COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF LUVERNE

January 24, 2022

The City of Luverne Council met in regular session on January 24, 2022 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

Kathy Smyth, Councilwoman

Elliott Jones, Councilman

Eddie Billings, Councilman 5:36

William Neal, Building Inspector

Margie Gomillion, Clerk

Christy Johnson, Editor

Absent:

Mike Jones, Attorney

Visitor:

Nic Atkinson

Mayor Beasley called the meeting to order. The mayor called on Elliott Jones to lead the pledge of allegiance to the flag and Kathy Smyth to say a prayer.

The mayor stated he would like to thank and congratulate Councilwoman Dawson on the blood drive. Mayor Beasley stated she did an excellent job and had a really good turnout. Councilwoman Dawson stated she thinks there were 14 that gave and 3 were turned away.

Mayor Beasley called for the approval of the minutes of January 10, 2021. Councilman Jones made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Councilwoman Dawson seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved.

The mayor reported Ms. Royals came in Friday and helped with paperwork on some grants we have filed. Mayor Beasley stated he has been consulting with Troy Hudson and met with him a couple of times on some grants that we are looking forward to receiving. The mayor stated he met with Kenneth Boswell this morning on another grant that he heard about with ADECA and Troy Hudson is handling that. The mayor stated there is a lot of work going on in District 1. We are still working on the ditches when weather permits by putting rip rap in the ditches to stop the flow of rushing water from blowing them back out. We also are going to put a new main water pipe in the dead end road behind Tom Thumb.

Mayor Beasley called on the city clerk for the administrative report. Routine work was performed with accounts payable, collecting utility payments, payroll, updating city website, following COVID-19 precautions, collecting 2022 business license and entering meter readings.

The mayor called everyone’s attention to the chief’s report. Since the last meeting, the police department had 157 calls for service, not including building checks. The department made over 46 traffic stops, wrote 18 citations and gave 28 warnings. The department made 4 misdemeanor arrests. There were 3 animal control calls since the last meeting. Mayor Beasley stated he thinks we have the animal situation taken care of over on Hawkins Avenue.

Mayor Beasley stated everyone has a copy of Mr. Neal’s report. The mayor stated we have gotten Mr. Neal a used vehicle for him to use where he can put all his fire and city building inspector gear in one place without having to load and unload. Maybe this car will be a benefit to the city and fire department.

The mayor stated he and Councilman Billings have met with Lee Simmons about the park this week. Mayor Beasley called on Councilman Billings to report on the park. Councilman Billings stated everything is going pretty well. They are in the middle of registration. Lee is trying to set up everything for tryouts and the numbers are coming back pretty good. We did have a little situation where we were contacted by two of the communities in the county who were hoping to play here. We informed them they are always welcome to play here. They were hoping to set up their own team with their own draft along with everything along those lines. After much talking back and forth to try to make it best for all kids involved, the mayor, Lee and I had to make a decision of what to do. We are just going to do things as we have always done them. The reason is, in my opinion, if they collect registration fees and use them by keeping them in their communities and we are supposed to do all the work including umpiring etc., it will put us at a disadvantage with uniforms, umpires and utilities if we are not collecting the money. Plus, there has been a habit in the past where some communities tend to load their teams up and you end up playing all-star teams which isn’t fair to the rest of the kids. It’s not supposed to be about all-stars, wins and losses but those do count also. But, I do think we are going to get good responses from Highland, Brantley and a lot of families out of Goshen. I do expect us to have a very good ball season. Also, the basketball goals are up and are being used very well.

Mayor Beasley stated the city has at Person Park a big liability that we are paying for and not utilizing because of the situation with the lighting. We do not have anything to replace the bulbs at Person to Person Park. It’s costing the city an average of $5,000 a year to keep it clean. There is no activity at all going on at that park. We need to monitor that this spring and summer to see if any kind of organized program comes available that we are utilizing the park. If not, in my opinion, I think we need to discontinue the facilities there but still keep it bush hogged and mowed.

Mr. Neal reported it is tentatively set tomorrow to install about $33,000 in new Holmatro rescue equipment on the rescue truck. Councilman Jones stated Mr. Neal did great job on the LFD annual report.

The mayor asked Councilwoman Smyth if there was anything new with economic development. Councilwoman Smyth stated there was a survey that was put out to the public to request some information that they are gathering through economic development but locally no.

Mayor Beasley asked if there was any new business. Councilman Jones stated nominations for the Luverne Parks & Rec Advisory Committee were supposed to be open tonight. The mayor called on each councilmember to nominate someone in their district. Councilwoman Dawson nominated Andre Dawson, Councilman Smith nominated Mike Johnson, Councilwoman Kathy Smyth nominated Marvin Barginere, Councilman Jones nominated Will Tate and Councilman Billings will be sitting in District 5. Councilman Jones made a motion to close nominations. Councilwoman Smyth seconded the motion and all was in favor. The mayor called for a vote for all in favor to accept the nominees as submitted. Councilman Billings stated he is in favor but with the stipulation that we are able to readdress it later and add some female voices. The council was in agreement. The vote was unanimously approved.

Councilman Smith stated the City of Luverne, Town of Rutledge and the United States of America lost a service veteran this past week, Mr. Tommy Odom. Mr. Odom was very instrumental in getting our Veterans Memorial Park going. He fought Parkinson’s disease for years. Between that and COVID was his demise. We need to think about his family. The mayor stated he deserves a lot of recognition for his service to his country and his community. All our prayers go out to his family.

Councilman Jones asked about a gentleman named Hunter Stutts calling to get information for a satellite internet type dish to be put in by the Verizon Tower at the old jail location and wondered what that was about. The clerk stated Tarpon Towers is subleasing a section of it to put a satellite. I checked with attorney Jones and it was in the contract that they can do this.

Councilwoman Dawson asked if economic development included washaterias. We only have one here and it stays very busy. Councilwoman Dawson asked if this is something we could tell someone who is trying to bring a business to the city. Councilwoman Smyth stated she would mention this to Ms. Snellgrove. Councilwoman Dawson also mentioned that Brantley and Highland doesn’t have one.

Councilman Billings made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Jones seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned.