



# City of Fort Wright

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## City of Fort Wright Special Council Meeting Wednesday, November 15, 2023 – 6:00 PM

### CALL TO ORDER

The Special Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Dave Hatter. Mayor Hatter led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. City Clerk Maura Russell called the roll.

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

Also present for the meeting were:

City Attorney Tim Theissen  
Fire/EMS Chief Steve Schewe  
Police Chief Ed Butler  
Public Works Director Jeff Bethell  
City Clerk Maura Russell  
Finance Clerk Kelly Perry

### CITIZEN COMMENTS/GUESTS

There were no citizen comments.

### APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES

Councilman Abeln made a motion to approve the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, October 4, 2023. Councilman Wessels made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on Thursday, November 2, 2023. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes

Councilman Wessels	Abstain	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Wall made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held Saturday, November 4, 2023. Councilman Abeln made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Abeln	Yes	
Councilman Wall	Yes	
Councilman Weber	Yes	
Councilman Wessels	Abstain	
Councilwoman Witt	Yes	MOTION CARRIED

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Kyles/Highland Traffic Congestion** – Chief Butler addressed recent concerns about the congestion on Highland Pike as drivers approach I-71/75 on weekday mornings, as well as the violation of the “No Right on Red” from old Kyles Lane to Kyles Lane from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM weekday mornings. He said in the past six years there have only been four accidents because of the No Right Turn violation, but he understands it is a concern and causes additional traffic congestion issues.

After discussion, Mayor Hatter recommended having a Resolution available for the next Council Meeting to request the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet review the intersection to determine if there could be any traffic engineering studies completed and updates made. It was also suggested that messages be sent via social media and the City’s newsletter to remind residents of the traffic issues.

**George Huser/Dixie Highway Traffic Complaints** – There was discussion about drivers violating the “No Left Turn” from George Huser Drive to go north on Dixie Highway, as well as U-turns that have been witnessed. Chief Butler said they can request signage from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to make U-turns illegal, but he has not seen any collision issues because of these actions.

After discussion, Mayor Hatter and Council determined the issues at Kyles Lane and Highland Pike were higher priority to address with KYTC and those would be the focus unless issues became more prominent at George Huser Drive and Dixie Highway.

**Kenton County Occupational Licensing Agreement Update** – Mr. Theissen reviewed the request by Kenton County for the City to sign a Licensing Agreement Update, essentially saying City staff will maintain confidentiality with records they can access via the Kenton County system. Mayor Hatter said he does not have an issue making sure sensitive records are protected, but he wanted to be sure no open records laws would or could be violated, as well as any penalties if there is a violation of the agreement.

Mr. Theissen advised he would pull together a list of questions for Kenton County based on Council's discussion and he would report back in December.

**Panhandling at Interstate Ramps** – Mayor Hatter addressed the concerns that have been brought to him regarding an increase in panhandling at the interstate ramps in the last six months. Mr. Theissen said there was a 2017 Kentucky Supreme Court ruling that cities could not prohibit panhandling as it is a First Amendment right. He said the City could take steps to address any public safety concerns that come up because of panhandling, including traffic issues or littering. He also warned that the consequences of a protected rights violation are high.

Chief Butler advised Council that officers are stopping to speak with the individuals each morning and reminding them of the littering issues, saying they can be cited if their belongings are left behind.

Councilwoman Witt suggested educating residents based on their concerns via the City newsletter and social media pages, and including information on other ways to support those in need. Mayor Hatter also suggested reaching out to businesses near those intersections to gently suggest they enforce their private parking rules.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Finance Committee – Councilman Wessels had no report.

Community Improvements Committee – Councilwoman Witt said the Committee will provide an update on the Door Store issue at the next Caucus Meeting.

## **CAO REPORT**

Ms. Bailey was not in attendance.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Administration** – Ms. Russell advised property tax bills have been sent. She also said she has been working to finish preparations for the Employee Appreciation Lunch next week.

**Finance** – Ms. Perry advised she is attending additional training on ARPA funding allowances this week.

**Fire/ALS** – Chief Schewe announced the upcoming Hoxworth Blood Drive on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, from 1:30 to 3:30 PM. He also announced a new part-time firefighter/EMT has been hired and she will start in the next two weeks.

Chief Schewe addressed a recent structure fire at 460 General Drive, saying the restoration company should be able to begin work in the coming weeks.

**Police** – Chief Butler reminded residents to remove valuables, including gifts and recent purchases, from cars and to not leave purses in plain view. He also recommended residents get packages off porches as quickly as possible to deter thefts.

**Public Works** – Mr. Bethell advised Fort Henry Phase One is complete and went extremely well. He said the bidding for Phase Two will go out this winter, with plans to start in the spring. He also said they are working to fully outfit the new trucks for winter plowing and salting.

Councilman Wessels requested an update on the crosswalk at Dixie Highway and Sleepy Hollow Road at St. Agnes and Mr. Bethell said KYTC completed updates to the existing mid-block crosswalk last week.

**Legal Counsel** – No report.

### **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Hatter provided the following updates to the City's calendar:

- November 27<sup>th</sup> – Santa's Mailbox arrives at the City Administration Building
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6:00 PM – Tree Lighting on the front lawn of the City Administration Building
- December 7<sup>th</sup> – 1:30 – 3:30 PM – Hoxworth Blood Mobile in the City Administration parking lot
- December 9<sup>th</sup> – 2:00 PM – Santa and Mrs. Claus visit via parade
- December 16<sup>th</sup> – Holly Jolly Days at Behringer Crawford Museum for City residents

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilwoman Witt – She said litter volunteers have collected 145 bags this year.

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

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

Councilman Abeln	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

The Special Council Meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Hatter, Mayor

Attest:



Maura Russell  
City Clerk