



**Florence City Council  
Business Meeting  
Tuesday, October 8, 2024  
6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

The City Council of the City of Florence, Kentucky, met in regular session on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, 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 five (5) members of council were registered present: Lesley Chambers, Jenna Kemper, David A. Osborne, Patricia Wingo, and Gary Winn. Councilmember Mel Carroll was absent.

Staff members present were: Assistant City Attorney, Dale T. Wilson; Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren; Chief of Police, Jeff Mallery; Director of Administration/City Administrator, Joshua J. Hunt; City Engineer, Bill Viox; City Clerk, Melissa Kramer; Finance Director, Jason Lewis; Videographer, Perry Weber; and Police Lieutenant, Roger Allen.

The following were also present in the audience: Kentucky State Representative Marianne Proctor; Resident of Florence, Thomas Judd; Resident of Florence, Nancy Corman; and Resident of Florence, Shirley Pieper.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mayor Aubuchon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2024, business meeting. Councilmember Wingo motioned to approve the minutes with a second from Councilmember Winn. **All councilmembers present voted aye.**

**PRESENTATION – KENTUCKY STATE REPRESENTATIVE MARIANNE PROCTOR:**

Mayor Aubuchon welcomed Kentucky State Representative Marianne Proctor.

Representative Proctor thanked everyone and provided a brief legislative update noting during the previous legislative session, the House filed 838 bills, the Senate filed 380, and 160 bills reached the governor's desk. Representative Proctor provided an overview of investments in public safety, education, and infrastructure. She also addressed future legislative priorities regarding personal income tax and squatter issues to streamline eviction processes for property owners and penalize repeat offenders. Additional matters they are reviewing include improving recruitment and benefits for firefighters and law enforcement to address current and impending shortages.

Additionally, Representative Proctor provided an overview of two upcoming constitutional amendments on the ballot. The first being Amendment 1 which aims to prevent illegal aliens from voting in elections. Second, Amendment 2 which involved school choice.

Councilmember Chambers requested clarification as part of Amendment 1 that discussed the exclusion of certain individuals from voting rights. She wanted clarification to know if the exclusion applied only to election related crimes or to any type of felony crime and referenced the Executive Order issued by Governor Beshear. Councilmember Chambers expressed concerns with regard to the passage of the amendment.

Representative Proctor responded that her understanding was any felony but she would look into it further to clarify.

Mayor Aubuchon stated that based on a brief review of the amendment it appeared to focus solely on US citizenship. She encouraged everyone to do their research before voting.

Representative Proctor explained that Amendment 2 had generated misinformation and stated that if passed, it would simply allow the General Assembly to discuss what school choice could look like. The current constitution prevents public money from going outside common schools and Amendment 2 only opens discussion. With all the upcoming ballot initiatives, Representative Proctor informed everyone there would be a Town Hall held on October 15 at Florence Baptist from 6:00-7:30 p.m. to address issues and answer questions.

Councilmember Chambers expressed concern regarding Amendment 2 and the wording going beyond just allowing a conversation about school choice. She suggested that it stated that public tax dollars could potentially be used to fund education outside of public schools.

Representative Proctor stressed that the word “may” was in the amendment and explained that it would simply allow the General Assembly to discuss school choice while maintaining the constitutional responsibility to fund public schools.

Mayor Aubuchon stressed that it was important for everyone to do their homework and be clear about the constitutional amendments they are voting on. She encouraged everyone to visit the

Secretary of State's website at [www.sos.ky.gov](http://www.sos.ky.gov) for detailed information on the amendments. Mayor Aubuchon thanked Representative Proctor for attending.

Representative Proctor thanked everyone.

Councilmember Chambers agreed with Mayor Aubuchon and encouraged everyone to speak with teachers, administrators and school board members regarding Amendment 2.

### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION – ORDINANCE O-18-2024:**

Mayor Aubuchon explained the proposed amendments to job descriptions, authorized positions and the pay plan addressing the restructuring of roles following the retirement of long-time CFO/HR Director Linda Chapman. In preparation of her retirement, the city hired a Human Resources Administrator, Laura Grant. Mayor Aubuchon explained that Laura had assumed responsibilities of all matters with regards to human resources. Additionally, the proposal eliminated the combined CFO/HR position permanently. The Finance Director position was filled by Jason Lewis. Job duties had been adjusted and currently, all job descriptions in the city are being reviewed to ensure ADA compliance, as well as, changes in the reporting structure. Mayor Aubuchon explained the proposed Senior Accountant position was not new, that it was only a new title from Accountant. The proposed Staff Accountant position would support the finance team, ensuring better succession planning and distributing responsibilities more effectively across multiple employees.

With regard to the Administration Department changes, Mayor Aubuchon read into the record the number of open records requests which the city had received. A significant increase from an average of 175 per year prior to 2023. There were 493 requests in 2023, and already 434 as of September 2024, projecting over 500 requests by year-end. She explained the requests range from police reports, contracts to personnel records and acknowledged that with city's growth, the requests are anticipated to rise. The proposed new Records Clerk position would be under the City Clerk and assist with the workload. Rather than filling a previously vacant full-time Administrative Clerk position, the Records Clerks is not anticipated to be full time and only part-time. Additionally, the proposal included adjustment to the City Clerk's salary to account for managing additional staff members and duties.

To minimize any budget impact, Mayor Aubuchon stated the proposal would eliminate the CFO/HR position and not fill the roles immediately but merely to allow time for the process to begin.

Mayor Aubuchon opened the floor for questions or comments from councilmembers.

Councilmember Winn moved to table the matter until he could gather more information, noting the complexity of the personnel issues. He expressed appreciation for Mayor Aubuchon's explanation.

Mayor Aubuchon clarified that his motion was to table the vote on the ordinance action, not the discussion. Councilmember Winn replied affirmatively.

Motion by Councilmember Winn was not seconded. Motion died for lack of second.

Mayor Aubuchon opened the floor for discussion.

Councilmember Chambers noted that many of the changes were discussed during the budget workshop.

Mayor Aubuchon acknowledged that while many of the changes were anticipated, they were not presented in the specific ordinance format currently under review.

Councilmember Wingo addressed the issue in the Finance Department, noting that while the need for changes had been previously discussed, the specifics were not yet determined. She also acknowledged the changes made to other positions over the past year and a half. She understood Councilmember Winn's concerns about the complexities involved, but pointed out that they are not in the office daily and do not see the time it takes to process the 400-500 open records requests. The requests require attorney review, department review, redaction and accuracy to ensure no documents are missed, all within the five day turnaround mandated by KRS. Councilmember Wingo acknowledged the significant pressure on the staff handling the requests. Additionally, she acknowledged that in the Finance Department, Linda "wore a lot of hats" and did an excellent job, and they knew it would take more than one person to fill her shoes. Councilmember Wingo was okay with the proposed changes but was willing to wait if anyone else had questions.

Councilmember Winn clarified that he was not opposed to the proposal but needed more time to digest it due to its complexity.

Councilmember Kemper expressed her concern with the aquatic center marketing and financial aspect of the center. She explained that she and her husband, both with marketing backgrounds, put significant efforts to save the aquatic center. She felt that there should be a dedicated staff member for marketing the aquatic center in addition to another handling the finances. She stated that after speaking with Josh prior to the meeting, it seemed that those aspects had been addressed. However, she also noted the extensive work being done by the city clerk and inquired if someone else would oversee the parks and recreation marketing, not just the aquatic center. With all the new possible park changes, she believed that there should be a liaison similar to Vanessa's role years ago.

Mayor Aubuchon agreed and acknowledged that while Linda managed both the financial and marketing aspects of the aquatic center, there was potential to adapt another approach. She mentioned that Eric aimed to address those matters with the Parks Master Plan and Aquatic Master Plan, focusing on personnel requests, proposals for additional staffing, or possible changes in the structure to ensure optimal management of recreational amenities.

Councilmember Chambers suggested reinstating a parks and rec board, similar to the one that was previously dissolved.

Mayor Aubuchon mentioned that board had not been operational since the '70s. She explained that reinstating that board would not address the immediate need of managing the aquatic center and golf course. She agreed it could be considered possibly in the future.

Councilmember Chambers suggested making more information available on the website, such as packet contents, to reduce open records requests.

Mayor Aubuchon explained that many open records requests often involve matters for which were highly sensitive and that each request was unique and must be reviewed individually. She stated that most of the requests pertain to police, fire and public safety issues.

City Clerk, Melissa Kramer, agreed with Mayor Aubuchon, noting that there were also requests related to environment and code enforcement matters. While ordinances and minutes are available online, fulfilling and posting additional information requests could risk exposing personal data. She explained the city aimed to balance transparency with privacy, ensuring resident and personal information was protected and continuously evaluate what more could be shared without compromising privacy.

Councilmember Chambers asked if the implementation of online payments had reduced labor demands in the finance department.

Finance Director, Jason Lewis, stated that during his short tenure, he has observed the occupational license finance supervisor handle a significant amount of manual work. Additionally, the finance clerks are fully occupied throughout the day. Adding a staff accountant would help alleviate duties and support the finance supervisor, enabling her to focus more on customer interactions and online payments. As the city grows, the increased volume of payments would add to the workload. He acknowledged the great job the current team is doing but can also see the visible daily stresses they face.

Mayor Aubuchon asked if there was any additional discussion and whether council wished to take action and add the ordinance to the agenda for action.

Councilmember Chambers moved to place the item on the agenda for formal action.

Motion was not seconded. Motion died for lack of second.

Mayor Aubuchon stated that the ordinance would be added to the agenda next week for a Special Meeting.

**MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-10-2024:**

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-10-2024. A Municipal Order approving the reappointment of Ed Huddleston 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-10-2024. Councilmember

Winn motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-10-2024 with a second from Councilmember Wingo. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized five yes votes approving Municipal Order MO-10-2024 by unanimous vote.**

#### **MUNICIPAL ORDER MO-11-2024:**

Mayor Aubuchon read Municipal Order MO-11-2024. A Municipal Order approving the reappointment of Don Volland 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-11-2024. Councilmember Winn motioned to approve Municipal Order MO-11-2024 with a second from Councilmember Wingo. Mayor Aubuchon requested a Roll Call Vote. Councilmember Chambers, yes; Councilmember Winn, yes; Councilmember Kemper, yes; Councilmember Wingo, yes; Councilmember Osborne, yes. **Roll call recognized five yes votes approving Municipal Order MO-11-2024 by unanimous vote.**

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

- Mayor Aubuchon announced Florence residents could pay their annual city property taxes at the Finance Department, where the Boone County Sheriff's Office was also stationed to collect county property taxes. She also noted that the city property tax rate was lowered.
- Mayor Aubuchon reminded everyone Fall Clean Up was scheduled for Monday, October 14 thru Sunday, October 20.
- Mayor Aubuchon reminded everyone the City of Florence Veterans Commission Open House Veteran Resource Fair was scheduled for Saturday, October 19 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Florence Government Center.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced that on October 20 at 2:00 p.m., there would be a Pomeroy Marker Dedication & Patriot Grave Marking Service in honor of Revolutionary War Veteran Private William Carpenter of the Culpepper Militia and Pastor of Hopeful Lutheran Church at the Carpenter Family Cemetery, 54 Circle Drive in Florence.
- Mayor Aubuchon reminded everyone the Halloween Art Contest runs October 21-25, open to all young artists from K-8.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the 2024 Leaf Collection program would begin on October 21 and run through December 19.
- Mayor Aubuchon reminded everyone the Florence Police Department was participating in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, October 26, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Mayor Aubuchon reminded everyone the Annual Halloween Night Out would be held on Tuesday, October 29 at Thomas More Stadium, Home of the Florence Y'alls from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced Trick or Treat Hours are set for Halloween, Thursday, October 31, from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

- Mayor Aubuchon announced in partnership with Florence Christian Church, as part of the Veterans Day Program, the city would host “The Witness Tree” Event. The event would be held beginning November 1 and run through November 11 daily at 8:00 a.m.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the City of Florence would hold the Annual Veterans Day Program on Saturday, November 9 at 2:00 p.m. at the Florence Government Center, Community Rooms.
- Mayor Aubuchon announced the Honor Run Half Marathon would be held the morning of Sunday, November 10 beginning at the Florence Y’all Water Tower.

### **RECOGNITION:**

Mayor Aubuchon asked if any of the following desired recognition:

Members of City Council:

Councilmember Wingo mentioned an event earlier in the day involving the Florence Rotary and the Florence Police Department.

Chief Mallery explained that Project Heart Restart, initiated by Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, is a program aimed to equip all police cruises with AEDs in partnership with Rotary Clubs and other sponsors. After the success in Ohio, the program was expanded to Northern Kentucky with the Florence Police Department being among the first to receive the AEDS.

Councilmember Wingo also mentioned that at the event, St. Elizabeth Hospital committed \$150,000 to the project and the St. Elizabeth Foundation pledged to raise an additional \$150,000. She explained the funding would support Boone, Kenton, Campbell and Pendleton counties.

Department Heads:

Fire/EMS Chief, Rodney Wren:

Chief Wren did not desire recognition.

Chief of Police, Jeff Mallery:

Chief Mallery did not desire recognition.

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

Mr. Hunt did not desire recognition.

Public Services Director, Eric Hall:

Mr. Hall did not desire recognition.

Finance Director, Jason Lewis:

Mr. Lewis 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 6:43 p.m.**

**APPROVED:**

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

**ATTEST:**

/s/ Melissa Kramer  
Melissa Kramer, City Clerk

