



City of Fort Wright

409 Kyles Lane | Fort Wright, KY 41011 | www.fortwright.com | 859.331.1700

City of Fort Wright Council Meeting Wednesday, June 5, 2024 – 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by City Administrator Jill Bailey. She announced that Mayor Hatter would not be in attendance. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Absent
Councilman Collins	Present
Councilman Wall	Present
Councilman Weber	Present
Councilman Wessels	Absent
Councilwoman Witt	Present

Also present for the meeting were:

City Administrator Jill Bailey
Fire/EMS Chief Steve Schewe
Police Chief Ed Butler
Public Works Director Jeff Bethell
City Clerk Maura Russell
Finance Clerk Kelly Perry
City Attorney John S. Brooking

Councilman Weber made a motion to appoint Councilman Collins to run the meeting in the Mayor's absence. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes
Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Collins introduced newly appointed City Attorney John S. Brooking. Mr. Brooking said he and his law partner, Brian Halloran, have their law practice in the Wright's Summit complex. He said he has been a resident of Fort Wright with his wife and child for over 18 years. He said he is currently the president of the Beechwood Education Foundation and the president of Vent Haven Museum. Mr. Brooking said he has appreciated the work the team has done for a long time, and he looks forward to contributing.

Senator McDaniel & Representative Dietz – General Assembly Update – Senator Chris McDaniel spoke to Council about the most recent legislative session, saying it was a good session for the Commonwealth and Northern Kentucky. He mentioned the Center for Biomedical Excellence in Covington and the relocation of the Chase School of Law and UK's Northern Kentucky Medical School branch as successes, as well as the new medical examiner and crime lab offices moving into the old Highland Heights City Building.

Senator McDaniel referenced the realignment of Buttermilk Pike and Orphanage Road, saying funding for that project was approved, along with right-of-way utility funding for the KY-17/Madison Pike and I-275 interchange and median rebuilding on KY-17.

Senator McDaniel said the state will have approximately \$4 billion in reserves, which is the best fiscal shape the state has been in in a long time. He said funding will be given to complete the police academy in Madisonville, which will relieve strain on the current training facility at Eastern Kentucky University. He said, once complete, the wait to send a new officer through training should go down to about one month.

Councilman Weber thanked Senator McDaniel and requested he check into assistance for replacing curbs on Kyles Lane. He also requested assistance on pushing for a police training center in Northern Kentucky.

Councilman Wall advised Senator McDaniel that there is a development issue happening in Covington that is impacting Fort Wright traffic flow, and the City will be in touch for some assistance.

Representative Stephanie Dietz addressed Council, first thanking Senator McDaniel for his work on the state's financial situation. She reviewed multiple bills that passed both chambers, including House Bill 482, which added the chief of police of the Owensboro Police Department and the director of the Northern Kentucky Police and Sheriff's Training Center to the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council. Rep. Dietz said this gets a Northern Kentucky voice in a very important group to continue advocating for a police training facility in the area. Councilman Weber thanked Rep. Dietz for her work on that bill.

Councilwoman Witt asked Rep. Dietz what her priorities will be moving forward. Rep. Dietz said she is now on the budget subcommittee for transportation, which is great because the Brent Spence Bridge and the 4th Street Bridge in Covington are both in her district. She said that the subcommittee will deal with large issues regarding roadway impact on quality of life, including walkability and biking. She also hopes to do some more work on domestic violence matters because of her work in family law.

PDS Executive Director Sharmili Reddy – Zoning for Medical Cannabis – Ms. Reddy presented to Council the administrative changes that will need to happen because of the passage of medical cannabis regulations at the state level. She said it will be a heavily regulated business requiring specially licensed prescribers, all participating businesses must be licensed, and anyone wanting medical cannabis must have a specific state-issued card.

Ms. Reddy presented Council with the three options they must consider: one – adopt the regulations via zoning ordinance amendments, with no ballot option; two – Council says “No” via ordinance, which could subject the City to a public petition to appeal and have the choice put on the ballot in the November election; or three – enact a resolution that sends the question to the voters directly for the November election ballot.

Ms. Reddy recommended taking action as soon as possible to allow residents the option to appeal and petition should they vote to not allow the businesses in the City. She also said the local jurisdictions are split, with some saying no to the businesses, some sending the question to the ballot, and at least three considering allowing the zoning changes. She advised Kenton County is considering a prohibition, and if that occurs medical cannabis businesses will only be allowed in those cities that say “yes”.

Ms. Reddy also advised Council that they can choose to say “yes” to certain parts of the industry based on the existing zoning. She said one example would be to not allow a cultivation facility if there is not an appropriate industrial zone, essentially allowing accommodations for all uses that have appropriate zoning already in place. Ms. Reddy also recommended keeping the approval very basic and not promoting any additional regulations or restrictions, staying mainly with the zoning matters.

There was discussion on permitted or conditional uses and Ms. Reddy said Council always has the option to make this a conditional use but cautioned that would push the matter to the Board of Adjustment to decide. She said the amount of training and state regulations involved will make this very complicated to sort through, which is why they recommend doing “permitted” use.

Joe Nienaber, Sr., member of the Fort Wright Board of Adjustment addressed Council, saying if Council is considering approving this change, he suggests making it a permitted use and determining at the outset if they want or do not want the businesses.

CITIZEN COMMENTS/GUESTS

There were no citizen comments or guests.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Wall made a motion to approve the minutes of the Caucus Meeting held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Councilman Weber made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Interlocal Agreement regarding Housing Choice Voucher Program – Ms. Bailey advised this is the agreement to allow the Housing Authority of Covington to continue administering the housing choice voucher program on behalf of the City, and the main change is to the name of the organization administering the program.

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve Mayor Hatter to sign the interlocal agreement with the Housing Authority of Covington. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

Lorup Drainage Issue & Work Proposal Results – Ms. Bailey said this project was put out for proposals to ensure the best value for taxpayer money and was not bid because it did not reach the threshold required. She said the three proposals received were: Jefferson Contracting, \$21,960; TMS Construction, \$23,775; and Humphrey

Concrete, \$34,325. Ms. Bailey advised the recommendation is for Council to approve the bid from Jefferson Contracting.

Councilwoman Witt made a motion to accept the bid from Jefferson Contracting for \$21,960 to complete drainage repairs at 21 Lorup Drive. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilwoman Witt	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Weber	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 06-2024 – Adoption of Municipal Road Aid Contract – Ms. Bailey said this adoption is done annually so that the City can receive gas tax money for roadway repairs and maintenance from the state. She said this year the City should receive \$127,744.39.

Councilman Weber made a motion to authorize Mayor Hatter to sign the Municipal Road Aid Cooperative Program Agreement. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

First Reading of Ordinance 05-2024 – Amending the Budget for FY 23-24 – Ms. Bailey said this budget amendment incorporates the audited fund balances into the budget and aligns any additional spending that Council authorized during the fiscal year. She said \$300,000 surplus will be moved from the general fund to the capital improvements fund and \$115,000 will be added to the emergency fund. She said the emergency fund will now have \$843,526 which is approximately six months of operating expenses.

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 05-2024, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright in Kenton County, Kentucky, amending Fort Wright Ordinance No. 06.2023 and the budget adopted thereby for the City of Fort Wright for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

First Reading of Ordinance 06-2024 – Adopting Budget for FY 24-25 – Councilman Weber thanked Ms. Bailey and the department heads for the hard work and time they put into the budget.

Ms. Bailey advised the budget mainly deals with personnel matters, including salary increases, new hires, and promotions, with a decrease in pension rates for the year. She said there are funds allocated in the Capital Improvements fund to purchase two new police cruisers, ARPA funding has been allocated for the replacement of the City Building's windows, and \$150,000 in street projects. Ms. Bailey said there are funds allocated in the

Fire/EMS budget for the future purchase of an ambulance or other fire equipment, but it is just earmarked and there are no plans to use those funds yet.

Councilwoman Witt thanked the Finance Committee for their time and hard work in managing the budget process.

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 06-2024, an appropriations ordinance of the City of Fort Wright in Kenton County, Kentucky, adopting the annual budget for the City of Fort Wright for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025. Councilman Collins made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

First Reading of Ordinance 07-2024 – Adopting Personnel Classification Plan – Ms. Bailey said the personnel classification plan is required by state statute annually and identifies the number of positions in each department, their title, their pay scale, and which are required to have a bond.

Councilman Collins made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 07-2024, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright in Kenton County, Kentucky, establishing non-elected offices of the City, and a plan of personnel classification and organization. Councilman Weber made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

Resolution 07-2024 – Recognition of Outgoing Chief of Police Ed Butler – Ms. Bailey completed a full reading of Resolution 07-2024 honoring Chief Butler. She thanked Chief Butler for his service to Fort Wright and for his guidance and the tremendous job he has done for the City.

Councilmembers and staff each expressed their appreciation to Chief Butler, wishing him the best in his new role and with his family.

Chief Butler addressed Council, thanking them for the opportunity to come back to a place he enjoyed. He also thanked Council for giving the department members the promotional opportunities now that he is moving on, saying his intention when he started in March 2020 was to hand the baton to Jonathan Colwell within five years.

Councilwoman Witt made a motion to approve Resolution 07-2024. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called the role.

Councilwoman Witt	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilman Collins	Yes	
Councilman Weber	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – Councilman Weber – Councilman Weber had no further report after the previous budget discussion.

Community Improvement Committee – Councilwoman Witt – Councilwoman Witt said the Committee will be reviewing the shipping container matter at their next meeting.

CAO REPORT

Ms. Bailey provided a written report.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Administration – Ms. Russell advised there was a Board of Adjustment meeting in May, but none scheduled for June. She also thanked Ms. Bailey, Mayor Hatter, Council, the department heads, and Ms. Perry for the opportunity to complete the Leadership NKY program through the NKY Chamber.

Finance – Ms. Perry advised the City now has less than \$15,000 in delinquent taxes, which includes delinquencies going back 11 years.

Fire/ALS Department – Chief Schewe said the Fire Department has brought on a new part-time firefighter/medic, Michaela Terry-Snead, and she will start tomorrow.

Police Department – Chief Butler had no report, but said he appreciated working with the staff and other department heads.

Ms. Bailey advised the ceremonial swearing-in for incoming Chief Colwell will take place at a Special Council Meeting on June 19th.

Public Works Department – Mr. Bethell said the parking lot is moving along well. He said the Fort Henry project should begin after the July 4th holiday and residents impacted have been notified. Mr. Bethell said the George Huser project should start at the beginning of August.

Legal Counsel – No Report

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Employee Recognitions/Special Thank You's – Councilman Collins read thank you cards for Mayor Hatter, Mr. Bethell, Officer Betustak, Officer Getz, and Officer Arnsperger.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Witt thanked the nine volunteers who clean up City streets, saying 51 bags have been collected.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

Councilwoman Witt made a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilwoman Witt	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Hatter, Mayor

Attest:


Maura Russell, City Clerk