

Village of Laura Council

7:00 PM

January 8,

2024

Attendees: Mark May, Glen McSparran, Chris Foster. Gretchen Slagle-Fiscal Officer. Solicitor-Andrew Johnston. Absent- Monte Evans. Others Present- Ken James, Robert Presley, Eric Stein.

Previous Minutes: Minutes of the December 11, 2023 meeting were previously reviewed and acknowledged. Mr. May made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. McSparran seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. May - Yes, Mr. McSparran - Yes Mr. Foster - Yes. The motion passed.

2024 Council Seat Appointments: Since no resident of Laura chose to file with the Board of Elections to run for two open seats on Council, or Mayor, Mr. Foster asked if any of the citizens present were interested in being appointed to fill an open seat. Mr. James and Mr. Stein were interested in filling an open seat, Mr. James was interested in the Mayor seat.

Mr. Johnston explained how we could appoint new Council members and Mayor. The existing Council could choose to appoint a new President of Council, the law mandates that that person would then become Mayor, and then the Mayor would appoint new members to the open seats. The existing Council could also fill the open seats and then elect a President of Council. Council chose to fill the open seats, then elect a President of Council (President Pro Tem).

Mr. Foster made a motion to appoint Mr. Ken James to one of the two open Council seats, Mr. McSparran seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. May - Yes, Mr. McSparran - Yes Mr. Foster - Yes. The motion passed. This term ends December 31, 2027. Ms. Slagle swore in Mr. James.

Mr. Foster made a motion to appoint Mr. Eric Stein to the other open seat. Mr. May seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. May - Yes, Mr. James- Yes, Mr. McSparran - Yes Mr. Foster - Yes. The motion passed. This term ends December 31, 2027. Ms. Slagle swore in Mr. Stein. Mr. May made a motion to elect Mr. James to President Pro Tem, Mr. Foster seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Stein-Yes, Mr. May - Yes, Mr. James-Abstain, Mr. McSparran - Yes Mr. Foster - Yes. The motion passed. This is a one-year term.

As President of Council, Mr. James becomes Mayor, his term ends December 31, 2027. He can keep his Council seat or vacate the seat. Mr. James chose to vacate his Council seat, this leaves one open seat for the term that expires December 31, 2027.

Mr. Foster made a motion to elect Mr. McSparran to President of Council. Mr. May seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Stein-Yes, Mr. May - Yes, Mr. McSparran - Yes Mr. Foster - Yes. The motion passed.

Sheriff's Report: 1. No Report

Citizens Comments: 1. Robert Presley/ 111 Pike Street. Mr. Presley asked Council about the burned remains of the house at this property. It has been a safety hazard, and there could be more problems the longer it goes without something being done. Mr. James noted the Village has been working with the County and the sister of the deceased property owner, she has applied for a grant to have the rest of the house demolished. Mr. James stated the County expected to have some information about awarding grant money to demo the house beginning in January of 2024. We haven't heard anything from the County yet.

2. Mr. Presley also asked about progress on the trial for 25 Laura Circle. At the trial, Mr. Rex was given six months to clean up, with substantial clean up at ninety days. The ninety days would have been around Thanksgiving. Mr. Presley noted there hasn't been substantial clean up, if any, at the property, why hasn't anything been done? Mr. Johnston explained Mr. Miller took updated photos of the property right before Mr. Johnston filed them on December 4th. He noted the timing of a different judge being assigned to our case had set the sentencing date as January 23. Mr. Miller will take updated photos a day before that date.

Mr. Foster leaves the meeting.

Solicitors Report: 1. 25 Laura Circle. See Citizens Comment # 2.
2, Wagner Paving Annexation. No Report.

BOPA: Mr. May reported:

1. The Board approved and recommended to Council the agreement with Mote and Associates for costs to engineer and obtain the back-up generator. The cost is approximately \$102,000, with the majority of the cost covered with ARPA and grant monies. Mr. May made a motion to recommend Council sign the agreement with Mote and Associates, Mr. Stein seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Stein-Yes, Mr. May - Yes, Mr. McSparran -Yes. The motion passed.
2. The Board is working to determine the cost of curb stops and repair costs, so when a curb stop is damaged, we have guidelines, as the property owner is responsible for the repair.
3. Hydrant Flushing. We recently flushed hydrants and had some complaints from residents about the water being brown. There is sediment in the lines and it was stirred up when the lines were opened fully during the flushing. The Board discussed notification options, they would like to use One Call to notify residents, and also put notice on our website. The lines are flushed once a year, similar to neighboring municipalities.
4. Bradley Ingle was appointed to the open BOPA seat. This term expires December 31, 2027. Dan Barker was elected President of the Board.
5. Leaf Pick-Up Concern. Leaves were dumped outside the gate at the sewer plant, We can't get the gate open all the way. Mr. James noted he has talked to Wagner Paving about using a bobcat to push the leaves away of the gate.
6. Mr. May noted the day Mr. James found the sewer plant gate unlocked was probably the day Stewart Hinkle from Saunders Towing was to work on the generator at the plant.

Old Business. 1. Davis Voice & Data. No Report.

2. Signs/Stop Signs. Mr. James replaced a stop sign at the alley behind 101 S. Main and Fifth St. Mr. James and whoever can help will set a date to replace the signs that need worked on around town. Mr. Presley asked about placing "Neighborhood Watch" signs somewhere around Dollar General. Mr. James stated he didn't think that organization was still around, he would ask around at the County.

New Business. 1. 2024 Committees

Finance-Mr. May, Mr. McSparran	Parks-Mr. Foster, Mr. May
Streets-Mr. Evans, Mr. Foster	Building-Mr. Stein, Mr. McSparran
Website-Mr. McSparran, Mr. May	BOPA- Mr. Stein, Mr. May
Records Retention -All	Zoning- Mr. James, Mr. Evans, Mr. Robert Presley, Mr. Doug Baker

2. Building Emergency Lights. We need to replace the batteries for the emergency lights in the building. Ms. Slagle will get the batteries.
3. Fire Training Grant Letter of Support. Laura Fire Company Chief Brendan Deere has asked the Mayor to sign a letter of support to area legislators for fire training grants for firefighters in our area. Mr. James signed the letter.

Bills. Mr. May made a motion to pay the following bills, Mr. McSparran seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Stein-Yes, Mr. May - Yes, Mr. McSparran -Yes. The motion passed.

PERS	\$852.11	AES	\$1066.79
Gretchen Slagle	431.12	Ken James	108.78
Amy Elmore	75.00	Shipman Dixon	334.00
Hamler-Gingrich Ins.	406.00	Twilio	6.23
Post Office	98.00	Treasurer of State UAN	762.00

Mr. Stein made a motion to close the meeting, Mr. McSparran seconded the motion. All yeas, the motion passed.

