

## MEETING MINUTES OF ST. MARYS CITY COUNCIL

PRESIDING OFFICER:  
James J. Harris  
Council President

July 25, 2022  
6:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers

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

Moved by Mr. Uhlenhake, seconded by Mr. Bupp, to accept the Minutes of the July 11, 2022, meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

### **PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mr. Foxhoven introduced Brian Cooper, the City's Municipal Advisor, attending via Zoom to review Ordinance 2022-29. Mr. Cooper said the ordinance is for the approval of bonds and sets forth all of the parameters that are needed before they market the bonds. Once the ordinance is approved, they plan on a discussion with S & P Global rating presenting information regarding the City's plan of finance, economic development efforts, and finances. He said we are currently working with City officials preparing the official Statement, which is the main disclosure document used when they go to market to seek purchasers for the City's bonds. Council would be approving \$12 million bonds for a 27-year term. Those bonds are General Obligations of the City, which means the City is offering its full faith and credit to the repayment of the bonds and is the highest type of security the City can offer. This will afford the City the lowest bond costs when going out to market. The process is planned to take place in September. That is when the interest rates are set. The current rate we are seeing for a project like this is in the 4% rate range for bond pricing. We hope to see favorable conditions moving forward in this 4% range.

Mr. Foxhoven reminded everyone there would be a public hearing prior to the meeting of the third reading of the ordinance.

Jacob Larger, a candidate for State Representative, addressed Council. He is currently the Council President for the Village of New Bremen, Ohio. He said he is an attorney by trade, but works in Human Resources for a Workforce Agency in Allen County. His passion is getting people jobs and helping employers find suitable talent to build our economic growth in West Central Ohio. The issues that are important to him is work force and he said he wants to build on those connections. He believes there are simple things we can do without rebuilding programs such as communication between agencies. Another big issue he would like to streamline is adoption reform to make it easier and less costly, as well as support for the aging out age group to help them succeed. Mr. Larger also wants to address common sense regulations to have regulations fit with the environment that we have. The Ohio Young Republicans, NFIB, Ohio Chamber of Commerce, as well as the School Choice Alliance for parents' rights in education have given their endorsement. He said we need common sense in Columbus, which is a big part of his campaign.

Mr. Noble commented one of the big issues the City has had in dealing with the State is the Department of Natural Resources and our canal that runs through the City. We have had a lot of difficulty working with ODNR and the pollution of the canal. He also mentioned the lake being a big part of this district and asked Mr. Larger what his position is on this. Mr. Larger responded that with issues like this, we need to make sure we have all of the stakeholders at the table when solutions come around. You can't exclude a group; and we need to make sure the regulations that we have on the books work with what they are trying to accomplish as well as looking at smaller solutions that may help solve a problem.

Mr. Uhlenhake asked Mr. Larger what his thoughts are on constitutional carry. Mr. Uhlenhake's concern is the new law enabling those to carry without any training. Mr. Larger believes the law is slightly misunderstood by some. If you have the ability to get a CCW, now you have the ability to carry one. Individuals that do not have the ability to get that license are restricted from carrying. He encourages people to go out and learn how to use their weapon. He also said that not all states have constitutional carry laws. Getting the CCW is a benefit to individuals so they do not accidentally break the laws when crossing state lines. Mr. Larger does like the affirmative duty being placed upon law enforcement to ask an individual if they have a weapon, rather than the duty being placed upon an individual in an unfortunate circumstance who may not be thinking about that.

Mr. Harris commented that length of time for adoption and costs are a lot and hoped this would be fixed. Mr. Larger said we have to do a better job in order to match individuals who are just looking for a loving family with individuals that want to provide it.

Mayor McGowan read and presented a Proclamation for Let's Back the Blue to Anne Niemeyer and Dan Burke representing the Let's Back the Blue organization. Police Chief Jake Sutton and Sheriff Mike Vorhees attended the meeting showing their support. Mayor McGowan said it is important that we recognize and back our law enforcement agencies. He said we have to give our people the proper tools and equipment to do their job. We have worked very hard on this and thanks to Council; we have been able to appropriate monies to do so. After reading the Proclamation, Mayor McGowan said without the Blue, we are in trouble in our communities and our Country. We need to support them and show them respect they give on a day-to-day basis.

Dan Burke thanked everyone for having them here and for the Proclamation. He said we need to support our law enforcement. With recent tragedies, we need to support them with equipment they need for a better way to protect our citizenship. Anne Niemeyer suggested everyone put their blue lights out as visible sign of support. Ann and thanked everyone and said they appreciate all of the support.

Superintendent of the Electric Department, Mack Kuenning, noted there has been some interest from residents in turbine #7 located off High Street. He was asked to come in and provide some information on the turbine. He said it is a frame 5 GE gas turbine that was built in the 1950s. It was pretty much stock until 2017 when we started doing upgrades to it. We replaced all of the operating controls from mechanical controls to electric control style. A new motor was put in the control center and clutch, which helps get the turbine started. The valves were also changed from mechanical to electrical. Its efficiency is a lot better than it used to be.

Mr. Bulp asked what the kilowatt output was. Mack said they can run up to 12 megawatts, which would be on the coldest day you could think of. In the summer, they run 9 to 9 ½ megs for a couple of hours. The longer it runs, the more the megawatts drop due to the heat and age of the exhaust system of the unit. Wintertime is the best time to run it. The colder the air, the more they can have on the output. It all runs off diesel. He also mentioned the JV2 unit #11 located at the Spokeworks Substation is a natural gas unit. It is basically the same turbine that has been converted over to natural gas. It is a little more efficient, but due to the cost of gas cannot run in the winter. Since 2021, by running turbine #7, our savings was \$1,362,842. We ran the unit 23 times throughout the summer and one time in the winter.

Mayor McGowan added that our bill would have been a little over \$16 million in 2021. That means the \$3 million we received came off all of the citizens of St. Marys electric bill. He said the City of St. Marys is in a unique position from the surrounding communities. They don't have the turbines like we do. We could generate approximately two-thirds of the electrical needs that we have. If the eastern grid ever went down, we could have lights on in this community. He said a decision would have to be made if it went to private homes or industry. We took these turbines and refurbished them and is worth the investment we put into it.

Ashley Randolph commented that she got to see turbine #7 last week. It is unique. She asked Mack if for some reason we ever lost our main power grid, would we be able to black start #11 to keep it going. Mack said it does have a battery backup on it, but if we start a smaller generator and tied into it, we could get it running. From there we could start putting out 8-10 meg and run. We just need a little bit to get it going. For instance, if we fired #7 and it was up and running, we could go over and fire #11. In further comment from Ashley, she believed they run about 21 gallons of diesel a minute. Mack said they use about 1,200 gallons per hour when it is up and running. The pony motor basically is a truck engine that is a 500 HP V8 Detroit motor which they start first, and that is where the new clutch comes in. Once it gets up to speed, the clutch kicks in and starts turning the turbine at about 5,000 RPMs. We pick up a fire, then they both come up together and finally the small pony motor drops out and the turbine takes its way back up. Mack said you can definitely hear it throughout town when they run it.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS COMMITTEES ETC.:**

The Auditor's Report was presented.

The Treasurer's Report was presented.

The Director of Public Service and Safety's Report was presented

Mr. Bulp asked about a recent power outage in his area and asked if it was a closure that opened. Mack Kuenning said the reclosure at the Sewage Plant opened due to a lightning strike.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no committee meetings to report.

**ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:**

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

The ordinance will be back for a third reading at the next Council meeting. Prior to the meeting, there will be a Public Hearing regarding this.

Ordinance No. 2022-30 was presented to Council for a first reading.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2022-30** – An Ordinance Approving Land Donation

Moved by Ms. Willoughby, seconded by Mr. Christman, to read Ordinance No. 2022-30. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Foxhoven said this parcel is located at 815 E. Spring Street (corner of Maple and Spring). The Lore family donated it to the ROC in the fall of 2013. The ROC has maintained it as a green space. As everyone is aware, the ROC is closing their doors this Friday so they are liquidating their assets. They would like to donate this parcel of land to the City and we would like to receive it. We will keep it as green space. He also commented that the Rotary may have some interest in taking on a pollinator project here. There are no structures on the property.

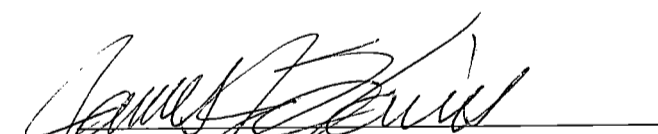
The ordinance will be back for a second reading.

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:**

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

Council adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

  
Debra Kable, Clerk of Council

  
James J. Harris, President of Council