



City of Fort Wright

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City of Fort Wright Council Meeting Wednesday, July 1, 2020 – 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Hatter. Mayor Hatter led the Pledge of Allegiance and 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 Todd McMurtry
Fire/EMS Chief Steve Schewe
Police Chief Ed Butler
Public Works Director Jeff Bethell
City Clerk Maura Russell

CITIZEN COMMENTS/GUESTS

Mayor Hatter introduced Kentucky State Senator Chris McDaniel and Kentucky State Representative Kim Banta for their legislative updates.

Senator McDaniel thanked the Mayor and Council for allowing him time to update the residents on the recent legislative session. He said he is thrilled to have Representative Banta in Frankfort and said she came in on fire and Northern Kentucky made a good pick with her. He said he normally goes through a laundry list of bills passed but thought he would talk more about the weirdness of this year's session. Senator McDaniel said he is the chair of the Appropriations and Revenue Committee which crafts the state budget and negotiates it through to completion. He said normally there is a two-year budget. Senator McDaniel said the focus was on cost containment and the revenue forecast plummeted because of the pandemic. He said CERS [County Employee Retirement System] has frozen contribution rates for this fiscal year and reset the amortization period through Kentucky Senate Bill 249. He also said a \$400 million buffer was built in if things go bad. Senator McDaniel said this is the first time a one-year budget has been passed and it is pessimistic and based on the worst-case scenario. He said there will be a full contribution to the teacher's retirement system and KRS [Kentucky Employee Retirement System].

Senator McDaniel continued by saying there was an increase given to Kenton County School District and a School Safety Bill was passed allocating \$9.4 million for school-based mental health services. He said the KLEFPF [Kentucky Law Enforcement Foundation Program Fund] increased stipends for law enforcement officer trainings around the state. He also mentioned the tax on vaping products that will be implemented.

Finally, Senator McDaniel discussed the road plans. He said there was a focus on KY-536 which does not run through Fort Wright but, with the Amazon facility opening, there is a need to have a southern route open because the traffic backups will continue on Interstates 275 and 71/75 and Dixie Highway, Turkeyfoot Road, and 3L/Madison Pike. He said they are still working on right-of-way utility acquisition at KY-17 and I-275. Senator McDaniel said there was \$50,000 approved for first-year design and \$2 million for the second year approved to fix the medians on 3L/Madison Pike and they were given \$500,000 to work on the ramp from I-71/75 to Kyles Lane. He said he is also happy to see the work progressing at the Kyles Lane and Dixie Highway interchange, as that has been a long time coming.

Mayor Hatter thanked Senator McDaniel for coming and appreciates his hard work in Frankfort, especially for the money for 3L/Madison Pike and the long-term support for the Kyles/Dixie interchange. He asked about the police academy situation, saying they have raised concerns about getting into the academy and the cost. He said he recently read that a city was looking at doing their own academy and if there is something that can be done for a Northern Kentucky academy. He said this is a concern because it is difficult to recruit and retrain with the ongoing situation.

Senator McDaniel said that Bowling Green was looking into starting their own academy and initial conversations have started with DOCJT [Department of Criminal Justice Training] about a Northern Kentucky academy. He said they have expressed interest and will need to work on a path then have a conversation with the Northern Kentucky law enforcement community. Senator McDaniel agreed that it is currently a frustrating process to get through DOCJT because of the reductions. Police Chief Butler said eight weeks have been cut out of academy training. Senator McDaniel said he hopes to see movement in the next year.

Mayor Hatter then introduced Kentucky State Representative Kim Banta. She thanked the Mayor and Council and said this has been a very strange session, with the masks and voting from their offices. Representative Banta said she is proud of the school mental health bill, which is especially important now. She said there are teachers who have not seen their students since as early as March 7th or 8th and sometimes kids need someone else laying eyes on them to ensure they are safe in their homes. She cited a recent Kenton County School District survey, which said 84% of parents want their children to return to school in the fall and she hopes to get on the Education Committee to push that through. She said two out of 354,000 football players die each year and only one out of one million die from Coronavirus. Representative Banta said parochial schools have said they will open and if they can do it then so can public schools. She said the state needs to do what it can to get kids back in school while being as safe as possible.

Representative Banta said her other focus this session has been on unemployment. She said she sometimes spends three to four hours on working to help one constituent with their unemployment concerns, but she is not sure where the money is going to come from to fund the current number of claims.

Councilmember Weber asked if Representative Banta has seen the numbers that US Senator Rand Paul referenced in his recent speech, which had statistics from other countries regarding students returning to school. Representative Banta said those numbers would be great to look at and she has been hearing from superintendents about their plans, including one that may do the “college model” of returning in mid-August and finishing before Thanksgiving. She also said it is hard to sift through data right now because of politics but she wants to get kids back in school. She also said if parents are concerned or there are fragile relatives to consider, school districts would be willing to set individual students on NTI [non-traditional instruction].

Councilman Feinauer asked Senator McDaniel and Representative Banta about the upcoming general election and how they anticipate the turnout. Senator McDaniel said he is working with Secretary of State Michael Adams to have a conversation. He said at worst there should be a dramatic increase in polling locations because he cannot imagine there only being a single polling location in the county. Mayor Hatter said this is also a concern of his and he recently spoke with Kenton County Clerk Gabrielle Summe and she mentioned the concern being poll workers as most of them are elderly and high risk. He said that will get worse because of the situation with the pandemic and people who have done it in the past will not be able to do it. Mayor Hatter said anyone who is concerned about their ability to vote in the general election and is able should reach out to Kenton County Clerk Summe to volunteer as a poll worker. Jason Worms, a Fort Wright resident present for this meeting, said he was a poll worker and that is where the bottleneck occurs, when there are not enough poll workers. He said there were about 50 at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center on June 23rd for the primary election and that was all they could get in Kenton County. Mayor Hatter said Kenton County also opened the Administration Building to vote prior to election day. He again urged residents to reach out to Kenton County Clerk Summe for the most up-to-date information on where they are headed with voting in November and poll worker information.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES

Councilman Abeln made a motion to approve the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, June 3, 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

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on Wednesday, June 17, 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

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve the minutes of the Caucus Meeting held on Wednesday, June 17, 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

Mayor Hatter said there is not a quorum available to vote on the minutes for the Special Council Meeting held on June 22, 2020. He said those minutes will be tabled until the next Council Meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 10-2020 – Coronavirus Relief Fund Application Approval

City Attorney McMurtry read resolution 10-2020, the adoption of a resolution of the City of Fort Wright authorizing the filing of a Coronavirus Relief Fund ("CRF") Application for reimbursement of incurred expenses in CRF Funds with the Department for Local Government ("DLG"); authorizing and directing the Mayor of City of Fort Wright to execute any documents which are deemed necessary by DLG to reimburse the City of Fort Wright; and authorizing the Mayor to act as the authorized correspondent for reimbursement.

Ms. Bailey said there were enough expenses to account for the reimbursable amount allowed. She said she anticipates receiving the funds prior to completion of the audit in late August/early September, and the auditor would like the receipt of funds recorded on the 2019-2020 fiscal year and steps will be taken to be sure it is on those books. Mayor Hatter asked why it is not recorded in the 2020-2021 fiscal year if that is when it is received. Ms. Bailey said this is because the bulk of the expenses fell within the previous fiscal year and corresponds with the shortfall of receipts. Councilman Weber asked if the City would be submitting for more than the anticipated amount to be received and Ms. Bailey said they have requested about \$75,000 to \$100,000 more.

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve Resolution 10-2020. Councilman Weber 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 requested an agenda amendment to allow for Committee Reports. He said in the past this has been on the agenda between New Business and the CAO Report, but was removed because of the pandemic and more pressing matters. He said he is open to having these reports at any time during the meeting but will need to amend the agenda for this evening and then add them to the agenda moving forward.

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the agenda amendment to include Committee Reports. Councilman Abeln 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 asked if any Committees had information to report, even if not prepared.

Councilman Feinauer, Chair of the Community Improvements Committee, said Senator McDaniel's report took care of the Committee's information. He said they had heard rumors of money coming in for the crumbling medians on 3L/Madison Pike and that is a huge win. He said the work is continuing on I-71/75 north and south exit ramps and Councilwoman Witt is looking at beautification plans for the corner of Kyles Lane and Dixie Highway. Councilwoman Witt the Fort Wright Garden Club used to maintain that intersection and she said she has a plan that will remove the existing sod and has scale drawing recommendations for native trees, shrubs, and plants. She said the Fort Wright Garden Club will add perennials. She is submitting the drawing to the landscape architect who will be working on ramp signage to formalize the plan and submit for approval to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. She said it is a simple plan, but better than a grassy hill. Councilman Weber asked about getting water to the area for irrigation and Councilwoman Witt said that is on the wish list and they are looking at the cost. Mayor Hatter asked if any of the property belongs to the City of Fort Wright and Councilwoman Witt said it is state right-of-way which is why they are asking for permission. She said she looked a list of planning requirements from other similar projects and used trees that were on an approved list.

Councilman Weber, member of the Finance Committee, reported that they are moving forward on requesting a presentation from the investment firm discussed at the previous Caucus Meeting and fine-tuning the investment policy.

Councilman Abeln, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, said nothing has been pressing and the Committee has not met for a couple months because of the pandemic.

Mayor Hatter confirmed with Councilman Weber that he had nothing to add as Chair of the Human Resource Committee.

Mayor Hatter thanked the Finance Committee for their time and hard work on the budget and investment policy and plan. He said it will be a great addition to the city's financial portfolio to generate higher returns. He also reminded residents that the budget amendment for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 were passed at the last Special Council Meeting, and both documents are now available on the City's website. He encouraged residents to check it out to see how their money is being spent.

CAO REPORT

Ms. Bailey said she was out on vacation last week and is catching up. She said she is working to implement the new budget and wind down the old fiscal year with housekeeping items.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Administration/Finance – City Clerk Maura Russell provided the Administration update. She said the Food Truck event on Tuesdays continues to be successful and well attended. She said all July rentals for the South Hills Civic Club were cancelled and refunded and there is a hold on accepting new reservations for the remainder of the year because of the pandemic. She said she and City Treasurer Susan Ellis are working with Ms. Bailey on ongoing reevaluation to reopen the Civic Club. Finally, Ms. Russell said there are other housekeeping items, including property file transitions, ongoing.

Mayor Hatter referenced the South Hills Civic Club, saying the City is not in a position to take on the additional cleaning and sanitation required, which is the reason for the deposit for rentals. He said there are now additional health risks and it is not prudent to go in the hole trying to clean the Civic Club after every use at this time.

Fire/ALS Department – Chief Schewe said the painting of the fire bays has finished and it was the first painting of the area in 30 years. He said the inspection for the two ambulances and service occurred yesterday and, with 145 items to review, the Fire Department had zero deficiencies. He said the inspection is good for one year, and they will return in a few weeks when the new ambulance arrives. Councilman Feinauer asked if the newest ambulance was still working okay and Chief Schewe said recently it has been going great.

Police Department – Chief Butler said he continues to work on filling the current vacancy in the Police Department and will have another at the end of July. He said they conducted the first round of interviews and have decent candidates, which they hope to select from by the August meeting. He said it is business-as-usual with the current environment, including the additional scrutiny nationally and in Kentucky. He said residents have been very supportive, including offering food and monetary donations and stopping officers to thank and appreciate them. He said this is further evidence of the great community of Fort Wright.

Public Works – Mr. Bethell said bushhogging has been done on major roads and a City-wide street sweep was done last week. He said the Amsterdam Road contractor is still drilling for the pier wall and that project is slow but moving along well. Mr. Bethell said SD1 [Sanitation District of Northern Kentucky, District One] was able to pull the pipe through on Fort Henry last week and that was done within one day and without issues. He said they do still need to set manholes which is why they are still working. Mr. Bethell said JPS will begin work on Helen Ruth Drive next week and letters have been sent to property owners. He said he went out to the site with Marty Hellman, of CT Consultants, to review the site last week. He said Ridgemont will be started toward the end of July and there will be a better idea of the start date once Helen Ruth begins. He said he sent letters to property owners on Ridgemont asking for their email addresses so he could keep them updated. Mr. Bethell said he also had a pre-construction meeting with Riegler Blacktop for the repaving project.

Councilman Weber asked about the pier walls and if they could be poured in the winter. Mr. Bethell said he does not think there is a problem with pouring those in the winter, but he would check. Councilman Abeln asked how much longer and Councilman Feinauer said October 2021. Mr. Bethell said the wall

must go in before the road construction can begin and he is hoping they can work through winter, but that is dependent on the weather.

Legal Counsel – Mr. McMurtry said he had no report for the Council Meeting but does have two items for the Executive Session.

Councilmembers welcomed Mr. McMurtry back as the City's Legal Counsel.

Ms. Bailey said there is one building and zoning issue to address concerning Little Links to Learning daycare center, located at 1945 Highland Pike. She said the director has requested permission to expand to 3420 Valley Plaza because of current limits on capacity. Ms. Bailey referenced the letter Christine Fairfield, Director, sent, saying about 80 to 100 families they serve still need childcare and asked for a temporary zoning change for 3420 Valley Plaza. Ms. Bailey said the zoning at that location does not currently allow for a daycare and she wanted to know what Council and the Mayor thought of the request. She said there is a parking problem periodically because of the existing businesses in that center and this will increase depending on the hours of operation of the daycare. She asked if anyone is interested in making a concession to the zoning code for this if it is temporary, and what their timeline would be for the concession.

Councilman Weber said he is interested but it is ultimately up to Mayor Hatter. Mayor Hatter said he is interested but asked if it was legal for this to happen. City Attorney McMurtry said the Mayor could issue an Executive Order to permit this temporary change. Mayor Hatter asked if any Councilmembers objected and Councilman Wall brought up the parking issue. Councilman Weber asked if they could have a walking path between the permanent and temporary locations, and Ms. Bailey said the topography prevents a walking path for the children. Ms. Bailey also said there are no outdoor play facilities at the temporary location, but she is unsure of the intention for the use of the space, like for younger children or infants for example. She said the daycare center is also still working through regulations and guidelines. Councilman Weber said if Mayor Hatter can get answers to Councilmembers' questions then he can make the decision.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Hatter reminded residents of the Food Truck event each Tuesday. He said the information is on social media, the digital sign in front of the City Administration building, and on the City's website. He also said Officer Brad Keller received a thank you card.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Hatter requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session under KRS 61.810 (1)(c) – Discussions of proposed or pending litigation against or on behalf of the public agency. A motion was made by Councilman Feinauer. 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 to Executive Session at 6:49 PM.

The Council Meeting was reopened to the public at 7:20 PM.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

Councilwoman Witt made a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Councilman Feinauer made a second. All voting in favor.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Hatter, Mayor

Attest:



Maura Russell, City Clerk