The Clarksburg City Council met in Conference (Work) Session on Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the Robinson Grand Performing Art Center, Pike Street, Clarksburg, West Virginia.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Gary Bowden
- Frank Ferrari
- Marshall Goff
- Ryan Kennedy
- Chad Sigmon
- Vice Mayor Malfregeot
- Mayor Catherine Goings

**ALSO PRESENT:**

- Martin Howe, City Manager
- Anthony Bellotte, Asst. City Manager
- Robert Hilliard, Police Chief
- Kim Karakiozis, Finance Director
- James Cann, City Attorney
- Annette Wright, City Clerk

The planning session consisted of the following agenda:

1. Introduction/Opening
2. Community Improvement
3. Economic Development
4. Efficient and High-Performing Government
5. Culture/Entertainment
6. Closing Remarks

- **Demolitions** - City Manager Howe referenced the demolitions stating that Public Works would do about 25 structures after abatement and that some structures within the TIF District would be taken down using TIF funding therefor. City Manager Howe noted concerns with utility disconnections regarding demolitions stating that this is something we need to look at as it relates to the electric service as the other utilities disconnect and let us know. With regard to the determination of properties for demolition, City Manager Howe referenced the slum and blight list and discussed the process wherein properties are placed on said list based on various assessments such as public danger, agreements with owners for the demolition of the property, etc.

- **Parks** – City Manager Howe informed that debt service would be budgeted for the turf project; the Park Board ordered the materials, etc. for the children’s play area at the Splash Zone and that the new vendor therefor will result in savings.

- **Infrastructure Projects** –
  - Bridge near/by Notre Dame High School – work to begin this spring and to take about 13 months to complete with traffic to be rerouted in said area.
  - North 13th Street – North View Overpass – will be replaced with the interchange to be improved – working with the DOH on this project. Assistant City Manager Bellotte remarked this project most likely would go out to bid in 2020.
  - DOH – I-79/US 50 Interchange – trying to stay in contact with the State regarding this $32 million project.
  - Camden Street Bridge - $1.2 million project happening at this time.

Mayor Goings apprised that the city of Bridgeport expressed interest in working with Clarksburg to improve the entrances on both sides of Emily Drive.

- **Mission** – City Manager Howe apprised that the Mission now has a new Director and that he wanted to meet with Director Ortenzio regarding future plans of the Mission and establish open communications. With regard to Fourth Street, Mayor Goings stated that the new business threat would like a couple light poles (street lights) with Mr. Howe advising that the Administration is looking at said area regarding the same. With regard to lighting, Mr. Howe informed that downtown property owners are being contacted to obtain permission for anchoring to their buildings to allow for lighting and that he would report back to Clarksburg Uptown who is assisting with the project financing.
• Tesla Destination Charging Station – Mayor Goings informed that she has been in communications with Tesla regarding the charging station which they would provide the station at no cost and we would pay for the cost of installation. Mayor Goings stated that per the information from Tesla, the cost would be approximately $1.00 per hour of charge time. Mr. Howe remarked that there may be funding to assist with the installation of “green use” equipment.

• Neighborhood Signage – Mayor Goings noted that we still need a sign for the Goff Plaza area with Mr. Howe advising of plans to change the signs up this year.

• Home Rule – “Certificate of Need” process – Councilmember Kennedy suggested that Council look into this matter noting that many times individuals have to be sent out of state to get necessary treatment and that if the Certificate of Need process could be repealed under Home Room that would help these facilities to provide such treatment. Mayor Goings informed of an email she received requesting support for a recovery center and that she would forward the same to the City Manager.

• City Manager Howe noted the B&O Tax Incentives and plans to revamp the Façade Program.

• Also, City Manager Howe commented on the Opportunity Zone that was received for the Central Business District and the incentives associated therewith.

• Old Palace Building – City Manager Howe announced that occupants would begin moving in sometime in February.

• Aquarium Lounge – City Manager Howe noted that the Robinson Grand Performing Arts Center was the anchor to attracting the Aquarium Lounge.

• Old City Hall Site – City Manager Howe stated that the Administration is working on a redevelopment plan for said site, as well as a redevelopment plan for the old Shroath lot. City Manager Howe noted the possibility of utilizing Home Rule to sell property directly without a redevelopment plan which Charleston, Martinsburg and Fairmont have done. Councilmember Ferrari commented that the disposition of property should be a high priority on the Home Rule list.

• City Manager Howe noted the Glen Elk project by Sadd Brothers and also noted that the Anchor Hocking property, which is located in the Opportunity Zone, sold several months ago to Anchor LLC and communications continue with the property owner.

• MORE Project – City Manager Howe informed that the Administration is continuing to work with this group to move the project forward.

• EastPointe - K-Mart location – City Manager Howe apprised that the property owner is currently dealing with a potential tenant and that the Administration would continue to work with the owner on the same.

• MCP Energy Park (12th Street) – City Manager Howe reported that the subdivision of said property was approved with the development thereof to move forward and that the Administration would see what could be done to develop the entire site.

• City-wide Internet – Discussion was held regarding downtown city-wide internet wherein we would be our own utility as an internet provider; noting such could be used as an incentive and/or a funding source mechanism.

• Economic Development Corporation – Councilmember Bowden inquired if the City was still funding the Corporation with City Manager Howe responding affirmatively and that he believed the term was for five years.
YMCA – Noting the sizeable investment in this facility, as well as the loss of the Executive Director, Councilmember Bowden inquired if there was routine communication with the YMCA with City Manager Howe informing that communication was much better now. Councilmember Kennedy remarked on the capital improvements made thereat with City Manager Howe suggesting a tour to see the improvements.

EAS (Essential Air Service) Agreement – City Manager Howe advised that this matter would be on the next agenda and that Airport Director Rick Rock would be in attendance to provide an update.

(At this time, a brief intermission took place)

Under the agenda topic entitled “Efficient and High-Performing Government,” the following was discussed:

- A draft of the employee handbook was distributed for Council review and discussion at a later date.

- Comprehensive Plan – City Manager Howe informed that we are coming up on 10 years wherein the plan needs updated and that an RFP would be put out seeking interest. The Administration will be working on this process over the next year.

- Excess Levy – City Manager Howe apprised that the five-year Excess Levy will need to be renewed and that an election will be necessary therefor.

- COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) – City Manager Howe remarked that consideration will need to be given therefor as we are going through the budget process; brief discussion was held concerning special assignment pay for police and fire, as well as police salaries. With regard to police, Councilmember Goff noted the importance in attracting and retaining police officers, as well as the need to increase morale. Councilmember Goff remarked that we have fallen behind the times and opined that not having in-car police cameras was a liability. City Manager Howe commented on GPS tracking stating that the device would be placed on every asset the City owns which would be of benefit from the fleet management side.

With regard to police matters, Councilmember Goff stated that it was imperative that the Chief have a secretary noting the backlog of reports to be done. Also, discussion was held concerning the phone system and that difficulty in reaching a person in the police department due to the automated message. Mayor Goings remarked that we needed to take a look at the phone system as the same was outdated.

Also, regarding police, City Manager Howe noted the lengthy process in establishing an eligibility list and noted the possibility of expediting the same for certified officers under Home Rule.

- Regarding demolitions and Code Department issues, Councilmember Ferrari advised of the numerous calls he receives regarding Code matters and requested a monthly update/summary with a list/status of the existing complaints. Mayor Goings stated that she would like to see the report more than once a month. City Manager Howe stated that he believed such information was available through InCode and that he would look to see if there was a way to do this.

Regarding “Culture/Entertainment” – City Manager Howe reported that as of December 2018, the Robinson Grand Performing Art Center netted a profit of approximately $183,000; reported on the revenues and expenses and provided the statistics of the number of uses/events and visitors to the theater.

City Manager Howe apprised that they have been working with a local vendor to get the downtown sound system back up and running with the same to be connected/controlled in the basement of City Hall.
Library/Waldomore – City Manager Howe provided Council with a copy of his memo of August 2, 2018 concerning the Library/Waldomore noting that we need to keep in mind during budget time that the City owns the Waldomore property. Also, need to look at the Library’s overall master plan for the campus and see if we can help them to expedite the project. Noting the restrictions on the use of the Waldomore, City Manager Howe commented that this may need to go to Circuit Court to have removed.

City Manager Howe noted the budget request from the Clarksburg Museum stating that we did give them $3,500 last year. With regard to the budget, Councilmember Sigmon requested funding for the Cemetery upkeep.

City Manager Howe noted the statues, the parking mobile app, various banners for downtown, Veteran banners and the partnering of RCB and Liberty ROTC for said banners.

Vice Mayor Malfregeot noted the property on Third and Pike and suggested setting up a meeting with property owner Paul Moses to help promote the same; suggested a meeting with Dr. Manchin regarding the placement of the survivor tree; suggested a sign be erected for Robert Wilson Jr. (an afro-America, Clarksburg native, NBA); suggested a Grandma & Ginga sign.

A recap of the potential items for Home Rule consideration were noted as follows:

- Utilities (Disconnection thereof)
- Certificate of Need process
- Disposition of city-owned property
- Civil Service process regarding the hiring of certified officers

Meeting concluded.

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Mayor Catherine A. Goings
Approved: February 21, 2019

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Annette M. Wright, City Clerk