

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF FORT THOMAS,
CAMPBELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY, ON
MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2022**

Mayor Eric Haas called the meeting of council to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 18, 2022. Melissa Beckett, City Clerk, called the roll and the following council members were present: Lisa Kelly, Ben Pendery, Ken Bowman, Jeff Bezold, Adam Blau and Roger Peterman. Staff members in attendance included: City Administrative Officer Ron Dill, City Clerk Melissa Beckett, Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Joe Ewald, Fire Chief Chris Amon, Police Chief Casey Kilgore, and City Attorney Tim Schneider.

Minutes

The minutes from the March 22, 2022 meeting were presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Pendery to approve the minutes as written. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Visitors and Communications:

Joan Ferris of 66 Burney Lane addressed council. Ms. Ferris indicated that she had sent an email to Joe Ewald with several questions and Joe responded to her by the end of the day. She was very appreciative of his time.

Ms. Ferris asked if there would be money available to help bring Ebert's Meats to Fort Thomas. Mayor Haas indicated that we have reached out to them, but at this time, they are staying in Newport.

Chanda Calentine noted that the city is currently working on a "Rent Subsidy Grant" and a "Up-fit Grant" for business that need to do upgrades to the interior of their businesses. The city is trying to help everyone and work together to create a better environment for our businesses and community. Chanda reached out to Ebert's Meats and indicated that we do have the grants in play and they would be eligible for these if they decided to move into Fort Thomas. At this moment in time, they have chosen to remain in Newport.

Appointment of Glenn Riggs to the Fire Department: Chief Chris Amon introduced Glenn Riggs as our newest Firefighter/Paramedic. His wife Chloe pinned his badge and he introduced his daughters Bexley and Briarly. Mayor Haas congratulated Glenn and welcomed him to Fort Thomas.

Shelly Funke Frommeyer addressed council. Ms. Frommeyer is running for Senate District 24.

Abby Voelker addressed council. Ms. Voelker is running for Campbell County Family Court Judge.

Jackie Fennell of 131 Robson Avenue addressed council. Mrs. Fennell came to get more information on the trees that were taken down behind Alexander Circle. She is concerned about erosion and hillside stability in that area. She asked if this is private land and if there are clearly delineated boundary lines. Mayor Haas noted that this is the only house in the development that

has a larger piece of land and it was not done with ill intention. The city is investigating its options with the Tree Commission, Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy and the State. Mrs. Fennell stated that she is very appreciative of the work and attention that the city is taking on this issue.

Chris Smith echoed Mrs. Fennell's sentiments. She feels there should be a paid position with the city that manages the green space. She noted that the city needs to put a stop to taking down all of the trees and chipping away at the hillsides. Mr. Bowman asked if we know where the property lines are and if the property owner owns all of that land. Mr. Dill noted that the homeowner did not go outside of his property lines. The mayor noted that this was a unique situation that was unfortunate. Ms. Smith also mentioned a home that was built on the north end of town, and took down more trees that they needed to. Ron Dill indicated that the Tree Commission was formed in the late 80's, they are volunteers that look at trees in the city, programs for re-planting, reviews development plans, etc. The city sponsors them and funds their projects in part. If the individual owns a lot, the owner has the right to regulate trees on their own lot. That was a conscience decision by council at that time to not regulate trees on private property. The city has staff that monitors this within the city.

Ellen Curtin from 148 Brentwood Place addressed council. She noted that she and her husband have spent a lot of time hiking the trails since Covid happened and were shocked to see the trees cut down on the trails. She questioned what was going to happen with the owner that has thrown all of his yard waste down on city property. Mayor Haas noted that the city is looking into all of this and hope to have a solution soon.

Police Department Annual Report: Chief Casey Kilgore presented his annual report to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Ms. Kelly to receive and file the Annual Report for the Police Department. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Reports of Boards, Committees and Commissions

Finance Committee Report: Mr. Pendery started by thanking Ms. Ferris for her comments regarding her concern about Ebert's Meats. We have a unique opportunity with the funds that are available to us, to be able to bolster Fort Thomas to make it more desirable for good business not only to stay here but to come here as well. Mr. Pendery reported as follows: The Finance Committee of Council met on April 11, 2022. The committee/staff was joined by Mayor Haas, Councilmembers Adam Blau, Ken Bowman, and Roger Peterman, several Police & Fire Dept. employees and City staff who participated in the discussions. Committee member Jeff Bezold was absent

The committee continued its March discussion on the allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds. As mentioned previously, the Department of the Treasury's final rule on ARPA funds, issued earlier this year, eased the restrictions on the expenditure of those funds.

City staff provided an updated version of the spreadsheet of potential expenditures and projects, which had been shown in a preliminary form last month. This sheet provided a framework for the ongoing discussion.

Economic Development Director / Renaissance Manager Chanda Calentine, as directed by Council at the March 21 meeting, presented updated versions of the Interior Upfit and Rent Subsidy grants, the additional funding for the traditional Grow Grant having been approved at that meeting. The grant amounts remained unchanged at \$120,000 each, but the modifications served to better delineate who qualified for each grant and the amount each applicant could receive. Specific attention was paid to those who qualified for more than one grant and how that affected the award amounts. Other minor changes were proposed, and have been incorporated into the documents received by Council. The Committee recommends that staff finalize the Interior Upfit and Rent Subsidy grants, and that \$240,000 be allocated for the programs.

The discussion then turned to infrastructure projects, specifically the parking lot behind 18 N Fort Thomas and the reconstruction of Kyles Lane; two projects that are nearly “shovel ready”. The parking lot has yet to be acquired by the City, but that closing should take place in the near future. Despite the project qualifying for use of ARPA funds, it was decided to earmark City reserves for those costs. Kyles Lane presents a problem due to the high cost of street reconstruction and the burden those projects put upon the Road Aid Fund. Full street reconstruction costs usually result in the delay of other needed street resurfacing, which often sets the overall program back at least one year. It was decided that ARPA funds offer the City a unique opportunity to rebuild a street without adversely affecting the program as a whole. Plus, the City of Newport has indicated that they would participate in the rebuild, as a portion of Kyles Lane resides within their City limits. As such, the Committee recommends that \$400,000 be allocated for the reconstruction of Kyles Lane.

Other infrastructure projects, including Carlisle Park and the repair or replacement of the Rossford Avenue bridge were left on the spreadsheet and set aside for further discussions when additional costs and specifics are available.

Lastly, with representatives from the City’s public safety departments in attendance, the group discussed premium pay for City employees. Director of Finance Joe Ewald presented examples of pay amounts, including required pension contributions and indicated that those pension contributions would be increasing after July 1st. The public safety representatives then offered examples of premium pay amounts authorized and/or received by employees of other Northern Kentucky cities. After a short discussion, the group decided that further research was needed before any decision could be made and the issue was tabled until additional information is compiled.

Overall, the Finance Committee has made great progress on the allocation of ARPA funds to several projects, from grants to parks to infrastructure. Committee Chair Ben Pendery recommended, and the group agreed, that the Committee reconvene before the May meeting of Council for further discussion.

Mr. Blau asked for discussion that council would be voting on the report and not the allocation of actual funds. Mr. Dill indicated that the first action would be to just accept the report. Council would take up for consideration if council decides to discuss other items in the report.

A motion was made by Mr. Peterman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to receive and file the report from the Finance Committee. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

ARPA Funding and Grow Grant Recommendations: Mayor Haas called for a vote on the Interior Upfit Grant and the Rent Subsidy Grant programs that Chanda Calentine presented to the Finance Committee. A motion was made by Mr. Peterman and seconded by Mr. Bowman to allocate \$240,000 to the Upfit and Rent Subsidy grants. Mr. Blau noted that he will vote “no” on this and he feels that we have to be more conservative with city funds, and giving money to businesses to upgrade the inside of their building. Inside someone’s personal building only benefits the building owner and why wouldn’t they lower the rent to allow the work to be done within their building. Mr. Peterman noted that these ARPA funds are not local taxpayer money. This program will not be a program that will require ongoing funding in the future. There are long term positives for the businesses that use the Upfit grant related to energy costs. With a motion on the floor, Mayor Haas called for a roll call vote. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Peterman. Voting “no”: Mr. Blau. The motion passed by a vote of 5-1.

Kyles Lane Reconstruction: Mayor Haas called for a vote on this item. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Pendery to approve allocating \$400,000 from the city’s ARPA funding to rebuild Kyles Lane. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Peterman. Voting “no”: None. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Report from the Public Safety Committee of Council: Ron Dill reported that the Public Safety Committee met and talked about speed limits about 2 years ago and a long term evaluation of speeds on certain streets. Studies were done in the Scenic View Subdivision, Summit Subdivision, and Woodfill Subdivision. These surveys were done in November of 2020 and again in November of 2021. It was decided to lower the speed limit on Woodfill Avenue and Grant Street to 20 MPH. The survey will be repeated in this area in November of 2023 to determine if lowering the speed limit made a difference in the speed data. Adam Blau indicated that people were concerned about speeding a couple of years ago and this discussion was moved to the Committee. He noted that if once this is complete, if there is still a problem, other actions will be taken. A motion was made by Mr. Pendery and seconded by Mr. Bowman to receive and file the report from the Public Safety Committee. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Reports of Officers

Fire Department Monthly Report, Chief Chris Amon: Fire Chief Chris Amon presented the fire monthly report to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Pendery to receive and file the monthly report for the Fire Department. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Police Department Monthly Report, Chief Casey Kilgore: Chief Casey Kilgore presented the police monthly report to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to receive and file the monthly report for the Police Department. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

City Administrator's Report: Ron Dill

City Building Update: The progress continues on the inside of the building with most of the walls now primed and ceiling tile grids being installed. The infrastructure is coming to a close within the building and finish work will commence soon including tile, lighting fixtures, etc. The outside curtain glass walls are completed and the roof coping is close to completion. The large remaining item on the exterior is the washing & staining of the aggregate walls in the front that are weather dependent. Electrical equipment still represents the longest hold-up from having a completion date.

2021 Street Program (Wilbers Lane): Reconstruction of Wilbers Lane was initiated on March 24th after being deferred from last year to allow utility adjustments. Riegler Blacktop has this contract and has placed storm sewer inlets, removed half of the pavement and is presently working on curb replacement. The asphalt base on that portion is scheduled for placement next week. Remaining work is expected to last for approximately 6-8 weeks.

Tower Park Swings: General Services crews have been constructing the custom built pergolas that will support the swings to be situated at the overlook on Alexander Circle.

Tower Park Shelter/Restrooms: Construction of this project commenced with footers being completed. The utility connections are available on site. This project should complete in approximately ninety (90) days, however, there are some potential supply chain issues that may delay portions from full completion. Regardless, it should still be available for use later in this season.

Mess Hall Sidewalk Construction: City crews are working diligently on the sidewalk by the Mess Hall that will help the farmers market once they move outside and other events in the park.

New Business

Consideration of Bids for Streetscape/City Building Landscaping: Bids for the landscaping of the city building, streetscape Phase I and the Towne Center were received and read on Thursday April 7th at 2:00 pm 2022. The city received competitive bids from three landscaping contractors. This project includes the city building plan, the phase I streetscape (Bluegrass Ave. to Montvale Ave.) and Towne Center (adjacent to Hagedorn Lane). The bids ranged from \$174,281.50 to \$285,743.05. The bid submitted by K&R Landscaping is the low bid and is recommended for acceptance in the amount of \$174,281.50. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Ms. Kelly to award the landscaping bid to K&R Landscaping in the amount of \$174,281.50. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted "aye": Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Peterman. Voting "no" none. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Consideration of Bids for 2022 Street Program: Bids for street resurfacing were received and publicly read aloud on Wednesday, March 23rd at 2:00 pm. We received competitive bids from three (3) contractors. City Engineer, Frank Twehues, has reviewed the bids ranging from \$467,141.10 to \$579,525.00. It is recommended that the project be awarded to Eaton Asphalt, representing the low bid, in the amount of \$467,141.10. This total is above the engineer's base bid estimate of \$460,791.50 which is a reflection of current fluctuating petroleum pricing that affects asphalt costs. This year's program includes Altamont Court, Avon Place, Bivouac Place, Carolina Avenue, Glenway Avenue, Garden Way, Hawthorne Avenue, Linden Avenue, Linden Court, Rossmore Avenue, Summit Avenue (to Avon) and Tower Hill Road (to Watchpointe Drive). A

motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Pendery to award the 2022 Street Resurfacing Bid to Eaton Asphalt in the amount of \$467,141.10. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Peterman. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Finance Committee Report of Disbursements: The Finance Committee presented its Report of Disbursements and recommended the payment of warrants numbered 10919 – 11056 for the period of **March 15 – April 14, 2022.** A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to concur in the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Peterman. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Ordinances and Orders

Ordinance O-02-2022: Consideration of an ordinance apportioning the assessments for the improvements to N. Ft. Thomas Ave. (2019); Waterworks Road (2020); Beechwood Ave, Crowell Ave. Greenwood Ave, Holly Lane, Mayfield Ave., Military Parkway and Robson Ave, all in accordance with the 2021 Street Improvement Program. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to approve ordinance O-02-2022. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Peterman. Voting “no”: None. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Ordinance O-03-2022: First reading of an ordinance to initiate changing the speed limit on Grant Street and Woodfill Avenue to 20 mph. This ordinance will be laid over to the next regular meeting of council for consideration.

Municipal Order MO-06-2022: A municipal order re-appointing Mike Rice as a member of the Tree Commission was presented to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Ms. Kelly to approve municipal order MO-06-2022. The mayor called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Municipal Order MO-07-2022: A municipal order appointing Glenn Riggs to the position of FF/P in the Fire Department was presented to council. A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to approve municipal order MO-07-2022. The mayor called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Bezold to enter into executive session In accordance with KRS section 61.810 (b) – for the deliberation of the future acquisition or sale of real property by a public agency. Mayor Haas called for a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Pendery to reconvene the regular meeting of council.

Mr. Bowman made a motion to authorize the mayor to sign a development agreement, along with any related documents between the City of Fort Thomas and the Quarter Group for the purchase of 25 N. Fort Thomas Avenue. Upon call of the roll, the following voted “aye”: Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Peterman. Voting “no”: Mr. Blau. The motion passed by a motion of 5 to 1.

With no further business to come before council, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

Eric Haas, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melissa K. Beckett, City Clerk