

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF FORT THOMAS,
CAMPBELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY, ON
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**

Mayor Haas called the meeting of Council to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge to the Flag

Roll Call: Melissa Beckett, City Clerk, called the roll and the following Council members were present: Lauren McIntosh, Ben Pendery, Andy Ellison, Jeff Bezold, Adam Blau, and Eric Strange. Staff members in attendance included: City Administrative Officer Matt Kremer, City Clerk Melissa Beckett, Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Joe Ewald, Fire Chief Chris Amon, Police Chief Casey Kilgore, and Attorney Dave Fessler filling in for Tim Schneider.

Minutes

September 5, 2023: The minutes from the September 5, 2023 meeting of council were presented for consideration. Motion by Mr. Pendery and second by Mrs. McIntosh. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Visitors and Communications

Recognition of Retired Board Members:

Mayor Haas presented Cathy Sonnett with a plaque for her service on the Renaissance Board and thanked her for her dedication to the city.

Mayor Haas presented Lori Wendling with a plaque for her service on the Planning Commission, Tree Commission, and the Design Review Board and thanked her for her dedication to the city.

Mayor Haas presented Barb Thomas with a plaque for her service on the Design Review Board and he thanked her for her dedication to the city.

Proclamation: Extra Mile America: Mayor Haas read a proclamation for Extra Mile Day within the City of Fort Thomas.

James Biedenharn from 22 Arno Avenue addressed council regarding the proposed playground in Tower Park, Carlisle Park, and asked about a city recycling program for tires, paint, etc.

Joe Kruse from 43 River Road addressed council regarding adding speed limit signs on Garrison Avenue.

Sharon MacKnight from 62 Miller Lane addressed council regarding adding legislation items to website and questions about city property taxes.

Reports of Officers

Fire Department Monthly Report: Chief Chris Amon: Chief Amon presented his monthly report to council. A motion was made by Mr. Ellison and seconded by Mr. Blau to receive and file the monthly report from the fire department. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Police Department Monthly Report: Chief Casey Kilgore: Chief Kilgore presented his monthly report to council. A motion was made by Mr. Blau and seconded by Mr. Penderly to receive and file the monthly report from the police department.

City Administrator’s Report: Matt Kremer: Matt Kremer reported the following:

- The city has advertised and is going out to bid for a new trash collection contract. The results will be presented to council at the October meeting.
- The Fort Thomas school board and city council will meet on October 24th at 6:00 p.m. to discuss city and school related projects.
- Matt is working with the “Friends of Highland Park” group to finalize an agreement and are working with the school to set rules for the Highland Park ballfield. Any money given by the city toward the ballfield will be put into next years budget.
- Mr. Blau asked about scheduling a committee meeting to discuss eliminating committees of council as to streamline meetings since most council members attend all of the meetings anyway. Matt noted that he will be scheduling a Law, Labor, and License Committee meeting sometime next week to discuss options.
- Mr. Blau mentioned the email from Mr. Kremer regarding a priority list of projects. He feels that people should have more information about each of these. Matt noted that this was to gather information from council and staff regarding the urgency of certain projects.

New Business

Consideration of Tower Park Playground Bid Results: The city received one bid on the playground project from Prus Construction. This project was split up to save money. It was recommended that if the city used Sourcewell (state-contracted pricing) to purchase the playground equipment directly, it would result in a 17% discount on the equipment and no increase from the contractor. This alone was about a \$400K savings compared to the engineer's estimate. Below is a breakdown of pricing for the project:

Direct Playground Equipment Purchase:	\$1,985,444.62
Contractor installation and site preparation:	\$1,623,159.25
Total with picnic area instead of splashpad	\$3,608,603.87
Direct Playground Equipment Purchase:	\$1,985,444.62
Contractor installation and site preparation:	\$1,623,159.25
Splashpad (Alternate Bid)	\$315,000.00
Total with splashpad	\$3,923,603.87

*This price includes the construction of the new patio entrance to the park that will display the General Thomas Statue.

**Public Work employees will not be conducting any prep work or other large tasks for the project.

***This will be funded with part of the \$4.2M in ARPA funding that the city received.

The city reached out to multiple construction companies prior to releasing the RFP and each company gave different reasons on not being interested in bidding the project. The bid cost is well under estimates and Prus

Construction is a local and professional construction company. The staff is recommending approval of this project and awarding the bid to Prus Construction with a completion date of May 24, 2024.

Discussions ensued with the board of council regarding the splash pad and reasons why to eliminate it or keep it.

A motion was made by Mr. Blau to accept the bid from Prus Construction with the alternative bid for the splash pad for an additional \$315,000, it was seconded by Mr. Pendery. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mr. Pendery and Mr. Blau. Voting “no”: Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Bezold, and Mr. Strange. The motion failed for lack of votes.

A motion was made by Mr. Bezold and seconded by Mr. Ellison to approve the Tower Park playground bid from Prus Construction in the amount of \$3,608,603.87, to include the 1.7 million in additional funding for the playground and eliminate the splash pad. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Strange. 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 24190 to 24347 for the period of **August 19 – September 15, 2023.** A motion was made by Mr. Pendery and seconded by Mrs. McIntosh to concur in the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Strange. Voting “no” none. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Ordinances and Orders

Dave Fessler stood in for Tim Schneider and read the following ordinance summaries:

Ordinance O-14-2023: An ordinance pertaining to a ten year renewal of the franchise agreement between Spectrum and the City of Fort Thomas was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Pendery and seconded by Mr. Ellison to approve ordinance O-14-2023. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Strange. Voting “no”: none. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Ordinance O-15-2023: An ordinance establishing the tax rate for the 2023 property taxes within the City of Fort Thomas was presented to council for consideration. A motion was made by Mr. Pendery and seconded by Mr. Bezold to approve ordinance O-15-2023. Upon call of the roll, the following members voted “aye”: Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. Pendery, Mr. Bezold, Mr. Blau, and Mr. Strange. Voting “no”: Mr. Ellison. The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 1.

Adjournment: With no further business to come before council, a motion was made by Mr. Pendery and seconded by Mr. Ellison to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

APPROVED:

Eric Haas, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melissa K. Beckett, City Clerk