

City of West Point Council Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2024
7:00 p.m.

A regularly scheduled meeting of the West Point City Council was held on Monday, August 12th, 2024, at the West Point Independent School building, 203 N. 13th 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
	Kevin Duke
	Hanna Duvall
	Jo Sabol
	<i>Absent: Chris McVey</i>
Recording Clerk:	Ashley Gates

Approval of July 8th, 2024, meeting minutes:

Annette Baker made a motion to approve the July 8th, 2024, meeting minutes. Seconded by Amy Bickel; carried unanimously.

Approval of July 22nd, 2024, special council meeting minutes:

Hanna Duvall made a motion to approve the July 22nd, 2024, special council meeting minutes. Seconded by Amy Bickel; carried unanimously.

Approval of financial report for the period ending July 31st, 2024:

Annette Baker motioned to accept the financial report as presented for the period ending July 31st, 2024. Hanna Duvall seconded the motion; The motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

First reading of Ordinance 2024-03 Setting Tax Rates:

Ordinance 2024-03 was read by Amy Bickel and presented for discussion. The ordinance involves the levying of city taxes for the fiscal year 2024-2025. A second reading will be held on the 9th day of September at the next regularly scheduled council meeting.

Mayor's Report:

1. The sale of the lease rights for the water tower have been completed and we have purchased a CD in the amount of \$763,000. This amount represents the sale price (\$805,000), less the \$42,000 income budgeted for this fiscal year. At the 5.25 percent rate this CD will generate \$16,690 in interest in the next five months and will be evaluated for renewal at maturation.
2. We are in final negotiations for the retail store on 31W. We are currently waiting for a response from CBS Outdoor as they have a first right of refusal to purchase the property under the same terms as the offer due to their billboard lease. Their deadline is Friday August 16, 2024, to respond. We doubt they will exercise this option since it includes building the store, not just buying the land. We may offer the opportunity to relocate this billboard to other city property as a concession.
3. Through the negotiations with CBS, it was learned that the lease for the billboard at main and 31w expired in 2018 and had not been renewed. I would like the council's opinion on cancelling this lease to eliminate this eyesore coming into our city. **Consensus of council is to keep the billboard at a minimum monthly rent of \$500.*
4. We have received a positive response for the re-location of the cell tower to the southernmost edge of the 55-acre city property. (Map Attached). This arrangement will assist the city in the future development of the remainder of the property by providing an entrance on 31W with limited cost to the city.
5. The concession agreement for the Salt River RV Park has been agreed upon and we are ready to send it for final approval to the National Park Service. Hopefully, the RV park will be open this calendar year.
6. With much help provided by Brett Guthrie's office, we now have an IRS advocate working on our behalf and have been presented with three (3) options for resolution. We have chosen to apply for the complete removal of all penalties and interest paid to date and will then attempt to reach a final, affordable settlement for the balance of actual taxes. We continue to make our monthly \$1300 payment until this matter is resolved should negotiations fail.
7. The HCSO has finished cataloging and disposal of the remainder of the police department evidence. This included the large amount of drugs and guns that are no longer stored in city hall. This process has also netted the city over \$4,000 in cash, some of which will be returned to other agencies. We are in the process of confirming how these funds may be legally used.
8. The flock cameras are scheduled to be installed this Thursday, August 15, 2024, and due to the delay, we will remain paid in Full for the next two years. FINALLY.
9. The boat ramp has had a setback, but we are still working toward opening the ramp this month with the paving taking place shortly thereafter. There was a drainpipe under the old ramp that ran into the river that had failed. To properly complete the new ramp the pipe and an intermediate head wall had to be removed along with a large amount of additional soil and a tree stump. Fish and Wildlife absorbed most of the cost with the city contributing the 60 tons of additional rock required at a cost of \$1,600. This will be funded from the additional money in reserve for the boat ramp renovation.
10. I attended two days of training at the governor's local issues conference held at the Galt House in Louisville August 7 and 8. They presented a great deal of valuable information primarily focusing on navigating the state government as well as available grants.
11. Both city trucks are down for repairs. The F-150 with transmission issues that we believe will be covered mostly by a recall. The F-350 has brake issues. We're reduced to using the mowers for transportation until repairs can be made.
12. By resolution No. 2024-144 Hardin County has agreed to participate in the formation and governance of the Kentucky Ohio River Regional Recreation Authority (KORRRA) and Mayor Richard Ciresi to represent the County on its Board of Directors. This agency will be similar to the KMRRRA which is now funded by the state with \$3,000,000. Once formed and in operation this authority will aid and direct the development of additional recreational facilities along the Ohio River.

13. The siren issue that took place last Monday continues to be a mystery. It was not initiated by HC Emergency or the local option which we are still exploring. After discussion with Mike Leo of Hardin Co. Emergency management, it appears that the controller is either bad or going bad and we have contacted a company to provide an estimate for maintenance and possible repair. FYI, the siren is owned by the city and is only initiated by the County. The city will be responsible for any repairs or updating required.
14. We are still awaiting a response from the County Judge of Bullitt County in pursuit of an agreement with the Nichols fire department to provide a quicker response ambulance service.
15. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bill & Matty Hartley for helping represent our fair city at the Hardin Co. Fair.
16. Personnel Change. Mrs. Bonnie Ciresi has been offered the role of Deputy Hardin County Judge Executive to begin on Monday August 19, 2024. She will be resigning her current position as Assistant to the Mayor to take on this full-time position. This is a huge opportunity for her continued professional development, a benefit of talent to Hardin Co. Government, and a blessing for West Point to be represented at such a high level in the county. She will continue to review our financials and train our city clerk as needed on evenings and weekends as she did for the three years prior to my taking office. We're confident that Ashley can handle the daily operations of the city.
17. **REMINDERS.** This Friday August 16, 2024, is the next "Rockin' on the River". Ft Duffield auction Saturday August 17 * The River Circus is officially scheduled for Monday September 16 on the riverfront. AND of course, River Days is scheduled September 26-28.

Committee Reports:

Ft. Duffield- The annual Fort Duffield Auction is set for August 17th and begins at 5 o'clock.

Planning & Zoning- No report.

Board of Adjustments- Cindy Young reported that the committee had to return a permit to obtain more information.

Fire Department- After a slow period, Chief Eddie Curl mentioned that the fire department is experiencing an increase in runs. One of the fire trucks recently had its air brakes and exhaust system repaired, as much of the equipment has been neglected for years.

Museum- Roszelle stated that Monie had approximately 25 visitors, some of whom were from other countries, with one even giving him euros. He has over 2,000 family names in his files and is continually seeking volunteers.

Finance Committee- Jo Sabol reported that the finance committee held their second meeting, and everything went smoothly.

Council Concerns:

Annette Baker- Asked whether to file a complaint about the loud music from cars or how to address the issue. Regarding e-bikes, Annette noted that something needs to be done about the kids using them, as they are pulling out in front of people and have almost been hit a couple of times. She believes it is necessary to work on an ordinance for any electrical vehicle. She also asked if there was any update on the people interested in buying property in West Point or doing anything in town. Additionally, park beautification will start this fall, and the River of Life church is looking for a project for the teenagers, agreeing that the beach could use some cleaning.

Amy Bickel- Mentioned that she has been approached a couple of times about reviving the school committee that was focused on generating ideas, which has been inactive for a while. She plans to send an email to everyone who initially expressed interest to see if they are still interested and proceed with meeting regularly again to generate new ideas.

Kevin Duke- Reported that there was a tree down on the city's property around 701 Main Street. The mayor mentioned that the city was waiting for the truck to be fixed but also expressed interest in investing in a gas-powered hedge trimmer. Kevin also reported some wires rolled up on a pole around 11th Street.

Hanna Duvall- No report.

Jo Sabol- Mentioned that River Days is still seeking sponsors for t-shirts and brochures and is also looking for auction items. She inquired if there was any discussion about the sheriff's department or the crime occurring in town at the last council meeting; Policing is her biggest concern. Since the council meeting in June, she has asked people to report incidents of crime and has received over 40 reports just in the last month. The mayor has asked that she send him a copy of this information so that he can share it with the sheriff's office. The mayor reminded everyone that the council controls the budget and asked her to specify how much additional money should be spent on police, where to allocate it from the budget, and specifically where it should be spent. Jo would like to have a conversation between herself, the other council members, and John Ward of the Hardin County Sheriff's Office.

Citizen Concerns:

Donna & Tim Taylor are worried about people trespassing through yards.

Patsy Chatman reported that over 120 pounds of donated items have been sent overseas, and Grayson wrote a letter thanking the City of West Point for their donations.

Scott Young suggested updating the traffic code to include e-bikes and electric scooters.

Mattie Hartley notified the council of three dead trees near the intersection of 5th and Main that need to come down.

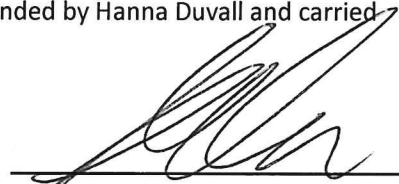
Roszelle Moore announced to everyone that a new army couple has recently moved to West Point and plans to be stationed here for three years. She agrees with the mayor and others in wanting to see the formation of a welcoming committee.

Joe Frost inquired about who oversaw the dead trees along Dixie Highway and was informed that it was the state highway's responsibility. He is concerned that one of the trees might eventually fall and injure someone.

Billy Ash mentioned that, given the increasing concerns about inadequate policing and slow emergency response times, people should still call 911 even if they worry about delays. Doing so would provide the mayor with access to the audio and radio communications, allowing him to present both sides of the issue to the sheriff's office.

Adjournment:

Kevin Duke moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. It was seconded by Hanna Duvall and carried unanimously.


Richard A. Ciresi, Mayor


Ashley Gates, City Clerk