



**Florence City Council
Business Meeting
Tuesday, December 12, 2023
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, December 12, 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 A. Osborne, Patricia Wingo, and Gary Winn.

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 Engineer, Bill Viox; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Videographer, Joel Clines; and Police Lieutenant, Jeff Mallery.

The following were also present in the audience: Representatives of the Boone County Pee Wee Athletic Association, Inc; President Elect of the Boone County Pee Wee Athletic Association, Chris Gunkel; Resident of Florence, Angie Cable; Resident of Florence, Nancy Corman; Resident of Florence, Thomas Judd; LINK nky Reporter, Douglas Clark; and Northern Kentucky Tribune Reporter, Trisha Scheyer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

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

DISCUSSION – BOONE COUNTY PEE WEE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.:

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua Hunt, regarding the Boone County Pee Wee Athletic Association, Inc.

Mr. Hunt referenced the information contained in council packets regarding the Boone County Pewee Athletic Association (BCPWAA) and explained the organization was a longstanding registered 501(c)(3), located at 1 Gridiron Drive, Florence, Kentucky. Established in 1969, as the Boone County Pee Wee Football League, the organization serves the youth and families of Northern Kentucky. Mr. Hunt stated the organization had been cornerstone of providing athletic opportunities for Florence residents from Kindergarten through eighth grade. Representatives with the association approached the city to inquire if the city would be interested in providing financial support for capital improvements to the facility. Currently, the synthetic turf field and lights require significant capital improvements. Discussion was held with regard to bond financing and was determined not to be advantageous. The next proposal was a request for traditional financing. Pursuant to KRS 82.082, public funds could be used for the furtherance of a public purpose, aligning with the invaluable role played by the BCPWAA in serving the youth of Florence. Mr. Hunt directed everyone's attention to the draft term sheet and explained the proposed financing, assets associated with the property, and required annexation. He stated should city council decide to move forward, the subsequent steps involve authorizing the Mayor to close on the loan via Municipal Order and city council passing an annexation ordinance.

Mr. Hunt opened the floor for questions from the BCPWAA representatives in attendance.

Chris Gunkel, President-elect of the BCPWAA, stated he would take official office in January and had served as vice president since 2020. Mr. Gunkel explained the organization had been in the community since 1969 and was a cornerstone/pillar for youth in our community. Initially, the organization was known as the Boone County Pewee Football League and focused on tackle football and cheer. Since that time, the organization has evolved and now offers flag football, baseball, and wrestling. He explained that their mission was not necessarily to raise the greatest athletes but teach them that in the game of life when it is time to take a test in school, when it is time to make friends, when it is time for them to grow up, they are going to know that you may lose, but it is about the next play or opportunity. They try to instill that in the youth to hopefully make them effective in the community.

Councilmember Carroll expressed his support of the organization and the contributions made over the years to the community. He was happy to support the BCPWAA.

Councilmember Chambers asked what they did with youth from disadvantaged households that may want to participate in the organization in the community.

Mr. Gunkel replied that every child could play. The organization does offer payment plans and assist in any way they can to ensure all children can participate. He stated "...at the end of the day, there's not a soul in this room that would not step forward and offer to pay somebody's registration. It's happened time and time again, whether it's myself or another coach. If there's a kid that shows

up that they don't have cleats, the next practice, they have cleats because somebody else stepped up. So, every kid gets to play.”

Councilmember Winn expressed his support for the organization and the tenure of the organization.

Councilmember Wingo stated while she was not originally from Florence, she had been in the city for twenty years and her grandchildren have made use of the facility. She expressed the importance of youth playing sports and keeping the organization as an asset for the community.

Councilmember Kemper expressed her support for the organization and how important sports recreation is for the community and youth.

Councilmember Osborne inquired with regard to the financing and expressed his support for the organization. He wished them well and wanted to ensure that they would be invited to the first game.

Mr. Hunt explained the next steps regarding annexation and legislative items. He also commended Chief Grau as the advocate for the support of the organization.

Mayor Aubuchon reiterated Councilmember Wingo’s statements and expressed her support for the organization and youth in sports. Mayor Aubuchon stated she holds the organization near and dear to her heart as she was part of the organization for eight years and cheered for the Blackhawks, Jets, Dolphins and Razorbacks. She maintains the connections she made and believes the organization is the fabric of our community.

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-25-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-25-2023. A Municipal Order approving a real estate purchase agreement between the City of Florence, Kentucky, and 31 Girard Place LLC, for the property located at 21 Girard Street, Florence, Kentucky.

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve Municipal Order MO-25-2023. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-25-2023 with a second from Councilmember Winn.

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua Hunt, with regard to the Municipal Order. Mr. Hunt advised the property was previously discussed and the intent of the city was to purchase the property, which was the first African American Church in Boone County and work on historic preservation.

No further discussion was necessitated and based on the motion to approve Municipal Order MO-25-2023 by Councilmember Wingo and seconded by Councilmember Winn, Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized six yes votes approving Municipal Order**

MO-25-2023 by unanimous vote.

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-23-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-23-2023. A Municipal Order Approving the Reappointment of Alegra Spille to the City of Florence Urban Forest Commission for a three (3) year term.

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve Municipal Order MO-23-2023. Councilmember Carroll motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-23-2023 with a second from Councilmember Osborne. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized six yes votes approving Municipal Order MO-23-2023 by unanimous vote.**

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-24-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-24-2023. A Municipal Order approving the reappointment of Phillip Yannarella to the City of Florence Urban Forest Commission for a three (3) year term.

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve Municipal Order MO-24-2023. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-24-2023 with a second from Councilmember Wingo. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized six yes votes approving Municipal Order MO-24-2023 by unanimous vote.**

FIRST READING ORDINANCE O-31-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Ordinance O-31-2023. An Ordinance providing a procedure for the annual collection by the City Attorney of Delinquent Ad Valorem City Taxes and Assessments Upon Real Estate and Personal Property; fixing the fees of the City Attorney for such collection; and repealing previous Ordinance No. O-3-83.

The foregoing Ordinance effectively repeals the previous City Ordinance No. O-3-83 dealing with collection of delinquent taxes. The subject Ordinance provides for policies and procedures to be followed by the City Attorney when initiating attempts to collect delinquent ad valorem City taxes and assessments upon real estate and personal property. The Ordinance also provides criteria to be followed when determining whether litigation should be undertaken for the collection of such delinquent taxes.

The full text of Ordinance O-31-2023 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-31-2023. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Carroll. No discussion was necessitated. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized six yes votes approving the first reading of Ordinance O-31-2023 by unanimous vote.**

FIRST READING ORDINANCE O-32-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Ordinance O-32-2023. An Ordinance of the City of Florence, Kentucky, amending the budget for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year of the City (Amendment #1)

This Ordinance represents an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget for the City of Florence. The purpose of this Amendment is to reflect the following changes in the City Budget:

1. Several Revenue Budget amounts were adjusted upward as a result of prior year results;
2. Administrative Departmental Expenditures for bank service charges increased due to interest income increases;
3. Capital outlays for computer purchases increased;
4. Increases in interest income have been realized;
5. Interest income increases have been reflected in the Municipal Aid Fund, Infrastructure Fund, Asset Forfeiture Fund, Golf Course Fund, Water/Sewer Fund; and Health and Dental Fund; and
6. All beginning fund balances have been changed to reflect those changes since the June 30, 2023 year-end audit report.

The full text of Ordinance O-32-2023 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-32-2023. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Carroll. No discussion was necessitated. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized six yes votes approving the first reading of Ordinance O-32-2023 by unanimous vote.**

FIRST READING ORDINANCE O-33-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Ordinance O-33-2023. An Ordinance relating to personnel: amending Ordinance O-17-2023 relating to personnel policies, job descriptions, authorized positions, and the pay plan.

This Ordinance makes revisions to the Job Descriptions, Pay Plan and list of Authorized Position Sections of the Personnel Policies and Procedures.

The full text of Ordinance O-33-2023, 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-33-2023. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Winn.

Mayor Aubuchon called upon Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren, with regard to the EMS officer position. Chief Wren stated he wanted to revisit the EMS Captain position that was eliminated July 1. He explained as the department had evolved, with most services now being EMS-related, he felt it was necessary to elevate the EMS Captain position to a Battalion Commander position in fiscal year 2024. Concurrently, he decided to eliminate the EMS Captain position and introduced the Paramedic-Only position to the authorized roles, aiming for an efficient allocation of resources. Considering the current volume of EMS activity and the addition of the Paramedic-Only position, combined with specific situations where command staff may be unavailable to oversee frontline personnel in the field, Chief Wren stated he recognized that maintaining the EMS Captain position would have been a more strategic choice. Therefore, Chief Wren requested the reinstatement of the EMS Captain role to the city's authorized positions, along with a revision of associated job duties.

No further discussion was necessitated and based on the motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance O-33-2023 by Councilmember Wingo and seconded by Councilmember Winn, Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized six yes votes approving the first reading of Ordinance O-33-2023 by unanimous vote.**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mayor Aubuchon expressed her appreciation to everyone that attended the Holiday Tree Lighting and Winter Wonderland Village. She thanked all the city personnel involved. She encouraged everyone to see the artwork from the first art contest on display. Councilmember Wingo expressed her appreciation for the event and Mrs. Claus (City Clerk).
- Mayor Aubuchon attended the Cincinnati State Paramedic Graduation the previous evening and expressed her enjoyment of the event. Chief Wren explained the importance of the program for the city.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the Boone County Comprehensive Plan 2024 link for public comment was now on the City Facebook page. Councilmember Kemper asked if the city was involved in the procession for the John Preston Journey. Chief Wren replied yes and Chief Grau explained the purpose of the journey in remembrance of losing his older brother, Michael, Marine and Boone County Sheriff's Deputy, to suicide.

Chief Wren stated the journey was 22 miles a day, similar to the event the city hosted during Veterans Day, to raise awareness of suicide. The procession came through Florence and stopped at Station 31 earlier in the day.

Councilmember Kemper asked if the city escorted them. Chief Wren replied yes and explained the procession.

Mayor Aubuchon stated she witnessed the procession at her office today.

- Mayor Aubuchon provided a recap of the toy drive at Meijer which was held by the Fire/EMS Department and Police Department.

Chief Wren stated Santa Claus and Meijer personnel were happy with the success of the event.

- Mayor Aubuchon expressed her thankfulness for the completion of the Weaver Road sidewalk.

Mr. Hall commended Mr. Viox's team for their work and design of the project.

Mr. Viox stated the project was longer expected due to various obstacles, but he was pleased with the result.

- Mayor Aubuchon announced the Florence Government Center would be closed on Friday, December 22, 2023, and Monday, December 25, 2023, for the Christmas holiday and resume regular hours on Tuesday, December 26, 2023.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced city offices would be closed on Monday, January 1, 2024, for New Year's Day and resume regular hours on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

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 Carroll so moved, with a second from Councilmember Winn. **Councilmembers present voted aye**, the time being 6:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Melissa Kramer
Melissa Kramer, City Clerk

APPROVED:

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

