

TOWN OF MANY
May 7, 2020
Special Called Session

The Mayor and Aldermen of the Town of Many met in special session via teleconference due to the COVID-19 outbreak, on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 10:00 AM which was conducted from Town Hall. Present were Mayor Ken Freeman, Town Clerk Amie Brown, Police Chief Roger Freeman and HR Manager Karla Williams. Present by teleconference where roll call was announced one member at a time, were Mayor Pro-Tem James Kennedy and council members Bobbie Jackson, Gay Corley and Mary Brocato. Absent was council member Anita Darwin.

Mayor Ken Freeman called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and the prayer was offered by Alderwoman Corley.

Open to Public Comments relating to items on agenda: No one from the public was available

The purpose of the meeting:

- 1. Chief's Recommendation to hire full-time patrol officer Jason Hughes at \$14.00 per hour with an effective date to be ASAP:** Mayor Freeman asked HR Manager Karla Williams if the background check had been done to which she replied yes. Passed with a motion by Corley; seconded by Kennedy. Vote unanimous as each council member was called by name one at a time.
- 2. Chief's Recommendation to hire Kyle Cook as Asst. Chief of Police:** Each council member was provided with a copy of an email from the Town Attorney stating that he does not recommend hiring Kyle Cook as Assistant Chief of Police until hearing back from the Ethics Board. Alderman Kennedy stated that he talked to Mr. Thibodeaux with the Ethics Board and was told that the decision would not be changed. Mayor Freeman explained that he told Mr. Thibodeaux that he didn't receive accurate information from the police department and was told that we could send a letter to reconsider. Alderman Kennedy made a motion to hire Kyle until we hear back from the Ethics Board again and if their ruling is then no we could rescind the position; seconded by Alderwoman Corley. Further discussion was added by Alderwoman Corley as she requested a change in the personnel policy stating that Stanley (father) would not fall directly under Kyle (son) that he would instead be under the supervision of the Chief and requested that it be made by the Chief within 30 days and a copy put in the council's boxes. Mayor Freeman explained that if they do this they open themselves up to discrimination by the other officers. Alderwoman Brocato explained that she thinks Kyle is a very good police officer but what is the harm, since he is already being paid the salary of Assistant Chief and not an officer, would it be waiting on the decision in writing from the Ethics Board and finding out exactly what they say before going ahead and naming him Assistant Chief. Mayor Freeman explained there would be no harm and that is what the legal advice is from our attorney. Alderman Kennedy stated to Alderwoman Brocato that we keep prolonging it for the last 4-5 months waiting on the Ethics Board and said the Ethics Board did not have a problem with it and said he does not understand why the Mayor and the rest of the council members have a problem with it. Alderwoman Brocato stated that we did not have anything in writing from the Ethics Board to which Alderman Kennedy stated that we did receive a letter. Mayor Freeman stated that the letter received is in reply to misinformation that was sent in from Stanley. Alderman Kennedy went on to say that Mr. Thibodeaux said the Mayor called and talked to him and was told the same thing that he was told and they have not been told anything and everything is being done behind the scene. Mayor Freeman stated that is so wrong and they have been told everything and was told that a letter has been sent and we are waiting on them to meet again on the two issues that are at the center of this concern. Alderwoman Brocato said that maybe the Ethics Board has not been able to meet during the lockdown but she thinks we need something in writing from them. Alderman Kennedy said they used the Coronavirus to act like they did not have time but they had plenty of time before the virus came out but did not do anything to which Alderwoman Brocato said she does not know how busy they were but she feels strongly that we need something in writing from the Ethics Board saying that it is okay to go ahead and hire him as Assistant Chief, or that it is not, so that we do not violate certain standards and that he is already being paid like the Assistant Chief so she did not see no harm in waiting. Alderman Kennedy stated there are things that have been done that have not been passed by them to which Mayor Freeman said that is absolutely not true. Alderwoman Brocato said she wanted to be clear that she wants very much for Kyle to be the Assistant Chief of Police but she wants it in writing from the Ethics Board to do this to which Alderman Kennedy said we do have it in writing and Mayor Freeman explained we do not have it on nepotism and the policy we only have it on the misinformation that was sent in from Stanley that our attorney said was misleading

and incorrect. Alderman Kennedy stated that Mr. Thibodeaux said the letter he received from the Chief and the attorney was the same and went on to say that we just wanted to prolong it. Mayor Freeman told Alderman Kennedy that he is just seeking support from the police department for when he runs for Mayor next year to which Alderman Kennedy stated that he is going to run for Mayor and even if he runs he is running against him. Mayor Freeman said his responsibility as Mayor is to make sure we do things correctly. Mayor Freeman called for a vote one member at a time and the vote was unanimous to hire Kyle Cook as Assistant Chief of Police with all yeas except for a nay by Alderwoman Brocato.

Next scheduled Regular Council Meeting is on Tuesday, June 16, 2020.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Alderwoman Corley and seconded by Alderwoman Brocato and Mayor Freeman called for a vote one member at a time. Vote was unanimous.

KENNETH FREEMAN, MAYOR

AMIE BROWN, TOWN CLERK