

**CITY OF COVINGTON
COVINGTON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 12, 2021**

**DUE TO THE RECENT INCREASE IN COVID-19 CASES,
THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM VIDEO
CONFERENCE AND YOUTUBE LIVE STREAM**

Council President Rolling called the regular meeting to order at 6:03pm.

Roll call was as follows:

PRESENT: Peter Lewis Sr., John Botsford, Joey Roberts, Cody Ludwig,
Mark W. Verret, Rick Smith and Larry Rolling

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Mark R. Johnson, Chief Administrative Officer Erin
Bivona and City Attorney Rod Rodrigue

Council President Rolling asked everyone to remember the family of Mr.
Roswell “Ronnie” Pogue, a former Covington City Council member, who passed
away recently.

A Moment of Silence was observed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council President Rolling.

CONSENT CALENDAR

**Councilman Roberts made a motion to adopt the consent calendar, seconded
by Councilwoman Ludwig. Roll call was unanimous to adopt the consent
calendar. The consent calendar was adopted.**

REGULAR AGENDA

Unfinished Business

Items to be voted on:

- 1. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ITEM NO. 2020-11-02 – An
Ordinance of the City of Covington Declaring Surplus Certain Vehicles and
Equipment Owned by the City of Covington (Rolling)**

Council President Rolling led a discussion on Item No. 2020-11-02.

City Attorney Rod Rodrigue gave a brief overview of the surplus and public
auction process.

**Councilman Botsford made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by
Councilman Roberts. There were no objections to closing the public hearing.
The public hearing was closed.**

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt Item No. 2020-11-02, seconded by Councilman Verret. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Item No. 2020-11-02. Item No. 2020-11-02 was adopted.

New Business

Items to be voted on:

1. RESOLUTION NO. 2021-01 -- A Resolution of the Covington City Council Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the State of Louisiana for State Capital Outlay Funding for Improvements to the Covington Wastewater Treatment Plant (FP&C Project No. 50-M57-20-01) (Verret)

Councilman Verret led a discussion on Resolution No. 2021-01.

Mayor Johnson commented that these funds will enable the City to make significant upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant which has been a priority of his Administration. He thanked State Representative Mark Wright and State Senator Patrick McMath for their help in acquiring these funds which will make a substantial difference for the community for years and years to come.

Councilwoman Ludwig made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-01, seconded by Councilman Botsford. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2021-01. Resolution No. 2021-01 was adopted.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 2021-02 -- A Resolution of the Covington City Council Authorizing the Mayor to Execute an Amended Intergovernmental Agreement with St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District #1 for Dispatch Services for the Covington Fire Department (Smith)

Councilman Smith led a discussion on Resolution No. 2021-02.

Chief Administrative Officer Erin Bivona stated that once this resolution is adopted, the Mayor will be authorized to sign the amended agreement and it may take effect on February 1, 2021.

Councilman Roberts made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-02, seconded by Councilman Verret. Roll call was unanimous to adopt Resolution No. 2021-02. Resolution No. 2021-02 was adopted.

COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Council District and Committee Reports

1. District A –

Councilman Lewis reminded everyone about the MLK Fun Day on Monday, January 18th from noon until 4pm at Peter Atkins Park.

2. District B –

Councilman Botsford mentioned that through the efforts of the Northshore Food Bank, 1,346,585 pounds of food were distributed to 19,655 families in 2020. Also, he stated that for the first week in 2021, there was an increase of 122% in families requesting assistance from the Food Bank. He encouraged local companies and organizations to support the Food Bank by hosting food drives and mentioned that monetary donations are needed along with donations of food and clothing. Also, the Food Bank expressed their appreciation to the organizers,

sponsors and volunteers who helped make Porch Fest Deux a great event. He personally thanked Councilwoman Ludwig and Councilman Verret for their help. Also, he thanked Councilman Lewis for his efforts in organizing the MLK Day event. Also, he reminded everyone about the “Rollin’ on the 3 Rivers House Float” event which will take place from January 23rd through February 16th. He mentioned that registration is free and encouraged the public to participate in this event by decorating their homes for Mardi Gras.

3. District C –

Councilman Roberts wished everyone Happy New Year and reminded the public to be good neighbors by wearing masks to keep each other safe. Also, he mentioned that the 2021 budget contains some improvements for District C and looks forward to those projects. Also, he gave a shout-out to the citizens of Covington for remembering to keep their cars locked at night to protect their property from potential break-ins.

4. District D –

Councilwoman Ludwig mentioned that as of today, St. Tammany Parish Hospital reported 60 COVID-positive inpatient cases. She added that the hospital has begun administering the vaccine to staff members as well as people 70 years of age and older. Upcoming events: (1) Mayor Johnson is sponsoring a Blood Drive tomorrow from 10am until 6pm in the Bogue Falaya Hall. She encouraged those who are able to donate and if they wish, to dedicate their gift to a member of the community; and (2) Coastal will pick up Christmas trees this week that have been stripped of all decorations and flocked trees will not be picked up. Also, she thanked Mayor Johnson and the Administration for the tree-trimming efforts throughout the City.

5. District E –

Councilman Verret gave a shout-out to the City’s Public Works Department for everything they do around the City, especially keeping the trees trimmed. Also, he encouraged everyone to remain vigilant by social distancing and wearing masks.

6. At Large (Smith) –

Councilman at Large Smith expressed his condolences to the Pogue family on the recent death of Mr. Ronnie Pogue. Also, he mentioned that there is a terrific article about Mrs. Pat Clanton in the current edition of the Inside Northside magazine and recommended the inspirational article to everyone. Also, due to the recent spike in COVID cases, he encouraged the public to continue to wear masks and remain socially distanced. Also, he urged the public to support the local businesses since most of them have experienced a decrease in business during the pandemic.

7. At Large (President) –

Council President Rolling announced that three new businesses applied for occupational licenses since mid-December. Also, he reminded everyone that the 2021 parade season in St. Tammany Parish has been cancelled due to COVID restrictions. He added that the Carnival in Covington Committee is starting to plan the 2022 events and looks forward to that celebration. Also, he announced some upcoming events sponsored by Keep Covington Beautiful: Arbor Day on Saturday, January 23rd; Paper-Shredding Day on Saturday, April 24th; and the Bogue Falaya River Sweep on Saturday, September 25th.

Administrative Comments and Reports

1. Mayor Johnson

- (a) He announced that CLECO is scheduled to remove the Christmas lights in downtown Covington on January 20th;
- (b) He reminded everyone that Christmas trees will be picked up curbside this week or they may be dropped off at the Fairgrounds behind Lyon Elementary School;
- (c) He recognized Councilman Botsford for organizing the wonderful Porch Fest Deux event. Also, he thanked Councilman Verret for helping out in Councilman Botsford's absence;
- (d) He announced that the City is planning another concert in Bogue Falaya Park which will allow the attendees to socially distance while enjoying live music. He mentioned that the tentative date is Thursday, February 11th and Carnival music will be performed. More information will be released in his February/March newsletter and his e-blasts;
- (e) He thanked Councilman Lewis for his time and efforts in organizing the MLK Fun Day on Monday, January 18th in Peter Atkins Park;
- (f) He mentioned that the Mayor's Council on Healthy Lifestyles hosted a Zumba with the Mayor event last Sunday in which 50 people participated. He encouraged everyone to take part in some kind of exercise every day;
- (g) He reminded everyone about his quarterly Blood Drive tomorrow, Wednesday, January 13th, in the Bogue Falaya Hall. He added that donations may be dedicated to someone to offset their medical costs;
- (h) He discussed the speeding "hot spots" throughout the City and the data the Police Department has compiled. He mentioned that in order to quantify the data, the City has acquired a device that will be placed on the street to log every vehicle that passes in both directions, the speed of the vehicles, the length of the vehicles and the time of day;
- (i) He reminded the residents to email him directly with any concerns or problems in the City and he will address them; and
- (j) He wished everyone a Happy New Year and to stay safe.

2. Erin Bivona, Chief Administrative Officer – None.

Council President Rolling thanked IT Director Quenton Belanger for his help in setting up the Zoom meeting this evening.

Council President Rolling reminded everyone that the February Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2nd at 6pm in the Council Chambers pending current COVID restrictions. Also, he mentioned that the 2021 Council meeting schedule is posted on the City's website.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm.

/s/ _____
LARRY ROLLING
Council President

/s/ _____
BONNIE D. CHAMPAGNE
Council Clerk