



**Florence City Council
Business Meeting
Tuesday, April 27, 2021
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, April 27, 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 five (5) members of council were present: Dr. Julie Aubuchon (Vice-Mayor), Mel Carroll, J. Kelly Huff, David Osborne, and Josh Walton.

Councilmember Gary Winn was absent.

Staff members present were: City Attorney, Hugh O. Skees; Business & Community Development Director, Joshua Hunt; Fire/EMS Chief, Scott Knoll; Chief of Police, Tom Grau; Public Services Director, Eric Hall; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Videographer, Spencer Foreman; and Police Officer, Mike Stanaland.

The following were also present: Trisha Scheyer, The River City News; Thomas Judd, observer; Patrick Merten, Eagle Realty Group; Carrie Herrmann, Boone County Public Library; and Mohamad Omar, Resident of Florence.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2021, business meeting. Councilmember Huff motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Aubuchon. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

PRESENTATION – BOONE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY:

Mayor Whalen introduced Carrie A. Herrmann, Director with the Boone County Public Library. As a follow up to the meeting last November, regarding the Wi-Fi Mesh Network, Ms. Herrmann stated she would share the library facility study upon completion. The study has been completed and Ms. Herrmann is here to share the findings of the report.

Ms. Herrmann thanked the Mayor and councilmembers for providing time on the agenda for her to share the findings of the study. Prior to sharing the Library Facilities Master Plan, Ms. Herrmann wanted to share information on projects the library has partnered with the City of Florence.

The first project is the Wi-Fi Mesh Network. Since the meeting in November, Ms. Herrmann stated the network is up and running as of February 17, 2021. The Wi-Fi at the Florence Library Branch was also bolstered. Additional access points were added and include a thousand feet diameter around the library. Everybody within that thousand foot diameter has access to the Wi-Fi Network. Similar equipment was installed at the Main Street Historical Fire Station, also creating a thousand feet diameter. As a result, the network is reaching approximately 250 households within those two areas. Within the first thirty days of the network launching, 970 devices used the network. As of today, approximately 2,827 devices have used the network. Seventy-five percent of the usage on the network has been remote learning including student and college classes. Fifteen percent was music and videos including YouTube, Apple Music, and Spotify. The remaining ten percent has been social media, news channels, and sports. Ms. Herrmann stated the library has filed a letter of intent to apply for a grant with the Horizon Community Fund to continue to grow the network within the Florence area. The library is requesting funds in the amount of \$50,000. The letter of intent has been accepted and the grant is in the writing process.

Another project with the City of Florence will be a story walk at the Florence Nature Park. A story walk is based around the concept of early literacy for the foundation of reading and getting kids moving. The story walk will be the book "Brave" by Stacy McAnulty. The library has negotiated the copyright permission and has worked with the publisher to obtain the digital images of the story. The library has created the activities that the kids will engage in as they are walking along the walk and are now adding those images to the digital images. Once completed, the images will be sent to the Florence Public Services Department to create the signs and install the signs. The story walk was mentioned in the Boone County Public Library's May Newsletter.

The library also applied for a grant with AARP. In partnership with the City of Florence, the project would be to install a history story walk along the walking path at the Senior Center. If approved, the project would include installation of ten signs, including history centered on the City of Florence, for individuals to read while walking along that path. Awaiting final award for the project.

Ms. Herrmann wanted to address those three projects before presenting the master plan. Ms. Herrmann presented the history of the previous master plan. She stated the previous master plan was completed two directors ago and was completed by the Director, the Boone County Library Board, and the Boone County Planning Commission. The priorities given to the library district at that time was to build a facility in Burlington. This occurred and the facility on Burlington Pike opened in 2008. The second priority given to the library was to relocate the Hebron Branch to north of 275 and increase the size of the location. This occurred and the facility in Hebron opened in 2019. The third priority given to the library from that plan was to build, relocate, and increase in size the Walton Branch.

In January of 2020, the Boone County Library Board engaged the company, MSR, to complete a

Facilities Master Plan Study. As part of that, Ms. Herrmann stated the library asked MSR to review the previous plan since it had been twenty years and see if the last project that was left on the facilities plan, should still be there, and where it should fall in all of the priorities. MSR met with all of the cities including Florence, Union, Walton; the school districts including Boone County and Walton–Verona; Judge Moore; the Boone County Planning Commission; TANK; and the transportation district. Ms. Herrmann stated she may have missed some individuals due to the numerous meetings held. Ms. Herrmann stated she was merely a facilitator of the meetings and only introduced everyone.

MSR has completed the report and the full report is 290 pages. Ms. Herrmann stated MSR provided their recommendation and listed their priority order, “A new Walton Branch. A renovation to the Florence Branch to add an additional 4,000 square feet to that location. A renovation to the Main Branch in Burlington. An addition to the Scheben Branch. By that point it should be twenty years and to look at Hebron to see if anything needs to be done to the Hebron location. That’s short, simple. Questions for me.”

Mayor Whalen opened the floor for questions. Ms. Herrmann provided everyone with a copy of the Boone County Public Library Master Plan 2021 Summary.

Mayor Whalen inquired with regard to the priority order and the recommendations. She asked Ms. Herrmann: “Do they have a timeframe and do you have a timeframe for construction of a new Walton Branch?” Ms. Herrmann stated the last page of the packet has a timeline and the date noted is the date they expect the project to be completed.

Mayor Whalen questioned that they do not expect Walton to be completed until 2024. Ms. Herrmann stated, “If you look at how long it takes to put an RFP out for us, you know the process as a governmental agency. I have to write a building program. I did not start a building program until I heard what order they were going to give us. Which means I did not start until early April. We have to write a building program, we have to write the RFP. The board has to approve both before it can go to anyone. Then it has to be out for 28 days. Then were going to need at least a month to check references. Then we negotiate a contract. And do all of that and get into the design phase. It’s probably going to be 2023, early 2024. But they went with the latest date, because we talked about our Hebron location, we were late opening that because we had the wettest two years on record when we were trying to build Hebron. So they built in a lot of time there. The timelines that is there is suggested. So once we complete the Walton Branch, their suggestion is to immediately pivot and look at the Florence location and start designing what needs to be done there.”

Mayor Whalen stated, “As we continue down the path with the Florence Branch and conversations that we have add over the last several years, an addition, a renovation to a building that was built in the early 70s, where is that financing as far as a whole new facility versus adding onto retrofitting and continuing to pack 10 pounds into a 5 pound lot, as far as access with parking and the ability to provide, what we believe the City of Florence, and particular the east side of Florence, needs access to the same type of facility, the same type of services, the same type of modern that the rest of the county is being provided. It’s the same conversation we have all the time.”

Ms. Herrmann, replied “What they suggested with the Florence Branch, first of all, I love the

interior of the Florence branch. It's probably one of my favorite ones. Very open, the woodwork that you see in that building and it's a rectangle and you can do so much with a rectangle. In fact, when we were looking at building Hebron in the design phase, I sent the architects out to the Florence branch and I said look at that building, look at the interior of that building, that's what we need in Hebron because it's flexible. The exterior of the building, I would be one of the first people to admit, it looks like a 1970s building. Part of the renovation would be to open that exterior up to put all sorts of windows there so that you could get natural light in to the building. That would do a lot to make the outside of it more modern, more up to date. As I said, this is a rectangle now, and their idea is to make it an "L" shaped building. The "L" addition would be meeting room space. That is one thing that the Florence branch really needs is additional meeting room space. That would be something that would be divided in half and you could have big programs or two smaller/medium programs in that building."

Ms. Herrmann continued, "Looking at that building and looking at the entire system, one of the things the report said, is that when the Main, Florence, and Scheben Branches are within 15 minutes of each other and should be considered together when you are looking at adding services. They also said as part of the study, that all the updates for each location should be planned in context with what's happening at the other, and they actually don't recommend that we duplicate services at those three locations because looking at data, people are traveling between those three locations quite often. They also said that this branch, that we should look at treating the Florence Branch as more of an urban model. Which means when you are looking at that in context of Florence, we are going to need to offer more story times than we do right now. We are going to offer those story times in multiple languages, which means we are going to have to hire some bilingual staff to come in to be able to do that, and not just bilingual staff, they are going to have to be well versed in childhood education, which we have highly trained staff in that particular area. The other thing they said if we are going to offer more story times, is that we are going to have to have a larger space for the children to be in. So we have to increase the size of that space. They also said we need a maker space in that particular building. So they gave us some very specific things of what between talking with the schools, between talking with the city, and different entities, what they think that particular location would need, as opposed to Main or Scheben."

Mayor Whalen stated, "I understand the desire to look at those entities as a whole because they are in close proximity, however, the ability to navigate between the Florence Branch and Union Branch, and the Florence Branch and the Burlington Pike Branch, the Main Branch, is not necessarily is something we feel is easy for the large majority of people on the east side of our town. Add to that the increased traffic on Burlington Pike with the complete opening of Amazon. You are creating another roadblock, they are creating another roadblock for accessibility of the children of our community to be able to get to those other facilities if they don't have access to a parent or a car, and they are not on a bus line. Again, that is one of those things that when you are looking at the library system as a whole, you don't want to duplicate, but at the same point in time, they are very separate. The populations they serve are separate."

Ms. Herrmann stated, "That was quite a bit of the conversations MSR had with TANK, trying to understand the bus routes that they have there. Then in the middle of the completing the study, TANK changed their bus routes in Boone County. So they had to go back and have another conversation to understand those changes and what those changes meant. That's when they came up with that Florence should be treated as an urban model. Which means for the Florence Branch,

prioritizing the children's area, prioritizing early childhood services, prioritizing Teens, that's not something we do at any of our locations. For an entire system, we only have one teen librarian. That's one of the things they are recommending for the Florence location. So prioritizing the kids from birth up through their Teens years and then making sure that we have computer access, internet access, Wi-Fi access, for anyone who needs things and then the Maker Space for workforce development."

Councilmember Aubuchon stated "I think it's a good plan and it's good to make sure there are opportunities available at all the locations throughout the county and it does help our workforce, I do think that we have Florence residents that use many of the libraries. I am extremely disappointed to see that Walton, which is a less dense area, is going to get a 20,000 square foot brand spanking new library, and we are going to get a renovated add on, with 16,000 square foot when we have triple the population. It is unacceptable to me, this plan. I feel like what the Mayor touched on, we need a new library, that's state of the art for our residents here, and it needs to be just as good, it does not need to be add on in the back for some meeting rooms. It needs to be well done, well executed, and just as viable as every other library in the system, and more importantly, the computer use needs to be there. These are folks on this side of town who will walk to that library. There has to be services in that library, that if they are duplicated somewhere else, so be it. They have to be there. The early childhood, you hit the nail on the head. We both advocate for that. We are on the same team for that. We agree with that, 100%, the bilingual. I don't feel this, this is a little disappointing as to what I would like to see for our city and our residents."

Councilmember Carroll stated, "Carrie, if I could share with you. First of all, I really appreciate you coming tonight and giving us the update and what you said about the mesh network is exciting. When I look at this program, a couple of things go through my mind. How many people were on this committee from Florence?"

Ms. Herrmann stated, "There was not a committee. What the library did, we went a totally different route from the original way it was done, where it was eight board members, the director, the planning commission. We brought in a third party entity, who does not really have skin in the game and very objective to look at this. One of things we started wondering at the library was had we dug our heels in, this old plan said we were going to do this, one, two, and three and we needed somebody to come in and talk to. That is why I said I did all the introductions. MSR ran all of the meetings. I did not even take notes during the meetings. My role was to introduce and get out of the way for them to talk to the City of Florence." Ms. Herrmann believes during the meeting with Florence, Mayor Whalen was there, previous Councilmember Froelicher, Councilmember Winn, and were a few other people. All sat in the meeting and answered the questions MSR had.

Councilmember Carroll thanked Ms. Herrmann for sharing that information with him. He continued and stated "This is going to sound a little bit crash, but often times, when you bring in a consultant in, they have a generally idea before it's over what the administration is looking for. I have dealt with it in my own professionally career, and I've seen it in other places. Sometimes, you pretty much get what you pay for. They know what you are looking for, they are going to lean in that direction. I was not part of that process. If I could go on, when you look at the programs you are talking about the Florence Library, we are thrilled about that, we think every one of those programs are viably needed in Florence. It's no secret that we have set aside a large tract of land to build a state of the art library. There was little hesitation about building a library in the

Burlington area, they did not renovate one, and they didn't expand one. Evidently, there is no hesitation about building a new library in Walton, rather than expanding the current one. So they are not adding on there. Here is another thing I want to share with you, that needs to be put out front. Your budget comes from taxes and the taxes are spread across the county. As kindly as I can say this, a disproportionately share of the taxes raised in Boone County come from within the City of Florence. As kindly I can say it, people in Florence need to get the same consideration as their tax money. We are subsidizing the rest of the county in many ways because of our property values and such that are much higher as a proportion of our population. I know that. Anyone in the governmental field knows that. While you put a lot of work in this, you are not giving us the information that we think is good for the City of Florence. Looking at your timeline of 2026, good five years away before we even get things started. Everything takes more time than you think it does. It's going to be longer than that. We are going to lose a whole generation of kids that could benefit from the programs that you are talking about and the library. There is no bus service that runs to Union. There is no bus service that runs to Burlington. There is no way a kid could walk from here to there. We have a lot of first generation kids that are new to Florence, new to America for that matter. They need all the assistance they can get. The programs that you mention can go a long way toward that, but you are cramming them all in an older facility and often times. I know from my own experience in the school business. Often times, it is cheaper to build new than to renovate. People will tell you this in the building business. When you look at that large plot of land that we have set aside to build a library. It is only a few hundred feet from the present library. It is a beautiful site, for a beautiful facility. We would like to see some return on our taxes. We would like to see some consideration for the people on the east side of town in particular can benefit from. What you have done with the mesh network, we are thrilled. I hope the grants come through and we can put more towers up in other places. We are going to work with you that is not an issue. The issue that I have, and I think perhaps the rest of the council, we are not getting our monies worth. Our kids are not getting their monies worth. I do not know if there is a reconsideration of this, but basically, what you are saying, is that the next project on the old plan, was Walton. The next project on this new plan, is Walton. We don't see much difference. This is dear to our hearts and very important to our community. If there is any way for reconsideration, we would like to have that. We have set aside land that we are willing to talk to you about. You won't have to cram it into a shoehorn. It will have ample parking and beautiful state of the art building. It may not be no more expensive than renovating what you are talking about. I have touched on everything that's on my mind and wanted you to be aware, and what you have done with the mesh network. We can't wait to put the next tower up quite frankly. Since I have your attention, if we get that \$50,000 grant, how many more towers will that cover?"

Ms. Herrmann stated the grant will provide an additional four towers. Councilmember Aubuchon replied if one tower supplied Wi-Fi to two hundred fifty households, the additional towers could support an additional thousand households. Ms. Herrmann replied affirmatively.

Councilmember Carroll opined that would be another thousand kids that could benefit from the towers. Ms. Herrmann stated it is not just the kids benefitting from the towers. Many businesses are working from home and the network allows these individuals to work from home. Also, data received indicates individuals have taken the time to start their own in home business and the network would also help them as well.

Ms. Herrmann stated she assured the board she would present the findings of the study completed

by MSR and report the comments received from the study to them. Councilmember Carroll inquired as to how many people on the library board are from the City of Florence. Ms. Herrmann replied two members have mailing addresses within the City of Florence, however, she is unsure whether they reside in the city limits. Both of those individuals term ends June 30. All four of the new considerations are from Florence.

Councilmember Carroll stated: “We appreciate that consideration. However, what you are sharing with us is that the board members are not from Florence that made that decision. And it’s easy to champion your neighborhood so to speak. If you are from Walton, Union, Hebron, Burlington...” Ms. Herrmann stated there is no one from Walton on the board. Mr. Carroll continued, “...you can see how those people might be more interested in their area, rightly so. When you stack up the needs that we have, versus the rest of the community, and the fact that we provide a significant amount of the libraries budget, more than we get back in return, we would like to share that with the board too.”

Ms. Herrmann stated she would and also stated “MSR was specifically chosen because they had never worked in Boone County or in Kentucky before. They wanted a fresh slate. They also, the board did not tell them about the request from the City of Florence for a new building. That came out in the meeting you guys had because we did not want to prejudice them in any way with this. The only thing we told them is, here is the old plan, its twenty years out, and look at what they did, look at what is happening in this community now, because there has been a lot of growth everywhere, and tell us what we should do as a library system moving forward. We tried our best not to give them any ideas, ahead of time. I sent them into some meetings, pretty dark actually.”

Councilmember Aubuchon stated: “Trying to figure things out and I just googled the population of Walton which is about 4,200 people. So that is, 10% of our population roughly. And they are getting a library that’s 3,000 square foot bigger than us. I understand they serve a bigger area, but that is the math I am doing in my head, that doesn’t fit for me. Even if they served 5,000 people, 10,000 people, we are still three times more than that here. It is still a much bigger library than what we are getting here.”

Ms. Herrmann replied: “Hebron is actually bigger than what it needs to be today because that building was built to take in the growth that is expected in the Hebron area in next twenty years. That was working with the architect working with the planning commission. MSR got a lot of data from the planning commission. The size that they are recommending is based on twenty years planned growth in that particular area.”

Councilmember Aubuchon questioned: “What data are they basing the Florence, because if they are basing it on our current, then it is inadequate. I hate to think, we just annexed 270 acres into the city. So obviously it is not planning for our future growth. I am going to say that that does not hold with me. It is not planning for our current state of affairs versus what is going to happen into the future. We are continuing to be adding to our borders.”

Councilmember Osborne stated: “Ms. Herrmann it is hard to kind of echo some of the sentiments that have already been outlined. We are kind of shocked with what you are showing us here tonight. The biggest thing is, and this is political. Somebody is responsible that they don’t want to give Florence a new library. Somewhere, board members, I don’t care. But, the point of it is,

we bought that land and there was good expectations, at that particular time, and there has been offers, to the city, for them to buy it from us, but we have been holding on that land for the expectation that we were going to get a different library. It is disheartening when you see there is more traffic flow on 42 and could handle it, but when you have a new library in Hebron, that is only 2 or 3 years of age...”

Ms. Herrmann stated: “July of 2019.”

Councilmember Osborne continued, “And they are going from modifications, I have a problem with that. Everyone has been talking about Walton. People forget about this. I am going to do a history lesson here. The people that started the library in Boone County, came from Florence.”

Councilmember Aubuchon replied “My mom was one of them that walked door to door.”

Councilmember Osborne continued, “I can name those people and it is disheartening, we went out on a limb to get that thing, to have a new tax, everyone was chastised for raising a library tax. The library, there is a lot of money from this county. Mel brought up, Florence is paying, and not only their fair share, but they are paying other fair shares of these people. Coming in here, I praised the library in Burlington, the history section. I have been looking forward to a history section in Florence instead of driving out to Burlington. I hope this stuff is not in stone, I really do. I hope that they would give Florence a second chance, or at least, say hey, you are not going to get it. What do we do with the land? At some point in time, we have to make a decision, do we want to hold on, or do we want to sell it. And it sounds like, we are not going to get a library built on that land.”

Councilmember Walton stated: “Two things, I agree with a lot of what the other councilmembers have said, specifically, the fact that a lot of people who were using this library, it is a burden to go to Burlington or Union. I am fortunate, my family lives right in the middle of the Scheben Branch and the Florence Branch. My wife is at the library almost once a week with my kids. My daughter is doing the thousand books before Kindergarten. She loves going up there and getting her buttons and putting them on her bag. I will go home after this meeting and read to them. They will go Saturday and get new ones. We love the library. I have used it to tutor kids when I was teaching high school. I have used it for all the exams I have had to pass for this new career. I have used all three of those branches, the Main Branch, the Union Branch, and the Florence Branch. I definitely agree with the other councilmembers and that Florence is definitely deserving of a new branch in the city. I don’t think we can overestimate what it would bring to this side of the city, what it would bring to providing services for people here. Also, you go into these newer libraries and you want to be there. You want to spend time there and take your kids there. You have these big open spaces where they have all kinds of displays and there is fun things for them to do. My daughter is almost five and she can’t wait to go to the library. Anytime they have something going on there, she wants to be there. I want to see that same type of thing here in Florence. I am fortunate enough that we are able to go to Union or get to Burlington. There is a lot of people that don’t have that option that I would love to see have the same opportunities here in Florence that they would have if they lived in Hebron or some other place. We can sit here and complain all night, but my big question is, what is that we can possibly do, this is looking out five years into the future, this is what we plan to do in five years, I know that the Mayor and council have been planning and preparing with a piece of land for a long time, what is it we can do at this point. If you are sitting

here in our seats, what would you want to try to do to change the plan or to, do we need to do a public relations campaign, do we need to get people fired up demanding the board be shuffled, what is it we need to do?”

Ms. Herrmann stated: “You are actually above my pay grade now. This is a board...”

Councilmember Walton replied: “You might know the channels that we can need to take.”

Ms. Herrmann replied: “You can do a presentation before the board, talk to them now that they have this plan in front of them, and you can talk to them about some of the things.”

Councilmember Walton stated: “I would like to see that, a PDF file of the 290 page report? I am sure those details that are in there is what they are basing a lot of those decisions on. I am a nerd. I don’t mind looking through those things and see some other things to look at.”

Ms. Herrmann stated: “I handed the IT Department this afternoon a flash drive with the contents, a huge PDF, its 112,000 KB approximately, I handed them a flash drive with the both the summary and the big 270-290 page report and they are working on getting that up to the website. I know the summary is there, when I walked out the door, they were telling me it was going to take a little longer to get the big one on there. They are putting it on there, so you will be able to see it. Once it goes up, I can let Mayor Whalen know and she can share it with the rest of the group. Trying to think about what might work for that to get back to your question about what you would need to do. I have to think about that.”

Mayor Whalen stated: “It is a great question. We have done the things that you suggested to Councilmember Walton. We came to the Board Meeting, we made a presentation, we showed them the statistics, and we went through all of that before this plan was done. We have all that information to bring one more time at a board meeting and have that conversation. Councilmember Huff wanted to say something and we want to be respectful of your time. It is very apparent to you that this is not what we hoped for. I don’t think you walked in here knowing that this is not what we hoped for but if Councilmember Huff would like to add something, we will quit beating up on you a little bit and find a way to make our presentation one more time and talk about the importance of a new facility for our community.”

Councilmember Huff stated: “I did consulting work for Fortune 500 companies across the United States. You should have never shared that first report with them that was done twenty years ago. If you wanted an unbiased opinion or an unbiased perspective on that, you should have never shared that with them. Next, what is the cost of the Walton facility, the brand new facility, versus the cost of our Band-Aid, I mean our remodel?”

Ms. Herrmann replied, “I did not bring that with me. It is part of the big one.”

Councilmember Huff stated: “That one is kind of important.”

Ms. Herrmann tried to recall the figures based on her recollection. Ms. Herrmann stated, “I believe they are estimating that the Walton location would be around 10 million dollars.”

Councilmember Walton requested clarification. Ms. Herrmann reiterated 10 million dollars.

Ms. Herrmann continued, "Because the land has already been purchased. It's there. We have most of the collection. We would only have to move collection over there is not a lot of purchasing of extra collection that we would have to go in there. The Florence addition, now this does include, what they think will be the percentage of increase based on the number of years from now until when they think that project is going to go, I believe they said, 2.5-3 million dollars, I am trying pulling this out of my head."

Councilmember Aubuchon stated: "You do realize that is unacceptable to us. I love the library. My child grew up in the library. I credit his early childhood intervention and story times with his academic success. I am a library supporter. That is why it is disparaging to me and upsetting to me that I can't advocate for my citizens to have that same experience here in Florence. That's why it means so much because I know how important and valuable your work is. Your programs are phenomenal. Your entertainment is phenomenal. You have the children's theater. You have magicians, you have all kinds of history...The library is a gem. It is a true gem. The work you do is phenomenal and we just want it here in Florence."

Mayor Whalen stated "We are not giving up. We are committed to the fact that we believe we are as deserving if not more so of a new facility. Stating you have the land in Walton already purchased, is one more, we have talked about the facility. We are not ready to accept this as gospel and we will remain a part of this conversation. Maybe we need to find our own consultant to take a look at how we would be best served by the library and the expenditure of money from the fund that we are paying into to provide us with the same quality size of facility as the city of Walton and the additions to the other facilities. Thank you for your time. We will remain in touch, we will get that information to councilmembers when it is up on your website to look at the full report. And if you would be in touch about your next board meeting, we would find a time when we could be on your agenda to plead our case one more time."

Ms. Herrmann stated the next Board Meeting is on May 17, 2021 via Zoom due to the State of Emergency. The library held their meetings via zoom due to the quarantining of books as mandated by the CDC. With restrictions being lifted, they are able to begin usage of their meetings rooms again for meetings instead of quarantining the books and storage of furniture. Ms. Herrmann assured Mayor Whalen she would let her know.

Mayor Whalen thanked Ms. Herrmann for her time.

Councilmember Carroll stated: "Carrie, you could stay here all night and we would say one more thing, one more thing. I've got two more things. Carrie, how would you like to be in the business of selling a product that no one wanted? There is a lot of businesses like that and they go out of business. You are blessed to be in charge of a business that people want more of. That's number one. I am going to share one more thing, versus us and Walton. Walton, as you had already shared has a plot of land...We have much more land than the Walton location. We are ready, we've been ready."

Mayor Whalen called upon Councilmember Huff. Councilmember Huff stated: "You reference future development, but yet, you are going to build this big facility down there. Guess what, the

need is here right now. Why do they take precedence over us?”

SECOND READING ORDINANCE O-2-21:

Mayor Whalen read Ordinance O-2-21. An Ordinance annexing certain territory consisting of a parcel of approximately 272.025 acres located in Boone County, Kentucky, lying on the northeast side of Houston Road, the southwest side of Donaldson Highway, and the southeast side of Turfway Road, adjacent to the city limits. (Vinings Trace, LLC Property)

This Ordinance annexes and makes a part of the City a tract of approximately 272.025 acres located in Boone County, Kentucky, lying on the northeast side of Houston Road, the southwest side of Donaldson Highway, and the southeast side of Turfway Road, adjacent to the city limits.

This annexation is in response to a request by Vinings Trace, LLC, the owner, to have the property become part of the City. The annexation will be complete upon second reading and publication of this Ordinance.

After annexation the property will remain subject to the same land use restrictions as applied prior to annexation.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance O-2-21. Councilmember Carroll motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Huff. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

SECOND READING ORDINANCE O-3-21:

Mayor Whalen read Ordinance O-3-21. An Ordinance establishing a Local Development Area for Economic Development Purposes within the City of Florence, Kentucky to be known as the Marydale Local Development Area (the “Local Development Area”); Approving a Local Development Area Agreement among the City, the Finance Department of the City of Florence, Kentucky, and other local taxing districts that may agree to be a party to the Local Development Area Agreement; Establishing an incremental tax special fund for payment of redevelopment assistance; Designating the Finance Department of the City of Florence, Kentucky, as the agency responsible for oversight, administration, and implementation of the Local Development Area; and Authorizing the Mayor and other officials to take such other appropriate actions as are necessary or required in connection with the establishment of the Local Development Area.

The Ordinance establishes the Marydale Local Development Area (the “Local Development Area”), pursuant to the provisions of KRS 65.7041 to KRS 65.7083 (the “TIF Act”), to encourage the development of a mixed-use project with an estimated \$400 million in new capital investment (the “Project”) within the approximate 272.025 acre Local Development Area. The Ordinance authorizes the execution of a Local Development Area Agreement (the “Agreement”) among the City, the County of Boone, Kentucky, Vinings Trace, LLC (the “Developer” of the Project); and the Finance Department of the City of Florence, Kentucky (as the “Agency” designated by the City in the Ordinance to oversee, administer and implement the Ordinance and Local Development Area). The Ordinance and Agreement pledges seventy-five percent (75%) of the City’s incremental revenues as defined in the Agreement, and in accordance with the TIF Act, for up to

thirty (30) years to reimburse or pay for Developer's Public Infrastructure Costs (as defined in the Agreement), up to a maximum recoverable amount from City and County incremental revenues of \$44 million, related to the Project.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance O-3-21. Councilmember Osborne motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Carroll. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- The Cirque Italia is underway at the Florence Mall and will be in town until May 2, 2021. Tickets may be purchased online. The Cirque Italia Water Circus is following all socially distance guidelines.
- The Cincinnati Soap Box Derby Fun Run is holding a Free Kid's Fun Run on Saturday, May 1, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Florence Y'all's parking lot. For more information, visit their website at soapboxderby.org/Cincinnati.
- The City of Florence will not be holding its annual Memorial Day Parade this year due to the uncertainty of the coronavirus and the safety of our participants, but instead will conduct a "SHOEBOX" parade. Participants may decorate a shoebox, as you would a float, with the theme of "Honoring Our Military." Once you have completed the shoebox float, take a photograph, and send the photo to our Community Events Coordinator for judging. All floats must be submitted by Friday, May 21, 2021. Awards will be announced at the Memorial Day Program. More information will be on our website and Facebook pages beginning May 3, 2021.
- The City does intend to host a Memorial Day Program on Monday, May 31, 2021 at the Boone County Veterans Memorial located at the Florence Government Center at 11:00 a.m. We will be honored to host the Northern Kentucky Brotherhood Singers and the Florence Community Band and Chorus. Join us as we pay tribute to our fallen military personnel.

RECOGNITION:

Mayor Whalen asked if any of the following desired recognition:

Department Heads:

Fire/EMS Chief, Scott Knoll:

Chief Knoll did not desire recognition.

Chief of Police, Tom Grau:

Chief Grau did not desire recognition.

Public Services Director, Eric Hall.

Mr. Hall did not desire recognition.

Members of City Council:

None desired recognition.

Audience:

Mohamed Omar, resident of Florence and student at Northern Kentucky University, wanted to extend an invitation to everyone for the An Iftar Celebration. The fast-breaking feast celebration will be held on May 6, 2021 at 8:00 p.m. at the new Islamic Center at 7009 Burlington Pike, Florence. They will be socially distancing and masks are required. He wants to bridge the gap between the communities and engage a relationship with city officials while enjoying food.

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 Osborne. **Councilmembers present voted aye**, the time being 6:58 p.m.

APPROVED:

/s/ Diane E. Whalen

Diane E. Whalen, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Melissa Kramer

Melissa Kramer, City Clerk

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