



City of Fort Wright

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City of Fort Wright City Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, June 3, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Hatter called the City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of Silence. City Clerk Kerrie Holland called the roll.

Mr. Jason Collins	Present
Ms. Donna Ross	Present
Mr. Scott Wall	Present
Mr. Jay Weber	Present
Mr. Bernie Wessels	Present
Ms. Margie Witt	Present

Also present were Mayor Hatter, City Administrator Jill Bailey, City Attorney John Brooking, Police Chief Jonathan Colwell, Public Works Director Jeff Bethell, City Clerk Kerrie Holland, and Finance Clerk Nyoka Johnson.

CITIZEN COMMENTS/GUESTS

Clare Flick, 1643 Elder Court, addressed Council regarding the condition of two residential properties, which she described as eyesores due to issues including overgrown weeds, disrepair to gutters, and general property maintenance concerns. She inquired about the renters' and landlord's responsibilities, specifically referencing properties at 317 Redwood Drive and the corner of Elder Court and Redwood Drive.

CAO Bailey reported that 317 Redwood Drive is currently on the City's violation list. It was explained that property owners are responsible for paying any fines assessed and, once violations are corrected, the property is removed from the violation list. The violation process then starts over. The Mayor noted that he has also observed concerns regarding the condition of the properties.

Public Works Director Jeff Bethell explained the City's code enforcement process, which is administered through PDS. Reported violations are reviewed and referred to PDS for inspection. A courtesy notice of violation is issued, providing the property owner with time to correct the issue. If the violation is not remedied by the follow-up inspection, a citation may be issued.

Mayor Hatter stated that the code enforcement process is lengthy and governed by established procedures. He encouraged residents to notify the City of potential violations, noting that enforcement typically begins with a complaint. The process includes a warning notice, citation, required waiting periods, and appeal opportunities before further action can be taken.

Ms. Flick also expressed concerns regarding the number of vehicles parked at one of the properties and the lack of leaf removal and general yard maintenance. Chief Colwell stated that there is no limit on the number of vehicles that may be parked on a property unless they are in violation of parking regulations or have remained parked beyond the permitted timeframe. Mayor Hatter added that City officials cannot enter private

property to search for violations, but may observe conditions from neighboring properties when responding to complaints.

Ms. Flick also inquired about several dead trees along Park Road after a fallen branch damaged a vehicle. Mayor Hatter explained that Park Road is owned and maintained by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and that responsibility for tree maintenance rests with the state.

Additionally, Ms. Flick asked when the Brooks Flooring signage would be removed, citing concerns about clutter and potential false advertising. Mayor Hatter explained that, under the City's sign regulations, businesses often retain existing signage until a new business occupies the property, as replacement signage may not be permitted if the existing sign is removed.

MINUTES

Minutes from the May 6, 2026 City Council Meeting

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Councilwoman Ross seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Ms. Holland called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilwoman Ross	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1st Reading of Ordinance 03-2026 Amending the Budget for FY 25-26

CAO Bailey reported that unanticipated expenses were incurred for repairs to the ambulance and pumper truck. These costs have been incorporated into the budget. She also noted that the budget includes rolling over the surplus into the General Fund, with 15% of the surplus allocated to the Emergency Fund.

City Attorney Brooking read Ordinance 03-2026 aloud for Council's consideration. With no further discussion, Mayor Hatter asks for a motion to approve the proclamation. Councilman Weber makes a motion to approve. Councilman Wessels seconded the motion. Ms. Holland called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilwoman Ross	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

1st Reading of Ordinance 04-2026 adopting a Budget for FY 26-27

Council reviewed budget allocations and compared funding levels to previous years. Discussion included appropriations for sidewalks, the banner program, Fire Department equipment purchases, the salt building, and playground improvements. Budget assumptions were reviewed, including projected increases in employee benefits, health insurance, and utility costs. The budget also incorporates the Fire Department Improvement Plan. Mayor Hatter emphasized that adoption of the annual budget is one of the most important responsibilities of the Council. He noted that the City continues to maintain healthy surpluses and remains in a strong financial position despite several significant expenses. CAO Bailey explained that certain Fire Department budget increases are detailed in the budget amendment and noted that four payroll periods still need to be reported. She further stated that funding for part-time salaries reflects employee leave and a reduction of one employee. Additionally, May and June financial activity is not yet reflected in the actual

expenditure figures. City Attorney Brooking read Ordinance 04-2026 aloud. Councilman Weber thanked the department heads for their work in preparing the budget. Councilwoman Witt requested clarification regarding the larger increase in the Fire Department budget, which was addressed during the discussion. With no further discussion, Mayor Hatter asks for a motion to approve Ordinance 04-2026. Councilman Weber makes a motion to approve. Councilman Wessels seconded the motion. Ms. Holland called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilwoman Ross	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

1st Reading of Ordinance 05-2026 Adopting a Personnel Classification Plan

CAO Bailey explained that Ordinance 05-2026 is the City's annual ordinance required by law. The ordinance establishes authorized positions, the number of individuals permitted in each position, and the corresponding salary ranges. It also identifies bonding requirements for applicable positions and confirms that employees must take an oath of office. CAO Bailey noted that the ordinance is reviewed and updated annually to reflect any necessary changes to staffing and compensation. City Attorney Brooking read Ordinance 05-2026 aloud for Council's consideration. With no further discussion, Mayor Hatter asks for a motion to approve Ordinance 05-2026. Councilman Collins makes a motion to approve. Councilman Wall seconded the motion. Ms. Holland called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilwoman Ross	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

Bid Proposals for Salt Storage Building – Phase 1

Council was informed that six bids were received for the project. Following a review of the submissions, the lowest responsive bid, \$167,279.25, was submitted by Rector Excavating. The highest bid received was \$272,207.00 by Smith & Brown Contractors. Staff recommended approval of Rector Excavating for the project, which includes groundwork, excavation, and storm sewer improvements. With no further discussion, Mayor Hatter asks for a motion to approve and to award the bid to Rector Excavating. Councilman Wessels made a motion. Councilwoman Ross seconded the motion. Ms. Holland called the roll.

Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilwoman Ross	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

CAO REPORT

CAO Bailey expressed appreciation to all individuals who assisted with the Memorial Day Ceremony and stated that she was very pleased with the event and its success. Council was asked to review the playground

information packet provided. A decision regarding playground color selections will be needed as the project moves forward. CAO Bailey also thanked the department heads for their work and cooperation during the recent budget preparation process. Council members were reminded that, as candidates for office, they must complete and submit their Financial Disclosure Statements within 30 days of receipt.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Administration: None

Finance: None

Public Works: Director Jeff Bethell reported that bids have been advertised for the playground excavation project. Pickett Construction is expected to complete work on the curbs project on Elder Drive in early July. Councilman Collins asked whether pavement line striping could be extended to side streets. Jeff responded that additional striping work can be considered and is likely to occur during the fall or winter.

Fire Department: Chief Schewe reported that a memo regarding equipment expenditures was included in the Council packet. It was noted that certain anticipated repairs may not be necessary, resulting in potential savings of approximately \$10,000 compared to the original estimate. Chief Schewe also reported that Chad Huth was hired as a part-time employee and began work in May. A review of billing revenues and expenses through MCA is underway. Chief Schewe noted that billing rates are currently lagging behind those of other cities and indicated that an increase in service charges may be considered in the future.

Police Department: Chief Colwell reported that the recent scam awareness class was well attended and successful. Appreciation was expressed to Detective Gross for his efforts in organizing and presenting the program. Chief Colwell reported that Officer Capps is more than halfway through the required Academy training program and recently received a report card from the Academy reflecting his progress and performance. It also stated that he is considered one of the leaders in the current class. The department also reported successful completion of three audits, including the State Asset Forfeiture Audit and the KLEPPF Audit. The department received a 100% compliance rating on all audits conducted.

Legal: Nothing to report from the City Attorney, but as a resident of Fort Wright, City Attorney Brooking wanted to express his appreciation for the Memorial Day ceremony hosted by the city. He enjoyed it very much and was excited to see the great turnout of residents.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The City received a thank-you message from Councilman Collins and family expressing their appreciation for the wind chimes provided by the city following the passing of his uncle, Dick Berger. Residents were reminded of the upcoming Shred Event scheduled for September 19, 2026, and encouraged to bring sensitive documents for secure disposal. Council and residents were also informed that a Hoxworth Blood Drive will be held at the City Building on June 18, 2026. Residents are encouraged to register in advance if possible.

The Mayor reported that the Memorial Day Ceremony was very well attended and thanked everyone who helped organize and facilitate the event. He also recognized the importance of the Veterans Memorial located on City property. The Mayor also apologized for not introducing the attending council members, Scott Wall and Donna Ross. CAO Bailey reported that the City newsletter has been delayed due to work associated with the budget process, but will be distributed as soon as possible.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor reported that the candidate filing deadline has passed and that all six incumbent Council members have filed for re-election without opposition. The Mayor thanked all six Council members for their

continued dedication, service, and commitment to the City. Councilman Wessels also expressed his appreciation to the Mayor for his leadership and service to the community.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

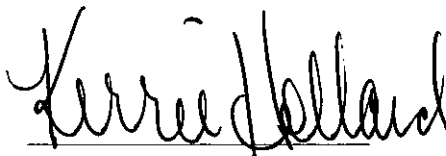
With nothing further on the agenda, Mayor Hatter asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Collins made a motion. Councilman Wall seconded the motion. Ms. Holland called the roll.

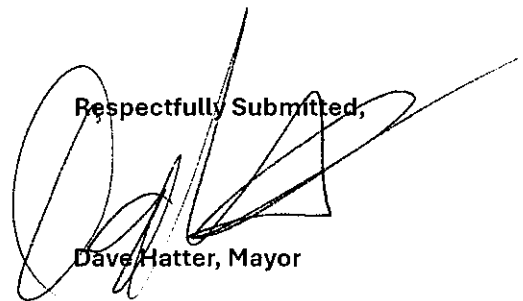
Councilman Collins	Yes
Councilwoman Ross	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilman Wessels	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

The meeting officially adjourned at 7:06 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

ATTEST:


Kerrie Holland, City Clerk


Respectfully Submitted,
Dave Hatter, Mayor