

MEADVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

January 16, 2024

Call to Order	<p>The in-person meeting of City Council was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Jamie Kinder. Deputy Mayor McKnight and Councilmembers Gretchen Myers, Jim Roha and Autumn Vogel answered on the call of the roll. City staff present were Manager Maryann Menanno, City Solicitor Tim Wachter, City Planner Peter Grella, Finance Director Tim Groves, and Recording Secretary Darla Boca. Junior Councilmembers Tatum Gorney and Elias Ramsey sat as representatives for the evening. Junior Councilmembers Agatha Crowley and Daniel Survey were also in attendance.</p>
Public Comment on Agenda Items	<p>None.</p>
Presentation – Bob Harrington - MAWA	<p>Bob Harrington, Operations Manager for MAWA, gave a presentation on the Water Authority. A copy of his presentation is attached to the minutes. Highlights included that the department is made up of 11 employees, 5,089 customers, pumps 1.4 million gallons of water daily using 7 wells, 3 storage tanks that store 4 million gallons of water. A review showed spending costs of \$3,934,235 over the entire system. Items are listed in the attached review. Bob indicated that the age of the system is between 60 and 90 years, meaning that the city has gotten its money’s worth, however there will be costs associated with upkeep and repair of both the system and the effected roadways that may need to be repaired. Road repairs are currently outpacing the cost of system repairs. Age of the system means that isolating a break may end up causing additional customers to be without water. Many facility repairs have been completed in-house, saving funds on necessary building upkeep and repairs.</p> <p>Finance Director Grove asked Mr. Harrington to comment on the current customer service concerns with the MAWA. Mr. Harrington indicated that there are 2 new employees answering the phones in customer service. They are looking for classes to remind folks about what they are doing in their job. People work hard, not everyone in our community is as nice as those in this room. I have the utmost respect for those that I work with. They do a fantastic job. Need to look at what we do with procedures to see what we can do different. It is a community water service – we’re all in this together.</p> <p>Councilmember Myers asked what the SCADA system is. Mr. Harrington explained that is is a computer program that allows operators to see run-cycles within the system, monitors systems for errors and reports to on-call operators who can then review what is going on. Councilmember Myers followed up by asking for a brief description of how the water system works – from the wells forward. Mr. Harrington explained that it is real easy. When the system calls for water, the pumps turn on. This draws water from the clear well storage area on Rogers Ferry Road. It sends a signal to the requested pumps that pull water from the selected wells which goes to the treatment plant to add chemicals, this circulates into the clear well and then back out to the pump station to be distributed throughout the system.</p> <p>Councilmember Vogel stated she appreciated Bob being at the meeting.</p>

MAWA has recently received state or federal money to replace the Hillcrest Tower. Asked if there were other big picture infrastructure items on the horizon. Mr. Harrington answered that capital projects intend to replace a pump that was installed in 1956 that won't keep up with the demands of the system – improving that with a high efficiency drive pump. Will be able to have control when that pump needs to be ran more aggressive than needed. Able to pump during non-peak hours as electric costs were up 30% this year. New roof for the pump station. May not replace the Hillcrest Tank but use a smaller tank to allow for that tank to be taken out of service. This will allow for the water stored there to not be wasted.

Councilmember Roha asked if there was a generator for the system in the event of power outing and if the remote meter reading system works if there is no power? Mr. Harrington responded that they do have a main generator and a portable that is available if needed. The remote meter reading system has its own power source, so even if power is off to a building the meter will send a report when requested.

Councilmember Vogel appreciated the updates on customer service. People are in positions to enforce policy and there is where the rub comes in – when people have a policy concern with water authority, where can they take that? Mr. Harrington responded that they can bring concerns directly to him. He will then take it to the board. His contact info is on the authority website.

Councilmember Roha stated a reminder that we call it Hillcrest Tank, but it is not owned by Hillcrest – it is just the location of it.

Deputy Mayor McKnight asked if MAWA was going to be looking at the billing policy. Mr. Harrington indicated that they are always looking at the policy. Reviewing to make sure that it is in line, will do so in 2024 as procedure. Deputy Mayor McKnight stated that people receive the bill in the mail and a week or so later, if they are unable to pay it, that there is a posting on the door – their concern is if they can't pay their water bill that now there is an additional \$50. I let them know that they should call, that there can be payment arrangements. My concern is that they don't do that, and then they want to fuss that they got their water cut off. I want to let them know it is the policy, but can we stop with the \$50 posting fee? Mr. Harrington responded that the policy will be reviewed, it would be discussed with the board to see what the best fit is. If someone is having a problem with their bill, they need to call as soon as they have the issue. When we are to the point that there is a posting about water service being shut off, it has already been over 60 days. There are a number of agencies that can assist someone that is struggling. That information is given out every day. The \$50 came about as an increase 2 years ago, the cost of serving that has gone up, it wasn't adjusted for almost 15 years.

Councilmember Vogel indicated that there was a program for low income assistance – similar to LIHEAP, that we don't participate in. Finance Director Groves indicated he had provided information on that program and there was a reason why we did not participate. Mr. Harrington added that the policies that prohibited our participation in the program had not changed. Finance Director Groves would resend that information for Council's review. Mr. Harrington reiterated that a phone call could have avoided the issues.

	<p>The phone call is the best first step.</p> <p>Councilmember Myers asked if there was any vision for the system to expand? Mr. Harrington answered that if someone asks, if it makes sense – then yes open to expansion of the system. Needs to be cost effective.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno reminded everyone that Tim Groves is the Chair of the water authority, and any questions should be directed to him.</p> <p>Council members thanked Bob for the presentation.</p>
Notice of Executive Session Meeting	None
Approve Minutes	<p>Councilmember Roha moved to approve minutes from the following meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.2.2024 - Final Meeting Minutes • 1.2.2024 – Reorganizational Meeting Minutes • 1.02.2024 – Regular Meeting Minutes • 1.9.2024 – Study Session meeting Minutes <p>Councilmember Myers seconded. The roll call was unanimous.</p>
<p>Communication to Council</p> <p>Letter from MASA Chair in Support of Marcia Yohe’s Appointment to the MASA Board</p>	<p>Ms. Menanno indicated that there was a letter received from MASA Chair concerning the MASA board appointment.</p>
<p>Manager’s Report</p> <p>RDA Update</p> <p>RTKR Update</p> <p>General City Updates</p>	<p>Ms. Menanno reported on Humphreys/Jones Plumbing building and 787 Water Street. The RDA awarded demolition to 2 different contractors came to about \$98,000. Part of the demolition will be paid for by a blight remediation grant and the other will come from blight funds. Demolition is likely to occur by the end of February/beginning of March, still finalizing documents from Ashley Porter.</p> <p>The siding for the Cinema project for McClure’s Fish House building was delivered last week and will be installed shortly, weather dependent.</p> <p>Ended 2023 with 94 requests with \$6900 in fees. To date in 2024, there have been 4 requests.</p> <p>The 3rd & Final reading of the Zoning Ordinance will take place on February 6th. No special council meeting on January 23rd.</p> <p>As a reminder, ABC appointment applications are due Friday, January 19th.</p>

	<p>Councilmember Myers asked about the tanks that are at the Humphrey’s building. Ms. Menanno responded that there would be a second phase of the project, there will likely be some DEP remediation funding that the authority will apply for to have those taken care of. They have gone through phase one and two of the process and are being monitored.</p> <p>Deputy Mayor McKnight questioned the second phase of the project. Ms. Menanno indicated that continued soil sampling and water testing then the removal of those tanks.</p>
<p>Old Business</p> <p>Discussion - Parking</p>	<p>Ms. Menanno indicated that City Planner Peter Grella was available to answer any additional questions from his presentation on parking. There is a Town Hall scheduled for Tuesday, January 23rd at the Meadville Public Library from 7 to 8:30 pm.</p>
<p>Ordinance – 1st & 2nd Reading – Zoning Ordinance</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor McKnight motioned on the first reading of the Zoning Ordinance. Councilmember Myers seconded. The roll call was unanimous.</p> <p>Deputy Mayor McKnight motioned on the seconded reading for the Zoning Ordinance. Councilmember Roha seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno read AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE, CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE BY REPEALING THE EXISTING ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE, ARTICLE 1301 THROUGH 1314, AND ADOPTING A NEW ZONING CODE FOR THE CITY OF MEADVILLE AND ADDING THE NEW ZONING CODE TO THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE AS ARTICLES 1301 THROUGH 1314, FOR GENERAL PURPOSES OF MAKING THE CITY’S ZONING REGULATIONS CONSISTENT WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE, THE STATE LAWS GOVERNING ZONING REGULATIONS, AND OF PROVIDING FOR THE REGULATION OF LAND USE WITHIN THE CITY OF MEADVILLE IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE DEVELOPED LAND USE PATTERNS WITHIN THE CITY, THE CITY OF MEADVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF 1993 AND THE SUITABILITY OF LANDS FOR FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR A REPEALER, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.</p> <p>Councilmember Vogel asked if there was any public comment at the earlier meeting. Ms. Menanno responded no.</p> <p>The roll call was unanimous.</p>

<p>MASA Appointment</p>	<p>Mayor Kinder asked for a motion to table this agenda item. Deputy Mayor McKnight motioned to table the item. Councilmember Roha seconded.</p> <p>Councilmember Vogel indicated that the item was tabled last time, and notes indicated that both Mayor and Deputy Mayor wanted to open the appointment back up. She asked at what time do we stop tabling? Solicitor Wachter indicated that it could be tabled to a specific date, it could be tabled and, on the agenda, until it is addressed – depends on what you want to do. If tabled it will keep rolling until it is acted up – if you have an idea of when you will be acting on it, then can table until that date. Ms. Menanno suggested tabling until after applications, interviews are conducted – the first meeting in March – March 5th.</p> <p>Mayor Kinder asked for a motion to table until March 5th. Deputy Mayor so moved. Councilmember Roha seconded.</p> <p>The roll call was unanimous.</p>
<p>New Business</p> <p>Motion – Exonerate City Treasurer for Collection of Unpaid 2023 Per Capita Tax</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor McKnight motioned to exonerate City Treasurer for collection of unpaid 2023 Per Capita Tax. Councilmember Myers seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno indicated that this is an annual action of Council. This simply means the responsibility to collect these delinquent taxes moves on to Sharp Collections.</p> <p>The roll call was unanimous.</p>
<p>Motion – Exonerate City Treasurer for Collection of Unpaid 2023 Real Estate Tax</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor McKnight motioned to exonerate City Treasurer for collection of unpaid 2023 Real Estate Tax. Councilmember Myers seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno stated, that as with the per capita tax, this absolves the treasure from any liability and passes on the responsibility to the Country Treasurer’s office.</p> <p>Finance Director Groves noted that since he’s been in the position for over 34 years, the amount of unpaid taxes has been around \$200,000. However, will collect 99% of those through collections – may take a few years, but we get there.</p> <p>The roll call was unanimous.</p> <p>Councilmember Vogel asked about when a person registers to pay for the Per Capita tax? Finance Director Groves indicated that there is nothing that specifies a person from coming to register to pay that they are over 18 and to pay the tax. There is no specific time for someone to come in and register. The tax is billed in August, so if they register prior to July, then they will be billed with that cycle. If not, it will be the following year. Mayor Kinder</p>

	<p>asked if this is something that can be done online? Finance Director Groves said that is something we can look into.</p> <p>Junior Councilmember Gorney asked what the punishment is for not paying the fee. Ms. Menanno indicated that is would be turned over to the collection agency and an additional fee added. Finance Director Groves indicated that they could put a collection on your paycheck. Councilmember Vogel further explained that Per Capita is per head – an individual 18 or older, living in the city - \$15 per year.</p> <p>Mayor Kinder asked if Per Capita could be paid online? Gets questioned about when it can be done that way. Ms. Menanno indicated that the new website will be rolling out in February and will check to see if bill pay is available.</p>
<p>Authorize Submission – Act 13 Grant for Shade Tree Maintenance, Removal and Planting</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor motioned to authorize submission. Councilmember Vogel seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno read: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE CRAWFORD COUNTY ACT 13 ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES GRANT PROGRAM FOR SHADE TREE MAINTENANCE, REMOVAL AND PLANTING.</p> <p>The Shade Tree Commission would like to apply for an Act 13 grant through the County to supplement the annual budget allocated to City Shade Tree maintenance, removal and planting. The application request is for \$20,000 in funds which would be used to remove dying trees in preparation for new planting sites, offset City personnel time/payroll, and purchase 30 Tree Gators (for new plantings). The local match would be met through City personnel time and existing tree removal operational funds.</p> <p>Councilmember Vogel questioned funds for planting, that the grant looks like the removal and preparation of the site for planting. Ms. Menanno indicated that those funds were in the matching funds required from the commission.</p> <p>The roll call was unanimous.</p>
<p>Authorize Signatures – School Resource Officer Agreement – City of Meadville & Crawford Central School District</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor McKnight motioned to authorize signatures. Councilmember Myers seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno read: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES FOR THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER WITH THE CRAWFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT.</p>

	<p>The district pays for 75% of the officer’s wages and fringe benefits. This should have been signed in June 2023, for an additional 4 years. There are no changes from the previous.</p> <p>The roll call as unanimous.</p>
<p>Authorize Signatures – WalkWorks Sub-Award Agreement – PDC & City of Meadville</p>	<p>Mayor Kinder asked for a motion to table the authorization. Councilmember Roha motioned for the tabling. Councilmember Myers seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Menanno stated there is nothing inherently wrong with the agreement, we are waiting on clarification of a box that was checked during the initial application. Just making sure how that transitions us into the actual program.</p> <p>Councilmember Vogel added that there is a pre-planning grant for WalkWorks, that the EAC sub-committee is having a community listening session at the library on Monday, February 12th at 5:30pm that will help us to check a box to go ahead and apply for this. On transportation and active transportation.</p> <p>The roll call was unanimous.</p>
<p>Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Councilmember Statements</p>	<p>Councilmember Roha: <i>Thank you to Bob Harrington for talking about water – I’ve learned quite a bit. Welcome to the Junior Councilmembers – thank you for coming and thanks for your interest.</i></p> <p>Junior Councilmember Gourney: <i>Thanks for having us. Looking forward to learning more about how council works.</i></p> <p>Junior Councilmember Ramsey: <i>Nothing at this time.</i></p> <p>Councilmember Myers: <i>The MLK dinner was wonderful. Jaime did a great job with the proclamation from Meadville. A great message of reviving hope. It would be great to see rising leadership involved moving forward. Thanks to Kevin from Armstrong for being there, and Mike from the Tribune.</i></p> <p>Deputy Mayor McKnight: <i>Thanks for those that came to the MLK event, it was awesome. Mayor did a great job. It’s great to see Allegheny College becoming part of something significant in Meadville and the black community. President Cole wants to see the college not distinguished, but to bring both entities back together as one.</i></p>

	<p>Councilmember Vogel: <i>Reminder to mark your calendar for February 12th at 5:30 for a session on active transportation. Connected to Allegheny’s partnership, the city’s environmental advisory committee’s mobility subcommittee was approved for a grant through Allegheny’s Impact Team we will have 20 custom fabricated bike racks that will go up around town. They will have the logo on them. They will have the Meadville logo. Craig Newell welding will make the racks and the Career and Technical Center students will create the logos to be put on them. Some student research will help to determine the placement of those. Should be installed in the spring when the weather turns. Part of the larger effort for active transportation – making it easier to walk and bike around town safely. Folks can weigh in on that on February 12th. Hope that folks weigh in on parking. Appreciate the presentation by Peter last week. Hope that people will come and share their thoughts. Also, glad that we are a step closer in passing the zoning ordinance, it’s been a long time. Thanks to all that have had a hand in that. Excited for what that means for development in Meadville moving forward.</i></p> <p>Mayor Kinder: <i>The MLK dinner was awesome. The message was really great. With everyone speaking the messages of how to live in a way that keeps hope alive, keeps the dream alive. We are up against a lot in this country, and we need to make sure that when we are looking at people that live here, our neighbors that we are looking at them with humanity. Keeping humanity first so that we all understand that we are all on the same playing field and everyone deserves dignity and love and second chances. That’s what Meadville is, a place where we care about each other, and we want to make sure that we are putting our best foot forward and doing better each day. Living better each day with our neighbors in mind. I do want to thank Peter for the parking. I’ve heard nothing but things from people about parking, saying that can’t believe what he has found and am looking forward to them being able to speak to you personally. Come to everything that we have come downtown, this place is full of cool things to do and people – boots on the ground – working to make it a better place with things to do and a place for everyone.</i></p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>With no further business to come before Council, Deputy Mayor McKnight moved to adjourn. Councilmember Roha seconded, and the roll call was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.</p>

Maryann Menanno, Interim City Clerk

Jaime Kinder, Mayor