

# City of Fort Wright

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## City of Fort Wright Special Council Meeting Wednesday, February 19, 2020 – 6:00 PM

### CALL TO ORDER

The Special Council Meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Mayor Hatter. Mayor Hatter led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Here
Councilman Feinauer	Here
Councilman Wall	Here
Councilman Weber	Here
Councilman Wessels	Absent
Councilwoman Witt	Here

Also present for the meeting were:

City Administrative Officer Jill Bailey  
City Attorney Kyle Winslow  
Fire/EMS Chief Steve Schewe  
Public Works Director Jeff Bethell  
City Clerk Maura Russell

### CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ms. Jane Kleman, representing the Fort Wright Hilltoppers senior citizens group returned to address the rental situation with the Fort Wright Civic Club, and asked if a solution had been made. She appreciated the offer to use South Hills Civic Club for free but does not anticipate it being an option because the senior citizen members could not clean it after meetings. Councilman Weber asked if the Hilltoppers could pay for someone to clean the South Hills Civic Club since the rental is being given for free by the City. Ms. Kleman was unsure if that would be a viable option. Ms. Bailey reminded Ms. Kleman that the City has put the third Wednesday of each month on hold for their group until May, to give them time to decide. Mayor Hatter advised no solution yet because there has not been enough time to discuss amongst the Council. He suggested sending the request to the Community Improvement Committee. Mayor Hatter reminded Ms. Kleman that any accommodation made for the Hilltoppers group would have to also be made for any other group that approaches the City, so Council and the Community Improvement Committee will need to decide.

Ms. Marge Kohne, 58 Morris Place, of the Young Grandmothers Club addressed Council, asking why the Parks & Recreation budget couldn't be used for the Young Grandmothers Club and Hilltoppers stating it was her understanding that the money paid for the hall [Fort Wright Civic Club] for the Young Grandmothers Club and the Hilltoppers group came out of the Parks & Recreation budget. She asked why the money from that budget couldn't continue to be used for their groups. Ms. Kohne said she feels the seniors should be compensated or helped for building the City. She went on to say using the South Hills Civic Club is not user-friendly for their group because of the cleaning requirements, no storage facilities for lunch items or BINGO items, etc.

Councilman Weber offered solutions for storage of their paper products and other items they want to keep in the location they use and advised the City is offering an option and the groups are making the choice to not take it. He said Council has a fiduciary responsibility to pay only for things City-related. Because this situation was not discovered until recently, they cannot comment on what has happened in the past but can correct it moving forward.

Ms. Kohne also asked about the payment situation. Ms. Bailey said the woman who runs the Fort Wright Civic Club dropped off a bill in December requesting payment for \$1,200, but there had been no expenditure or budget item for this. Fort Wright Civic Club did not bill the City in 2018 and the City Treasurer found a payment in 2016 for \$1,200, but there was nothing else in the records. Additionally, just because the payment had been allocated in one fiscal year does not bind Council to continue payment for future years, as there should have been discussion annually. Ms. Bailey confirmed the check had been written from the Parks & Recreation account, but parks are expensive and require regular maintenance and upkeep and expenses are considered annually. She asked Ms. Kohne if anyone from either group had reached out to any private businesses for support or fundraising, or other communities that may be able to accommodate their groups. She said the City is interested in talking with the groups and looking for a solution, but she encouraged the groups to brainstorm and possibly come up with other communities to partner with.

Ms. Mary Beth Dowd, of 1410 Amsterdam Road, Park Hills, is the new President of the Hilltoppers group and asked if they should use the facility next month. Mayor Hatter reminded her that the City is not paying for Fort Wright Civic Club and reminded her that the Fort Wright Civic Club is entirely private and not associated with the City. He asked who was paying for that if the City makes the South Hills Civic Club available for free. The Young Grandmothers Club treasurer, Ms. Pam Presnell, of 3200 Mitchell Court, Burlington, said they would rather pay \$75 for Fort Wright Civic Club and not have to worry about cleaning, as it is the one time a month many of the members get out. Ms. Bailey reiterated that the City is happy these clubs are here, but the issue is liability. She said if you are affiliated with the City as a function or group, we must provide insurance, control the funds, and subject the entity to the governmental accounting procedures. Ms. Bailey said the City does not want to hurt or disband these groups but needs to understand what they can support.

Mayor Hatter reiterated that it may not have been legal for the City to pay for the group rental fees in the past and that Council would discuss it to see if it is possible to do something moving forward. He reminded her that any deal made with the Young Grandmothers Club or Hilltoppers group could open the City up for any organization or club to come to them to have the same arrangement. Mayor Hatter and Councilman Feinauer both commented again to put this issue with the Community Improvement Committee for further research. Councilman Feinauer asked for both groups to pass on additional

information to them and reminded the groups that this will not get resolved in one or two weeks as it will take some time to come to a resolution.

#### **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES**

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2020, Special Council Meeting. Councilwoman Witt made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2020, Special Caucus Meeting. Councilman Wall made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Abstain
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

#### **NEW BUSINESS** (after Department Reports)

FY 18/19 Audit Presentation – Van Gorder, Walker & Co., Inc.

Mr. John Chamberlin, Partner with Van Gorder, Walker & Co., Inc., presented the fiscal year 2018-19 audit to the Council.

- Presented in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States (GAAP) and auditing standards generally accepted in the United States (GAAS)
- Issued an unmodified opinion, meaning that no modifications are required to the opinion and that they are stated fairly; highest opinion they can give
- There are no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control
- There are no instances of non-compliance with laws or grant or bond agreements
- There were two management comments issued to management; there were seven management comments for FY 2017-18
  - Controls of deposits from South Hills Civic Club
  - Maintenance of capital asset register; recommends new capital asset policy to assist in correction of this, along with work by City's accountant

Mr. Chamberlin thanked the City staff who helped the auditing team during their review process. Ms. Bailey expressed appreciation for Mr. Chamberlin and his team who have worked well with her team, especially with budget changes as she came into the City mid-budget year. Mayor Hatter also thanked Mr. Chamberlin and his team, confirming the audit is a critical part of what the City does to maintain transparency and visibility on the money that belongs to the residents of the City. The audit is now available on the City's website.

## **CAO REPORT**

Ms. Bailey identified two items to be addressed. The first pertains to the James A. Ramage Civil War Museum. Council will need to accept the resignation of Ms. Kathleen Romero as well as appoint two new members to the Board. The two appointments are not intended to replace Ms. Romero. Ms. Bailey advised the Museum Board can have up to eight members and their terms will be staggered. Three members' terms will expire in December 2020; three will expire in December 2021; and the two new members will expire in 2021 and 2022. If anyone else is appointed, they will fill the end of existing terms.

A motion was made by Councilman Abeln to amend the agenda to include a discussion on Executive Order 02-2020. Councilman Feinauer made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

**MOTION CARRIED**

City Attorney Kyle Winslow read the Executive Order. 02-2020, an Order appointing Ms. Jan Mullikin and Mr. Stephen Clifford to the James A. Ramage Civil War Museum Board and accepting the resignation of Ms. Kathleen Romero from the Board.

A motion was made by Councilman Weber to approve Executive Order 02-2020. Councilwoman Witt made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mayor Hatter expressed appreciate to Ms. Romero as a founding member of the Museum Board who put in an enormous amount of time and energy there. She will be missed there, after 15 long years of dedicated service. We appreciate everything she has done for the City as a long-term resident of the City. Ms. Romero will be presented with a gift at the next Council meeting.

The second item Ms. Bailey addressed was the appointing of Councilmember Wessels to the OKI Regional Council of Governments Board. A motion was made by Councilman Abeln to amend the agenda to include a discussion on Executive Order 03-2020. Councilman Feinauer made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made by Councilwoman Witt to approve Executive Order 03-2020. Councilman Wall made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Ms. Bailey said she will have an updated issues list to Council soon. She sent a few emails today to be reviewed. Currently migrating servers, so experiencing some computer issues which should be resolved by Friday. There were no questions for Ms. Bailey.

## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

**Fire/EMS Department** – Fire/EMS Chief Steve Schewe reported that they are working to put the bracketry and equipment on the new fire truck. He hopes to do training in March and put it in service. The other apparatus will be declared as surplus and will be retired. The ambulance is under construction at Horton with tentative delivery scheduled for June. The Hoxworth Blood Drive last month was successful. Councilmembers expressed their appreciation to Chief Schewe for saving the City money. Mayor Hatter stated that roughly \$300,000 was saved by purchasing this truck lightly used from another local city. He stated that it will replace a 1982 fire truck and will be a great asset for the community.

**Police Department** – Interim Chief/Captain Jonathan Colwell was unable to attend the meeting because of an incident that occurred this afternoon. Ms. Bailey reported on his behalf that the hiring process has been completed for the Police Chief position and based on the recommendations of the hiring committee a conditional offer has been made to Ed Butler, currently Chief Deputy of the Kenton County Detention Center. His first day with the City will be March 9. Ms. Bailey said she excited to have him join the team and thinks he will be a great addition to the staff. Councilman Weber expressed appreciation to Ms. Bailey and Mayor Hatter for the time and effort they and the hiring committee put into this decision. He said any of the three final candidates could have been chosen, but his ability and experience with the City brought him to the top.

Ms. Bailey highlighted Mr. Butler's achievements: has previously served as City Administrator for the City of Fort Wright and currently serves as Chief Deputy of the Kenton County Detention Center; he was also the Chief of Police for the Kenton County Police Department and the Hamilton County Parks Board; he is a graduate of the FBI Academy; and he has a Master's degree.

Mayor Hatter reiterated Councilman Weber's point of the number of candidates. He said they had many very qualified applicants and it was difficult to narrow it to seven. Colonel Pat Morgan from the Kenton County Sheriff's Department reviewed the initial round of resumes and came in to assist with the first round of interviews with Mayor Hatter and Ms. Bailey. He provided technical guidance and insight from his 30 years of law enforcement experience and was helpful in narrowing the field to three candidates. Those three candidates interviewed with the HR Committee, Councilman Wessels, Mayor Hatter, Interim Chief/Captain Colwell, and Ms. Bailey. Mayor Hatter agreed that any one of the three finalists could have been chosen. He said Mr. Butler rose to the top because of his experience, he has worked at the City before, and is well known and respected throughout Kenton County and Northern Kentucky with his connections with the first responder community. He welcomed Mr. Butler back to the team, looks forward to working with him, and said he will fit in well with the Police Department and staff, residents, and businesses.

**Public Works** – Mr. Jeff Bethell reported that his team is working to replace sections of sidewalks. The weather is helping them get some projects completed. They are cutting back honeysuckle to make mowing this summer easier and clearing drains because of the rain. The team is also working on the sign inventory master list and replacing anything damaged. Mr. Bethell said there were a couple of rounds of snow last month and they have restocked the salt pile. Currently, there is 240 tons in stock, but have only used 86 tons this year, which is very low. Mayor Hatter asked about road projects. Mr. Bethell said CT Consulting is working on a design for the Amsterdam Road street project, which will go to bid in April. Bid opening is March 6 at 11 AM. Councilwoman Witt inquired about the sign that was hit on Redwood Drive and Mr. Bethell said it was taken care of.

**Administration/Finance** – Ms. Bailey said training is ongoing for City Clerk Maura Russell. Treasurer/Senior Deputy Clerk Susan Ellis prepared the financial reports. Mr. Russell will start preparing the Administration report moving forward. For operations, we have reinstituted passport acceptance and are ensuring Mr. Russell understands operational aspects to answer day-to-day questions. She has also been reformatting and reorganizing personnel files to remove duplicates and locate missing documents we are required to have. One item we found that was not kept in our records are the death notifications in the event officers or emergency staff are killed in the line of duty. We are in the process of creating those forms for staff to fill out. We must keep medical files separate from personnel files, so we are creating that filing system to ensure it is set up appropriately. Ms. Bailey said the finance reports are in the packets and they will be tweaking the financial reporting to have summary and detail sheets. Mayor Hatter reminded citizens about OpenGov, which allows anyone to go online and look up the City's financial information, including any check that has been written. With the restructuring of the budget last year, the interface is not updated, but Ms. Ellis is working on fixing access to the recent information. She is working with the OpenGov team to resolve this in the very near future.

### **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Hatter said a card was received from Councilman Wessels family, thanking the City for the flowers sent for his father's death.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilwoman Witt reminded residents that the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Clean Up Fort Wright Day will be on Saturday, April 18, from 8 AM to 12 PM. This is organized by a group of citizens from the City and will start and end at the City Building. Participants will get a t-shirt and free lunch provided by Sub Station II. Councilwoman Witt thanked Sub Station II, Mr. Bethell, and Councilman Wessels' wife, Donna, for their support and help with organizing the event.

Mayor Hatter said he received a letter from the Department of Commerce and reminded residents of the upcoming Census. He stated there are a lot of scams around the Census and to be careful to whom and how you are giving out your information. Mayor Hatter said if you see people doing Census work and they cannot produce legitimate government identification to call 911 and the police will come to check out the situation.

### **ADJOURNMENT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING**

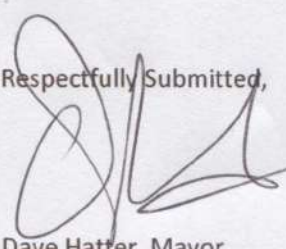
A motion was made by Councilman Feinauer to adjourn the Council Meeting. Councilman Wall made a second. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

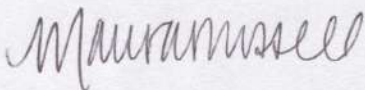
**MOTION CARRIED**

The Council Meeting was adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Dave Hatter, Mayor

Attest:



Maura Russell  
City Clerk