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## **AUMSVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

### **April 25, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Council President Angelica Ceja called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Present in-person were Councilors Angelica Ceja, Doug Ecclestone, Della Seney, Walter Wick, City Administrator (CA) Ron Harding, and City Clerk Colleen Rogers. Councilor Scott Lee and Nico Casarez (logged on @7:30 PM) joined via Zoom Conference call. Council absent: Mayor Derek Clevenger. The meeting was video recorded to be released later.

**AGENDA APPROVAL:** Councilor Ceja called for a motion to approve the agenda. Councilor Seney moved to approve the agenda as presented by staff. Councilor Ecclestone seconded. Motion APPROVED 5-0: (Yes: Councilors Ceja, Ecclestone, Lee, Seney, Wick. No: None.)

**Arbor Day Proclamation:** Mayor Clevenger read into record proclaiming April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 as Arbor Day, urging all citizens to plant and care for trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

**Visitors:** There was one in-person visitor and no online attendees.

**Public Comment:** Patrick Ferrell of Aumsville informed Council that he recently stopped at the post office after hours and found a man sleeping inside the lobby area. He asked if the Aumsville Police could stop by the post office occasionally just to do a safety/welfare check. His concern was for the person's health and safety, and for others that stop to get their mail.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Councilor Seney moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilor Wick seconded the motion. Motion APPROVED 5-0: (Yes: Councilors Ceja, Ecclestone, Lee, Seney, and Wick. No: None.)

**OLD BUSINESS: None**

#### **NEW BUSINESS: Water/Sewer Rates Discussion**

CA Harding gave an overview of the 2022-2023 Budget in regard to the upcoming annual water and sewer rate increase. He talked about the current rate of inflation and how it could affect the cost of city water and sewer operations. Using the city's forecasting model, he showed Council that we could see up to a 4% increase in water and 8% in sewer operation costs. Council discussed how these increases will add further burden to our residents who are already feeling it at the gas pumps, grocery store, and other utilities. CA Harding offered some options for Council to consider but warned there are some risks that would be involved. By deferring a \$100,000 transfer into the Water Improvement Fund, we could sustain with only the annual increase of 3%. He explained that our overall budget is in good shape, and we could delay the higher increases this year, but that will only make the inevitable increase higher down the road. This would give some relief to residents at the peak of the current inflation. After a

lengthy discussion Council consensus was to do the annual 3% increase and defer the \$100,000 for this year effective June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. CA Harding will prepare a resolution and bring it to the next Council meeting on May 9, 2022.

**City Administrator Report:** CA Harding reported that staff has been discussing COLA increases. Taking into consideration the CPI is close to 8%, city employees are willing to settle for a 6% COLA for the upcoming budget year. After a brief discussion, Council agreed with the 6% and directed staff to figure the 6% COLA into the budget.

CA Harding stated that on a positive note, overall, the city's budget looks good, and we are still very sound.

**MAYOR/COUNCIL REPORTS AND INITIATIVES: NONE**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:** Councilor Seney reported that she has heard a lot of positive comments about the Easter Egg Hunt event.

**CORRESPONDENCE: None**

The meeting adjourned without prejudice at 8:12 PM.

  
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Ron Harding, City Administrator

  
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Angelica Ceja, Mayor Pro-tem