



**Florence City Council
Business Meeting
Tuesday, March 14, 2023
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Florence Government Center, 8100 Ewing Boulevard, Florence, Kentucky, with Mayor Julie M. Aubuchon presiding as chair.

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME:

Mayor Julie M. Aubuchon called the regular meeting to order and declared the regular session open for the presentation of all city business.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Aubuchon and Members of City Council recited the invocation.

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

The roll was called, and the following six (6) members of council were registered present: Mel Carroll, Lesley Chambers, Jenna Kemper (Vice-Mayor), 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 Engineer, Bill Viox; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Videographer, Perry Weber; and Police Lieutenant, Jeff Mallery.

The following were also present in the audience: Florence Police Department new police officer, Austin Dupree; Family and Friends of the new Florence Police Department police officer, Austin Dupree; Northern Kentucky Tribune Reporter, Trisha Scheyer; President of Countryside Condominium Homeowners Association, Stacey Arnett; Resident of Florence, Brian Kinross; Resident of Florence, Naomi Liebson; and Resident of Florence, Thomas Judd.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2023, business meeting. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Wingo. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

OATH OF OFFICE:

Chief Grau introduced the newest member of the Florence Police Department, Austin Dupree. Chief Grau stated Austin is twenty-eight years old and currently resides in Florence. Austin is a 2012 graduate of Ryle High School. After graduating high school, Austin was employed by Riegler Blacktop before enlisting in the United States Army. He served in the Army from 2018 to 2022. Chief Grau stated Austin is the son of Sean Dupree who works for our Public Services Department. Chief Grau stated the Florence Police Department is excited to be adding Austin to their department. Austin will leave for the academy on Sunday, April 9.

Mayor Aubuchon administered the oath of office and welcomed Austin to the City of Florence.

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-4-23:

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-4-23. A Municipal Order authorizing the City of Florence to Adopt and Enter into an Agreement with other Northern Kentucky Governmental Entities regarding the use of the City of Florence's Mobile Command Vehicle.

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Chief of Police, Tom Grau, with regard to the Municipal Order. Chief Grau stated the city has had the Mobile Command Vehicle since 2007. At that time, the city received a Grant to purchase the vehicle for use as a mobile command center for major incidents and large scale events throughout Northern Kentucky. The Grant stipulated that Florence maintain the vehicle, insure the vehicle and provide the vehicle to requesting agencies. Chief Grau explained there were no agreements with other agencies while using the vehicle should damage occur. The agreement would solidify that the agency using the vehicle would be responsible for any damage incurred during their use of the vehicle.

Councilmember Carroll inquired which agencies have previously used the Mobile Command Vehicle. Chief Grau stated the Mobile Command Vehicle has been used by Boone County, Campbell County, City of Newport, Coast Guard, and other agencies for their local county fairs and large events such as the WEBN fireworks.

Councilmember Carroll inquired where the vehicle was stored. Chief Grau stated the vehicle is stored at the Florence Fire/EMS Station on Weaver Road.

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve Municipal Order MO-4-23. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-4-23 with a second from Councilmember Winn. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

FIRST READING ORDINANCE O-5-23:

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Joshua J. Hunt, Business and Community Development Director, with regard to discussion and possible action with regard to Ordinance O-5-23, Heritage Fellowship.

Mr. Hunt referred to his PowerPoint presentation and identified the proposed project. He stated the request was from Heritage Assembly of God Church to remove the two existing free-standing signs and replace them with a monument sign with a full color electronic message board panel. Mr. Hunt stated the Boone County Planning Commission recommended approval with conditions. Conditions include the message to be displayed for a minimum of five second intervals on the message board, no moving displays, no message containing more than one still photo and three lines of text, and the sign shall not be used to advertise off premise businesses. Mr. Hunt advised the Florence Planning & Zoning Committee met and recommended approval with no additional comments or public hearings.

Councilmember Chambers inquired with regard to the messaging and whether it would have school or religious messages and ensure the messages would not be controversial or offensive to residents. Mr. Hunt stated the city could not regulate what messages are displayed as Heritage Assembly of God Church is protected by the first amendment. However, he believed the messages would be school related activities. He noted other churches within the city have signs and to his knowledge, the city has not received any complaints.

No further questions or comments were necessitated. Therefore, Mayor Aubuchon read Ordinance O-5-23. An Ordinance Adopting and Approving a Zoning Map Amendment for a Special Sign District in a Suburban Residential Two (SR-2) and Office One (O-1) District for an approximate 20.7 acre site located at 7216 US 42, Florence, Kentucky, to allow a free standing sign having an electronic message board/panel. (Heritage Fellowship)

The effect of this Ordinance is to allow a zoning map amendment for a Special Sign District in a Suburban Residential Two (SR-2) and Office One (O-1) District, which would allow a free standing sign having an electronic message board/panel.

The full text of Ordinance O-5-23, 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 Aubuchon called for a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance O-5-23. Councilmember Osborne motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Kemper. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

FIRST READING ORDINANCE O-6-23:

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Joshua J. Hunt, Business and Community Development Director, with regard to discussion and possible action regarding Ordinance O-6-23, Prime Car Wash, LLC.

Mr. Hunt referred to his PowerPoint presentation and identified the proposed project and site area. Mr. Hunt stated the proposed project was a Prime Car Wash and was to be located at the former Swifty Gas Station and adjacent lot on Burlington Pike. Mr. Hunt identified renderings of the project and stated the architecture exceeds the Central Florence Overlay District Architecture requirements. He explained the site has two existing curb cuts and one will be removed. A Public Hearing was held and comments from the residents included inquiry with regard to the storm water

detention, lights, noise and the fence. Mr. Hunt stated he spoke with the residents and they were concerned with the detention basin. Mr. Hunt stated the project will include an underground detention facility. The residents also wanted to ensure the fence along the backside of the property would remain and council would not have the fence removed. The project is an 11,250 square foot carwash, with 5 bays, exterior vacuums, 12' stacking lanes and 17 parking stalls. Additionally, conditions included the amended architectural and building colors, awnings, rooftop mechanical unit, lighting conditions with no bleed over, and ensure the fence remained as depicted on the renderings. Mr. Hunt advised the Florence Planning & Zoning Committee met and recommended approval with no additional comments or public hearings.

No questions or comments were necessitated. Therefore, Mayor Aubuchon read Ordinance O-6-23. An Ordinance Adopting and Approving a Change in an Approved Concept Development Plan in a Commercial Two/Planned Development/Parkway Corridor Study Overlay (C-2/PD/PO) District for an approximate 1.3 acre site area located at 7592 and 7600 Burlington Pike, Florence, Kentucky, to allow a car wash. (Prime Car Wash, LLC)

The effect of this Ordinance is to allow a car wash on an approximate 1.3 acre site in a Commercial Two/Planned Development/Parkway Corridor Study Overlay (C-2/PD/PO) District.

The full text of Ordinance O-6-23, 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 Blvd., Florence, Kentucky, during regular office hours.

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance O-6-23. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Wingo. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mayor Aubuchon informed everyone the Youth in Government Program was ongoing this week schools were visiting the Florence Government Center.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced local fish fry's: Center Table Catering at Brighton Recovery Center, 375 Weaver Road, Florence; St. Paul Parish at 7301 Dixie Hwy, Florence from 4:30-7:30 p.m. At St. Paul Parish, individuals may dine in or drive thru and order online up to 6:30 p.m.; Heritage Academy will have one fish fry this Friday on March 17; and World of Golf.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the Family Nurturing Center Blue Ribbon Ceremony will be held on Friday, March 24 at Tom Gill Chevrolet. The event will be from 11:30-1:00 p.m. The event is a kick-off to Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the Florence Aquatic Center memberships will go on sale beginning March 30. There will be a pre-season sale March 30-April 6 with a 25% discount and pre-season prize giveaway. Memberships will be sold online only through the city website. For more information, please call the Florence Public Services Department at 859-647-5416.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the Florence Police Department will host the Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 1 at Thomas More Stadium, Home of the Florence Y'all's. The

event will begin at 10:00 a.m. and have games, music, photos with the Easter Bunny and local vendors. For additional information, please contact the Community Services Coordinator, Victoria, at 859-647-5425.

- Mayor Aubuchon informed everyone she hosted her first Coffee with the Mayor the previous evening at Florence Biggby. A portion of the sale proceeds were donated to the Florence Lions. Mayor Aubuchon stated she met many residents and also had the opportunity to meet Stacey Arnett with Countryside Condominiums.

RECOGNITION:

Mayor Aubuchon asked if any of the following desired recognition:

Members of City Council:

None desired recognition.

Department Heads:

Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren:

Chief Wren did not desire recognition.

Public Services Director, Eric Hall:

Mr. Hall provided an update with regard to lane closures on KY 18 for a project by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. He informed everyone crews would be working daily, beginning March 13 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. to install a concrete median. Lane closures will be in place on KY 18 from the overpass over Interstate 71/75 to just past the TA Travel Center. The middle lane will be closed on the exit ramp from I-71/75 southbound to Burlington Pike (KY18). The far-right lane on the KY 18 overpass over I-71/75 will also be closed. He explained, once motorists approach the travel center, they will be shifted back to the right lane away from the work zone area. The work has a completion date of Monday, April 3.

Mayor Aubuchon recognized Rodney Deno and Jacob Carpenter for obtaining their Road Scholars Certification. Mr. Hall stated the Road Scholar Program is offered through the University of Kentucky and provides an opportunity for personnel to receive specialized training.

Chief of Police, Tom Grau:

Chief Grau did not desire recognition.

Members of the Audience:

Brian Kinross, Resident of Florence, announced NKY Swims will host their 2nd Annual Race Back to the FAC 5k on Saturday, May 27, Memorial Day Weekend. Mr. Kinross stated the race had 47 participants last year and he hopes to double the participants this year.

Naomi Liebson, Resident of Florence, stated during the last wind storm, a large tree was blown over and blocked her street, Utz Drive. She stated multiple residents called 911 and Boone

County Dispatch to have the city remove the tree. The tree knocked down power lines. Ms. Liebson was concerned with the rain, tree, downed power lines and the residents on Utz Drive surveying the damage. Ms. Liebson believed no one from the city came to help and no one arrived until Duke Energy the following day. Ms. Liebson was concerned and inquired as to why the city failed to respond.

Eric Hall, Public Services Director, stated the Public Services Department staff was dispatched within an hour of the call. When the crew arrived on scene, they identified the downed power lines and contacted Duke Energy to remove the hazard before any additional work could be performed. Mr. Hall stated the city crews responded and were on scene within an hour of being notified.

Ms. Liebson inquired the time crews were dispatched. Mr. Hall stated he did not have the exact time, but as soon as they were dispatched by the Police Department, the initial response was within the hour.

Ms. Liebson stated she arrived home at 6:19 p.m. and the tree was already down. She was unsure if the crews arrived before she was home. Ms. Liebson stated the neighbors cordoned off the area with garbage cans.

Mayor Aubuchon did not believe that was a good idea with the 50 mph winds during the storm. She stated the day of the storm, Governor Beshear had declared a State of Emergency. With the State of Emergency, Mayor Aubuchon stated residents should take cover and not be outside.

Chief Grau stated they received hundreds of calls that evening. Calls are responded to and prioritized. He explained that even with the wind storm, unfortunately, all calls do not stop. Chief Grau stated the Fire/EMS Department was on scene with 5-7 minutes of being dispatched.

Mayor Aubuchon stated there were 50,000 people without power that night and commended Duke Energy for being on site within eighteen hours to remove the lines and restore power. She encouraged patience and a reminder if you see down power lines, stay away from them. She explained the city crews are not trained with power lines and they have to wait for Duke Energy.

Ms. Liebson stated her boyfriend is a trained electrician and is aware of the safety issues with power lines. Ms. Liebson was reassured and stated the city obviously responded before she arrived home.

CLOSED SESSION:

There was no need for Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Carroll so moved, with a second from Councilmember Winn. **Councilmembers present voted aye**, the time being 6:29 p.m.

APPROVED:

/s/ Julie M. Aubuchon
Julie M. Aubuchon, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Melissa Kramer
Melissa Kramer, City Clerk

