

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF FORT THOMAS,
CAMPBELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY, ON
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2019**

Mayor Eric Haas called the meeting of council to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 18, 2019 in the Council Chambers of the city building. General Services Secretary Julie Rice called the roll and the following council members were present: David Cameron, Ken Bowman, Mark Collier, Jeff Bezold, Roger Peterman and Adam Blau. Staff members in attendance included: City Administrator Ron Dill, Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Joe Ewald, General Services Secretary Julie Rice, Fire Chief Mark Bailey, Police Sergeant Adam Noe and City Attorney Jann Seidenfaden.

Mayor Eric Haas lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Minutes

The minutes from the October 21, 2019 meeting were presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Collier and seconded by Mr. Blau to approve the minutes as written. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Cameron, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Peterman and Mr. Blau. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Visitors and Communications

Badge Pinning for Adam Hinkel: Chief Mark Bailey: Mark Bailey introduced new FF/Paramedic Adam Hinkel to the mayor and council. Adam comes to the city from the City of Florence Fire Department. The Mayor welcomed him to Fort Thomas.

Reports of Officers

Fire Department Monthly Report for October 2019: Chief Mark Bailey presented his monthly report for October to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Blau to receive and file the fire department’s monthly report. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Peterman and Mr. Blau. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

City Administrators Report

Tennis Court Project Update: Tennis Technologies has completed the surfacing of the courts in Tower Park and the pickle ball courts have been striped on the lower court.

Street Resurfacing Program: Reigler Asphalt Co. has modified completion dates due to weather. They will be completing all resurfacing (weather dependent) during the week of November 18th. To date they have milled all streets and have resurfaced portions of Sherman & Sheridan Avenues and are milling Ohio Ave and Ridgeway Ave.

Employee Health Insurance: The city is finishing our first year of a self-funded insurance program and is cautiously optimistic with the results to date. The ability to review and analyze our use and to program around our usage needs has proven beneficial. Additionally, our employee groups have responded to ‘participating’ in managing cost. Those factors have lead to an optimistic view of our trend toward cost

stabilization. As indicated at the outset last year, it will take a couple of years to gain a full picture of the plan/use. However, initial indicators are positive. We will be meeting with the employee insurance committee on November 22nd and forwarding recommendation to council at the December meeting.

The Jack O' Lantern Walk and Johnson Hullabaloo went well on Friday, Oct. 25th. We had 2,937 people walk the trail.

Memorial Parkway work has been completed by the state.

On November 8th, the Cincinnati Design Awards had an annual event program that recognizes local firms and design centers that do outstanding work in the regions. These awards are classified as honor, merit and honorable mention. The Fort Thomas Community Plan in collaboration with CT Consultants and Human Nature won the honor award in the interdisciplinary category. The city's hard work is paying off and being recognized elsewhere!

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Law, Labor, and License Committee Meeting: Mr. Cameron reported that the Fairness Ordinance was discussed prior to the council meeting. A draft ordinance was presented by Jann Seidenfaden. There are still some items outstanding that need to be discussed and the first reading should be done at the next council meeting.

Finance Committee Report of Disbursements: The Finance Committee presented its Report of Disbursements and recommended the payment of warrants numbered 6521-6691 for the period of **October 18 – November 14, 2019** was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Blau to concur in the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted "aye": Mr. Cameron, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Peterman, and Mr. Blau. Voting "no" none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinances, Resolutions, and Orders

Ordinance O-16-2019: A second reading of an Ordinance amending the Official Zoning Ordinance by adding *Churches and Places of Religious Worship* as a "Permitted Use" in section 10.12 (A) was presented to council. Discussion ensued as Ken Bowman requested to read a statement for the record:

"We are lucky to have the capable group of professionals that currently serve on Planning and Zoning. However, there is a system in place of checks and balances to review all decisions made by that body. It would not be expected that they would have taken into consideration all of the potential fiscal consequences of every action that they recommend. Nor should it be. That is where we come in. Point A: As the 66 line list of permitted uses currently exists, all of them are "generally commercial" as one would expect. With the possible exception of # 23, which allows for clubs, including philanthropic such as YMCA. All the rest listed are taxable entities that would be subject to net profit, tangible property, payroll and property taxes. All of these taxes have a direct effect on the income and budget of the County, Schools and the City of Ft. Thomas. Point B: If the plaza were to fill up with non-commercial tax exempt entities, that would adversely effect the potential revenue that would not be realized by taxable businesses. As I understand it, we are very close to having a new hotel in this plaza, which should breath new life into the retail possibilities in the plaza. However, this is not the only General Commercial location in Fort Thomas. The area around Highland & Grand, Inverness area and around DEPS are also part of this zoning designation. Point C: This text amendment would also allow this and other GC sites to broaden the market for re-sale of their properties, as it could attract offers from this or other deep pocket shopping center type churches, much like what happened at the old HQ site on Ridge Rd. in Cincinnati. Point D: Public records indicate that the Ft.

Thomas Plaza was purchased in 2014 for 2.5 million. It is currently assessed by the county at 2.7 million. That value is very likely to skyrocket after the proposed development is finished. If the property were to be sold to a church, or other 501 (c) (3) there would be a complete loss of tax revenue to the schools, city and county. That could be very painful in these times, and even more so in future times of tighter budget constraints. Point E: Example church property. St. Andrews has three parcels listed under their ownership. The combined assessment from PVA is 1,375,850. However, this property and its income has no taxable value. Point F: I want to be clear that I am not advocating against the current system or churches in general, but feel that commercial is commercial, and our zoning regulations are in place for good reason. Commercial zones should be just that, Commercial zones that effect commerce. I take these decisions very seriously and feel a responsibility to thoroughly consider both the immediate and future consequences, both intended and unintended.”

Mr. Blau noted that he has the same concerns that Mr. Bowman does. After talking to Peter LaRuffa the pastor at the Fort Thomas campus, he noted that the church has zero intention of purchasing the property but will continue to lease the space.

Discussion continued regarding the leasing of the plaza by churches and similar entities.

Jay Fosset noted that the church does not want to purchase the property and the church does pay taxes and payroll taxes that are higher than most retail tax. Churches are trending more in commercial zones.

A motion was made by Mr. Peterman and seconded by Mr. Bezold. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Cameron, Mr. Collier, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Peterman, and Mr. Blau. Voting “no”: Mr. Bowman. The motion passed by a vote of 5-1.

Police Department Monthly Report for September 2019: Sergeant Adam Noe presented the monthly report for October to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold receive and file the police department’s monthly report. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Peterman and Mr. Blau. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance O-17-2019: A second reading of an Ordinance establishing a non-exclusive Franchise for use of public right-of-ways to communications providers was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Peterman and seconded by Mr. Collier to approve ordinance O-17-2019. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Peterman and Mr. Blau. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Executive Order EO-18-2019: An executive order appointing Adam Hinkle to the position of Firefighter/Paramedic grade 3B. No action necessary.

With no further business to come before council, a motion was made by Mr. Peterman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to adjourn.

APPROVED:

Eric Haas, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melissa K. Beckett, City Clerk