

## City of West Point Council Meeting Minutes

11-13-2023 7:00 p.m.

A regularly scheduled City of West Point Council Meeting was held Monday, November 14, 2023, at the West Point Independent School Building, 203 N. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, West Point, Kentucky.

### **Call to Order:**

Mayor Ciresi Called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Ciresi led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Prayer**

Annette Baker led in prayer.

### **Roll Call:**

Presiding Officer:	Richard Ciresi, Mayor
Council Members:	Annette Baker
	Amy Bickel
	Eric Duvall
	Chris McVey
	Kevin Duke Jo Sabol
Recording Clerk	Roszelle Moore

### **Approval 10-9-2023 meeting minutes:**

Amy Bickel made a motion to approve the October 9, 2023, meeting minutes, with corrections made. Seconded by Chris McVey and carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Financial report for period ending 10-31-2023.**

Jo Sabol moved to accept the financial report as presented. Seconded by Eric Duvall and unanimously carried.

### **First Reading of Ordinance 2023-06 Amended Budget FYE June 30, 2023**

Jo Sabol moved to approve the Amended Budget FYE June 30, 2023. Seconded by Chris McVey. Amy Bickel read the ordinance.

**Resolution 2023-11 to support the John Muir Trail Project.**

The mayor proposed a resolution to support the John Muir Trail Project. Approved unanimously.

**Act on the Towerco 2013 LLC Ground Lease (Cell Tower) agreement**

Eric Duvall moved to approve the lease agreement with the Signing bonus of \$2500. Seconded by Kevin Duke and unanimously carried.

**Mayor's report:**

1. We need to agree on a reserve amount. The mayor suggests \$150,000.
2. Josh Lindenbaum has offered \$8000 for the police car and \$1300 for the remaining police weapons. We have already surplus the car but would need authorization for the weapons. Annette Baker moved to surplus the police weapons. Seconded by Eric Duvall and unanimously carried.
3. Ft. Duffield Road is complete, and we have been billed the amount of the grant.
4. Snow removal. Jason Vogt has offered an average cost of \$600 per cleaning. This is a savings from the previous vendor, and we will monitor the arrangement throughout the season.
5. The mayor achieved a Level II Excellence in City Governance training award (58 Hours) and Annette Baker has achieved a Level 1 Achievement in City Governance Award (29 Hours).
6. We saved another \$1,053.50 in insurance costs by cancelling our sewer backup coverage with the transfer of water/sewer to Hardin County Water District #1.
7. We received a \$5,322.76 refund on our workman's comp insurance due to the substantially decreased payroll in city hall.
8. State of the economy, the deposits are down at the West Point bank, which has slightly reduced the city's franchise fee we collect indicating the overall reduction in cash available and slow economy.
9. We have joined the KRDA (Knox Regional Development Alliance) at an expense of \$500. This gives the city access to all visitors and residents (22,000) in Fort Knox, to promote our recreational benefits as well as our local businesses.
10. I would like to clear, and lease space in the impound lot. Suggesting \$40 per month per 12 x 30 spaces.
11. The new City Clerk, Ashley Gates, has been sworn and bonded.
12. The new required fire hydrant located in the 2200 block on Main Street has been installed and paid for.

13. Feeding America has agreed to provide a Food Giveaway for West Point Citizens on November 17 and December 15 from 3 to 5 PM. Annette, Amy and Jo volunteered to assist.
14. The Lincoln trail Health Dept cancelled their date for a mini-clinic and would like to reschedule for another event.
15. Tony Baker has graciously agreed to help get our street signs back in shape.
16. We have received two restitution payments from the former City Clerk in the amount of \$95.24. It appears that this will pay off the debt over 10 years.
17. We've made additional payments on Fire Truck through the dunking booth and donations in the amount of \$1,451.89.
18. The storm sewers along Main Street have been cleared by the state.
19. Code enforcement currently has 26 open cases.
20. The Lewis & Clark Trust interns continue to meet to convert the former school library into a Lewis and Clark Museum. Plans have been submitted and the web site and social media accounts are forth coming.
21. The Albros' property has been sold to Melissa Malone. She has requested a historical marker for the Rosenwald school property and is investigating funds for marking and possible partial restoration. The WP Museum has graciously agreed to furnish the sign.
22. The Market on Main is now open, please visit! The ribbon cutting was held on October 27<sup>th</sup> Radcliff Small Business Alliance had 25-30 members in attendance for the Ribbon cutting, Radcliff city council member Toshie Murrell was present as well.
23. Since the Last Council meeting, I have attended the following on the City of West Point's behalf at no cost to the city.
  - a. 10-10 Guest Speaker at the Elizabethtown Rotary.
  - b. 10-10 Hardin Co. Fiscal Court
  - c. 10-18 Lincoln Trail Add District Board Meeting
  - d. 10-21 Warm Blessing annual gala and fund raiser
  - e. 10-24 Hardin Co. Fiscal Court
  - f. 10-25 & 26 Ohio River Way annual meeting in Madison, Indiana
  - g. 10-31 Market on Main investor meeting
  - h. 11-3 Hardin Co. Schools focus group on tax revenue.
  - i. 11-4 Represented West Point along with mayors from Vine Grove, Radcliff and Elizabethtown in the Vine Grove Veterans Day parade.
  - j. 11-8 Hardin Co. Chamber of Commerce Board meeting and Luncheon.

Regarding the issue with Bonnie Ciresi's participation in city business and the ensuing concerns.

1. The accusation has been made that we had mis-represented Bonnie's position with the city on the bond application, which is simply not true. One of our citizens filed a complaint with the bonding company stating that we had "openly lied" on the application, for which a libel suit is being considered. We responded to bonding company regarding this accusation and have confirmation from Mr. Nathan Rabe with CNA' Surety that "no action is being taken against the bond" and that underwriting would contact us soon "if there were any issues." That email is dated Oct 23, 2023, and no further communication has been received. ADDITIONALLY, we did receive the invoice for the RENEWAL of the bond in question which would further indicate that there is not a concern with its issuance.
2. For clarification, the bond application listed Bonnie's position as "Clerk", which she is, not as "city clerk." Roszelle failed to put any title on her application and when the bonding company issued the bond, the bonding company added "clerk" as her title as well, providing further proof of the ambiguity of this title.
3. As a preemptive measure we have since secured an additional bond for Bonnie, at our expense, through another agency with the full disclosure of all circumstances.
4. Regarding the nepotism policy. Chapter 38.050 Nepotism. *No officer, employee, board or commission member shall participate in any action relating to the employment or discipline of a family member.* Since Bonnie is a volunteer, she is not "employed" so this Chapter does not apply. The city's personnel policy states, *"The city does not expressly prohibit the employment of relatives to permanent positions within the city as long as one does not supervise the work of the other."* First, she is not employed and second, her position as my assistant is not permanent, so neither apply as when I no longer hold this office, she will no longer be a volunteer.

In conclusion, Bonnie's presence in City Hall fully complies with both our personnel and Code of Ethics policies and the city is fully protected against any damage, theft, or fraud. Finally, while I am the Mayor, Bonnie will review and oversee the preparation of all city's financial reports and documents as she is, without doubt, the most qualified person in the city to do so, and she's doing it at NO cost to the city. EVERY audit we have reviewed since 2012 generally states that there is no one on the city's staff capable of producing a financial statement. This deficiency has cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars in theft, fines, lost earnings, and additional audit costs over the years. That deficiency ended when Bonnie began compiling and presenting the city's accounting records as reflected in every audit since her involvement.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Fort Duffield:** Project pavilion at top of hill moving along. Gary Masterson thanked the mayor for completing the road project. The mayor reported that Senator Deneen and Carl Loren of the transportation cabinet were instrumental in securing the funds quickly.

**Planning and Zoning:** No report

**Board of Adjustment:** No report **Fire**

**Department:** No report.

### **Council Concerns:**

- Annette Baker requested that last month's minutes reflect that she had proposed a basketball court and pickleball court. What is the latest on the school building breakin. The Hardin County Sheriff's Department is still working on it. There is concern about the deterioration of trees around the town. Since the city had to pay to have a tree removed from the street, could there be some action to make the property owners responsible? The mayor appointed Annette to determine possible problem trees and letters will be sent to property owners that if they create damage, it will be their responsibility.
- Eric Duvall reported that his business had been broken into and that the State Police responded within 15 minutes.
- Chris McVey thanked the mayor for removing the weeds on South Street. The fire department needs some method for purchasing supplies and equipment. Kevin Duke moved to secure a credit card for the fire department. Seconded by Eric Duvall and unanimously approved.
- Jo Sabol presented the correct municipal order 2023-01 for the finance oversight committee. No action was taken to select a chairman. A notice will be made available for more resumes to be submitted.

### **Citizens' Concerns:**

**William Ash** reported that he had been approached to serve on an Ad Hoc committee for emergency services and safety. It will be a two- or three-year project. The mayor was pleased that West Point will be represented.

**Joseph Frost** asked about progress on the Salt River Boat Dock. The mayor reported that the project has been delayed until spring of 2024. He also expressed concern about the ground around the supports on the Bee Branch bridge. The mayor advised that he would have an engineer inspect it. There would be a cost.

**Timmy Walker** wanted to understand the concern about the skirting around the RV parked on property at 4<sup>th</sup> and Main. The mayor requested that documentation be produced to prove the skirting was an accessory to the RV.

**Donna McCreary** has concerns about the washing out of the drain area next to her property on 13<sup>th</sup> and Riverview. The mayor will get an estimate for adding rock. Jo requested pictures of the problem.

**Scott Young** advised there may be a problem with the finance committee already being an ordinance. 110.07A Further investigation will be made.

**Monie Matthews** reported that the History Museum painting project has been completed.

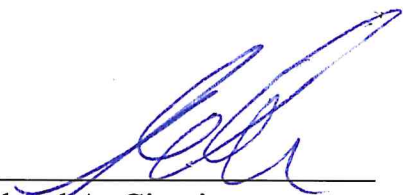
**Matty Hartley** has submitted a resume to be chairman for the finance committee. She felt that someone with experience and knowledge in accounting should be chairman. She is not interested if she is not chairman.

**Roszelle Moore** requested a progress report on the storm drains on Main Street. The mayor reported that they were complete. She advised that they had not completed past 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The mayor advised that he would contact the department to see what the plans were.

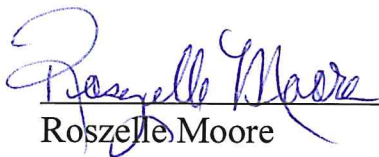
Light up WP will be December 2, after the Christmas parade which will begin at 4:45. Bonnie Ciresi oversees the Light Up ceremony and Fran Moore oversees the parade. The History Museum will be having an open house Christmas celebration.

**Adjourn:**

Eric Duvall moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:48. Seconded by Chris McVey and unanimously carried.



Richard A. Ciresi  
Mayor



Roszelle Moore  
Recording Clerk