



**Florence City Council
Business Meeting
Tuesday, January 25, 2022
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, January 25, 2022 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 six (6) members of council were registered present: Dr. Julie Aubuchon (Vice-Mayor), Mel Carroll, J. Kelly Huff, David Osborne, Patricia Wingo, and Gary Winn.

Staff members present were: Assistant City Attorney, Thomas Nienaber; CFO/HR, Linda Chapman; Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren; Chief of Police, Tom Grau; Public Services Director, Eric Hall; Business & Community Development Director, Joshua Hunt; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Videographer, Spencer Foreman; and Police Lieutenant, Roger Allen.

The following were also present in the audience: The Ion Center CFO, Lisa Buerkley; The Ion Center CEO, Christy Burch; Communications and Community Projects Manager, Staci Leiker; Resident of Florence, Jenna Kemper; Resident of Boone County, Carlotta Lively; Resident of Florence, Aaron Gillum; Resident of Florence, Jonathan Sterling; The River City News Reporter, Trisha Scheyer; and observer, Thomas Judd.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2022, business meeting. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Huff. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

PRESENTATION – THE ION CENTER:

Mayor Whalen introduced and welcomed The Ion Center, CEO, Christy Burch, for a presentation to provide an update regarding their recent rebranding and services the center provides the community.

Ms. Burch thanked Mayor Whalen and city council for allowing her to provide an update regarding the center. Ms. Burch stated The Ion Center was formally The Women's Crisis Center. The name change was sought because the name, The Women's Crisis Center, did not represent the services provided. Services are provided to men, as well as women, and many individuals staying at the shelter were not classified as in crisis. The word crisis was a barrier for individuals requesting their services. Fortunately, they were awarded a grant for rebranding. The Ion Center's new branding was created through a philosophy that drives the center and the services it provides including prevention, intervention, compassion, collaboration, inclusion and protect.

In spite of the pandemic, the center has been able to stay open 24/7 with the help of their staff and volunteers. Throughout the pandemic, Ms. Burch stated twenty-six thousand bed nights were provided to adults and children in the shelter, seven hundred hours of emergency room support, seventeen hours of court advocacy, twelve thousand hours of therapy and counseling, and eight thousand crisis calls. Within the past year, a text line has been added providing additional help. All of the services provided are free of charge.

The next chapter of The Ion Center is utilizing community engagement. Ms. Burch stated the center wants to reduce the number of individuals being harmed and increase their volunteers. Currently, the center has been able to help in thirteen area high schools and two colleges. The City of Maysville is a Green Dot City and Ms. Burch would like to engage additional cities. A Green Dot community sees all community members as potential active bystanders and seeks to safely engage them in violence prevention. In addition, the center opened a kennel to provide individuals escaping violence a safe place for their pets.

Ms. Burch stated the center is growing and building off of their strong foundation. Also in attendance, Ms. Burch introduced Lisa Buerkley, the CFO of The Ion Center.

Councilmember Huff inquired as to the definition of power-based personal violence. Ms. Burch stated power-based personal violence is violence such as sexual violence, stalking, partner violence, and bullying. Any type of violence where an individual uses power and control against their victim. The term power-based personal violence was developed by a Green Dot Program at the University of Kentucky.

Councilmember Carroll stated he appreciated the services the center provides for the community.

Mayor Whalen thanked Ms. Burch for attending the meeting.

MOTION TO AMEND THE 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET FOR POSSIBLE AQUATIC CENTER FUNDING:

Councilmember Carroll motioned to amend the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget for possible aquatic center funding, with a second from Councilmember Aubuchon. (Further discussion was held following the motion.)

Councilmember Carroll opined that while the city has had challenges with the aquatic center in the past, it does provide a service to the community and he felt trying another year to see if it could turn around was worth a try.

Councilmember Aubuchon agreed with Councilmember Carroll and stated it was not open ended and they needed to be sensitive to the costs involved. She felt if the efficiency was not increased, they would be “back in the same boat”.

Councilmember Winn requested clarification that the motion was only for this coming season. Mayor Whalen clarified there were no funds in the budget currently for the aquatic center and the motion was to amend the budget to include the costs for this coming season.

Mayor Whalen inquired of CFO/HR, Linda Chapman, the amount of expenditures for the amendment. Ms. Chapman estimated the expenditure to be approximately \$610,000 based on the average costs the last two years the pool was open and the increase in the contract. The expenditure could be offset by revenues generated. However, based on inflation and the costs provided by the contracted management of the pool, the price will increase 30% to operate this coming season.

Councilmember Osborne expressed concern that the management company would have difficulty staffing the pool for the duration of the season as many local businesses are experiencing the same obstacle of employment challenges.

Councilmember Carroll stated to operate the pool requires approximately seventy employees and if the management company cannot staff the required amount of employees, it would be necessary to reduce the hours and amenities provided. He stated the motion was a one-time season experiment. He also informed everyone pool companies were experiencing shortages for supplies to operate and maintain a pool which also has caused an increase in pricing due to inflation.

Councilmember Huff expressed concern with regard to the necessary staffing and possible closure of the pool and amenities. He also wanted to reiterate to everyone the 30% increase it would cost to operate the pool this season.

Following the discussion with regard to the Motion to Amend the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Budget for Aquatic Center Funding by Councilmember Carroll and a second from Councilmember Aubuchon, Mayor Whalen requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Huff, no; Councilmember Aubuchon, yes; Councilmember Wingo, no; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized four yes votes, and two no votes, approving the Motion to Amend the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Budget for Aquatic Center Funding.**

FIRST READING ORDINANCE O-1-22:

Mayor Whalen read Ordinance O-1-22. An Ordinance adopting and approving a Zoning Map Amendment for a special sign district in a Recreation/Planned Development/Houston Donaldson Study Corridor Overlay (R/PD/HDO) zone for an approximate 196.5 acre site located at 7500 Turfway Road, Florence, Kentucky, to allow alternative signage.

The effect of this Ordinance is to allow a zoning map amendment for a Special Sign District in a Recreation/Planned Development/Houston Donaldson Study Corridor Overlay (R/PD/HDO) zone, which would allow alternative signage. This Ordinance does not change the zoning of the site, but approves a zoning map amendment for a Special Sign District based on its current zoning.

The full text of Ordinance O-1-22, including its Exhibits, is available for examination in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Florence, Kentucky, in the Florence Government Center, 8100 Ewing Boulevard, Florence, Kentucky, during regular office hours.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance O-1-22. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Aubuchon. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-1-22:

Mayor Whalen read Municipal Order MO-1-22. A Municipal Order approving the reappointment of Linda Schaffer to the Florence Board of Adjustment and Zoning Appeals for a four (4) year term.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to approve Municipal Order MO-1-22. Councilmember Huff motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-1-22 with a second from Councilmember Osborne. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mayor Whalen announced the Florence Water Tower would continue to glow orange again this week as a show of support for the Cincinnati Bengals as they play in the AFC Championship Game Sunday against the Kansas City Chiefs.
- Mayor Whalen informed everyone the Boone County Solid Waste will recycle holiday lights until February 1 at two non-contact drop-off locations in Burlington. All string lights are accepted. Look for the sign and a blue recycling bin drop-off at either the Boone County Public Works Office or the Boone County Conservation District.

RECOGNITION:

Mayor Whalen asked if any of the following desired recognition:

Department Heads:

Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren:

Chief Wren informed everyone the Fire/EMS Department recently promoted Chris Fuhrman to Captain and Shawn Ross to Lieutenant. He also stated they are currently accepting applications for new candidates.

Chief of Police, Tom Grau:

Chief Grau stated the Police Department will have a swearing in ceremony on February 4 for the promotions of Samantha Riley, Rick Saint-Blancard, and Michael Gonterman to the rank of Sergeant and Tad Ecklar, Kelli Chapman, and Ben Kolkmeier to the rank of Corporal. Their promotions will take effect on February 6.

Public Services Director, Eric Hall:

Mr. Hall stated the Shelby and Main Street Project will begin in February and anticipated completion prior to the end of the fiscal year. The project will provide additional parking on Main Street.

Members of City Council:

Councilmember Wingo was happy to know the project on Main Street was moving forward.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to KRS 61.810 (1)(b) acquisition/sale of real property - where publicity would be likely to affect the value of property to be acquired for public use or to be sold by the city.

Councilmember Huff so moved with a second from Councilmember Wingo. **All councilmembers present voted aye, the time being 6:24 p.m.** Mayor Whalen advised they would return to the room to adjourn and did not anticipate any further business taking place following Executive Session.

Mayor Whalen called for a motion to come back into session after the Executive Session. Councilmember Huff so moved, with a second from Councilmember Winn. **All councilmembers present voted aye, the time being 6:57 p.m.**

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 Winn. **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

