



**Florence City Council
Business Meeting
Tuesday, February 9, 2021
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, February 9, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at the Florence Government Center, 8100 Ewing Boulevard, Florence, Kentucky, with Mayor Diane E. Whalen presiding as chair.

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME:

Mayor Diane E. Whalen called the regular meeting to order and declared the regular session open for the presentation of all city business.

ROLL CALL:

The roll was called, and the following four (4) members of council were present: Dr. Julie Aubuchon (Vice-Mayor), J. Kelly Huff, Josh Walton, and Gary Winn.

Councilmembers Mel Carroll and David Osborne were absent.

Staff members present were: City Attorney, Hugh O. Skees; Fire/EMS Assistant Chief, Chris Miller; Chief of Police, Tom Grau; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Videographer, Spencer Foreman; and Police Corporal, Rick Saint Blancard.

The following were also present: Fire/EMS Department new employees, Cristian Espinoza and Zach King; Family and friends of the new Florence Fire/EMS Department employees, Cristian Espinoza and Zack King; Florence Police Department new police officer, Antonio McKinney; Family and friends of the new Florence Police Department employee, Antonio McKinney; Reeves family with Boy Scout Troop #1; and Trisha Scheyer, The River City News.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2021, business meeting. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Aubuchon. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

OATHS OF OFFICE:

Chris Miller, Fire/EMS Assistant Chief, introduced the newest members of the Florence Fire/EMS Department, Cristian Espinoza, Firefighter/Paramedic, and Zach King, Firefighter/EMT.

Cristian is a 2012 graduate of Boone County High School and currently resides in Florence. Cristian is a paramedic and has previous experience with Georgetown-Scott County EMS, Madison County EMS, Dry Ridge Fire Department, Alexandria Fire Department and American Medical Response.

Zach comes to us from the Deerfield Township Fire Department, Montgomery Fire Department, and Wyoming Fire Department. Zach is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, having served eight years on active duty. Zach is currently a student in the Butler Tech Paramedic Program and is expected to graduate in July.

Mayor Whalen administered the oath of office and welcomed Cristian and Zach to the City of Florence Fire/EMS Department.

Tom Grau, Chief of Police, introduced Antonio McKinney, as the newest member of the Florence Police Department.

Antonio McKinney is a lateral transfer. Antonio is 24 years old and currently resides in Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky. He is a 2015 graduate of the Windsor Academy and grew up in Macon, Georgia. Antonio was a student athlete in college and attended LaGrange College in Georgia on a basketball scholarship. After two years at LaGrange College, he transferred to Thomas More University on a basketball scholarship and finished his college courses. Since college, Antonio was hired by the United States Capitol Police Department in Washington, D.C. where he has resided for the past two years. While in D.C., Antonio graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers Uniformed Police Training Program. Chief Grau is excited to be adding Antonio to the department.

Mayor Whalen administered the oath of office and welcomed Antonio to the City of Florence Police Department.

PRESENTATION – JONES MIDDLE SCHOOL:

Due to the inclement weather, Principal of Jones Middle School requested to reschedule their presentation to a later date.

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-1-21:

Mayor Whalen called upon Chief of Police, Tom Grau, regarding donation of a surplus police cruiser. Chief Grau was contacted by Chief John Gaffin of the Northern Kentucky University Police Department requesting donation of a cruiser. Their department was in need of a replacement cruiser for their K-9 cruiser. The university did not have a spare car, nor money allocated in their budget for a new cruiser. Their K-9 has been unable to work without a cruiser. Chief Grau would like to donate a 2014 Ford Interceptor.

Mayor Whalen read Municipal Order MO-1-21. A Municipal Order declaring one Ford Interceptor Police Vehicle as surplus property, approving its sale, and authorizing the execution of a Purchase and Sale Agreement with respect thereto.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve Municipal Order MO-1-21. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-1-21 with a second from Councilmember Huff. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

RESOLUTION R-2-21:

Mayor Whalen advised the Kentucky League of Cities Board of Directors identified transportation funding as the top legislative priority for the 2021 session. Kentucky League of Cities is requesting the city adopt a Resolution which calls on the legislature to pass a measure in the 2021 session that modernizes how Kentucky funds its vital infrastructure. Following adoption of a Resolution, the city would forward said Resolution to the Kentucky League of Cities to combine with other cities.

Mayor Whalen read Resolution R-2-21. A Resolution of the City of Florence, Kentucky urging the Kentucky General Assembly to enact pertinent legislation regarding transportation related funding.

Councilmember Walton agreed with the legislation to modernize the road funding formula to prioritize cities. However, was concerned with language contained in the Resolution and believed it may include support for an increase in the fuel tax revenue based on the written language.

Mayor Whalen requested additional comments or a motion to amend the Resolution. Councilmember Huff and Councilmember Aubuchon understood Councilmember Walton's concerns, however, did not interpret the language contained in the Resolution to be in support of an increase in fuel tax.

Mayor Whalen stated the road funding formula had not changed in fifty years. The fuel tax has remained the same since 2015. The Kentucky League of Cities requested cities pass a Resolution in support to ensure a more reputable allocation to the cities funds. Increasing the transportation funding and modernizing the road funding is part of the Resolution.

Councilmember Aubuchon agreed and endorsed the Resolution by the Kentucky League of Cities. She believed as a result of passing the Resolution, the city would be added to a list of other cities which were in agreement with the Kentucky League of Cities lobbyists. Councilmember Huff was also in agreement and endorsed the Kentucky League of Cities.

Mayor Whalen stated the bill to modernize the road funding formula had been introduced the past few years by State Representative, Sal Santoro. Representative Santoro has introduced the bill to modernize the road funding formula which in turn could possibly call for an increase in the gas tax. Mayor Whalen requested any additional comments or a motion to amend Resolution as written. There was no further discussion by councilmembers.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve Resolution R-2-21. Councilmember Huff motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Winn. Mayor Whalen requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Huff, yes; Councilmember Aubuchon, yes; Councilmember Walton, no. **Roll call recognized three yes votes, and one no vote, approving the Resolution R-2-21.**

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE:

Mayor Whalen requested a motion to allow her to proceed with a request for a zone change on property located at 8275 Ewing Boulevard, Florence, Kentucky and forward the request to the Boone County Planning Commission. The parcel is currently owned by the city and zoned for public facilities. The request is to allow for medical offices. Councilmember Huff motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Aubuchon authorizing the Mayor to proceed with the request. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Monday, February 15, 2021, is Presidents Day and city offices will remain open with normal business hours. There will be a Presidents Day display in the lobby of the Florence Government Center.
- Recent post on the city's Facebook page is requesting for Florence inspired Minecraft World Creations. The city is requesting individuals pick a scene or building from Florence and incorporate the scene into their Minecraft world. This idea was inspired by a six year old that created a Florence water tower in her Minecraft world. Submissions are due by February 16, 2021, and the city will begin sharing the creations through social media on February 24, 2021.

RECOGNITION:

Mayor Whalen asked if any of the following desired recognition:

Department Heads:

Fire/EMS Assistant Chief, Chris Miller:

Chief Miller did not desire recognition.

Chief of Police, Tom Grau:

Chief Grau did not desire recognition.

Members of City Council:

Councilmember Winn commended the Florence Public Services Department for a great job on the snow removal.

Audience:

No recognition requested from the audience.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Whalen called for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Huff so moved, with a second from Councilmember Walton. **Councilmembers present voted aye**, the time being 6:24 p.m.

APPROVED:

/s/ Diane E. Whalen
Diane E. Whalen, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Melissa Kramer
Melissa Kramer, City Clerk