

BRYAN BOARD OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NOVEMBER 5, 2019

Board of Public Affairs Chairman Jim Salsbury opened the meeting of the Bryan Board of Public Affairs with the following members present: Karen Ford, Richard Long, and Tom Sprow. Derek Allen was absent.. Also present were: Director of Utilities Kevin Maynard, Mayor Carrie Schlade, City Attorney Rhonda Fisher, Operations Manager Dawn Fitzcharles, Power Plant Production Superintendent Jim Coressel, Human Resource Director Jacqueline Perry, City Council member Judith Yahraus, and Clerk-Treasurer Laura Rode.

Mr. Long moved, Mr. Sprow seconded, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on October 15, 2019, as written. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Operations Manager Fitzcharles gave the Board an updated presentation on the water rate plan from a year ago when the Board opted to review after a year a plan to implement a 7% rate increase per year from 2019 through 2022 with the option of changing course if necessary. After reviewing the current information, John Courtney of Courtney and Associates recommended to continue with the 7% increase multiyear plan resulting in a \$2 per month increase for the average residential customer in 2020. Commercial and industrial rates will also increase accordingly. The staff supports this recommendation. She continued that no action was required at this time; however, if directed to proceed, legislation would be presented at the November 19, 2019, meeting for the Board's consideration. Further discussion was held regarding the Board's option to reconsider the long range plan if conditions deem it necessary to which Operations Manager Fitzcharles replied that the plan should be reviewed intermittently.

Human Resource Director Perry requested the Board's consideration to hire Jason Beck as probationary Power Plant Operator Trainee effective November 18, 2019, noting his experience in troubleshooting, repairing equipment, and preventative maintenance programs.

Mr. Long moved, Mr. Salsbury seconded, to hire Jason Beck as a probationry Power Plant Operator Trainee effective November 18, 2019, at a rate of \$20.65 per hour. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Human Resource Director Perry then requested to hire Donald Miller as a part-time temporary laborer in the Communications Department. If hired, he would start November 6, 2019, as a Videographer.

Ms. Ford moved, Mr. Sprow seconded, to hire Donald Miller as a part-time temporary laborer in the Communications Department at a rate of \$9.00 per hour effective November 6, 2019. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Operations Manager Fitzcharles then gave the annual presentation on the status of the Good Neighbor Fund noting the current balance is \$2,023.32. There is currently a fund raising effort in process to assist households in need. Further discussion was held with Board member Long issuing a donation challenge to Bryan Municipal Utilities employees as well as City of Bryan employees.

Mr. Long moved, Ms. Ford seconded, to pay bills. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Board member Long addressed the public saying he felt blindsided by the Council with regard to the proposed Charter amendment to dissolve the Board of Public Affairs and that he doesn't feel the Council understands how hard the Board works to keep power supply costs down and run the Utility. He wondered how Council could do everything including staying on top of energy markets with only five (5) members. He had a list of 21 Ohio communities that have two (2) separate boards. He continued by asking how the money will be saved and what the duplication of services are. He reminded the public that Bryan Municipal Utilities is public power meaning the citizens are the owners of the Utility and have a say. He urged citizens to contact their Council members with their concerns and to be informed so they can make an informed decision when voting. He concluded with how hard the staff and Board members work for the Utility; but, he hopes the issue can be discussed.

Board member Long added that next Monday is Veterans Day and that Bryan City Schools will be doing a program to honor them. Mayor Schlade also acknowledged the wonderful Veterans Day program at the school and noted that City offices will be closed on Veterans Day.

Board member Ford shared that she had a wonderful time at the Customer Connections Conference last week noting it was an educational conference providing new information and tools to utilize. She continued that she shared the sad news of the possible Board of Public Affairs abolishment with some associates she met at the conference, and they advised her to do everything you can to keep it. Next, Ms. Ford invited the public to read the public forum submitted to The Bryan Times by former Board member Al Horn noting his reasons opposing the abolishment of the Board of Public Affairs.

Board member Sprow commented that Bryan water rates will still be below neighboring communities even if the proposed water rates go through over the next three (3) years.

Citizen and Board of Public Affairs candidate Annette Schreiner addressed the Board to voice her opinion that the Board be kept so the public has a place to voice their concerns to a group that is specifically educated on the Utilities.

Council member Yahraus expressed that she is glad that discussion is coming up on the Charter amendment issue and that she feels that is what is needed.

Board Chairman Salsbury shared that he was stunned when the proposal was made to dissolve the Board of Public Affairs at the Council meeting held a little over two (2) weeks ago. He continued that good questions were brought up at last night's Council meeting where the first reading of the proposed Charter amendment took place; however, he didn't know if good answers were supplied. He has only seen a few people speak out in favor of the idea; but he has spoken to a quite a few people about the proposed Charter amendment and no one has thought it was a good idea. He continued that it will be good to let the voters decide as it's a major change in City government. He feels the Utility has been well run, the rates have been reasonable, and the services are second to none. He mentioned that the Utilities have been involved and invested in solar, hydro and power generation. He hopes the public will inform themselves and ask questions of those responsible for bringing the issue forward. In closing, he wants people to ask questions and demand answers. He concluded that the public knows what they may be giving up, but not what they may be getting.

Board member Sprow added that with regard to the proposed Charter amendment savings, the Board wages in total are capped at \$45,000 per year on a City wide budget which exceeds \$50,000,000. He believes there needs to be more savings than that.

A brief recess was taken.

Mr. Long moved, Mr. Sprow seconded, to go into Executive Session to discuss the employment and compensation of public employees and collective bargaining at 5:48 p.m. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Asked to attend Executive Session were: Director of Utilities Maynard, Mayor Schlade, City Attorney Fisher, Human Resource Director Perry, and City Clerk-Treasurer Rode.

Mr. Long moved, Ms. Ford seconded, to adjourn Executive Session at 5:59 p.m. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Mr. Sprow moved, Mr. Salsbury seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Allen absent.

Chairman of the Board

Clerk-Treasurer