

MEETING MINUTES OF ST. MARYS CITY COUNCIL

PRESIDING OFFICER:
James J. Harris
Council President

July 11, 2022
6:30 p.m.
Council Chambers

ROLL CALL: Bupp, Randolph, Christman, Willoughby, Uhlenhake
Absent: Mauter, Fitzgerald

Moved by Ms. Willoughby, seconded by Ms. Randolph, to accept the Minutes of the June 27, 2022, meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Debbie Carmean who lives on Coventry Green addressed Council. She said she had some concerns for the people in our community. She feels that people are hurting and are going without medications to pay their utility bills. Debbie also believes that not enough money is being appropriated for street repairs. She said there is a sinkhole on Coventry Green that is sinking more and more each year. She has pointed this out but has been told there is no money to fix things like this. She said the City needs to do something to help. Debbie also believes the electrical system is outdated saying the materials hanging on the poles in the area of Coventry Green are from 1952 and 1960's. These things need to be addressed. Debbie brought up Sleepy Hollow stating that she said she does not understand it. We could make a beautiful park here. It has a lot of history. She said we would be destroying beautiful woods for housing when there are lots available in Canal View Estates. Debbie ended stating again that people in the community need help.

Mr. Foxhoven addressed Council stating last year Council passed an Ordinance concerning the DORA. There is a section in the ordinance that requires an open discussion to review it. He asked Police Chief Jake Sutton and Laura Yelton of SMART to attend the meeting regarding this. He also noted that Councilor Erik Mauter, said that as a small business owner, their business has experienced no ill effects of the DORA and supports its continuation.

Chief Sutton said they have not had any issues whatsoever with DORA. It has been a good program. They have not had any violations and will continue to monitor it.

Laura Yelton said when we did this last year they wanted it to be reviewed in case it was a disaster. She said the only disaster she has seen so far is they are completely out of cups and they cannot get them because of the supply and demand chain going on. Laura said it has done what they intended it to do. To get people downtown to explore our downtown. Young kids are stepping up and opening businesses, which she thinks, is a domino effect.

Mr. Foxhoven said from an Administrative standpoint, they are in support of the DORA.

Mr. Uhlenhake said in the beginning he remembers a concern that people would get their cups, go back to their cars, and covertly refill instead of going to the establishments. Chief Sutton stated they have not seen any issues with this. The Department has had bike patrol downtown to help monitor that with security. They have not seen any negative effects from having DORA. It has been kind of positive with the outcome of the number of people. They remain very cognizant and if they do see any issues, they will address it.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS COMMITTEES ETC.:

The Mayor's Report was presented.
The Tax Commissioner's Report was presented
The Director of Public Service and Safety's Report was presented

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee meetings to report.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:

Ordinance No. 2022-29 was presented to Council for a first reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2022-29 – Providing for the Issuance and Sale of Bonds in the Maximum Principal Amount of \$12,000,000 for the Purpose of Paying the Costs of Acquisition, Construction, Renovation, Equipping and Installation of a Municipal Building, Including the Costs of Design and Engineering for the Municipal Building, and Construction and Reconstruction of an Adjoining Parking Lot, Together With All Necessary Appurtenances Thereto, and Declaring an Emergency

Moved by Mr. Christman, seconded by Mr. Bulp, to read Ordinance No. 2022-29. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Foxhoven introduced Allison Binkley, Bond Counsel, who has been with us for a long time. He said this ordinance would allow us to proceed with financing our new Municipal Building. The amount is for \$12 million. The cost of the building is \$10,500,000. We have budgeted \$1 million for furniture, fixtures, and equipment, and \$500,000 for the construction/reconstruction of the adjoining South Street parking lot.

Allison addressed everyone via Zoom stating before Council is an ordinance authorizing up to \$12 million of bonds for the construction of a new Municipal Building and adjoining parking lot and various costs that go along with it. Tonight will be the first reading with forthcoming readings in future meetings. In the weeks ahead, members of the administration will be working with the finance professionals to get ready to attend a rating meeting so that the City can receive their rating before we go into the market to sell the bonds. She noted a slight difference than prior issuances of bonds is that before Council approves the bond ordinance; we will be holding a public hearing. We are doing this for tax purposes to give the City a little flexibility with what entities are permitted to use the building for future planning purposes. That could include nonprofits if the City chose to do so.

Mr. Foxhoven added as has been discussed before, the second floor of the building will be vacant. We are building for future growth opportunities. We have talked about possibly renting to nonprofit organizations. In order to do that, there are certain things that need to take place. Before the third reading of the ordinance, we will have a public meeting in Council Chambers fifteen (15) minutes prior to the Council meeting if anyone has any concerns.

Mr. Noble said there is a rule on the taxability of the bonds so they are tax-free. You can allow a certain amount of private use, but it endangers the tax-free status of the bonds. In working with Allison, this procedure allows us a little more flexibility in renting out the second floor to nonprofit entities. Entities such as the Sister Cities Organization or the St. Marys Community Foundation could have offices on the second floor and it would not endanger our tax-free status of the bonds.

Mr. Foxhoven stated that we recognize and understand that \$12 million is a lot of money. The administration is looking at it as a 75 to 100 year commitment and investment to our downtown area.

Mr. Harris commented that Council would need to review. Mr. Foxhoven said there will be three readings and the public hearing will be on August 8th.

Mr. Noble added they are preparing a Statement providing the background of the City. He said this is a good opportunity for us to tell the story of St. Marys and our industrial development and population growth over the last ten years. It's good to sit down and analyze where we've been the last 10-15 years. When they rate these bonds, they look at the ability of the City of St. Marys to pay back the principal and interest. In doing that, we are telling the story of the City. In looking at old statements, it is amazing the changes that have taken place. We used to rely almost solely on Goodyear; now we have a much broader base of industrial activity. This is a tremendous story to tell the third parties that will be rating these bonds.

Allison commented the documents Mr. Noble is referring to our on file with the Clerk and is one of the forms Council will approve in the bond ordinance.

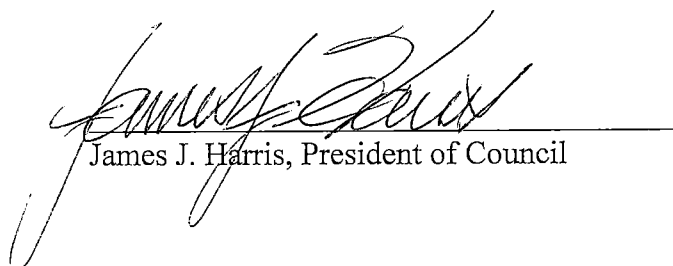
MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Moved by Mr. Bulp, seconded by Mr. Christman, to excuse Mr. Mauter and Mr. Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Moved by Mr. Bulp, seconded by Mr. Uhlenhake, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Council adjourned at 6:48 p.m.


Debra Kable, Clerk of Council


James J. Harris, President of Council