

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

Minutes of

LONDON CITY COUNCIL

Meeting

Casto & Harris Inc. Form S-301 E1412692LD

Held JANUARY 6 20 22

**London City Council**

**20 S. Walnut Street, London, Ohio 43140**

**January 6, 2022**

**Minutes**

Council President, Henry Comer, called the regular meeting of the London City Council to order at 6:30pm. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance and observed a moment of silent reflection.

**Council members present:** Henry Comer, Rich Hays, Anthony Smith, Andrew Hitt, Josh Peters, John Stahl, Bryan Robinson and Greg Eades

The minutes of the December 16, 2021 meeting were approved as written

**COMMUNICATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- President Comer asked for a voice vote to approve Mayor Closser’s appointments to the following:
  - Board of Zoning & Appeals – Michelle Anderson, term expiring 12/31/26
  - Historic District Review Board – Phil Taylor, term expiring 12/31/24
  - Civil Service Commission – Thomas Arrington, term expiring 12/31/27
  - Planning Commission – Dr. Gregg Alexander, term expiring 12/31/27
  - Tree Commission – Andrew Hitt, term expiring 12/31/25
  - City Properties Committee – William Long, Brenda Russell, Andrew Hitt, Rich Hays, Chuck Duvall, terms expiring 12/31/23
  - London Metro Housing – Angela Eaden, term expiring 12/31/26
 All appointments were approved unanimously.
- President Comer appointed Council members and the Clerk to the following 2022/2023 terms:
  - Personnel Budget & Finance Committee – Josh Peters (Chair), John Stahl, Greg Eades
  - Public Safety Committee – Rich Hays (Chair), Andrew Hitt, John Stahl
  - Public Service Committee – Bryan Robinson (Chair), Josh Peters, Greg Eades
  - President Pro Tempore – Josh Peters
  - Council Clerk – Amy Rees
- President Comer asked for a voice vote to approve the 2022-2023 City Council rules (attached). The rules were approved unanimously.

**AUDIENCE CONCERNS**

Mr. Brendan Shea was prepared to speak about the recent failed legislation regarding London becoming a sanctuary city for the unborn. President Comer stated that since the legislation is no longer before Council, he will not allow citizens to address the topic. Councilmen Peters and Robinson expressed their opinions that everyone should be given the opportunity to address Council with their concerns, no matter the subject or if it was on the current agenda. Councilman Smith said that the Council rules only state that the President can limit the time, not totally take away someone’s right to speak. President Comer stated that he is Council President and his power to limit the time also allows him to give someone absolutely no time to speak.

Held \_\_\_\_\_

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Tommy Boyd - 48 N. Main Street, London, Ohio 43140

- Mr. Boyd complimented City Council on their public discussions regarding the Sanctuary City but did not agree with President Comer's ruling that community members not being permitted to continue to speak about it.
- He thanked the Street Department for their recent work salting City roads.
- Mr. Boyd asked if the farmland that the Sanitation department is leasing was in the City and if so, why revenues do not benefit the citizens.
  - Mr. Castle explained that the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is an entity separate from the City and keeps all revenues earned.
  - Councilman Smith explained that citizens do benefit from BPU revenues and that the money is used for department operations and to help keep utility rates down.
- Mr. Boyd asked if the funds raised from the Parks & Recreation youth programs benefit the Parks & Recreation Department and could be used to renovate the gymnasium.
  - Mr. Castle explained that the revenues from the youth programs go into the City's general fund. The funds raised does not cover the cost to operate the programs and the city subsidizes the Parks & Recreation budget to cover the additional expenses.

Mr. Shea asked to address the Council about the First Amendment and was permitted to speak.

Brendan Shea - 60 Logan Avenue, London, Ohio 43140

- Mr. Shea thanked Councilmen Smith, Peters and Eades for defending his 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment right to address City Council. He said that there is current litigation against school boards for not allowing citizens to speak about critical race theory during public meetings.
- Mr. Shea stated his belief that the American people are tired of government corruption and urged London City Council to be transparent in their actions and referred to President Comer's estimation regarding the number of people for and against the Sanctuary City legislation as an example of misrepresentation of facts.
- He stated that if City Council changed their ruling on London becoming a sanctuary city, the right-to-life supporters are ready to stand with Council.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Smith – Board of Public Utilities Representative

- Everyone is finishing up their year-end process and reports
- A Superintendent was hired for the Wastewater Department
- Issues with a well at the Water Department has been fixed

Councilman Hays - Public Safety Committee Chair

- The next Public Safety meeting will take place on January 11, 2022 at 5:00pm

Councilman Robinson – Public Service Committee Chair

Parks & Recreation

- The youth basketball program has collected approximately \$29,000 in revenues
- The punch cards sold to spectators is working well
- Researching additional sites to possible expand the program in the future
- Registrations for the youth volleyball program are being received and the first game will take place on February 19, 2022
- Repairing concrete on the walkways and gutter walls at the pool
- Pickleball will be offered Mondays and Thursdays from 10am to 12pm
- Have received several complaints about the state of the gymnasium

Street Department

- Addressing issues with the storm sewers at Richmond and Mound Streets
- Semi-trucks are still using Midway Street even though it is not designated a state route
- Repairing a transmission issue on a 2008 plow truck
- Currently advertising for a Street Worker Maintenance 1 position
- There is a delay in receiving some of the new traffic lights and parts needed to replace the existing ones
- Painting crosswalks will take place after the St. Rt. 56 and St. Rt. 38 paving project is complete

The next Public Safety Committee meeting will take place on February 2 at 1:00 in the City Hall conference room

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Councilman Eades – Public Safety Committee

- Painting crosswalks will take place after the St. Rt. 56 and St. Rt. 38 paving project is complete
- The City does not own a camera to look into storm sewers. Mr. Eades suggested to purchase it with Storm Water Utility Funds.
  - Street Superintendent Long stated that the cost to purchase one would be approximately \$120,000 to \$150,000. In the past, the City has trades service with other communities when a camera was needed

**OLD BUSINESS – none presented****NEW BUSINESS**Ordinance 101-22 - Sponsored by Josh Peters - An ordinance for strengths on job descriptions

Motion by Hays to place on first reading, seconded by Stahl

Motion by Peters to suspend, seconded by Hays

Roll call to suspend: Peters, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Stahl, yes; Smith, yes; Eades, yes; Robinson, yes

Motion by Stahl to adopt, seconded by Hays

Roll to adopt: Peters, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Stahl, yes; Smith, yes; Eades, yes; Robinson, yes

PASSED

**ROUND TABLE**Councilwoman Eades

- Acknowledged the Council President's ability to control the meeting but may need to clarify the Council rules
- Question the need to suspend and pass legislation without public input
- Recognized Angie Harris for supplying a free Thanksgiving dinner to the community

Councilman Peters

- Welcomed new Councilmen Stahl and Eades

Councilman Robinson

- Thanked community members for their attendance
- Stated his belief that it is important that Council hear from community members and that they be given a chance to speak and wanted to make sure that Council rules are written correctly
- Welcomed new Councilmen Stahl and Eades

Councilman Hays

- Welcomed new Councilmen Stahl and Eades and stated that he was looking forward to working with them
- Thanked City employees for their hard work and especially the Street Department for their recent street plowing
- Thanked City Council members for their service
- Asked God to bless the City of London
- The next Public Safety meeting will take place on January 11, 2022 at 5:00pm

Councilman Hitt

- Welcomed new Councilmen Stahl and Eades and hope to get a lot accomplished this year

Councilman Stahl

- Stated that he was glad to be back serving on City Council and is happy to see community participating in meetings

Councilman Smith

- Had questions about the budget that Auditor Combs answered and urged anyone with questions about the BPU budget to please ask
- Welcomed new Councilmen Stahl and Eades and stated that he knows they will do a good job
- Thanked the community for the generous donations to Mayfield, Kentucky
- Hoped everyone has a good year

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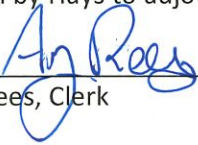
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Council President Comer

- Welcomed new Councilmen Stahl and Eades
- Stated that at times Council members will need to agree to disagree and some topics may be hard and others easy and that debating them is what we they were elected to do
- Thanked past Council for their hard work and is looking forward to the future

Motion by Hays to adjourn at 8:08pm



Amy Rees, Clerk



Henry Comer, City Council President