



City of Fort Wright

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City of Fort Wright Council Meeting Wednesday, October 5, 2022 – 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The 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. Finance Clerk Kelly Perry called the roll.

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

Also present for the meeting were:

City Administrative Officer Jill Bailey
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

Mike Delaney and Debi Verges, Northern Kentucky SEL (Social Emotional Learning) – Mr. Delaney presented the City of Fort Wright with a recognition award for the recent donation of a surplus police cruiser to the City of Whitesburg after the flooding in Eastern Kentucky this summer. Mr. Delaney thanked City leadership for being generous with its time and energy with the cruiser donation and thanked the Fort Wright business community for stuffing the cruiser full of supplies for Whitesburg.

Jason Collins, Chair of St. Agnes Oktoberfest – Mr. Collins thanked the City for its help with the St. Agnes Oktoberfest festival, including the Police Department for traffic control and the Public Works Department for loaning barrels and traffic barricades. Ms. Bailey thanked Mr. Collins for donating the straw hay bales that are now being used for fall decorations around the City.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES

There was a question of quorum available for voting on minutes. Ms. Russell clarified that anyone present for the vote can approve Council meeting minutes if they are familiar with the contents.

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on Wednesday, September 7, 2022. Councilman Feinauer made a second. Ms. Russell called roll.

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 Council Meeting held on Wednesday, September 7, 2022. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2nd Reading Ord 07-2022 – amending the COFW Nuisance Code – Mr. Theissen completed the second reading of Ordinance 07-2022, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright, in Kenton County, Kentucky, amending various sections of Title IX, Chapter 92 of the City of Fort Wright Code of Ordinances entitled “Nuisances” to eliminate the City Nuisance Board, implement nuisance enforcement through the Kenton County Joint Code Enforcement Board, and other amendments relating to nuisances.

Mayor Hatter commented that substantial effort was put into this amendment to the Nuisance Code. He said he is thankful these issues do not happen often, but these changes will help deal with chronic issues and give the City more leverage to deal with them promptly.

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 07-2022. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

2nd Reading Ord 08-2022 – adopting the 2021 Property Maintenance Code – Mr. Theissen completed a second reading of Ordinance 08-2022, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright, in Kenton County, Kentucky, amending Section 150.02 of Title XV, Chapter 150 of the City of Fort Wright Code of Ordinances entitled “Adoption of International Property Maintenance Code” to adopt the latest 2021 draft of the Code.

Mr. Theissen said that Council previously adopted the 2009 version of the International Property Maintenance Code, and this will be updated every few years. He also said this Code is very long and a copy is available at the City Administration Building if anyone would like to view it. Mr. Theissen added that code enforcement officers around the country use this Code, it helps to avoid arbitrary issues, has been developed over decades, and is constantly updated and modernized.

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 08-2022. Councilman Weber made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

2nd Reading Ord 09-2022 – closing Old Madison Pike to thru traffic – Mayor Hatter commented on the substantial slippage and astronomical cost to repair parts of Old Madison Pike. He said careful review was done, including a traffic study and consultation with other entities involved, leading to the decision to close the road.

Ms. Bailey added that the City will establish a date for closure and notify all impacted parties prior to closing to make it as painless as possible. Councilman Weber suggested reaching out to the railroad as well.

Mr. Theissen completed the second reading of Ordinance 09-2022, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright, in Kenton County, Kentucky, adding a schedule to Chapter 74, entitled Traffic Schedules of Title VII, the Traffic Code, of the City of Fort Wright to close off Old Madison Pike from vehicular traffic south of the driveway to 3864 Old Madison Pike, Fort Wright, Kentucky.

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 09-2022, with a spelling correction to the second “Kentucky” in the title. Councilman Wall made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

2nd Reading Ord 10-2022 – adopting tax rates for FY22-23 – Mr. Theissen completed the second reading of Ordinance 10-2022, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright, in Kenton County, Kentucky, establishing the tax rate for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023, upon real estate, personal and mixed property in the City of Fort Wright, Kentucky, and establishing the time and payment and penalty for non-payment of same.

A motion was made by Councilman Weber to approve the second reading of Ordinance 10-2022. Councilman Wall made a second.

Councilman Weber commented on the frugality of the department heads and staff and acknowledge their efforts to allow this tax rate decrease. Mayor Hatter thanked the Finance Committee for their diligent work over the last few years to ensure finances are in order to allow the cut. He also thanked staff for their work in coming in under budget and Council for their hard work and vision to get to a place where they could cut taxes significantly. Mayor Hatter said this is the lowest tax rate in the City of Fort Wright since 2011 and he feels fortunate to be in this position to lower taxes.

Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Mayor Hatter commented that this is the single most important decision Council makes and the revenue that comes in from taxes funds everything from employee pay to street fixes to materials for infrastructure improvements. Mayor Hatter said he is proud to be part of a team with the vision to make these kinds of cuts.

NEW BUSINESS

1st Reading Ord 11-2022 – Repealing Motor Vehicle Tax – Mayor Hatter introduced the motor vehicle tax repeal ordinance, saying there are a number of taxes paid when a resident pays their yearly car registration, including a tax to the City. He said in light of reducing the real and personal property taxes, Council came across this tax and realized Fort Wright is one of the few cities that has not yet eliminated the tax.

Mr. Theissen completed a first reading of Ordinance 11-2022, an Ordinance of the City of Fort Wright, in Kenton County, Kentucky, rescinding and repealing the motor vehicle tax effective January 1, 2023, and amending Section 37.02 of Title III, Chapter 37 of the City of Fort Wright Code of Ordinances relating to taxation implementing the termination of the tax on motor vehicles.

Mr. Theissen added that this Ordinance, once passed, will be effective January 1, 2023, to allow the state of Kentucky time to update their systems.

Councilman Feinauer made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 11-2022. Councilwoman Witt made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Municipal Order 05-2022 – Disposal of Surplus Property – Ms. Bailey advised this surplus property consists of outdated fire equipment that needs to be disposed. Mr. Theissen read Municipal Order 05-2022, an Order declaring surplus property and authorizing disposal of such property by destruction and/or recycling.

Councilwoman Witt made a motion to approve Municipal Order 05-2022. Councilman Feinauer made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer Yes
Councilman Wall Yes
Councilman Weber Yes
Councilwoman Witt Yes

MOTION CARRIED

City Holly Jolly Days with Behringer Crawford Museum – 2022 – Ms. Bailey said the City has participated in this event in the past when it was formerly known as “Holiday Traditions”. She proposed to Council the City’s participation by sponsoring a day to allow residents to attend the Museum for free. Ms. Bailey said there are two sponsorship options: the first is \$750 which allows up to 125 residents to attend for free and the second allows an unlimited number of residents to attend on the specific date for \$1,000.

Ms. Bailey said the Museum tracks the number of residents who attend, and in years past the City of Fort Wright has passed 125. Mayor Hatter said Behringer Crawford Museum is a great partner for the City and stepped in when the Civil War Museum was shut down to take on items and keep that tradition alive at their Museum.

Councilman Weber made a motion to approve the City’s sponsorship of the Behringer Crawford Museum’s Holly Jolly Days at the “Yuletide Unlimited” level [\$1,000]. Councilman Feinauer made a second. Ms. Russell called the roll.

Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Improvement Committee – Chair Councilman Feinauer – Councilman Feinauer said that the gateway signage is still in progress, and Ms. Bailey added that there are some supply chain issues causing delays on items ordered.

Finance Committee – Chair Councilman Wessels – Councilman Weber said there are some investments coming due, which will be reinvested at a higher rate. He also said Ms. Bailey has been working with Republic Bank to update accounts to earn higher interest.

Mayor Hatter commended the Finance Committee and Ms. Bailey who met with Republic Bank to review the substantial deposits the City holds there and negotiating a higher interest rate that could yield as much as \$100,000 more a year. He also thanked Republic Bank for being responsive and great to work with.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Administration/Finance – Ms. Russell provided updates, including South Hills Civic Club and Passport Acceptance. She advised the property tax bills should be out by the last week of October. Ms. Russell said she is also working on the Employee Appreciation Lunch that will be held the day before Thanksgiving.

Mayor Hatter added that residents should keep an eye out for their tax bills. Ms. Bailey said tax bills are due December 30, 2022, by 5:00 PM, and they can be paid in-office, at the locked drop box at the front of the City Administration building, and online via credit card. Mayor Hatter said all this information will be communicated to residents in multiple ways. He also reminded residents to sign up for the City’s email newsletters.

There was discussion about South Hills Civic Club reporting and Ms. Bailey advised Ms. Perry is tracking the information and creating reports specifically for Councilmembers to review and see the return on the recent investment in the space. Ms. Bailey thanked Granite World and former Fort Wright Mayor Joe Nienaber Jr. for their donation of new countertops for the Civic Club.

Ms. Bailey added that the audit will be October 17th to 19th and will again be completed by Chamberlin Owens. She said she will schedule their presentation once the report is complete.

Fire/ALS Department – Chief Schewe thanked the City of Fort Mitchell for inviting the Fort Wright Fire and Police departments to the annual Heroes Night held at the DCCH Center on Orphanage Road. He said there was an excellent turn out and the department had a good time.

Chief Schewe announced another grant has been received and they are exploring ways to use it. He said they have also been reviewing safety issues like the Police Department and are considering outfitting the second ambulance for specific personal protective equipment fire personnel need in times like active shooter situations.

Police Department – Chief Butler thanked Rudler PSC for coordinating another successful Shred Day event on September 24th. He announced that some of the active shooter equipment discussed last month has begun to arrive and be distributed, and he thanked Council for their support on that purchase.

Chief Butler congratulated Sergeant Rob Griffin on completing the Academy for Police Supervision, a three-week intensive leadership course. He said all Police supervisors have now completed that course and the City is much better because of it.

Public Works Department – Mr. Bethell said the department has been working on asphalt patching. He also said the road project is almost complete, and it is going very well.

Mayor Hatter reminded residents that the full five-year street plan is available on the website and he welcomes questions about the process.

Councilman Weber thanked the Public Works Department for the fall decorations around the City.

Legal Counsel – Mr. Theissen said he has been working with Ms. Russell and Ms. Perry to collect the last of the 2021 delinquent taxes. Ms. Bailey said there are only 12 unpaid tax bills from 2021. Mayor Hatter commented on how lucky the City is that such a small percentage are not paid each year.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Hatter thanked Rudler PSC again for organizing the annual Shred Day and reminded residents that shredding documents is a great way to protect identities.

Mayor Hatter announced that the Caucus Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 19th will be cancelled.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Feinauer reminded residents that Halloween is on Monday, October 31st and trick-or-treating will be from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. He also asked residents to turn on their lights for walkers.

Councilman Weber suggested the department heads consider succession planning. Ms. Bailey said that each department makes a good effort to cross-train staff, but they will work on that specific planning.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

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

Councilman Feinauer	Yes
Councilman Wall	Yes
Councilman Weber	Yes
Councilwoman Witt	Yes

MOTION CARRIED

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Hatter, Mayor

Attest:



Maura Russell, City Clerk