

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF FORT THOMAS,
CAMPBELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY, ON
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE**

Mayor Eric Haas called the meeting of council to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 16, 2020. City Clerk, Melissa Beckett 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 Administrative Officer Ron Dill, City Clerk Melissa Beckett, Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Joe Ewald, Fire Chief Mark Bailey, Police Chief Casey Kilgore and City Attorney Jann Seidenfaden.

Minutes

The minutes from the October 19, 2020 meeting were presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Collier and seconded by Mr. Bezold 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

Proclamation for Small Business Saturday: A proclamation was read by City Clerk, Melissa Beckett proclaiming November 28, 2020 as Small Business Saturday in the City of Fort Thomas.

Reports of Officers

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

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

City Administrators Report:

City Building Update: Ehmet Hayes & Associates and their team are completing construction specifications & drawings to be available to potential bidders beginning December 1, 2020. Mayor Haas & I met with their design team to review 50% completion drawings last month and we will be performing 95% completion drawings next week. There has been coordination for the site work, including relocation of a Duke Energy transformer and the services leading to the tower behind the city building. City administrative staff will be relocated to the Armory while construction is under way. It appears that everything is in order to meet the bid window and consider awarding bid at the December council meeting.

Waterworks Road closure: SD No. 1 continues construction of replacement of their sanitary & storm sewer lines. They are currently ahead of schedule and may be able to reopen to traffic by the end of the calendar year.

City Events: The drive through *Goblins Tour* in Tower Park that was paired with the jack-o-lantern contests took place on Thursday, October 29th from 7:00-10:00 pm. We had 760 families participate in the drive through and received very supportive response to the event. Carmel Manor reached out to inquire if they could participate if there is a similar event next year that would extend to their location.

The virtual Veterans Day video was completed and posted on the morning of Veterans Day. It featured tradition ceremonial events held at the Charters of Freedom and included testimonials of veterans from city staff members and city volunteer Lonnie Sloan, former commander of the Reserve Post located in Tower Park who served in the United States military.

The city will not be having the traditional Holiday Walk. The city is looking at options for families that don't require people to get out of their cars.

Chesapeake Avenue: The city was able to assist the residents on Chesapeake with the grant offered by Vision Zero. The city was not successful with the grant for the sidewalk but there will be another option to apply in March.

Personnel: Fire Chief Mark Bailey is retiring effective December 31st. He will be missed. We have openings in the police department and likely openings in the fire department as well. The city is always looking for crossing guards for the schools, if anyone is interested, please contact the city.

N. Ft. Thomas Sidewalk: Ken Bowman inquired about the N. Ft. Thomas Sidewalk project. Ron reported that the city is continuing to push the Department of Transportation and this could take time to get the process through. Once approved, the city will bid out the project and it should be completed in the Spring of 2021.

Waterworks Road: Mr. Peterman asked the status of Waterworks Road. Ron reported that once the work is completed by SD1, the street will likely be resurfaced in 2021.

Christmas Tree: The city has had a couple of offers but the trees are not suitable. We are still looking for a donation that will fork at the Inverness location.

New Business

Consideration of Bids for New Ambulance: The city advertised and accepted bids for a new ambulance with a bid opening on Tuesday October 27th at 10:00 am. We received one bid from Specialty Truck Sales & Service, based in Wilder, KY. They are the local sales representatives for manufacturer *Horton Emergency Vehicles*, Grove City, OH. The total bid was \$210,000.00. The bid specifications were for stock vehicle production without custom specifications. The city's budget for this item was \$225,000.00. Staff recommends acceptance of this bid in the amount of \$210,000.00. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to accept the bid from Horton Emergency Vehicles in the amount of \$210,000. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted "aye": Mr. Cameron, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Peterman, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Blau. Voting "no" none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Update from Legal Counsel: Jann Seidenfaden addressed council. Jann has been the city attorney for the City of Fort Thomas since 1985. Over the years, she has served with four (4) mayors, eighteen (18) city councils, three (3) city administrators, three (3) finance directors, three (3) fire chiefs, six (6) police chiefs, and four (4) zoning administrators. Jann has made the decision to retire from the practice of law effective March 31, 2021. Jann has offered to help in the transition to a new city attorney. Mayor Haas thanked Jann for her service to the city. The Mayor and Ron will be meeting in the future to establish a committee to appoint a new city attorney. Ron Dill thanked Jann and noted that she is the only city attorney that he has worked with in his tenure with the city.

Covid 19 Discussion: Ron Dill started the conversation regarding the Covid virus, stating it has been a long tough issue for everyone, and we all have been through the same ups and downs of this crisis. We have tried to adjust the best that we can as we move forward, never having to navigate through something like this previously. Internally, the city has had to deal with many aspects of Covid within our organization. We have worked with the school and the county to do the video that has recently been released. The city has kept the website and our Facebook page updated with any new information that we receive. We are also using our marquee sign to pass on information.

Mayor Haas indicated that there is a weekly meeting with surrounding cities and the health department to stay on top of what is happening in our region. Mayor Haas thanked Mark Collier for filming the video with the city, schools and county. The schools do not want to close down, and they are finding that it is not being spread in the schools but it is spreading outside when people gather in large groups.

Ken Bowman asked how we know that there is not spread in the schools without testing.

Mr. Bowman stated a list of measures he felt were necessary that included:

Direct mail postcards to all residents. Use banners and sandwich board signage as done for Merchants and Music to reach citizens that are not using online sources.

Light the tower green.

Use frequent Covid specific posting on our Facebook page.

Use a more prominent placement of information and guidance on the city website.

Cancel any existing bookings at the Mess Hall and discontinue rentals until the virus is under control.

Close playground equipment.

Set proper example: mandate that all city employees and first responders wear masks when outside of their vehicles.

Instruct PD to verbally discourage risky behavior such as large gatherings when observed.

Discourage gatherings at holidays through messaging with alternative suggestions.

Encourage testing and provide current updates on where and how to get tested and host testing events in the city.

Design and create a chat option for citizens to be able to participate in our zoom meetings.

Use Cares Act funding already on hand for funding of messaging options.

Host zoom meetings with officials from the NKY Health Department and/or St. Elizabeth.

Mr. Collier noted that some of the things that Ken has brought up will be easy to implement. Such as, aligning information and guidelines to send out in the newsletter, using signage, etc.

Mr. Bezold suggested that we do not use any type of opinion or stance on the information that we send out. We need to follow the data given to us.

Mr. Blau thanked Ken for bringing up his ideas regarding the Covid 19 pandemic. He noted that he is hesitant to include our police and fire in practices that they can not legally enforce.

Mr. Peterman noted that it is a good idea for our officers to wear masks whenever they interact with the public. Mr. Peterman agrees with Mr. Blau that we do not want to put our officers in a position to get into confrontations that they do not have the authority to enforce.

Chief Kilgore indicated that they are able to enforce people not using protocol in a business using a trespassing charge. Chief Kilgore added that if the police tried to break up a group of people outside, it would not be received well by our community.

Mr. Peterman noted that he would not be in agreement to closing the playgrounds. People are outside and the spread is much lower risk. The medical advice that Mr. Peterman has received recently indicated that it is not a high risk method of transmission of the virus.

Mr. Collier suggested facilitating a virtual town hall and including the health department and St. Elizabeth.

Mr. Cameron commented that we have received several emails about events, specifically that the Farmer's Market could be problematic because it is inside the Mess Hall. Mr. Bowman noted that he would not weigh in on the Farmers Market because they use extreme caution and follow all protocol.

Ron Dill stated that the city has continued to follow KY orders with all facilities currently shut down and no private bookings of the Mess Hall into February of next year.

Mr. Bezold noted that there is also a time that you have to allow adults make their own decisions and the city can't shut everything down.

Mayor Haas mentioned that schools and restaurants are doing a good job of maintaining a safe environment and through contact tracing, the spread is happening more within private groups that get together.

Mr. Bowman suggested with the Cares Act funds that the city currently has, that we develop a relief package for our businesses. Mr. Dill noted that the city is already working on specifics for a possible program.

Mr. Blau indicated that he is concerned about shut downs because you are forcing people to get together. They are safer in a bar or playground/park than together in large groups.

Ron Dill summarized the discussion and stated that items discussed can be implemented as resources permit. He stated that additional signage, website messaging, and forwarding CDC and NKY Health Department information is already in place. He suggested that the City can also increase the messaging, in part through emphasis on Covid issues in the upcoming newsletter that reaches every household. Staff will review other suggestions or additional options presented as we move forward.

Mr. Collier noted that he governor mentioned today that we are moving closer to a vaccine. He stated appreciation for Mr. Bowman's lead on this issue and he commended the Mayor and Mr. Dill on their efforts.

Finance Committee Report of Disbursements: The Finance Committee presented its Report of Disbursements and recommended the payment of warrants numbered 8316-8481 for the period of **October 12 – November 11, 2020** was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Collier and seconded by Mr. Bowman 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. Peterman, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Blau. Voting "no" none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinances, Resolutions, and Orders

Ordinance O-15-2020: An ordinance reducing the speed limit on Glenway Avenue to 15 MPH was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Blau to approve ordinance O-15-2020. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted "aye": Mr. Cameron, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Peterman, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Blau. Voting "no" none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Municipal Order MO-19-2020: A municipal order waiving the liquor license fees for a 12 month period was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Bezold and seconded by Mr. Blau to approve municipal order MO-19-2020. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Cameron, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Collier, Mr. Peterman, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Blau. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

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

APPROVED:

Eric Haas, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melissa K. Beckett, City Clerk