



**Florence City Council
Special Meeting
Tuesday, December 19, 2023
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in special session on Tuesday, December 19, 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 special meeting to order and declared the meeting open for the presentation of items on the special meeting agenda.

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 five (5) members of council were registered present: Mel Carroll, Lesley Chambers, Jenna Kemper (Vice-Mayor), Patricia Wingo, and Gary Winn. Councilmember David A. Osborne was 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, Joel Clines; and Police Lieutenant, Jeff Mallery.

The following were also present in the audience: Resident of Florence, Angie Cable; Resident of Florence, Nancy Corman; 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 December 12, 2023, business meeting. Councilmember Carroll motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Wingo. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-26-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-26-2023. A Municipal Order approving the appointment of Casey Sorrell 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-26-2023. Councilmember Carroll motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-26-2023 with a second from Councilmember Winn. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes. **Roll call recognized five yes votes approving Municipal Order MO-26-2023 by unanimous vote.**

RESOLUTION R-5-2023:

Mayor Aubuchon read Resolution R-5-2023. A Resolution of the Legislative Body of the City of Florence, Kentucky, Adopting Ethics Principles and Code of Conduct for all Elected Officials and Employees.

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve Resolution R-5-2023. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve Resolution R-5-2023 with a second from Councilmember Winn. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes. **Roll call recognized five yes votes approving Resolution R-5-2023 by unanimous vote.**

SECOND 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 second reading of Ordinance O-31-2023. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve, 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. **Roll**

call recognized five yes votes approving the second reading of Ordinance O-31-2023 by unanimous vote.

SECOND 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 second reading of Ordinance O-32-2023. Councilmember Carroll motioned to approve, 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. **Roll call recognized five yes votes approving the second reading of Ordinance O-32-2023 by unanimous vote.**

SECOND 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 second reading of Ordinance O-33-2023.

Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve, with a second from Councilmember Winn. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Carroll, yes; Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes. **Roll call recognized five yes votes approving the second reading of Ordinance O-33-2023 by unanimous vote.**

2023 YEAR END CITY ACHIEVEMENTS & MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mayor Aubuchon announced city offices 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.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the city would have their Christmas treecycling pickup on Wednesday, January 3, 2024. Trees must be placed at the curb the night before to be collected on Wednesday. Please remove all tinsel ornaments, ribbons and lights and do not place the tree in a bag. Contact the Public Services Department at 859.647.5416 for more information.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the city would have a Christmas treecycling drop off at Stringtown Park (7340 Burlington Pike), January 2-7, 2024. Please remove all tinsel ornaments, ribbons, lights, and bags.

Mayor Aubuchon presented her year-end address.

“As we near the end of my first year as Mayor, I would like to reflect on the progress we have made together. It has been my commitment to the residents to provide the vision and leadership that our great city needs to thrive and be the most desired city in the region.

As the Mayor of Northern Kentucky's leading city for shopping, entertainment, business, and diverse housing options, I am truly proud to lead the team of over 250 dedicated employees that work tirelessly to deliver topnotch city services, offer bountiful recreation opportunities, and ensure safe neighborhoods. It has been my pleasure to work with work with our city council members, Jenna Kemper Mel Carroll, Lesley Chambers, David A. Osborne, Gary Winn and Pat Wingo to pass legislative priorities that position Florence as a well-managed fiscally conservative city. I want to express my gratitude to city council for their invaluable insight and encouragement. This year, your dedication has been instrumental to our progress. This year, I presented council with 75 legislative items for passage which promote economic growth. They update our policies and ensure we are evolving and advancing our community. The initiative of the home ownership grant, creation of arts programs, addition of new events and the establishment of Veterans Commission are just examples of the testament to the willingness of council to entertain new ideas while creating positive change. I extend my deepest gratitude to city council for their unwavering commitment to our shared vision.

I would also like to thank our department heads led by our Director of Administration/City Administrator, Josh Hunt, CFO/HR, Linda Chapman, Fire/EMS Chief Rodney Wren, Chief of Police, Tom Grau, and Public Services Director, Eric Hall.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the exceptional leadership of our department heads and express my heartfelt thanks to them and every city employee who has been instrumental in making our city a better place to live, work and play. Your hard work and dedication are commendable. In council chambers this evening, you may have noticed banners which reflect the

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highlighted achievements of each city department. This year, we cannot state each milestone and accomplishment but have highlighted a few from each city department denoting their commendable milestones which contributed to the success of our community.

The Administration Department, led by our Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua Hunt, attracted business growth and expansion with companies investing over \$400 million in new buildings, equipment, and infrastructure. The jobs created through these projects will sustain the City of Florence's economic growth and prosperity for years to come. Legislatively, the department has been efficient in manage in the management and coordination of city operations, ensuring legislation is adopted and implemented within the city. The department's commitment to transparency and accountability has set a strong pre precedent for good governance in the coming year. City council meetings will be live streamed to ensure every resident has accessibility to our meetings. Furthermore, we published an activity guide earlier this year and have created a revised more detailed community guide that will be published and distributed to every resident in Florence, providing valuable information to our citizens. The department oversaw the execution of 21 events including exciting editions such as our summer concert series, car show and other engaging activities, bringing our community together like our National Night out. In 2024, we are adding even more events to ensure there is something for everyone from cultural events to neighborhood night outs. These events will strengthen our community resilience and ensure we are all inclusive for all in this ever-changing world. We want to ensure that events in our community are inviting.

We have seen several important staff changes this year with key hire hires in various departments to strengthen our team's capabilities in the administration department. The establishment of the Human Services Administrator position will begin in January of 2024 and this administrator will undoubtedly advance our mission to ensure everyone in Florence. Even our most valuable, even our most vulnerable has the opportunity to thrive.

The Public Services Department led by Public Services Director, Eric Hall, has been at the forefront for enhancing our community's infrastructure with numerous projects completed improving the quality of life for all residents this year. Their highlighted achievements include leading the installation of the state's first branded overpass on KY18, adding a distinctive element to the landscape of the city while promoting unique identity and community pride. The department spearheaded and successfully executed a citywide initiative to upgrade water meters, enhancing accuracy. And third, the department successfully led the transition to a paper free environment, implementing digital streamlining processes that facilitate smoother and more efficient services for residents and businesses. We thank them for their commitment to ensuring that our community is at the forefront of the standard of our residents, businesses and visitors have come to enjoy and rely on.

The Finance Department led by Linda Chapman, Chief Financial Officer and Human Resources Director, has led her and her team's diligence efforts to ensure fiscal responsibility link a sustainable financial foundation for the city. The department successfully implemented a Springbrook software upgrade, ensuring finance resource management is state of the art. The department encountered over 11,000 citizens achieving outstanding customer service by skillfully handling these inquiries and concerns, demonstrating exceptional communication and problem-solving abilities. The department maintained excellence in financial reporting, securing distinguished budget awards for the 18th consecutive year, showcasing a consistent commitment to precision and financial transparency. Their fiscal responsibility ensures the city will continue to lead the region and the economic growth and advancement of our city.

This year, our Florence Fire/EMS Department led by Chief Rodney Wren achieved accreditation for the department by receiving the 2023 Department of the Year Award by the Northern Kentucky Firefighters Association, the Mission Lifeline EMS recognition from American Heart Association and Recognition for Pediatric Emergency Care by Kentucky Emergency Medical Services for Children. The department continues to implement and facilitate fire safety training programs for

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personnel, organizations and citizens with the knowledge and skills to enhance fire prevention and response, ensuring a safer environment for all. The department successfully reduced emergency response times and received the Brain Pin by the American Heart Association and St. Elizabeth Medical Healthcare for their quick response to citizens. Additionally, the department marked a significant milestone of breaking ground on the fourth state of the art fire station to enhance community safety and faster response. This will be a welcome addition to our community in 2024.

The Florence Police Department led by Chief of Police, Tom Grau maintained their commitment to excellence, achieving and sustaining state accreditation since 1986 showcasing continuous dedication to high standards, professionalism, and practices in law enforcement. Community Resource Officers continue to demonstrate a commitment to community outreach programs successfully leading impactful community outreach by administering D.A.R.E., which is Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program, to over 800 youth in the community through enhanced training and safety programs. The department received the Kentucky League of Cities Safety Awareness Award, recognizing their exceptional commitment to creating a secure and safe environment for the community.

As we look ahead to the coming year, there is much to be excited about. We will continue to focus on infrastructure improvements, community involvement and events and enhancing public services. Our goal is to ensure that our city remains a great place to live, work, have a business and raise a family. Let us embrace the challenges and opportunities ahead with optimism, knowing that together we can build a city that we are proud to call home. Thank you to Florence City Council, our department heads, and all our city employees for their unwavering dedication and our wonderful community. Thank you to our residents for being engaged in our city.

My best wishes are with you as we hope for a promising year in 2024 in wonderful Florence, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year."

CLOSED SESSION:

There was no need for Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting. Councilmember Carroll so moved, with a second from Councilmember Winn. **Councilmembers present voted aye**, the time being 6:20 p.m.

APPROVED:

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

ATTEST:

/s/ Melissa Kramer
Melissa Kramer, City Clerk

