

CITY OF WEST POINT  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 10, 2025

The City Council of the City of West Point, Kentucky, convened for its regular session on Monday, March 10, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the West Point Independent School building, 203 N. 13th Street, West Point, Kentucky, with Mayor Richard A. Ciresi presiding as chair.

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME -

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE -

Mayor Ciresi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRAYER -

An invocation was offered by Monie Matthews, asking for guidance and wisdom in conducting the business of the city.

ROLL CALL -

PRESIDING OFFICER - Richard Ciresi, Mayor

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT - Amy Bickel  
Dwayne Culver  
Vernon Curl  
Kevin Duke  
Chris McVey  
Jo Sabol

STAFF PRESENT - Ashley Gates, City Clerk

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS - Sheriff John Ward & Lieutenant Travis Cook from the Hardin County Sheriff's Office.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - FEBRUARY 25, 2025, SPECIAL MEETING -

The minutes of the February 25, 2025, Special Call Meeting were presented for approval. A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Dwayne Culver and seconded by Chris McVey. There being no discussion or corrections, the motion passed unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2025 -

The financial report for February 2025 was presented. Kevin Duke made a motion to approve the report, seconded by Chris McVey. Discussion included a question regarding a telephone and internet expense line item which appeared significantly over budget; it was explained that the overage was due to a double billing cycle. Following clarification, a roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

### SHERIFF'S REPORT -

Lieutenant Travis Cook provided the department's February activity report. A total of 146 combined incidents were documented during the reporting period. These included dispatch calls for service, self-initiated activities such as building checks, traffic enforcement, and paper service related to civil processes and warrants.

Lieutenant Cook highlighted notable activity, including 25 traffic stops, many of which occurred within the city limits, with specific attention paid to areas where speeding complaints have increased. Cook also noted the department's enhanced presence during the recent flooding event, citing overnight patrols aimed at preventing theft or tampering with personal property left near the street for clean-up. Law enforcement responded swiftly to calls regarding suspicious persons and vehicles, and additional patrols were conducted along low lying areas and the riverfront.

Residents were reminded that the Sheriff's Department provides vacation watch services for anyone planning to be away from home for an extended period. Homeowners may request these checks in advance by providing the department with the address, travel dates, and a list of people (if any) who are allowed on the property. Deputies will make a point to drive by and check in during their regular patrols.

Several council members and residents brought up concerns about speeding on various streets. The deputy committed to increasing visibility and enforcement in areas that are reported to help address the problem. A resident also raised a complaint about a vehicle regularly driving through town blasting music loud enough to rattle windows. The concern seemed familiar to others in the room and the Mayor said he would share the city's noise ordinance with the department to help with future enforcement.

### III. DISTRIBUTION - OPENING MEETINGS & OPEN RECORDS ACT MATERIALS -

Mayor Ciresi distributed updated copies of the Kentucky Open Meetings Act and Open Records Act to all council members along with acknowledgement forms. Members were asked to review the materials and return the signed forms to the City Clerk for compliance with state law.

### IV. PRESENTATION - 2023 AUDIT RESULTS -

Mayor Ciresi distributed copies of the city's 2023 audit report to all council members. He noted the audit was significantly delayed due to the CPA firm's timeline, not any issue on the city's end. The report showed no major findings and reflected a clean audit overall. Council members were encouraged to review the audit in full and any questions or comments can be brought forwards at the next meeting if desired.

### V. SECOND READING - ORDINANCE 2025-02 - CREATING UTILITY FRANCHISE -

Mayor Ciresi gave a summary of Ordinance 2025-02, which formalizes a new utility franchise agreement with Louisville Gas & Electric. The current agreement, originally signed in 2015, is set to expire in September of this year. This new ordinance allows the city to continue its partnership with the provider for another 10 years, with an updated fee structure.

One key change is an increase in the franchise fee from 3% to 3.5%. The Mayor explained that this small bump would bring in around \$6,000 in additional annual revenue with minimal impact to residents, typically less than a dollar a month for most households. Council agreed the increase was reasonable, especially considering the long-term nature of the deal. Chris McVey made a motion to approve the ordinance, and Kevin Duke seconded. A roll call vote was held, and the ordinance passed unanimously.

VI. ORDINANCE 2025-01 - TINY HOME REGULATIONS (SECOND READING - TABLED) -

The Council revisited Ordinance 2025-01, which outlines rules for allowing tiny homes within city limits. Most of the discussion focused on the width requirement listed in the draft—8.5 feet. Council members questioned whether that restriction was too limiting, especially since many modern tiny homes are wider. Some suggested increasing the allowable width to 14 or even 16 feet to give residents more flexibility.

There was also some confusion about whether tiny homes on wheels are considered RVs under state law. Since legal definitions and transport rules could affect enforcement, Council members agreed it would be best to pause and do a little more homework before moving forward.

Dwayne Culver made a motion to table the ordinance until more research could be done. Jo Sabol seconded the motion. The ordinance was tabled by unanimous vote.

VII. ORDINANCE 2025-03 - ABANDONED URBAN PROPERTY TAX (SECOND READING - TABLED) -

The second reading of Ordinance 2025-03 was held. This ordinance establishes a higher tax rate of \$1.50 per \$100 of assessed value for properties identified as abandoned, blighted, or deteriorated. The ordinance outlines criteria for determining abandonment and assigns the Code Enforcement Board responsibility for maintaining the list and reviewing appeals.

Extensive discussion followed. Council Member McVey voiced strong concerns about the potential for inequitable enforcement and the historical misuse of code enforcement powers in the city. Others questioned whether the Board had the capacity to administer the ordinance fairly and uniformly. Council Members acknowledged the city's need to address long-neglected properties but expressed a desire to ensure protections for responsible property owners.

Council agreed to table the ordinance until formal procedures and appeal policies could be developed. A motion to table was made by Chris McVey and seconded by Kevin Duke. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. DISCUSSION – LEASE PROPOSAL FOR CITY-OWNED PROPERTY (55 ACRES) -

Mayor Ciresi presented a proposal for a lease agreement involving approximately 20 acres of the city-owned 55-acre tract. A private developer is interested in using part of the land to create a vehicle storage lot for Ford, which is currently looking for additional space to store new cars. The first 10 acres would be cleared, graveled, and fenced by the developer at no cost to the city. Ford would lease that portion through the developer, and once the developer recoups their investment (plus 10%), the city would start receiving a share of the revenue.

The developer also plans to begin infrastructure work on another 10-acre section for future residential development. As part of the agreement, at least two homes must be built within three years. Potential income from the lease and sublease could significantly reduce city debt on the property.

The council raised questions about the future sale of the land, any existing logging value, and the possibility of future development impacting city services. Mayor Ciresi assured members that the lease would include protection for the city, and any sale would require council approval.

Due to the time-sensitive nature of the proposal— Mayor Ciresi requested permission to negotiate and finalize lease terms, with flexibility to adjust the language as needed to meet legal and project requirements. Chris McVey made a motion to authorize the mayor to proceed. Amy Bickel seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held:

Amy Bickel – Yes  
Dwayne Culver – Yes  
Vernon Curl – No  
Kevin Duke – Yes  
Chris McVey – Yes  
Jo Sabol – Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-1.

IX. MAYORS REPORT –

1. The Dollar General agreement has been extended, and they have provided the additional deposit per our agreement. Currently, we are still on track to close and begin construction in April.
2. The street light issue was raised in the January meeting. Our canvas of the streetlights found a total of four that were not already submitted for repair.
3. Our agreement with Bullitt Co. to provide ambulance services from Nichols continues to move forward. All necessary approvals have been achieved, and we are waiting for a final interlocal agreement.
4. There were eight homes reported that had water from the Friday flood. We have submitted damage assessments on all affected properties. IF the county makes its \$560,000 threshold there may be public, and private assistance may be available.
5. We recently removed the 3 PH electric meter from the old water building since we have not required a 3-

phase service since when we started buying water from Hardin Co. No. 1 in 2018. The average bill for this unused meter was \$58 a month for a total of \$4,900

6. Request a motion to surplus the 5 Apple computers. All information has been removed from them and stored separately.
7. The fire station computer crashed but has been refurbished with a new hard drive and should be back online with the software loaded this week or next.
8. There is a FREE Hardin Co. Solid waste tire Collection event on March 27, 28, and 29th. Brochures in City hall.
9. There is a FREE Hardin Co. Solid waste E-scrap event on May 10th
10. Meetings and events attended on behalf of the City this month.
  - a. Hardin Co Fiscal Court (2)
  - b. Hardin Co. Chamber Board Meeting.
  - c. Lincoln Trail Area Development District Board Meeting
  - d. LTADD Hazard mitigation committee meeting
  - e. Ohio River Way monthly meeting.
  - f. Knights of Columbus / Shriner Brotherhood Dinner
  - g. RSBA annual Gala
  - h. KORRRRA meeting in Maysville

MOTION – SURPLUS CITY-OWNER COMPUTERS –

During the Mayor's report, Mayor Ciresi requested a motion to surplus five Apple computers that are no longer in use at City Hall. He noted that all the data had been properly removed and archived to a single external hard drive. Amy Bickel made the motion, Dwayne Culver seconded.

A roll call vote was held:

Amy Bickel – Yes  
Dwayne Culver – Yes  
Vernon Curl – Yes  
Kevin Duke – Yes  
Chris McVey – Yes  
Jo Sabol – Yes

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS -

FT. DUFFIELD – Nothing to report.

PLANNING & ZONING - A public hearing is scheduled for March 25 regarding rezoning of the Marshall property.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS – Nothing to report.

FIRE DEPARTMENT - The department evaluated a truck offered for donation but declined due to mechanical issues. The search continues for a reliable replacement.

MUSEUM REPORT - The museum was open for 225 days in 2024 and recorded over 1,200 visitors. A rare 1825 King James Bible was donated, along with additional artifacts.

FINANCE COMMITTEE - No meeting held; Last met in December 2024. The next meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2025, at 7pm.

CODE ENFORCEMENT - Nothing to report.

## XI. COUNCIL CONCERNS -

JO SABOL - requested that the balance sheet and restricted fund statements be included again in the financial reports that are distributed to Council monthly.

CHRIS MCVEY - Nothing to report.

KEVIN DUKE - Nothing to report.

VERNON CURL - asked if the current lease was set to expire this year. Mayor Ciresi confirmed that it was. Curl immediately made a motion not to renew the lease. Council Member Kevin Duke seconded the motion. Discussion was held concerning the lease agreement between the City of West Point and Hardin County Schools for the former West Point Independent School building, which is currently used for public meetings, community events, and ongoing city-related projects.

Curl was firm in his position, making it clear he was not interested in exploring options to continue the lease. No alternative structure, management plan, or compromise was proposed.

Kevin Duke expressed concern about the potential long-term financial obligations associated with the building. He asked for a breakdown of monthly costs over the past two years and questioned what the city's financial responsibility would have been if major repairs, such as the roof, had already been addressed.

Mayor Ciresi responded that, aside from the roof, most of the building's maintenance issues had already been resolved. He explained that the utilities and operating costs are not paid by the city, but by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded by himself and his wife which was created to support the overall revitalization of West Point. When asked whether the Council had been given access to those financial records, Ciresi said they had not, but that he was willing to provide them.

Amy Bickel said she was not ready to make a decision without reviewing that information. She requested a full financial breakdown including income, expenditure, and future obligations before any further action.

Council Member Chris McVey agreed there needed to be more structure and accountability but noted that he valued having a public facility. He said that if the lease were to continue, it would require clearer oversight and more transparency moving forward.

Mayor Ciresi listed several current and future uses for the facility, including city meetings, Girl Scout programs, community fundraisers, and the upcoming Lewis &

Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center. He also noted that Tom Masterson has agreed to donate and install the necessary switch gear that would allow the city-owned generator to power the gymnasium, making it useable as an emergency warming shelter, if needed. He expressed frustration that the motion was made and seconded without any formal discussion or prior request for financial information.

Roll Call Vote – Motion Not to Renew the Lease:

Amy Bickel – No  
Dwayne Culver – Abstained  
Vernon Curl – Yes  
Kevin Duke – Yes  
Chris McVey – Yes  
Jo Sabol – Yes

MOTION PASSED, 4–1, WITH ONE ABSTENTION.

DWAYNE CULVER – asked if the flashing light near Salt River Bridge could be upgraded. He explained that the current caution light doesn't give drivers any indication that the light is about to change, which may be contributing to people running the light. He suggested replacing it with a more visible, timed warning system like the ones on Joe Prather approaching Elizabethtown, which says "Prepare to Stop" when the light is about to change. The Mayor said he would reach out to the state highway department and see if it could be included in the upcoming traffic study.

AMY BICKEL – announced that city-wide cleanup dumpsters would be delivered on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and remain in place through May 11<sup>th</sup>. She noted that the dumpsters will be swapped out daily to keep up with demand.

## **XII. CITIZEN CONCERNS –**

HANNA DUVALL – brought up that the city's tornado siren did not go off during Hardin County's recent test. This sparked a brief discussion among those in attendance, with several people confirming they had received test alerts on their phones, while Hanna noted she had not received any notification at all.

Mayor Ciresi explained that the city's siren had stopped working back in October and that parts to repair it were no longer available due to its age. He added that replacing the system would cost around \$40,000. Council Member Vernon Curl suggested looking into grant opportunities through NOAA to provide weather radios to residents as an alternative. The mayor agreed to begin gathering quotes and exploring options.

NATASHA JANNEY – spoke about the upcoming Easter event at the Veteran's Park and asked if the city would be willing to purchase three bikes and one balance bike to give away during the festivities. The Council was supportive and approved the request.

MOTION – PURCHASE BIKES FOR EASTER EGG HUNT –



Motion- Amy Bickel; Second- Jo Sabol.

MOTION PASSED.

ROSZELLE MOORE – raised concerns about chickens and roosters in her neighborhood.

While noise from the roosters was a factor, she also expressed frustration over chickens frequently roaming onto her property and damaging her yard. She requested that the city consider amending its ordinance to prohibit roosters altogether. She noted that other nearby residents shared her concerns but were hesitant to speak up. The Council acknowledged her comments and encouraged her to submit suggested ordinance changes for review at a future meeting.

MOTION – PURCHASE BIKES FOR EASTER EGG HUNT –

Motion- Amy Bickel; Second- Jo Sabol.

MOTION PASSED.

**XIII.** ADJOURNMENT –

Kevin Duke called for a motion to adjourn seconded by Chris McVey. Motion passes unanimously, the time being 8:47 PM.

CITY OF WEST POINT

  
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Richard A. Ciresi, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Ashley Gates, City Clerk