COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF LUVERNE

April 12, 2021

The City of Luverne Council met in regular session on April 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., in the City Hall Building. The following members were present:

Mayor Ed Beasley

Betty Dawson, Councilwoman

Kip Smith, Councilman – by phone conference

Kathy Smyth, Councilwoman

Elliott Jones, Councilman

Eddie Billings, Councilman

Mike Jones, Attorney – by phone conference

Michelle Royals, Engineer

Margie Gomillion, Clerk

William Neal, Building Inspector

Jammie Odom, Editor

Mayor Beasley called the meeting to order. The mayor called on William Neal to lead the pledge of allegiance to the flag and Eddie Billings to say a prayer.

The mayor called for the approval of the minutes of March 22, 2021. Councilman Billings made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Councilman Jones seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved.

Mayor Beasley stated everyone has a copy of Engineer Royals’ departmental reports. Ms. Royals reported Jack’s should be open Wednesday, April 14, 2021. The parking lot and turn lane asphalt was finished today. The permanent striping will be placed in approximately two weeks following appropriate curing period.

Next, Ms. Royals informed the Council that the city is applying for a FEMA grant to equip Well #2 with a generator. The initial documentation was submitted today with lots of help from our EMA director.

Engineer Royals reported that the city is expected to receive approximately $510,000 from the first round of stimulus money. Infrastructure is expected to be an eligible expenditure. However, we are expected to receive half of the money next month and the other half next year. We are also applying for an additional stimulus through Southeast Gas. Ms. Royals was asked to submit a detailed list of needs with associated costs. She stated that the list submitted totaled $18 million. The Council was asked to bring any ideas they may have to add to the list to Engineer Royals.

Ms. Royals reported the ball season at Turner Park began April 5, 2021 and everything seems to be successful. Nothing negative has been reported.

Engineer Royals stated it appears the Nutrition Center is going to be operational again effective Monday, April 19th but the participants will not be allowed to eat on site. They will continue to receive their meals in a frozen format to be taken home, but they will be allowed to enter the building and conduct activities again. Anita West has a conference call Friday, April 16th to receive more details.

The mayor stated he and the Engineer have been working on a couple of grants and some other ideas that hopefully we can announce later.

Mayor Beasley called on the city clerk for the administrative report. Routine work was performed.

The mayor stated everyone had a copy of the chief’s report. Since the last meeting, the police department had 291 calls of service including building checks. The department made over 94 traffic stops, wrote 76 citations and over 18 warnings. The department made 6 misdemeanor and 6 felony arrests. There were 6 animal control calls since the last council meeting. The traffic control unit is still at Woodford.

Mayor Beasley stated everyone has a copy of Mr. Neal’s report.

The Engineer stated Mrs. Maegan Marshall has put in an event application which is not on the agenda because it was just submitted today but suggested it be discussed. Councilwoman Smyth stated a Facebook post by Mrs. Marshall has been seen about a grant she was involved with to conduct movie nights at the park. It is supposed to be held on certain nights throughout a month or two during the summer. Councilwoman Smyth knew we hadn’t had an event application come through so she called her just to inform her of the process. Councilwoman Smyth told her she needed to pick up an event application at the police department. I also asked if she had spoken to anyone at the park because we can’t overlap ball game nights due to traffic and capacity out there. She had not so I suggested she do that. The grant is through the RC&D and Councilwoman Smyth is concerned that they would not accept an application from a private citizen. Those types of grants typically has to go through a nonprofit or municipality. Mrs. Marshall was encouraged to speak to Mrs. Snellgrove with the economic development authority to see if Mrs. Snellgrove could assist because the city has a number of grants already being applied for other things. This is something that is popular in other towns so it should be considered once it aligns with the other priorities. The mayor stated the park will only be available Wednesday nights or Saturday nights during the summer. The mayor stated we will discuss this at the next meeting when we get more information. Councilman Billings made a motion to table this event for now. Councilman Jones seconded the motion and all was in favor.

Next, Engineer Royals stated the Airport Authority is requesting to apply for a grant through the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) Aeronautics Division. The grant is for a security fence across the front, a gate, and digital keypad entry. Ms. Royals requested the Council approve the resolution to allow the Airport Authority to apply for an ALDOT grant to replace the fence, the gate, and add a digital keypad entry to the airport. After further discussion, Councilman Jones made a motion to adopt Resolution 041221. Councilman Billings seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved. The resolution is as follows:

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 041221**

**WHEREAS,** the *City of Luverne* intends to apply for state matching funds for an airport improvement project for the *Frank Sikes Airport* during fiscal year *2021*.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the *City of Luverne* as follows:

That the *City of Luverne Airport Authority* is authorized to make an application for airport improvement funding assistance from the State of Alabama Department of Transportation, for the purpose of undertaking a project in fiscal year 2021 to make improvements at the *Frank Sikes Airport*.

That the application shall be submitted on behalf of the *City of Luverne Airport Authority* by its *Airport Authority Chairman*, who is authorized by this resolution to sign the application and any related forms or documents on behalf of the *City of Luverne Airport Authority*.

That the *City of Luverne Airport Authority* is authorized to enter into an airport improvement funding agreement with the State of Alabama, acting by and through the Alabama Department of Transportation, for the purpose of undertaking a project to make improvements at the *Frank Sikes Airport*, with partial funding provided by the State of Alabama.

That the agreement be executed in the name of the *City of Luverne Airport Authority* for and on behalf of the *City of Luverne* by its *Airport Authority Chairman*.

That the *City of Luverne Airport Authority* has the authority to enter into this project with the State of Alabama.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the *City of Luverne* hereby affirms that the local matching share of funds in the amount required for this airport improvement project has been officially approved, placed into the budget of the Frank Sikes Airport and is available for expenditure upon execution of the funding agreement and the start of the project.

I, the undersigned *City Clerk of City of Luverne*, do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of a resolution lawfully passed and adopted by the *City Council of the City of Luverne* at a regular meeting of such body held on the 12th day of April, 2021.

The Engineer discussed the Lease Agreement for the old Vanity Fair building. The original lease agreement that was approved by the council several months ago was with 4 Byrd’s. At the request of the parties involved, the agreement has been revised. The agreement is now between the City and Elite Contracting & Safety, LLC. The guarantor was changed from Lomax Byrd to Jamie Johnson. The original agreement denied the right to sublease, but the revision will allow for three specific subleases. The city is applying for an ADECA Economic Development grant to replace a portion of the roof, repair the sprinkler system, repair water damage to the interior ceiling & walls, repair minor plumbing issues, and replace lights and electrical issues to bring the building up to code in an effort to help the companies function properly in the building. Because they have not been able to operate at full capacity due to the issues with the building, the term of the new agreement will begin April 1, 2021 if approved. After further discussion, Councilman Jones made a motion to accept the revised lease agreement with Elite Contracting & Safety, LLC as written. Councilwoman Dawson seconded the motion and all was in favor.

Next, Engineer Royals stated that the City Clerk and I were asked to research what the cost to the city would be to offer Tier 1 benefits to Tier 2 employees. We had a conversation with a RSA agent who explained it as follows: Employees hired prior to January 1, 2013 are considered Tier 1 employees. Some of the benefits of being a Tier 1 employee include being allowed to retire with full benefits with 25 years of service regardless of age; full benefit is considered 2% of the employee’s monthly gross pay; employee’s contribution is only 5%. Employees hired after January 1, 2013 are considered Tier 2 employees. The difference in benefits include an additional age requirement of 62 years before full benefits can be drawn; full benefit is considered 1.65% of the employee’s monthly gross; employee’s contribution is 6%. These numbers are for standard employees. The law enforcement numbers are slightly higher. RSA has presented this option to all government entities that are contributors to the state retirement system. If the council elects to participate, the Tier 2 employees will be allowed to retire with 25 years regardless of age and their contribution will increase from 6% to 7.5 %. The city’s contribution will also increase by 1.46% which is estimated to be $13,021 annually. Engineer Royals stated that the City currently has 22 Tier 2 employees. After polling all 22 Tier 2 employees, 21 of 22 thought it was a good idea and asked the council to consider this. Since the deadline is May 8th, Engineer Royals requested this be tabled until the next council meeting to allow time to have more questions answered and a little more information. After some discussion, Councilman Billings made a motion to table this until the next council meeting. Councilman Jones seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved.

The Council was presented with the framed resolution for Mr. Charlie Johnson. After some discussion, Councilwoman Smyth offered to have the framed Resolution matted prior to presenting it to his family. All agreed that it would look better matted.

Mayor Beasley stated this July will be 50 years ago that we lost an officer in the line of duty. Mr. Drexel Rushing’s daughter has asked if the city would do some kind of monument for him. Councilwoman Smyth recommended calling Block Wire in Goshen and getting a bronze plaque. The mayor recommended hanging the plaque in the police department. The council was in agreement.

Councilwoman Smyth reported the Verizon Mitigation has completed the installation of the four new historic markers. We are awaiting a bill from the contractor to have him paid directly through Verizon. Councilwoman Smyth commented that she was at the lake the other day and excited to see the new paddle boats.

Councilman Billings made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Smyth seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned.