

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

June 11, 2020

6:30 P.M.

The Murray City Council met in regular session on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via video with Mayor Bob Rogers presiding.

Council Members Present: Jeremy Bell, Wesley Bolin, Linda Cherry, Rose Elder, Danny Hudspeth, Monty McCuiston, Dan Miller, Alice Rouse, Pat Seiber, Terry Strieter, Burton Young

Council Members Absent: John Mark Roberts

Staff Present: Dannetta Clayton, City Attorney Warren Hopkins, Tom Kutcher, Jeff Liles, Jim Osborne, Eric Pologruto, Zach Warren, Kim Wyatt

Mayor Rogers called the meeting to order and welcomed Council members and guests.

After a moment of reflection, Jeremy Bell led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The minutes of the Council meeting of May 28, 2020 were presented for approval. **Mr. Hudspeth moved for approval; seconded by Ms. Elder. All members present voted Aye.**

Mayor Rogers summarized what has happened during the last three months. He shared the timeline of the pandemic from the planning, training, and preparing stages that started on February 26, 2020, until the office was fully re-opened on May 18, 2020. Mayor Rogers stated the staff worked hard during that time to continue to provide the needed services to the customers. He stated the first positive case of COVID 19 in Calloway County was on March 20, 2020, and there have been a total 53 cases, with 48 recovering, and unfortunately one loss to the disease. Mayor Rogers stated the headlines the last few weeks have shifted to marches, protest, and rallies. He stated the City had five events last week; three being orderly, and two that could have caused concerns, but the Murray Police Department was present, in charge, and kept everyone safe. Mayor Rogers stated the center of attention now appears to be the confederate statue on the court square. He stated the Council received a public letter from a gentleman informing the Council they should do something about the statue. Mayor Rogers stated the City issued a statement to inform the gentleman and the general public that the statue does not stand on city property, and therefore, the City does not have legal authority to tell the Judge and the Fiscal Court what to do with the statue. However, the City's name appeared in media, television, and, even the *New York Times* newspaper. Mayor Rogers stated since the City has been brought into it, he will open the floor for discussion concerning the statue.

Danny Hudspeth's statement is attached to the minutes.

Ms. Cherry stated the statue is registered with the Historical Monument and it's also registered with the Kentucky War Monument Commission. The Kentucky War Monument Commission clearly states the statue cannot be altered unless it's being repaired or removed, unless it's on loan for less than one year, and there must be approval by the Kentucky War Monument Commission. Ms. Cherry stated this approval may determine what the Fiscal Court is allowed do.

Mr. Bolin stated the Kentucky Military Heritage Commission is a five member Board appointed by the Governor. He stated Sherman Neal, who is a Murray State football coach, an attorney, and a former marine, has reached out to the commission, and the commission indicated they follow actions

taken by local governments. Mr. Bolin stated in 2017, Lexington relocated two monuments to cemeteries, where they are still relocated today.

Ms. Seiber stated she has been contacted by a few people who want the statue to remain, but many more are in favor of removal. She asked everyone to consider the message it sends about our town to visitors, to potential employers who visit, and especially a large number of Murray residents that experience sadness, discomfort, or anger when they see the statue. She hopes we can come together in a spirit of mutual respect and brotherhood to remove and relocate the confederate statue.

Mr. Bell stated if the statue is removed, he believes we should come up with something to put in its place that is meaningful to Murray and Calloway County, or a noted Kentuckian. Mr. Bell stated he knows that it isn't the Council's responsibility, but he hopes an amicable agreement can be reached as to what could be put in its place.

Ms. Elder stated she believes we need to make a statement to all citizens of our county, which includes Murray, that even though the statue is part of our history, it is a terrible, horrible, shameful thing, and we shouldn't pay reverence to it.

Dr. Strieter stated he expressed his opinion with administration awhile back that the statue does not belong on the court square. He believes it should be fully explained to the citizens that moving the statue is not changing history, but the statue should be removed.

Ms. Rouse stated it's time to put the past behind us and unite to move forward.

Dr. Miller stated he would like to see a show of hands to see if the Council is unanimous.

Dr. Young stated he is tired of this issue, and he would love some way to settle the issue and to treat people more fairly. He stated the 800 citizens that fought for the United States Confederacy were United States citizens and the statue is honoring those soldiers. Dr. Young stated he would hate to see it broken into a million pieces and he would like to see it moved to the confederate cemetery. He believes it would be wise to see what the fiscal court decides instead of trying to guide them.

Mr. Bolin stated this is part of a historic moment that demands an answer. He stated even though we are not part of the fiscal court and will not be able to vote on this issue, we are citizens of Murray, Kentucky, and it's important to make a commitment now that 100 years is enough. Mr. Bolin stated this isn't a relocation of our history, it's about placing our history in context. He stated what you put at your heart, at the center of the community, is what you value and right now what we show to visitors and members of our community who are people of color is that we value the legacy of the confederacy. Mr. Bolin stated history is about historic plaques that show why statues are erected and what it means by telling the full history, and right now the statue is a swine, not a historic object. Mr. Bolin stated we have an opportunity to be on the right side of history.

Mayor Rogers stated he respects the rights of everyone and tries to understand the ones concerned about history and the ones offended about the statue. He stated he is very concerned about the safety of our citizens and the property of our business owners. Mayor Rogers stated James Payne, a former citizen of Murray and now a policeman in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, was asked how he worked so well with people. Mr. Payne stated it was simple, he tries to spread love the way he learned from the people of Murray and to treat people the way he was treated in Murray. Mayor Rogers stated he encourages things to be done the Murray way, the right way, and he wants the citizens to be safe.

Mr. Hudspeth made a motion for the Mayor to form a committee to draft a resolution to remove the confederate statue from the court square, to be ready by the next council meeting,

and to send the resolution to the Fiscal Court; seconded by Ms. Elder. Mayor Rogers asked for everyone in favor of the motion to raise their hand. **All members presented raised their hand, voting Aye.**

Surplus Mayor Rogers presented the items to be declared surplus. **Dr. Miller moved for approval; seconded by Mr. Bell. All members present voted Aye.**

Ordinance Number 2020-1795 (second reading) an ordinance amending Ordinance Number 2019-1776, an ordinance which adopted the 2019-2020 City of Murray, Kentucky annual budget by restating certain revenues and expenditures for the City of Murray operations budget. **Mr. Bell moved for approval; seconded by Ms. Seiber.**

Mayor Rogers called for a roll call vote.

Ayes: Mr. Bell, Mr. Bolin, Ms. Cherry, Ms. Elder, Mr. Hudspeth, Mr. McCuiston, Dr. Miller, Ms. Rouse, Ms. Seiber, Dr. Strieter, Dr. Young

Nays: None

Ordinance Number 2020-1796 (second reading) an ordinance adopting the City of Murray Annual Budget for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, for the General Fund; Cemetery Fund; Alcohol Beverage Control; Municipal Aid Tax Fund; E-911 Fund; Court Award Fund; Local Government Economic Assistance Fund; Murray Natural Gas System; Murray Water and Sewer System; Murray Storm Water System; Sanitation, Transfer Station, and Central Garage Division; by estimating revenues and appropriating funds for the operation of City government.

Ms. Cherry asked that her comments be recorded as a matter of record. Ms. Cherry's statement is attached to the minutes.

Mr. Bell stated he sits on the Playhouse in the Park Board and certainly the Board would like more funding from the City but the Board has never asked for it because they ask for donations. Mr. Bell stated he feels the allocation to Murray Main Street is a bargain.

Mayor Rogers requested that the Council consider an amendment to the budget. He stated there is a two percent salary increase in the budget for all employees, and he is requesting an additional one percent for the Murray Police Department. Mayor Rogers stated this is based on the wonderful job they have done during recent events, and the City learned recently that the City is eligible to receive COVID 19 funds for the policemen's salaries.

Dr. Strieter moved to amend the budget for an additional one percent increase for the Murray Police Department; seconded by Ms. Elder.

Mayor Rogers called for a roll call vote.

Ayes: Mr. Bell, Mr. Bolin, Ms. Cherry, Ms. Elder, Mr. Hudspeth, Mr. McCuiston, Dr. Miller, Ms. Rouse, Ms. Seiber, Dr. Strieter, Dr. Young

Nays: None

Dr. Miller moved for approval to accept the amended budget; seconded by Mr. Bell.

Mayor Rogers called for a roll call vote.

Ayes: Mr. Bell, Mr. Bolin, Ms. Cherry, Ms. Elder, Mr. Hudspeth, Mr. McCuiston, Dr. Miller, Ms. Rouse, Ms. Seiber, Dr. Strieter, Dr. Young

Nays: None

Mr. Bell made a motion to enter into executive session (7:26); seconded by Ms. Elder. All members present voted Aye.

Dr. Miller made a motion to leave executive session (8:00); seconded by Ms. Seiber. All members present voted Aye.

With no other business before the Council, **Mr. Bell moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Elder. All members present voted Aye.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.



Bob Rogers, Mayor

ATTEST



Dannetta Clayton, City Clerk