

March 15, 2018

President Joe Russell called the regular meeting of the London City Council to order. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance and observed a moment of silent reflection.

**CLERK ROLL CALL:** Henry Comer, present; Rex Castle, present; Brenda Russell, absent; Rick Hays, present; Josh Peters, present; Andrew Hitt, present; Anthony Smith, present.

**MINUTES** of the previous meeting were approved as received.

**COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None

**AUDIENCE CONCERNS:** None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Councilman Comer attended the public safety and finance committee meeting. He reported that police department cruiser #10 is back and cruise #7 is having equipment switched around.

The police and fire departments participated in the life fair career day at middle school. Safety drills were conducted at the middle school, with active shooter training. The SWAT operation on South Oak Street was successful. They used the department's new dog Egor too.

The fire department is continuing fire and rope trainings. They are also testing hydrants.

Councilman Castle attended the finance committee meeting where the auditor gave an update. They discussed changing the pay scale for recreation department employees. They also discussed the 2017 carry over, finalized the 2018 capital budget, and personnel changes in the street department.

Storm water utility fund legislation is on the agenda this evening as a result of numerous conversations at the finance committee meetings.

The next finance committee meeting is April 9, at 6:00 p.m. The next city property's meeting is March 28, 7:00

Councilman Hays attended the finance and public service committee meetings.

Councilman Hitt attended the public safety committee meeting. He had learned and found interesting that there is GPS on all hydrants. As fire departments are in route to fires, they can locate the nearest hydrant. This also helps when hydrants are covered with snow.

Councilman Peters attended the public service meeting. The street department continues to work on storm water related problems. They are working on catch basins, filling potholes on streets and in alleyways.

The recreation department has youth and adult volleyball underway. The proposed recreation department salaries increases were also discussed.

The next public service meeting is April 12 at 6:00 p.m.

**CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS:** Mayor Closser was unable to attend the meeting but each council member had a copy of his written report. (attached)

Safety Service Director Mosier welcomed Councilmen Hitt and Smith to council.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

RESOLUTION 108-18 Sponsored by: Henry Comer A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE MADISON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH'S (MCPH) HOUSING AND NUISANCE CODE (attachment) Motion by Hays to place on second reading, second by Peters. Clerk read.

Councilman Comer explained that this resolution city's code verbiage will match the Madison County's public health district's health, sanitation, and maintenance of property guidelines.

**LEFT ON 2<sup>ND</sup> READING.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

RESOLUTION 109-18 Sponsored by: Joe Russell. A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TAX INCENTIVE REVIEW COUNCIL Motion by Hays to place on first reading, second by Hitt.

Safety Service Director Mosier explained that this is an annual review. Businesses with tax abatements are reviewed to make sure they are meeting all the criteria to continue to qualify for the tax abatements.

He explained how different type of criteria is used to qualify for certain percentages.

Mr. Comer asked if the abatements were just for large businesses or could small businesses get tax abatements to help them get going.

Mr. Moser said any business could apply; it is just hard for small business to qualify.

President Russell mentioned that Governor Kasich is moving away from these types of abatements.

Mr. Castle shared that the school and city's biggest portion comes from payroll. These abatements have been proven to be a "win-win" for the school and city.

**LEFT ON 1<sup>ST</sup> READING.**

RESOLUTION 110-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO TRANSFER FUNDS DURING 2018 Motion by Hays to place on first reading, second by Comer. Clerk read.

Councilman Castle explained that this resolution just allows the auditor to transfer funds into these departments to keep them running.

Motion by Castle to suspend rules, second by Peters. Roll to suspend: Castle, yes; Hays, yes; Peters, yes; Hitt, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes.

Motion by Castle to adopt, second by Peter. Roll to adopt: Hays, yes; Peters, yes; Hitt, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes

**ADOPTED.**

ORDINANCE 111-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF LONDON, STATE OF OHIO, DURING FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2017 Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read.

Councilman Castle stated that this is the city's capital budget and discussed each of the line item figures.

The police department is requesting new units, retiring out two old vehicles. Communication equipment needs to be updated.

The fire department needs technology upgrades and turnout gear replaced. The fire department may purchase a potential piece of equipment and renovations are needed on their facility.

The recreation department needs renovations to Merrimac Park, a dog park, some pool items and replace water lines at cowling park.

The street department needs funds for street sealing projects, full depth repair, and crack sealing throughout the city. They also need of pickup truck and small dump truck.

There are monies in the capital fund already, so not all will need to be transferred out of the general to cover these requests. There will still be a surplus in the capital budget just in case an emergency arises.

Due to latest of this legislation, the urgency is to give Mr. Long an opportunity to contract for materials.

Motion by Castle to suspend, second by Hitt. Roll to suspend: Peters, yes; Hitt, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Hays, yes.

Motion by Hays to adopt, second by Castle.

Councilman Smith asked it if was possible to abstain. He stated that he want to support this but to also be caution as he is not familiar with the city's finances.

Councilman Castle went over the fund and said there was an ending balance of \$2,382,000. "As long as revenue continues to grow, life is not going to be too bad! Historically, the city has had a \$500,000 deficit budget as we have a very conscientious administrative."

President Russell also noted that a vote to abstain is not a vote against it.

Ordinance No. 111-18: Roll to adopt: Hitt, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Hays, yes; Peters, yes.

**ADOPTED.**

ORDINANCE 112-18 Sponsored by: Josh Peters AN ORDINANCE SETTING THE SALARIES FOR SUMMER POOL EMPLOYEES Motion by Hays to read, second by Comer. Clerk read.

Councilman Peters explained that the recreation department needs to get their pay scale up above minimum wage.

Recreation director Braskett wants to advertise job openings before seasons begins.

Councilman Castle noted that there is a big jump in the lifeguards with a dollar increase across the board. The city needs to have a more competitive pay scale.

The maintenance position will require an experienced person to supervise others.

Recreation Director Braskett looked up minimum wage. The clerk positions need to be raised 10 cents across the board, starting with \$8.30. She is not even sure if she will use the positions. She may eliminate the two clerks and go with one adult recreation assistant and save money.

She added that her budget can handle these pay raises.

Tammy explained the operations of the pool.

Motion Castle to amend the clerk category of clerk to the following: \$8.30, \$8.40, \$8.50, \$8.60, \$8.70, \$8.80, second by Hitt.

Roll to amend: Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Hays, yes; Peters, yes; Hitt, yes.

Motion by Castle to suspend, second by Comer.

Roll to suspend: Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Hays, yes; Peters, yes; Hitt, yes; Smith, yes.

Motion by Peters to adopt, second by Hays.

Roll to adopt: Castle, yes; Hays, yes; Peters, yes; Hitt, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes.

**ADOPTED.**

ORDINANCE 113-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle AN ORDINANCE SETTING A MONTHLY STORM WATER UTILITY FEE Motion by Hays to place on first reading, second Comer. Clerk read.

Councilman Castle explained that this is a proposed fee. This will be a start to build up the fund for a very aging storm water system. This may not be the fairest way to charge residents, but it is a start. This will help to get revenues up as the general fund is running thin.

He noted that he has had inquiries from residents on fixed incomes. They expressed that they are going to have to make a choice between paying electric, eating, or whatever. He wondered if there should be some type of hardship clause. This could be for those possibly on disability insurance or a family only making \$12,000 a year. A proof of poverty level would be required.

There have been three, 15% increases in the past years passed onto residents.

President Russell shared that the Mayor suggested a public hearing. A public hearing is not required though.

President Russell agrees that the city has to have the ability to fund these systems.

There needs to be more discussion on exemption for hardship cases.

The question was asked about having a levy for the fund. Mr. Castle explained that a campaign would need to be funded and ran and residents would need to pass it. The utilities can be accessed without a levy.

This proposed increase should bring in approximately \$120,000-\$130,000 annually. "It's a beginning"

Councilman Comer asked if alternative funding had been looked into so we don't have to charge the community. Legislation was just passed this evening increasing salaries and now we are asking residents to pay more for utilities.

Councilman Hitt asked if grant money might be available.

Safety Service Director Mosier responded, "We explore those perpetually!"

Bill Long said there is grants from the CDBG, but that is only every other year. Continuous funding is needed. Grants only last so long.

Councilman Castle added other communities' water utilities funding were researched. The city will be mandated to have a plan in place by 2020.

This will be discussed again at the next finance committee meeting.

**LEFT ON 1<sup>ST</sup> READING.**

RESOLUTION 114-18 Sponsored by: Joe Russell A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO TRANSFER FUNDS

Motion by Hays to place on first reading, second by Comer. Clerk read.

President Russell explained that this resolution gives the auditor the ability to move dollars from general to the capital line item so the dollars can be accessed right away.

Mr. Mosier further explained that the state will award up to a third of the \$200,000 or \$67,000. The Access Cowling Park project is \$200,000. The city will have to fund the rest of the project. Once the \$67,000 shows up, we can go ahead and start with the project.

President Russell explained that the bill passed in the senate with no amendments. It is expected that the governor will be signing. He shared that he spoke with the senate and house finance chairs, looks pretty good, and that we will be fine. It is a very small possibility that should something happen, we may have to move dollars back into the general fund.

This will complete the playground portion of Access Cowling Park.

Mr. Castle noted that the city's investment is minimal at \$25,000. There have been many private and corporate donations, along with the grant.

It will be a nice facility visited by those from surrounding areas, as there are not a lot of accessible parks for children or even parents in wheelchairs.

The Mayor requested that this be suspend and adopted this evening so we can lock into quotes given.

Motion by Hays to suspend, second by Comer. Roll to suspend: Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Smith; yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes.

Motion by Comer to adopt, second by Hitt. Roll: Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Smith; yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Hays, yes.

**ADOPTED.**

#### **ROUND TABLE:**

Councilman Smith shared that he worked with a community service individual and were able to get some clean up done on the south end of town.

Councilman Peters welcome Councilmen Smith and Hitt.

Councilman Hitt thanked everyone and for the appointment from the central committee.

Councilman Hays welcomed new members and said we have a good council.

He thanked the Police Department and Mr. Long for taking such quit action directing traffic while getting a traffic light repaired.

Councilman Castle welcomed the two new council members and invited them to join finance committee!

Mr. Castle asked if it is the residents' responsibility to repair deteriorating gutter and curbs. There is a dirt and debris running freely in sewers as much as grass clipping. We need to look at these properties.

Mr. Moser said it is the residents' responsibility and there is legislation in place.

Mr. Castle reminded that the next finance committee meeting is April 9, 6:00 p.m. and the city properties meeting is March 28, 7:00 p.m.

Councilman Comer welcomed Councilmen Hitt and Smith.

The next public safety meeting is April 10, 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Comer also commended the police and fire departments for the professional and positive presence in the community.

President Russell welcomed Councilmen Smith and Hitt. They will be seated on committees at the next meeting.

**ADJOURN** Motion by Castle to adjourn.

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Arlene Duffey, Clerk of Council

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Joe Russell, Council President