

State of Alabama)
City of Oneonta, December 13, 2022
County of Blount)

Council Meeting Minutes

The Mayor and City Council met during the regularly scheduled work session at 5:45 p.m., with two public hearings held before the work session and the council meeting followed at 6:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Phillips; Council Members: Alexander, Bradley, McAlpine, Pierce, and Underwood. Also present in the meeting were Alex Smith, Brandon Horton, Allie Allcorn, Tim Moore, Christine Carr, Steve and Dana Handley, Dan Buckner, Rachel Simmons, Pamela Casey, Jan and Deanna Johnson, Robin Bynum, Jeremy Hyde, Julie Cleveland, Fire Chief Seehusen, Officer Dempsey, Police Chief Clifton, Police Lt. Egan, Fire Lt. Ivey, Fire Lt. Loggins, Firefighter Dyar, Nick Washburn, Karr Solo, Amanda Cole, and other concerned citizens.

Mayor Phillips opened the 5:00 p.m. public hearing up for discussion on the topic of ordinance number 1222-01, authorizing the operation of medical cannabis integrated facility. Mayor Phillips read the ordinance in its entirety and then asked Brandon Horton to present the groundwork on the topic. Brandon Horton stated that in 2021 Alabama passed an act to allow the cultivation, processing, and distribution of medical cannabis to begin in late 2023. He explained that applicants were required to apply for an application by October 24, 2022, then to complete applications to the state by December 30, 2022. The application required the applicants to provide an identified property and an ordinance/resolution authorizing the license for the integrated facility. Brandon explained that Karr Solo with Alabama Botanical Extractions, LLC presented the plan details on October 25, 2022, explaining that he wants to set up a medical cannabis processing facility in the industrial park. Brandon said he briefly discussed the process during the November 10th council meeting, and the public hearing was set during the November 22nd council meeting.

Mayor Phillips welcomed Karr Solo to the floor. Karr thanked the Mayor and Council for allowing him to speak. Karr stated he has been working on this process for over a year and wants to open a processing facility, not a dispensary, to clarify. Karr explained that a doctor must prescribe medical cannabis when nothing else works for the patient, and the patients must be intrastate only. Karr mentioned his business would only be processing oils, soft gels, and lotions; no raw form would be allowed. He stated that the act does not allow any recreational use of the products, and the products are 81% more effective than opioid medications. He explained that by prescribing medical cannabis, the usage of schedule two drugs, such as fentanyl, oxycontin, Xanax, ketamine, and anti-depressants, would decrease. Karr stated that his goal is to bring medical cannabis products compliant with the state available at a local level, and with that will come fifty jobs paying from \$15/hour to \$30/hour. The jobs offered include administration, production management, chemists, security, and maintenance.

Karr presented his projected floor plan for the facility to demonstrate the physical security and the placement of the products on site. He explained that the facility has climate-controlled spaces, and the extraction lab is fire and explosion-proof. There was a discussion on why the

ordinance authorizes an integrated facility when the business owner is only interested in a production facility. Mayor Phillips stated that if the business owner is only interested in a production facility, the wording can only be changed in the ordinance to allow a production facility.

Christine Carr a certified registered nurse anesthetist specialist from Birmingham, was next to the floor to speak. From her research and studies, Christine feels that once the council approves the ordinance, it will be impossible to move the facility out of the city if warranted. Her main concern about allowing medical cannabis within your city is the risk of children getting ahold of the drug, which is a true risk to public safety. She also stated that cannabis is the second-leading drug in car accidents and one of the top-leading drugs in child abuse cases. She also stated that studies believe that if a man and woman ingest cannabis during conception, it can lead to autism.

There were concerns about the explosion possibilities from the facility and how the city will be able to train public safety employees. Karr stated that he is trained to handle explosive devices and will be happy to ensure all employees have proper training. Tom Buchanan voiced his concern about the facility's proper security. Karr stated he would have two guards on-site during working hours, and the most product delivered at one time would be 500 pounds and locked away in the climate control room.

After much discussion, Mayor Phillips asked the council how they would like to move forward. Councilman Alexander requested to table the ordinance and present it at the December 27th council meeting with the "dispensary" removed from the ordinance. Councilwoman Pierce agreed and stated that Karr has a great business plan with good-paying jobs. Mayor Phillips closed the public hearing at 6:59 p.m.

Mayor Phillips opened the 5:30 p.m. public hearing at 6:59 p.m. to discuss adopting ordinance no. 1222-02; amending section 13-3 in the city code to increase business license issuance fees. The Mayor read the ordinance in its entirety. Amanda Cole stated the current issuance fee is \$12.00, so if ordinance number 1222-02 is adopted, the issuance fee will increase to \$14.00 per business license beginning January 1, 2023. Mayor Phillips closed the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Mayor Phillips opened the 5:45 p.m. work session at 7:03 p.m.

The Mayor stated that agenda items one and two are standard items, and item three is to consider approving the minutes of November 22, 2022, as written unless there are any comments.

Mayor Phillips explained that the Mayor and Council had just conducted an extensive public hearing pertaining to item four to consider adopting ordinance 1222-01, authorizing the operation of a medical cannabis integrated facility.

The Mayor stated there was also a public hearing conducted for item five. Amanda Cole stated the current issuance fee is \$12.00, so if ordinance number 1222-02 is adopted, the issuance fee will increase to \$14.00 per business license beginning January 1, 2023.

Mayor Phillips stated that Councilwoman Pierce would review items six and seven during the council meeting, and Councilwoman Pierce would review item eight during the council meeting.

The Mayor mentioned there would not be an administrative report, and he will complete his report during the council meeting. Mayor Phillips closed the work session at 7:06 p.m. and stated there would be a five-minute break before conducting the council meeting.

Mayor Phillips opened the regularly scheduled council meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Councilman Bradley gave the invocation.

Mayor Phillips led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Bradley motioned to approve the minutes of the November 22, 2022, council meeting as written. Councilman McAlpine seconded; Mayor Phillips abstained, and the motion carried with all ayes.

Councilman Bradley stated he would have to abstain from voting due to his employment with the federal government and his affiliation with the Veterans. Councilman Alexander made a motion to table ordinance no. 1222-01 for the next council meeting. Councilwoman Pierce seconded, then there was a discussion to hold a special called meeting before the next regularly scheduled council meeting so that every council member would be present. Mayor Phillips set a special called meeting for December 22, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. to consider adopting ordinance no. 1222-01.

Councilman Alexander made a motion to table ordinance no. 1222-02; amending section 13-3 in the city code to increase business license issuance fees. Councilwoman Pierce seconded, and the motion carried with all ayes.

Councilwoman Pierce motioned to hire the following part-time firefighters: Tyler Cates, Chad Chesser, Michael Darby, and Nicholas Kent. Councilwoman Underwood seconded, and the motion carried with all ayes.

Leslie Loggins gave the fire report for November. He stated that the fire department ordered all new uniforms and jackets for full-time firefighters, and Chief Seehusen is working on the 2023 plan for the department. Leslie also informed the Mayor and Council that the "Safer Grant" the department applied for in hopes of adding three additional full-time firefighters was denied.

Councilwoman Underwood gave the November report on behalf of the police department.

There was no report on behalf of the City Administrator.

Mayor Phillips stated that the property by Pizza Hut was previously a gas station forty years ago; therefore, the company has to complete a phase two study to see if the gas tanks have been removed. The Mayor mentioned from the study that it appears that two tanks have been removed, but there is a requirement to complete phase three on the property due to another tank being there.

There being no further business, Mayor Phillips entertained a motion to adjourn the council meeting. Councilman Alexander made a motion to adjourn the council meeting. Councilman McAlpine seconded, and the motion carried with all ayes. The council meeting closed at 7:25 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk