Regular Council Meeting

March 7, 2023

Meeting called to order by Mayor Harley at 6:00pm.

Invocation given by Councilman Bird.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Chief Duncan.

Welcome Extended to all by Mayor Harley.

Present were Mayor John R. Harley, Councilman Robert D. Bird, Councilman Justin Wright, Councilman J. Micheal Evans, Councilman Edward Armijo and City Attorney Rebecca Tydings.

Public Comments

None

Adoption of Minutes: Motion made by Councilman Bird to adopt minutes as written; seconded by Councilman Wright. Motion carried.

* February 21, 2023 Council Work Session

Old Business

Rate Adjustments Water Sewer/Sanitation/Permits: Councilman Bird recognized Director of Operations Brumfield. Mr. Brumfield provided a handout with proposed rate increases for Sanitation rates; permit fees and zoning application costs/fees; and for increases in the water and sewer taps. Rate increases for sanitation were based on Ryland’s increased operating costs with some (lowering) adjustments requested by city staff. The estimated net effect of increased annual revenues to the city is $12,952.00. Director Brumfield stated the increase is being proposed based on comparison of Centerville’s current tap fees to other municipalities in the area. We are currently on the low side compared with other cities. There are a number of reasons for the proposed increases. Tipping fees at landfill have risen and tap fees have not changed in a very long time, despite sustained increases across the board.

Additionally, after a review of planning and zoning fees, the application fee has remained at $100.00, including the costs of the required newspaper advertisements. The ads are quite expensive based on the size of the ad. The city has been losing money for a long time due to cost of advertising and signage. The proposal is that the applicant for re-zoning will be responsible for paying the cost of advertising and signage before any zoning action is finalized. This increase would go into effect May 1st; thereby allowing time to post notice of the new rates on social media. Seeking approval tonight for all proposed rate increases/adjustments.

Motion to approve made by Councilman Bird; seconded by Councilman Wright. General discussion among Mayor and Council.

Mayor Harley reported that the city has been losing money in these areas for some time.

Councilman Bird asked about the percentage of the proposed increases, particularly curious why residential cart increase is a higher percentage as opposed to other cart increases. Director Brumfield, responded that this is the proposal from the City’s sanitation contractor, Rylan

City Attorney Tydings stated that a review of the City’s contract with Ryland reveals the following three possible criteria for price increases: labor cost increases, fuel cost increases or landfills costs. Ryland has incurred increases in all three areas, which is why they are recommending/requesting rate increases from the City.

Councilman Bird inquired about the percentage of increase for the proposed rates for residential carts and stated this will have an effect on the citizens and concerns him.

Councilman Armijo recommended that Ryland Sanitation come to a meeting to discuss and answer questions.

Councilman Bird rescinded motion in order to clarify and split question. City Attorney advised that there is no need for second due to rescission of motion.

Motion made by Councilman Bird to table sanitation rate increase item until the upcoming Work Session meeting in order to gather more information and have Ryland attend to answer questions; seconded by Councilman Armijo. Motion carried.

Director Brumfield read the following paragraph from letter received from Ryland Sanitation:

“Unfortunately, the costs of doing business have continued to increase in 2022. Increasing costs include tires, parts, lubricants, labor rates, truck insurance, landfill rates, and employee benefits. Our cost of operations has increased by as much as 100% in some areas. No area of our business has been untouched by inflation. We currently project a loss of over $ 40,000 per month for the City of Centerville.”

City Attorney Tydings informed everyone that the Ryland contract runs from 2022-2030.

Motion made by Councilman Bird to increase tap fees and fees for advertising and signage for planning and zoning but not to approve the sanitation increases at this time; seconded by Councilman Evans. Motion carried.

New Business

Approval FY 2024 Budget Preparation Calendar and Appoint Budget Sub-Committee: Councilman Wright made motion to approve FY 2024 calendar and appoint Mayor Harley and Councilman Armijo as budget sub-committee; seconded by Councilman Bird. Motion carried.

Add the Adoption of New Job Description and a Change to the Centerville Police Department Organization Chart: Councilman Armijo recognized Chief Duncan. Chief Duncan provided a copy of a new proposed job description and amended organizational chart to Mayor and Council for review. Seeking approval to add new job title/position in the organizational chart. There is no additional position – this will be filled by transfer within the police department. Position would not incur any additional funding within the budget. Will report to Lieutenant under investigations, hours will be Monday-Friday 8-5. Councilman Evans asked if this will be a sworn officer position. Chief Duncan confirmed “yes”.

Councilman Armijo made motion to approve new job description and amended organizational chart; seconded by Councilman Bird. Motion carried. Copy of job description and organizational chart attached and made part of official minutes.

Addition of Recycling Center to Approved Parking Lot Quote: Councilman Bird recognized Director of Operations Brumfield. Director Brumfield reminded everyone that at the last council meeting, Mayor and Council agreed to reseal and restripe parking lots. Mr. Randall Wright brought to his attention that the prior quotes did not include the recycling center. A copy of quote for the recycling center parking lot to reseal and restripe provided for review. Motion made by Councilman Bird to approve quote from Professional Paving in the amount of $1450.00; seconded by Councilman Armijo. Motion carried.

Discussion Recycling Center: Mayor Harley stated this is a trade mark of the city, there are several options to consider for the future.

1. Discontinue it-Does not see this as a good option.
2. Keep it as is-not really feasible because of the growth in activity and dependence on its operation by so many people.
3. Renovate it where it is-Not really sure if this is worthwhile because of lack of space.
4. Move it to a larger location-there is a good space next to the Water & Sanitation Shop. Have to find the funds.

Open for comments. General discussion.

Councilman Wright stated this is at least worth discussing, running out of space need for growing, maybe we could add to SPLOST projects list but need to figure out cost of expansion as well as possible set up a structure for using paid, part-time employees.

Councilman Armijo looking into the costs and getting a plan is good - not a problem, need to get a cost estimate, funding, design of future location if that is what we want.

The proposed project list for 2024 SPLOST already includes $ 500,000 for recycling center upgrades.

Councilman Armijo stated he has noticed a problem with the can crusher and getting containers pulled and emptied. Volunteers are there to provide support and make the operation work, wanted to make sure we are spending funds and get citizens feedback -recommends using “survey monkey”.

Councilman Evans stressed the real pressing issue is getting manpower at the recycling center -this is an immediate need.

Mayor Harley reminded everyone that the recycling center is currently only open 2 days a week.

Former Councilman Wright agrees that getting volunteers is an ongoing issue and should advertise on social media and contact businesses.

Mayor Harley, in closing, stressed the importance of beginning the stages of planning.

Comments from Council

Post 1 Councilman Bird, hopes Ryland will be here at the next meeting to discuss proposed sanitation increases. Encouraged citizens to come to meeting or tune in on line.

Post 2 Councilman Wright, no comment.

Post 3 Councilman Evans, no comment.

Post 4 Councilman Armijo, went to the Farmer’s market this weekend, had a great time. A lot of talent out there, encouraged citizens to come out and support these events.

Mayor Harley stressed the importance of advertising the farmers markets. Encouraged the public to make their voices heard re: recycling center and senior citizens group.

Mayor Harley adjourned meeting at 6:57 pm.

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Mayor John R. Harley

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Attest by City Clerk Krista Bedingfield

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Date