

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

MINUTES were approved as received. All were in favor by responding "aye".

PUBLIC HEARING: Ordinance No. 117-18 AN ORDINANCE VACATING AN ALLEY

Motion by Comer to exit the regular meeting for the public hearing, second by Hitt.

Councilwoman Russell explained where the alley is located, that it is no longer in use, and sees no reason for it to remain open.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion Castle to reconvene the regular meeting, second by Russell.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilman Hitt attended the public safety committee meeting. Police Chief Nicol announced there would be another round of civil service testing for officer positions. The "casting with cops" fishing program is June 1st funded by ODNR and Target.

Councilman Hays attended the public service meeting. He added to Mr. Hitt's report that there were no suitable candidates on the civil service applicant list. Chief Nicol attended the annual chief training program. Impaired driving training, with impaired goggles, was conducted at the high school. The department participated in the distracted driving campaign

The fire department has concluded safety inspections. They offered hands-on CPR training to junior and senior high school students. The employees have giving station tours, are conducting spring maintenance and flushing of water hydrants, will be participating in water rescue in June and grain bin rescue training in the fall.

The next public service meeting is June 12.

Councilwoman Russell reported on the street and parks and recreation departments. The street department is busy with mowing, continuing work on the North Main Street sewer project, purchased a new utility truck, turned an existing truck into flat bed, and hired a new employee.

The state is continuing repaving on Route 38.

The dog park on Rt. 38 and Keny Boulevard has been secured, the swim team has signed the contract, softball leagues are underway, pool staff is being hired, the pool concession will be ran by the parks and rec department, and the pool is scheduled to open May 26th. She also gave an update on Merrimac Park.

Councilman Castle reported on the May 7 finance committee meeting. There are many pieces of legislation this evening because of that meeting. A fund needs to be created so the police department can spend funds seized by drug busts; parks and recreation donation needs to be moved into their fund; there needs to be a fund transfer for seasonal mowing employees; and a potential tax levy on the ballot.

The next finance committee meeting is June 11, 6:00 pm.

The next city properties meeting is May 23, 7:00

Councilman Comer attended the public service meeting. He commented that it's good to see tax dollars at work on the road.

CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS: Mayor Closser addressed council with his administrative report.

COMMUNITY/ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

AUDIENCE CONCERNS: Carla Blazer, 205 South Union, addressed city council. Her concern is for the Mayor's topic and comment on needing the best and brightest personnel. "I feel that's what we already have at Madison county EMD. I am not trying to hide what I do I was a fulltime employee for 31 ½ years. I went back part time and as their training officer. I am also a nurse. I am a firefighter for the central township fire department. I feel you are only hearing one side of the conversation."

It was said we have not reached out. We have reached. We have invited the fire department to attend trainings multiple times. The trainings are free, held three times a month. They are held on every unit day, so it wouldn't cost over time. Very rarely is that offer taken up."

Talked about over taxing. As a full time employee, when I did the paper work report for board. The city of London pays approximately 1/3 of budget for the emergency squad, but 60% of the runs here in the city of London.

Her concern as a citizen is for her own family as her husband has health issues. His doctor is at Mt. Carmel. "With an entity that is going to be covering both fire and EMS, will they be able to pick up my husband and take him to the facility that he needs to be at, to have the proper care he needs, instead of transporting him to Madison Health." She reminded that she works at the hospital, but they are having up to eight hour delays getting patients transferred to Columbus. "It may save in taxes, but cost me \$2000 and up to get him transferred where he needs to be."

I put it out to you that we work very hard to give you the best service we can for the money that we have. We do have capital improvement fund that we put some of that tax money into and that is to further large purchases in the future such as new medic to take place of the ones we have. We have three staffed units today and have had three runs at the same time. This is not uncommon. Two of those were in the city of London and one outside.

My question is what happens when again the fire department is taking care of it. Will we have the fire coverage, or be like West Jeff when we have a big fire, don't have the EMS coverage, or an major EMS event don't have the fire coverage?

President Russell thanked her for her comments.

OLD BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE 117-18 Sponsored by: Brenda Russell AN ORDINANCE VACATING AN ALLEY (attachment) Clerk read. Motion by Russell to place on 5th reading, second by Hays.

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

ADOPTED.

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION 127-18 Sponsored by: Brenda Russell A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AUDITOR'S WARRANT FOR PAYMENT Motion by Russell to place on first reading, second by Castle. Clerk read. Councilwoman Russell explained that this is for bond payment to the Huntington Bank for the Keny Boulevard project

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 128-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AUDITOR'S WARRANT FOR PAYMENT Motion by Russell to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. Councilman Castle explained that this is for a change order.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 129-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AUDITOR'S WARRANT FOR PAYMENT Motion by Hays to place on first reading, second by Hitt. Clerk read. Councilman Castle explained that this was a timeliness issue with a change over from the old to new auditor.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 130-18 Sponsored by: Brenda Russell A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. Councilwoman Russell explained that this is being requested by the fire department for a building feasibility study on their building.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 131-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Hitt to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. Councilman Castle explained that the Board of Zoning need funds to send out correspondence and place notices in the paper. They have no employee so funds will be transferred from their PERS line.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 132-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. The London Planning Commission needs funds to send out correspondence. They have no employee so funds will be transferred from their PERS line.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 133-18 Sponsored by: Brenda Russell A RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS Motion by Hitt to place on first reading, second by Comer. Clerk read. Councilwoman Russell explained that this donation of \$100,000 just needs to be transferred to the parks and recreation line

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 134-18 SPONSORED BY: Andrew Hitt RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON TO CREATE A LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST FUND Motion by Hays to place on first reading, second by Comer. Councilman Hitt explained that this fund is required by the state so the police department can use monies from seized property, drug bust, etc.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 135-18 Sponsored by: Brenda Russell, Rex Castle, Rich Hays, Andrew Hitt, Joe Russell. A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NECESSITY TO LEVY A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES Motion by Hitt to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read.

President Russell reiterated a few of the Mayor's comments. This would create a .2 mill levy to fund the EMS through fire department.

Resolution No. 136-18 requests that the city be removed from the current .3 mill levy funding the EMS district. As long as 135-18 passes, this creates a funding mechanism, if the citizens so chose.

Councilman Comer stated that he did not sign onto this one or the next one because he didn't feel council has enough information to make an informed decision. He realizes groups have been meeting and discussing this issue, but he would like to see the "blue prints" in place in regards to equipment and employees. So far, he didn't think council has heard any of that yet. He would like to see a full plan before he votes.

President Russell said due to the nature of this legislation, there will be three readings and a public hearing on June 21st, giving an opportunity for broad public input.

Mayor Closser also noted that this is just one of three readings and there will be a public hearing on June 21st, offering an opportunity for the public to express their opinion.

He let Councilman Comer that if he has any questions, to come talk to him. This has been brought up at many meetings. If you want a specific blue print, or specific questions, just let me know. There will be a lot more discussion about this. We knew weren't going to bring it in and suspend it. We need public input and allow both sides to speak. Just trying to do it correctly and will have over a month to discuss this.

Councilman Comer commented that he is confident he will hear the facts at those meetings to make a better-informed decision.

President Russell commented that that on a time line perspective, this legislation would only put the levy on the ballot in November. Once that's done, the fire department will have to do some work itself to prepare. The actual succession and the date itself, would have to be passed and that would be done and discussed after the levy passes.

Mayor Closser noted that this lets the citizens make the decision.

President Russell shared that conversations he has been part of, is that we don't have to run a levy, necessarily, we could potentially fund it different ways. This allows the public to decision

LEFT ON FIRST READING.

RESOLUTION 136-18 Sponsored by: Russel, Castle, Hays, Hit, Russell. A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE NON-COLLECTION OF THE 3 MILL LEVY FOR THE MADISON COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISTRICT Hays, Russell. Clerk read.

President Russell stated that this is contingent upon passage of the first .2 mill levy, resending the .3 mill levy effectively reducing the millage paid for EMS by 1 mill. These pieces of legislation go hand in hand.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

President Russell noted that as there were many funding resolutions, needing addressed this evening, and we did not have enough members to move forward on them, there will be a special meeting on Monday, May 21, 7:30 p.m. It will be an abbreviated meeting, only discussing the funding resolutions.

ROUND TABLE

Councilman Comer thanked everyone for coming in this evening. He thanked Carla for sharing her view.

Councilman Castle thanked everyone for coming out this evening. He thanked Carla Blazer for coming in and sharing views of the EMS perspective. He thanked the Mayor for addressing the city's side.

He stated that he put his name on the pieces of legislations as a sponsor because ultimately, it puts the decision on the citizens. The citizens and council will be receiving a lot of information this month from both sides. "I agree that not always is cheaper better, but we need to have all aspects brought out and discussed."

He congratulated the city of West Jefferson for getting the Amazon warehouse. They will employ 1500 people.

He said that in discussions, the question was, "where are they going to live in West Jeff? "And, if we got that, where would we put them?"

If they make the kind of money, as posted on line, what would they be able to pay for rent? There is only one apartment complex that they would be able to afford and they have a 6-12 month waiting list.

There is a shortage of affordable housing. There was discussion about securing the old high school and converting it into affordable housing. Other communities have done the same. The building is structurally sound but the inside needs work. It's not going to solve our problem, but maybe get us moving forward for those who may want to work and live in London.

Councilwoman Russell thanked everyone for coming out. "I support the levy coming up, as it has been an issue for years around town. I know I have questioned why we have two entities, and who was in charge or this and that. So, it does bring questions to our minds. This way we can get correct information. People need to come in and hear. We are not going to send out a mailing to every single person. Come out; ask questions to council members or at any of the meetings. All meetings are open to the public."

She shared that she didn't come out herself until sitting on council now. "I feel I made a big mistake by not being involved." She encouraged everyone to come out and ask questions! The decision will be made at the poll.

Councilman Hays thanked everyone for coming in this evening. He thanked the EMS for the great job that they do. "I applaud you."

He noted that this is the last meeting before the holiday and asked that everyone to take a minute to think about a service man who laid is life on the line, maybe even died, so we can be out celebrating. Salute the flag; take care of it and our country.

Councilman Hitt appreciated the EMS coming in this evening and giving their input. Council needs to make the best decision possible.

President Russell thanked everyone for coming in this evening. He echoed what Mr. Hitt said. Council needs to hear all arguments from both sides to make an informed decision. Everyone get involved that has an opinion.

He shared that he co-sponsored the legislation because the voters will be the ones to make the final decision. Like Mrs. Russell, he too has seen complications out there. This offers citizens the opportunity to decide.

Councilwoman Russell shared that her son severely cut his foot on a lawn mower. The EMS made an immediate decision to take him to Riverside due to the severity of the injury. She asked if the fire department would be able to make that type of decision. "Can things like that be done by the fire department?" These are questions we need to have answered. There are three readings, so come out and present your case.

ADJOURN Motion by Russell to adjourn.

Arlene Duffey, Clerk of Council

Joe Russell, President