



City of Fort Wright

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City of Fort Wright Caucus Meeting Wednesday, July 19, 2023 – 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The Caucus Meeting was called to order at 6:22 PM by Mayor Dave Hatter following the close of the Special Council Meeting.

CITIZEN COMMENTS/GUESTS

There were no citizen comments.

Councilman Wessels made a motion to amend the agenda to include the following additional topics: KLC prescription card; Lookout Heights Civic Club; and property acquisition by a resident. Councilman Collins made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5-year Road Plan – 2023 to 2028 – Marty Hellmann, CT Consultants – Mr. Hellmann presented the updated five-year road plan, saying it is reviewed every two years with Mr. Bethell to ensure there are no changes to the plan. He presented a draft plan based on reconstruction and resurfacing needs throughout the City. Mr. Hellmann projected the City would spend approximately \$800,000 per year for the next five years as construction costs have gone up 25-30%.

There was discussion about the increased costs associated with the road program and it was decided that Mr. Hellmann would come back to Council with an updated plan that brings project costs to the \$600-650,000 range. Mr. Hellmann advised this would spread the projections out over thirty years, but that construction materials were getting much better, which would allow most roads to last that long without needing substantial resurfacing or reconstruction.

Fort Henry (Phase 3) Paving Project – Mr. Hellmann advised he reviewed the small section of Fort Henry Drive that was repaired ten years ago because of a water main break, which was subsequently not included in the street program repair specifications. He presented Council with a plan that would cost \$250,000 to replace that section, even though it would last at least five to ten more years. Council agreed to not move forward with including this section of Fort Henry Drive in the street program and instead include it with Bunker Court in the next five or so years.

George Huser Sidewalk/Concrete Channel Project – Mr. Hellmann discussed the issue of water coming off the Tower Hill Plaza parking lot onto the sidewalk along George Huser Drive, saying the large amount of water has begun to undermine and deteriorate the sidewalk and could potentially be causing damage to the roadway. Mr. Hellmann presented a plan to repair the sidewalk and install a concrete-lined channel as a ditch behind it. He

said this project would cost \$125,000 and both he and Mr. Bethell agreed this project is critical as the roadway could be impacted, which would cause even further damage and lead to more extensive and expensive repairs.

Council agreed to move forward with the repairs to the sidewalk, saying this item will come back to the next Council meeting for a vote. It was also requested that Mr. Theissen explore options for the assessment process with the owner of Tower Hill Plaza to cover some or all of the costs of repairs. Mr. Hellmann advised there are some other grant options he would also explore for the City.

Exterior Brick Cracking on Building – near Fire Department Bays – Mr. Hellmann presented a report from a structural engineer who reviewed the cracking in the brick around the fire bays. He said the engineer advised the cracking is not a structural concern and is the result of brick and/or thermal expansion and contraction. Mr. Hellmann said the engineer recommended using an elastomeric sealant to patch and seal the cracks. Councilmembers did not object to the recommendation.

There was discussion about the sidewalks on Fort Henry Drive and if they would be widened at all during the reconstruction process. Mr. Hellmann described the process currently in place, which attempts to match the back of the sidewalk location to minimize intrusion into adjacent yards. He said this usually requires narrowing the road slightly to bring the sidewalks to a minimum of four feet wide. Council agreed to continue with the existing process.

Duke Franchise Agreement Update – Ms. Bailey provided an update on the Duke Energy franchise agreement, saying Mr. Theissen has worked on the ordinances needed to move forward with collecting revenue from Duke Energy. She advised Council that those ordinances should be ready for the next Council meeting, and she anticipates approximately \$100,000 in revenue per year from this agreement.

COFW Telephone System Upgrades – Mayor Hatter advised the City would be getting a new phone system that would get rid of physical phones and use headsets in their place via a cloud-based service. He said this change would save approximately \$3,400 per year.

KLC Prescription Discount Card – Ms. Bailey discussed a prescription discount program being promoted by Kentucky League of Cities and requested Council's permission to advertise it to residents. She said it is free to use and there is no cost to the City to promote the product. Council agreed to allow promotion of the Kentucky RX Card program.

Lookout Heights Civic Club Update – Mr. Theissen provided a brief history of the tax issues that Lookout Heights Civic Club has experienced, saying the organization currently owes Kenton County approximately \$60,000 and the City is owed over \$17,000. He said a judge recently ordered foreclosure proceedings to continue. There was discussion on the City taking over the tax liabilities and the property from the organization. Mr. Theissen added that the building is not in good shape and potentially has mold damage, so it may be appropriate for the City to demolish the building if it purchases the property. Council agreed to have Mr. Theissen discuss potential acquisition of the property with the organization.

In conjunction with this discussion, it was brought to Council's attention that the Fort Wright Civic Club's only tenant, Little Treehouse Learning Center, will be moving, causing the Club to lose a lot of its income. It was suggested that the Club may approach the City for acquisition.

Council discussed options if both Club properties are acquired and recommended moving forward with conversations about purchasing Lookout Heights Civic Club at this time.

Property of Interest by Resident – Council was advised that the owner of 26 Glazier Road also owns two parcels on the paper street alongside their property. Mr. Theissen advised their attorney reached out requesting the City sell them the parcel in between the two they own, as well as close the paper street and allow them to acquire the right-of-way alongside their properties. Mr. Theissen advised it is a wooded lot and cannot be developed with a roadway because of steep drops in the wooded areas.

Council agreed to allow Mr. Theissen and Ms. Bailey complete further research and present information at the next Council Meeting.

Councilman Abeln left the meeting at 8:02 PM.

Kyles Lane Overpass Update – Council reviewed a Kentucky Transportation Cabinet-provided updated rendering of the Kyles Lane Overpass that incorporated their requested updates. It was determined that further updates were needed to fully include the previous requests. Ms. Bailey advised she would reach out to KYTC.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE CAUCUS MEETING

Councilman Wessels made a motion to adjourn the Caucus Meeting. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

The Caucus Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Dave Hatter, Mayor

Attest:



Maura Russell, City Clerk