

The Common Council of the City of Connersville held their regular meeting on Monday, June 3, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Councilman Gray led the Pledge of Allegiance before the start of the meeting.

Mayor Chad Frank presided and called the meeting to order with Councilwoman Sharon McQueen, Councilwoman Jenny Barrett, Councilman Tommy Lee Williams Jr., Councilwoman Diana Phillips, Councilman Brian Robb, Councilman Bill Gray, and Councilman Jabin Collins were present. Attorney Geoff Wesling was also present.

Councilwoman McQueen made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2024, regular meeting; Councilman Williams Jr. seconded the motion. All Council members voted "yes."

Mayor Frank presented **Pending Ordinance 3944**, an ordinance rezoning 1020 Meyer Ave, 501 Maple St, 440 Ariens Ave, and 508 Ariens Ave from single family residential (R-2) to local business (LB). Mayor Frank closed the meeting and opened the public hearing.

Micheal Bell, 1020 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, he got a signed (31 people signed) petition to oppose the zoning of 501 Maple Street. Micheal stated that Brian Chapman does not own the property, he gave it to his brother Alan. He has complained about the tires setting out there breeding mosquitos. Micheal also stated that Brayden Parker is past due on his taxes for his 1020 Meyer Ave property, he hasn't paid anything since 2022. Micheal also has a no trespass order against Brayden.

Bill Mac Daniel stated that the 501 Maple Street property is owned by Brian Chapman, that is what GIS and the property card states.

Brayden Parker, 1020 Meyer Ave, stated that he has a verbal with Brian Chapman to use his property. He cleaned everything up when Randy Wulff called him. He stated that he only parks his personal vehicle on the 501 Maple. He plans to put up a fence.

Beth Bell, 1020 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, stated that the cars at 501 Maple have been there since Brayden has been there. She also stated that the value of their property is declining.

Scott Brown, 204 Regency Place, stated that the cars sitting there are waiting on parts. Brayden also needs that property to access his building.

Bill MacDaniel confirmed that the houses at 501 Maple and 508 Ariens have been removed and the lots are not suitable to build a new house.

Mayor Frank closed the public hearing and re-opened the council meeting.

Councilman Collins made the motion to approve **Pending Ordinance 3944** on first reading with the 8-foot fence instead of a 6-foot fence, Councilwoman Barrett seconded the motion. On a roll call vote: Councilwoman Sharon McQueen, Councilwoman Jenny Barrett, Councilman Tommy

Lee Williams Jr., Councilwoman Diana Phillips, Councilman Brian Robb, Councilman Bill Gray, and Councilman Jabin Collins voted "yes".

Councilman Gray made the motion to suspend the Rules on **Pending Ordinance 3944** and move on to Third and Final Reading; Councilman Robb seconded the motion. All Council members voted "yes."

Councilwoman Phillips made the motion to approve **Pending Ordinance 3944**; on Third and Final Reading; Councilman Williams Jr. seconded the motion. On a roll call vote: Councilwoman Sharon McQueen, Councilwoman Jenny Barrett, Councilman Tommy Lee Williams Jr., Councilwoman Diana Phillips, Councilman Brian Robb, Councilman Bill Gray, and Councilman Jabin Collins voted "yes".

Mayor Frank presented **Pending Ordinance 3943**, an ordinance modifying local income tax rates, changing the special purpose rate from 0% to .25%. Adam Stone with Stone Municipal presented trends if we do not consider this additional tax. He stated that the state has done a 3-year property tax capped at 4%. The current tax cap is 40%. Mayor Frank closed the council meeting and opened the public meeting.

Chad Ripberger, 8051 N Co Rd 550 West, is currently the Chief of the Bentonville Fire Department and a Captain of the Connersville Fire Department. He stated that the volunteer fire departments cover 90% of the fire territory and get the least amount of taxes as support. They do not pay wages and benefits. They fund raise for all of their expenses. The OSHA standards are increasing which could affect the volunteer departments, OSHA can and will show them down if they do not meet the standards. The City Fire Department is desperate for wages, they are losing people to different departments offering higher wages. We are using our tax dollars to train our personal and they are leaving for higher wages.

Mayor Frank stated that he is going to recommend the county to share with the volunteer departments.

Councilman Williams Jr. asked if the personal that are leaving because of the wages. The answer is yes.

Clint Brown, 300 N. Gray Road, is currently a detective with the Connersville Police Department and a past president of the FOP. He has a list of Indiana's PERF certified salaries for 2023. Both the Connersville Fire Department and the Connersville Police Department are on page 6 of 6 with some of the lowest certified salaries in the state. The city has got the cars where they need to be, but we still need more equipment. There are officers using their own rifles due to this shortage. There is technology that can help solve crimes faster and help real time locating of wanted persons. The number of applications is reducing. The national average police officer per 1,000 citizens should be 2.6%.

Scott Brown, 204 Regency Place, is a paramedic at Fayette County EMS. There is a national shortage of Emergency Medical Services. EMS professionals are leaving the field at a higher rate than ever due to burnout, risk of exposure and new career opportunities outside of traditional

EMS that offer higher salaries, hospitals, medical, dental, and industrial settings. An overwhelming majority of our staff work and live in Fayette County. We are passionate about our city and county and provide the best care for our residents. We have an innate desire to serve those around us. Unfortunately, that service comes at a price. FCEMS is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. We miss holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, kids sporting events and the list goes on. 79 out of 92 Indiana counties have adopted a safety tax. The last 13 are currently working on adopting one. The EMTs are currently making \$14.81 an hour and the paramedics are making \$16.53 an hour. The EMTs are making \$18-\$23 and the paramedics are making \$20-\$28 in the surrounding area.

Mary Blakely, 8000 S Bentley Road, is the Police secretary. She was 10 days old when the first responders saved her life. She is a single mom of 2, she would pay the extra taxes to keep these first responders here.

James Dare, 522 Ariens Avenue, is a Fire department Lieutenant at station 3. He had Adam Stone go over the tax presentation confirming the Public Safety Tax keeps the City's general fund from going negative.

Lori Moff, 535 John Street. She asked if there is any way we can save on the maintenance of vehicles by not outsourcing. Are there any grants to help with the expenses.

Mayor Frank stated that everything we bought was needed. The need for 2 trash trucks because one can be serviced when the other is running. There are a lot of grants that we do not qualify for. Fire equipment is specialty equipment that needs to be serviced by specialty labor. He plans that 75% is going to go to wages and 25% goes to equipment.

Erica Free, 1905 E Pinecone Court, is the Decatur County 911 director. She currently has 4 dispatchers from Fayette County. Fayette County is the training ground for dispatchers. Decatur dispatchers make \$42,000.00, whereas Fayette County's make \$32,000.00. The Decatur director makes \$60,000.00, whereas Fayette County's make \$44,000.00.

Mayor closed the public hearing.

Councilman Collins asked if we passed this unanimously, does the county get a say? No, the county can say how they disperse their share.

There needs to be a discussion with the county and the city.

Councilman Williams Jr. asked about the volunteer departments. There are 3 volunteer fire departments. The Glenwood Fire department does a 60 Fayette/40 Rush split on their runs.

Councilman Collins made the motion to approve **Pending Ordinance 3943** on first reading, Councilwoman Phillips seconded the motion. On a roll call vote: Councilwoman Sharon McQueen, Councilwoman Jenny Barrett, Councilman Tommy Lee Williams Jr., Councilwoman

Diana Phillips, Councilman Brian Robb, Councilman Bill Gray, and Councilman Jabin Collins voted "yes".

Councilwoman Barrett made the motion to suspend the Rules on **Pending Ordinance 3943** and move on to Third and Final Reading; Councilman Gray seconded the motion. All Council members voted "yes."

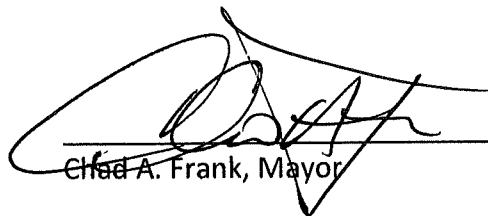
Councilwoman Phillips made the motion to approve **Pending Ordinance 3943**; on Third and Final Reading; Councilman Robb seconded the motion. On a roll call vote: Councilwoman Sharon McQueen, Councilwoman Jenny Barrett, Councilman Tommy Lee Williams Jr., Councilwoman Diana Phillips, Councilman Brian Robb, Councilman Bill Gray, and Councilman Jabin Collins voted "yes".

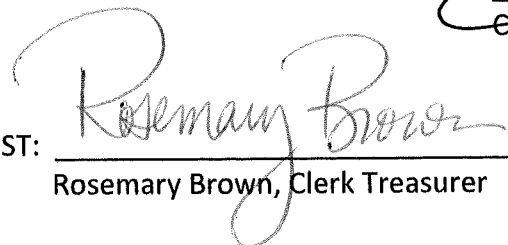
Clerk Treasurer Rosemary Brown requested approval of **Resolution 2024-28**, a resolution to reimburse Fifteen and 00/100 dollars (\$15.00) into Cable 324 Telephone, **Resolution 2024-29**, a resolution to reimburse Five Hundred Seventy and 00/100 dollars (\$570.00) into Police 324 Telephone, **Resolution 2024-30**, a resolution to reimburse Sixty-five and 00/100 dollars (\$65.00) into City Hall 324 Telephone, and **Resolution 2024-31**, a resolution to transfer Twenty-five thousand Nine Hundred and 05/100 dollars (\$25,900.05) from General into First Aid Non-reverting. Councilwoman McQueen made the motion to approve **Resolution 2024-28, -29, -30 and -31**, Councilwoman Barrett seconded the motion. All Councilmembers voted "yes".

Grant Administrator Jolissa Bates requested approval of **Resolution 2024-32**, a resolution for the purposes of statement of benefits compliance, and **Resolution 2024-33**, a resolution for the purposes of statement of benefits compliance. Councilwoman Phillips made the motion to approve **Resolution 2024-32, and -33**, Councilman Robb seconded the motion. All Councilmembers voted "yes".

Donna Harper, 221 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. She stated that she is very appreciative of Randy Wulff. There needs to be something done with 127 Nickel, Eugene Mengedoht's house and Chuck Woodward's building. The mayor stated that they do have a process that involves court dates.

Councilwoman Phillips made a motion to adjourn with Councilman Robb seconding. All Council members voted "yes."

  
Chad A. Frank, Mayor

ATTEST:   
Rosemary Brown, Clerk Treasurer