

LUDLOW COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES

May 14, 2020

Mayor Josh Boone called the virtual meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Laurie Sparks called the roll which showed the following council members present: Steve Chapman, Tiffany Grider, Bill Whiteley, Chris Wright, Vanetta Davis, and Julie Terry Navarre.

ALSO ATTENDING: City Attorney Todd McMurtry, City Administrator/Police Chief Scott Smith, City Clerk Laurie Sparks, Fire Chief Mike Steward, Public Works Director Shane Hamant, and Code Enforcement Officer Tom Garner

Motion by Mr. Wright, second by Mr. Chapman, to approve the minutes from the council meetings on March 12, 2020 and April 3, 2020. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.

STAFF REPORTS

Fire Department

Mr. Steward discussed his monthly report for April and May. Mayor Boone thanked the Fire Department for all that they do for the community.

Public Works

Mr. Hamant advised the City is currently accepting applications for a seasonal public works employee. Discussion on replacing the front window in the administrative office to make it safer and more secure. The ball fields, skatepark, and basketball courts in the parks will be open on May 11, 2020. Chief Smith advised that playground equipment will remain closed for at least an additional week.

Code Enforcement

Mr. Garner discussed his monthly reports for April and May. There were 47 new cases opened and 56 cases abated. The rental licenses have been mailed out and are due by June 15, 2020. The City has received payment for 144 rental licenses to date. Mr. Garner commended the citizens for taking care of their properties while they are staying at home. Discussion on the status of the City filing mass foreclosures. The City plans to foreclose on between five and eight properties, but the courts will be closed through the month of May.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Boone advised that the coronavirus has been a main concern in the city. In addition to areas of the parks, the Train Viewing Platform will also reopen. The curfew remains in effect. City offices will be opening soon. Discussion on temporarily allowing outdoor seating for restaurants and bars. The zoning could be changed permanently through an ordinance upon a recommendation from Planning and Development Services (PDS) once the emergency orders are lifted. Mayor Boone advised that he plans to pass an executive order temporarily allowing for outdoor dining at restaurants and bars in the city. Mayor Boone advised that although the City is not in a position to assist businesses financially, temporarily easing restrictions to allow outdoor dining could help. Mayor Boone advised that he was asked to look into the possibility

of creating an entertainment district, similar to what Bellevue passed last year, that would allow open containers between certain businesses. The Ludlow-Bromley Memorial Day Parade has been cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. Mr. Whiteley suggested the possibility of postponing the parade until Veterans' Day in November.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance—Mr. Chapman advised that he spoke with Chief Smith and requested a Budget vs. Actual report, which was sent out to everyone on council. Mayor Boone advised that he would like to meet face-to-face with Vanetta Davis to discuss the budget process.

Public Works—The Committee has not met since the pandemic began.

Safety—Mr. Wright advised that he met informally with Chief Steward a couple of weeks ago and hopes to set up a more formal meeting soon.

CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Chief Smith advised that the City appears to be on-par with collecting the rental licenses this year. Discussion on the status of the Yards Project at 38 Elm Street. The project is still moving forward, but some of the language in the contract will need to be changed to extend the time frame outlined for the project. The City is still waiting on the go ahead from the State on the Adela Avenue Paving Project, which is still scheduled to begin in May. Since the engineers could not come to a feasible solution to save the Ernie's building, it appears the building will need to come down. The cost to tear down the building would be approximately \$25,000.00. Challis Hodge is interested in constructing a two-story, brick building on the site that would fit in with other buildings in the area. Discussion on the status of the property if the City has to pay the cost to tear it down. Chief Smith advised that the City is still looking for developers for the riverfront on the west side of the city. A new development would provide a tax base that would help the City in the future. The City will need to fill three positions by August—administrative assistant, the treasurer position, and school resource officer. Chief Smith advised that he would like to hire a treasurer in August to allow Alice time to train him/her before she retires in November. Ms. Sparks is reviewing the personnel policies. Discussion on people seen surveying the area on Highway Avenue and Elm Street possibly for future development projects. Chief Smith advised that the Police have done a good job patrolling; there were forty-six fewer police calls last month than the previous month. Mr. Chapman advised that he was contacted by Paul Miller who was concerned about drug activity in the building next to his (Bircus) parking lot and inquired about what can be done to stop it. Chief Smith advised that the issue had been addressed and the tenants have been evicted. Anyone who sees suspicious drug activity should contact the police.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

First Reading of Ordinance 2020-4

Mr. McMurtry completed the first reading of Ordinance 2020-4 *An Ordinance Setting the Budget for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 Through June 30, 2021 for the City of Ludlow Calling for Revenue of \$4,179,896.00 and Expenditures of \$4,015,610.00.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Boone advised that he did not cancel the caucus meeting for May and would prefer to meet in person, if possible. Mayor Boone advised that he would definitely like to be back in the council chambers in June. Mr. Chapman advised that he has discussed the City's finances with Chief Smith and determined that the City wasn't hurt financially by the shutdown.

Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Mr. Whiteley, to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Sparks, City Clerk

Attest: _____
Josh Boone, Mayor