recorder-Treasurer Jessica Chandler said that this is a grant

serving the region and the money will be used to help fund things for the Beckley Police Department such as DUI check points, target red programs, and speed checks. Council unanimously approved the resolution on a motion by Councilman Buchanan seconded by Councilwoman Coots. The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, the Mayor read a Resolution whereby the DMV approved granting the City $655,020.00 for the WV Governor's Highway Safety Program to be used for the Law Enforcement Liaison Project. Interim Recorder-Treasurer Jessica Chandler said that this grant serves the state and the money will be used to help fund things for the Beckley Police Department such as covering the cost of training officers, purchase equipment needed for each region, radar detectors, and e-citation products. Council unanimously approved the resolution on a motion by Councilman Williams seconded by Councilwoman Shoemaker-Dingess. The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, the Mayor read a Resolution whereby the DMV approved granting the City $348,500.00 for the WV Governor's Highway Safety Program to be used for the WV Lifesavers and Data Tracking & Agency Support Projects. Interim Recorder-Treasurer Jessica Chandler said that this grant serves the state and the money will be used to fund things for the Beckley Police Department such as tracking the officers, results for DUI arrests, seatbelt tickets, red lights tickets and other data tracking that the BPD does. She said this helps the City know whether the grants are working or not. Council unanimously approved the resolution on a motion by Councilman-at-Large Reedy seconded by Councilwoman Coots. The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

OLD BUSINESS: Councilwoman Bullock thanked the Mayor for recently attending an event at Pinelodge. Councilwoman Bullock asked Chief Bailey to give a quick update about Larew Avenue. He said a speed box was installed on Larew Avenue. Councilman Williams asked if the yellow extension cord is still hanging from the second floor out of the window to charge a vehicle on Main St. Chief said that the PD talked to the individual about it and the individual must have moved it back because he had discontinued using the extension cord. The individual said that he is working on rectifying the situation as quickly as possible. The Mayor asked Chief of PD to follow up on this situation.

NEW BUSINESS: Councilwoman Bullock said that Tuesday, September 17th from 11 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. there will be an informational meeting at the E. Beckley Post Office. She asked Pam Frey, Director of Board Of Public Works about paving the rest of G Street and paving F Street. Pam said as soon as the budget allows, they will work on it. The weather will also have to be considered.

The Mayor asked Interim City Manager Ann Worley if she wanted to give an update. She reminded Council members of the 911 Ceremony at 9:30 tomorrow at Word Park and invited the public. She asked Council to visit Lt. Bragg at the BPD to get their picture taken for the City's website and submit their biography to her as soon as possible. She asked the Department Heads if they had any updates. Beckley Events Director, Jill Moorefield shared that Kid's Classic was this past weekend and it was nice to see all of the children in attendance. Parks and Rec. Director Leslie Baker said the Ten Year Comprehensive Plan Meeting was at the Raleigh County Convention Center. Ann said it was well attended and well received. Chief Bailey said the BPD started the D.A.R.E. Program this week. Councilman-at-Large Reedy thanked the BPD for their work in helping clean up the old dust bowl across from Park Middle School. He said the Greater Beckley Christian School leased that property and has done a lot of renovations and updates. He said a lot of kids are on that field throughout the year. He said the BPD has helped remove people off of that property that were living in the dugouts.

He said an encampment was there and drug paraphernalia and weapons were there. He said construction workers have been working in that area and have been finding stuff there every morning. He said the BPD have really helped clean up this area of the community. He requested a Workshop on changing the downtown environment including updating or composing new ordinances. He said Council needs to reconsider if the Greyhound Bus Station is actually needed. He said, in his opinion, it needs to be eliminated. Councilwoman Coots said there are two runs to and from Beckley to Detroit each week.

Councilman Buchanan said that he recently traveled to the Carolinas and heard advertisements inviting others to come see West Virginia's fall colors and the New River Gorge.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mary West thanked Chief of PD for the speed box installed on Larew Ave. She requested cameras be installed there. She requested that Council have prayer before meetings and said the alleyways need cleaned out on Larew Ave.

James Freeman purchased a building at 337 Neville Street and wanted to

introduce himself. Christina Baisden thanked Councilwoman-at-Large Hunter for keeping the children of the community in mind regarding the need for green space. She asked Council and the Mayor to send letters of support for the track field to the County Commission. Tom Mosley spoke about the ordinance regarding panhandling. He urged Council not to rush through the process in formulating the ordinance. He asked that a Safety Commission be added to an upcoming Agenda. Councilwoman Coots said that the ordinance has been drafted but it is a rough draft and Council understands the importance of it and they also want to see the City cleaned up. He requested a citizen award for both Greg Stovall and Scott Worley who recently passed away. Maya Panto and ZiMeng Rein spoke in support of keeping the cross country course for Woodrow Wilson High School at the Pinecrest Industrial Park. Theresa Dennison prayed and requested that each meeting begin with prayer. The Mayor asked Mr. File if the City Council meetings can begin with prayer. Mr. File said that he does not make this decision.

It is a public place and different religious beliefs must be permitted if prayer is permitted. Ms. Dennison thanked Ms. Hunter for speaking in favor of keeping the track field. Tony Martin spoke regarding improving the quality of life for the citizens. He said it will result in economic development. He said ARPA funds can be used in various ways for economic development. He thanked Ms. Hunter for her support on the green space for the youth of the community. Amanda Hammons spoke in support of the City having a Day Center and invited Council members to contact her with questions they have regarding it. Councilwoman Coots said that further discussion regarding Council's concerns about a Day Center facility may need to take place at an appropriate time. Robert Dunlap said that the Day Center at Pinehaven Homeless Shelter does not do anything to address the ten people milling around uptown. He said these people being seen on the streets uptown are not going to walk to Johnstown Rd where the homeless shelter is. He said the Day Center can move its location to Prince Street. Amanda Hammons said they meet

at 5:00 every Tuesday at Carpenter's Corner and invited Council to attend.

Next on the Agenda is the anticipated Executive Session to discuss City Manager Candidates. Mr. File said no votes will be taken and no decisions will be made during Executive Session.

Council unanimously approved entering in Executive Session at 8:05 p.m. on a motion by Councilman-at-Large Reedy seconded by Councilman Williams.

Council unanimously approved entering back into the Regular Council meeting at 8:35 p.m. on a motion by Councilwoman Coots seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

Council unanimously approved adjourning the meeting at 8:36 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Buchanan seconded by Councilman Williams

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

_____

_____

Mayor
Interim City Manager