



**Florence City Council  
Business Meeting  
Tuesday, November 28, 2023  
6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, November 28, 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 four (4) members of council were registered present: Lesley Chambers, Jenna Kemper (Vice-Mayor), Patricia Wingo, and Gary Winn. Councilmembers Mel Carroll and David A. Osborne were absent.

Staff members present were: City Attorney, Thomas R. Nienaber; CFO/HR, Linda Chapman; Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren; Police Chief, Tom Grau; Public Services Director, Eric Hall; Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua J. Hunt; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Videographer, Perry Weber; and Police Lieutenant, Nathan Rettig.

The following were also present in the audience: Executive Director of the Boone County Planning Commission, Kevin Costello; Community Development Services Director of the Boone County Planning Commission, Jenna LeCount; Preservation Planner of the Boone County Planning Commission, Bridget Striker; Florence Police Department new police officer, Justin Tucker; Friends and family of new police officer, Justin Tucker; Police Lieutenant, Jeff Mallery; Resident of Florence, Stacey Arnett; Resident of Florence, Thomas Judd; and Northern Kentucky Tribune Reporter, Trisha Scheyer.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2023, business meeting. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Winn. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

**OATH OF OFFICE:**

Chief Grau introduced the newest member of the Florence Police Department, Justin Tucker. Chief Grau stated Justin was 39 years old and currently resides in Florence with his wife and four children. He grew up in Fayette County, Tennessee and graduated from Middleton High school in 2003. Justin has sixteen years of law enforcement experience, starting his career for the Fayette County Sheriff's Department before moving on to Moscow Police Department and then Collierville Police Department, all in Tennessee. Approximately three years ago, Justin transferred to the Elsmere Police Department before coming to the City of Florence. Chief Grau stated Justin will be starting in the Field Training Program immediately.

Mayor Aubuchon administered the oath of office and Chief Grau presented Justin with his badge.

**PRESENTATION – BOONE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2045:**

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Kevin Costello, Executive Director of the Boone County Planning Commission to present the Boone County Comprehensive Plan Update 2045.

Mr. Costello thanked everyone, and stated Kentucky law requires the Comprehensive Plan be evaluated every five years due to the vast changes in the community. The previous evaluation of the goals and objectives began in 2017 and was adopted in 2019. He explained the Planning Commission serves the City of Florence and the other two cities in the county. The City of Florence has six board members who are appointed by the Mayor and ratified by the city council representing the city. The comprehensive plan is a general plan of what direction the city and county are going in the next 20-25 years. Mr. Costello stated the success of the county, and the cities has been the collaboration of working together on development.

Mr. Costello introduced the Community Development Services Director of the Boone County Planning Commission, Jenna LeCount.

Ms. LeCount stated the Comprehensive Plan is completed in two parts. Currently, the Planning Commission is in the beginning of the first part which is creating the goals and objectives. She explained the Planning Commission has five commissioners working on the Comprehensive Plan. Initial language was taken from the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. Ms. LeCount stated the first draft has been completed and a copy has been provided to each of the councilmembers. The draft will go through a public comment period before being finalized and being adopted by legislation. Ms. LeCount stated the Boone County Planning Commission is unable to proceed with the second part of the plan, which are recommendations, until the goals and objectives are in place.

Ms. LeCount explained the overall goal of the Boone County Comprehensive Plan is to make Boone County a leader in the region. There are two goals associated with demographics. The first goal is meeting the need through orderly growth by not discriminating and meeting the needs of the population. The second goal is to provide safe, sound, and sanitary housing opportunities for all Boone County residents.

Reviewing the goals of the plan, Ms. LeCount stated there is one goal for the environment which is recognizing and protecting natural systems essential to safety, health, economic stability, and overall quality of life in the land use planning process by protecting and maintaining the developmentally sensitive and scenic areas. The goal is to also consider natural and ecological systems during development design.

Additionally, there are three goals associated with Natural and Cultural Resources. The first goal is to provide adequate active and passive recreation facilities; the second goal is to protect and sustain resource lands such as agriculture and related uses; and the third goal is to ensure significant cultural resources and natural features in Boone County are documented, preserved, and interpreted.

With regard to the economy, Ms. LeCount stated there are two goals. The first goal is to promote a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable economy that recognizes the value of the natural environment and encourages innovation and prosperity with meaningful employment and living opportunities while developing a highly skilled and educated workforce. The second goal is to promote a variety of industries and develop businesses in suitable and compatible locations.

There is another goal associated with public facilities which is to ensure safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible public services and facilities exist for all residents and businesses in Boone County by efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure and building and maintaining infrastructure systems to support current and future growth.

Ms. LeCount explained transportation was a large point of discussion in all of the public input meetings and a large topic of discussion during the long-range planning committee. There are currently four goals associated with transportation. The first goal is to recognize the interdependence between transportation systems and land use patterns by maintaining systems across jurisdictions, encouraging all modes of transportation, and utilizing transportation facilities and services in supporting economic development. The second goal focuses on safety. The third transportation goal is about quality of life and how that relates to transportation and how the county develops with respect to transportation. The fourth goal is regarding freight, which was absent from goals and objectives discussions, to promote safety through infrastructure improvements and increase capacity through efficient and innovative strategies.

Currently, the Planning Commission is appearing in front of all legislative units to receive input on the goals and objectives. Public comments will begin on December 11 and remain open for approximately one month. A review will take place in January with the long-range planning committee to provide a final draft to present at a public hearing in front of the Boone County Planning Commission in February. With a successful public hearing, the Planning Commission

would vote to recommend the goals and objectives to the four legislative units for legislative approval in April. Ms. LeCount opened the floor for any questions or comments.

Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua Hunt stated that the City of Florence hopes to have their comments to the Boone County Planning Commission by the beginning of the year. He stated a memo would be provided to councilmembers with an outline of comments being sent to the Boone County Planning Commission in the next few weeks.

Mayor Aubuchon thanked Mr. Costello and Ms. LeCount for providing the information.

**DISCUSSION – BUDGET AMENDMENT # 1 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024:**

Mayor Aubuchon called upon CFO/HR, Linda Chapman to discuss budget amendment # 1 for fiscal year 2023 – 2024.

Ms. Chapman noted there were changes made due to carryovers for budgeted operating and capital items, increases in estimates for capital projects and the incorporation of the period year audited fund balance amounts from the fiscal year 2023 year-end audit.

Ms. Chapman referenced the proposed amendments and identified information provided in the packets:

Page 1/2 – General Fund – Revenues were adjusted upward for Occupational license, payroll taxes, grants, emergency medical services, penalties and interest and auction proceeds.

Page 6/7 - General Fund – Departmental Expenditures were adjusted for bank service charges, computer services, professional support, administration capital outlay and security system.

Page 8/9 – Municipal Aid, Infrastructure, and Asset Forfeiture Funds were increased due to interest income increases and carryover from the Weaver Road sidewalk grant and Center Street grant projects. Health and dental funds were increased due to interest rate increases.

Page 10 – Aquatic Center Fund Revenues and Expenditures was increased due to interest rate increases; accounts were adjusted to reflect anticipated expenditures.

Page 11 – Golf Course Fund Revenues and Expenditures were increased due to interest rate increases.

Page 13 – Water & Sewer Fund Revenues and Expenditures were increased due to interest rate increases and final CDBG grant funds for utility assistance payments from the prior year.

Ms. Chapman concluded her presentation and requested any questions.

Mayor Aubuchon reminded councilmembers that the step increase for employees that was approved in the budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year would take place in January, if no one objected. No councilmembers objected.

No further questions or discussion were needed and Mayor Aubuchon advised an Ordinance would be placed on the next agenda for first reading.

**DISCUSSION – DELINQUENT TAXES:**

Mayor Aubuchon called upon CFO/HR, Linda Chapman to discuss the delinquent tax ordinance which was initially adopted in 1983.

Ms. Chapman explained statutes had been updated since the initial ordinance was adopted necessitating an update to the ordinance. Changes in the ordinance included the following:

1. The title of City Clerk would be changed to Chief Financial Officer.
2. The fee paid to the City Attorney for each delinquent tax letter written would increase from \$5 to \$25. The fee will continue to be added to the delinquent tax bill as it had in the past.
3. A meeting will occur each year between the City Attorney and Chief Financial Officer to confer as to whether to file suit on delinquent taxpayers or explore other remedies.
4. Any legal fees incurred by the City Attorney will be paid at the current hourly rate at the time the suit is initiated.

Ms. Chapman concluded her presentation and requested any questions or comments.

No questions or discussion were needed and Mayor Aubuchon advised an Ordinance would be placed on the next agenda for first reading.

**MAYOR’S REPORT:**

- Mayor Aubuchon reminded everyone that the Florence Fire/EMS Department and Florence Police Department, in partnership with Meijer, were filling the truck with donations for the Boone County Family Resource Center Saturday, December 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She encouraged everyone to stop by Meijer in Florence at 4990 Houston Road and consider donating toys or hygiene products including soap, shampoo, deodorant, and toothpaste. She stated you can have your photo taken with Santa on the Fire Truck while you help give back to the community.
- Mayor Aubuchon encouraged everyone to attend the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting and Winter Wonderland Village Event on Tuesday, December 5, at the Florence Government Center. The ornaments used to decorate the tree will be made by the children of the community. She encouraged everyone to pick up an ornament in the Administration Department. In addition to the traditional tree lighting and musical presentation, there will be a Winter Wonderland Village with Elf craft stations, a North Pole mailbox, hot chocolate bar, live music provided by the City of Florence Band and Ockerman Middle School choir, visits and photos with Santa, storytime with Mrs. Claus, train display and the incredible lights displays from our Public Services Department.

**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 did not desire recognition.

Chief of Police, Tom Grau:

Chief Grau did not desire recognition.

Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua J. Hunt:

Mr. Hunt did not desire recognition.

Members of the Audience:

None desired recognition.

**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 Winn so moved, with a second from Councilmember Wingo. **Councilmembers present voted aye**, the time being 6:47 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

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

**ATTEST:**

/s/ Melissa Kramer  
Melissa Kramer, City Clerk

