

Pre-Council Meeting - Final
November 19, 2018
6:00 PM

*Present: Mayor Max Bacon Charles "Corkey" Welch Tim Gould
Maryline Blackburn Derek Norton Andrea Blustein
Susan Wilkinson*

Absent: Ron Fennel

Also Present: Tammi Saddler Jones (City Administrator), Scott Cochran (City Attorney), Scott Andrews (Assistant City Administrator), Frank Martin (Director of Public Works), Terri Graham (City Clerk), Christy Ullman (Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Council), and Tina M. Monaghan (Deputy City Clerk)

Mayor Max Bacon called the Pre-Council Meeting to Order at 6:00 PM.

City Administrator Report

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones requested Assistant City Administrator Scott Andrews to update the council on several items on his list.

Mr. Andrews spoke of how the City is waiting on the results of the asbestos survey on the green house. It appears demolition will be less expensive if the city does the demolition but Mr. Frank Martin, Public Works Director, is still waiting on an estimate for the demolition.

The Zion Cemetery had two large trees that fell down due to wind. The trees were already dead but before removal, the area was carefully checked for remains and artifacts. The trees will need to be cleaned up at an estimated cost of \$2500.00.

Councilmember Andrea Blustein asked who the City was using for the tree removal. Mr. Frank Martin replied that the trees would be removed by Paul Bunyan Tree Service.

Councilmember Charles "Corkey" Welch inquired as to the size of the lot of the green house property. No one was sure of the exact size but that the lot was deep. Ms. Saddler Jones, who recently toured the house, spoke of the poor condition of the structure.

Chris Addicks, Director of IT, will be resetting Mayor and Council passwords to email accounts due to hacking attempts. He will contact each person individually for the reset. The City Engineer job posting closed November 16th and interviews are set to take place the first week of December.

Mayor Bacon asked if the applicants were from in state or out of state. There were five applicants with only one out of state. The interim City Engineer did apply for the job. The job was posted in several places.

Ms. Saddler Jones stated that according to Kristin Robinson Finance Director, over 90% of property taxes have been collected and the number continues to increase.

Mayor Bacon asked about water bills and how long they are allowed to go delinquent before disconnecting. Councilmember Welch spoke of a situation that caused him to inquire about his water bill and he asked questions about disconnection, he was told that accounts have to be 90 days delinquent before disconnection.

The Mayor also inquired about back property taxes and wanted to know why the City hasn't moved forward with doing something about it.

Ms. Saddler Jones agreed that after recently taking a class, she also feels that something needs to be done to collect on delinquent taxes.

City Attorney Scott Cochran explained that usually when someone owes the city, they also owe the county and that county tax bills supersede city tax bills. County tax bills take legal priority over city tax bills. He went on to say that if only city tax bills are owed, the city can go ahead and do a sale. Another issue would be that most people do not buy city tax bills because they are afraid of losing their money if the county decides to step in. From a practical standpoint, it makes more sense to place a lien on the property rather than to go ahead with a tax sale.

Mayor Bacon feels that the city needs to make every effort to collect on money that is owed.

Mr. Welch agrees that the city needs to be aggressive in order to get back money that is owed.

City Clerk Terri Graham stated that she regularly signs off on FIFA's which puts a lien on properties that are delinquent for city property taxes. The FIFA's are sent to her by Mike Hickenbottom from the Finance Department. The liens are paid before the property can be sold. After a certain amount of time the lien is reapplied.

The Mayor was just concerned to see that there were some properties where the taxes were over ten years delinquent and wants to see the city collect on accounts where money is owed.

Review of the Agenda for the November 19, 2018 Council Meeting

The Mayor asked if there were any agenda changes. Ms. Graham stated that the Ashley Shares contract extension was added to the consent agenda.

Mayor Bacon asked Councilmember Tim Gould to read aloud the small business proclamation at the Mayor and Council meeting.

City Clerk Terri Graham wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Bacon adjourned the Pre-Council Meeting at 6:25 PM.