

**CITY OF WEST POINT  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 12, 2025**

The City Council of West Point, Kentucky, convened for its regular session on Monday, May 12, 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 -**

Monie Matthews offered a prayer at the beginning of the meeting, asking for guidance and wisdom in the Council's discussions.

**ROLL CALL -**

**PRESIDING OFFICER -** Richard Ciresi, Mayor

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

**STAFF PRESENT -** Ashley Gates, City Clerk

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS-** The Mayor welcomed State Senator Matt Deneen, noting his presence and extensive involvement during the recent flood events.

**I. APPROVAL OF APRIL 14, 2025, MEETING MINUTES -**

Motion by Chris McVey, second by Butch Curl, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2025, regular meeting with a correction: Joseph Short should read Joseph Frost.

Roll Call: All members present voted in favor; motion passed 6-0.

## **II. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING APRIL 30, 2025 -**

The financial update for period ending April 30, 2025, was presented for approval. Jo Sabol made a motion to approve the report, seconded by Amy Bickel.

Roll Call: All members present voted in favor; motion passed 6-0.

## **III. SECOND READING & PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE 2025-04 -**

Chris McVey conducted the second reading of Ordinance 2025-04, an amendment to Title III, Chapter 32.21(A) of the West Point Code of Ordinances. The ordinance changes the official meeting location of the West Point City Council from the West Point Independent School building (209 North 13th Street) to West Point City Hall (509 Elm Street). Following the reading, a roll call vote was taken to approve the ordinance:

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

Ordinance 2025-04 was adopted unanimously.

## **IV. OPENING & ACCEPTANCE OF LG&E FRANCHISE BID -**

The mayor opened the sole sealed bid received in response to the city's public notice. The bid submitted by LG&E confirmed its agreement to all terms of Ordinance 2025-02, including reimbursement of advertising cost incurred by the city.

A motion to accept LG&E's franchise bid was made by Dwayne Culver and seconded by Chris McVey. 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.

## **V. MAYOR'S FY25-26 BUDGET MESSAGE & PRESENTATION -**

Mayor Ciresi presented the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year and delivered his required budget message under KRS 91A.030. He stated that the City remains in good financial shape; Debt continues to go down, and available cash has increased.

This year's budget includes the use of some of the proceeds from the sale of the water and sewer operations, along with funds from the water tower lease. These would be directed toward equipment repairs, and critical infrastructure projects. Highlights include:

- Replacement of the City's pickup truck with a lightly used vehicle.
- Modest pay increases for employees to help remain competitive.
- Tree removals and demolition of abandoned properties, with some cost recovery possible through fines or property sales.
- Increased stormwater funding and \$10,000 allocated for sidewalk repairs, supported in part by a grant.
- Purchase of three new sets of turnout gear for the fire department.

The mayor explained that the proposed budget includes an estimated \$50,000 in FEMA reimbursement for flood-related expenses. While this figure has been assumed for budgeting purposes, no federal disaster declaration has been issued, and there is no indication of when, or if, those funds would be received. He noted that items such as this, which may impact the budget, will be addressed as needed through budget modification. The budget projects an ending fund balance of \$60,000. A budget meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. to allow time for review ahead of the first reading in June.

## **VI. CONSIDERATION OF AUDIT PROPOSAL –**

Mayor Ciresi presented a proposal from Baldwin CPAs to conduct the City's FY2025-26 audit. He explained that audit requests were sent to 10 firms across the state with the only response from Baldwin. Their proposal totaled \$22,750, which includes preparation of the City's annual financial statement. He also noted that Baldwin CPAs offered to prepare the UFIR for a fee of \$850, but it will be prepared by Bonnie Ciresi CPA at no charge to the city.

Baldwin has agreed to meet the City's requested completion deadline of December 2025.

A motion to accept the audit proposal from Baldwin CPAs was made by Dwayne Culver and seconded by Amy Bickel. 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 carried.

**VII. MAYOR REPORT –**

1. Bullitt Co. Ambulance is now serving West Point. There is a protocol for Hardin Co. to be dispatched under certain circumstances.
2. The parts are in for the siren. When the controls electrician is available, we will attempt to make the necessary repairs.
3. We have obligated over \$50,000.00 for flood damage. We hope that this will be reimbursed through FEMA Public Assistance, but it has not been declared.
4. The importance of the city having use of the school. As a reminder it has now served as the
  - a. The regional headquarters for the Reed Cross
  - b. The distribution of supplies for flood victims
  - c. The River of Life Kids club and the Net for teens.
  - d. Storm shelter during severe weather
  - e. Will house the Lewis and Clark Educational and interpretive center
  - f. We have an email from John Stith of HCS stating “without a renter the building will degrade”  
This community simply cannot afford to lose the school AGAIN.
5. Request Motion to lease the school.
6. Request motion to renew the lease on the school at the current terms with a sub-lease to the West Point Preservation Corp. to take financial responsibility for any and all expenses related to the lease. Additionally, the West Point Preservation Corp. will pay the city \$1,200 in annual rent.

**VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS –**

**FT. DUFFIELD** – No new business was reported this month.

**PLANNING & ZONING** - No updates reported this month.

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS** – No updates reported this month.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT** – No new business was reported this month.

**MUSEUM REPORT** – No new business was reported this month.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE** - No meeting was held last month due to flooding.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT** – Mayor Ciresi reported that code enforcement has been largely paused since the flood, but he expects activity to resume in the coming weeks.

**IX. COUNCIL CONCERNS –**

**AMY BICKEL** announced that the City had been awarded a \$4,000 community grant that she applied for last month. She stated the grant will cover most the cost of this summer’s Third Friday events.

She also reported a large, dead tree on a city-owned lot at the end of Riverview that is leaning toward the road and poses a risk to overhead power lines. She noted this isn't the only problem tree in town and said there are several others that need to be removed.

Mayor Ciresi confirmed we have a list of problem trees and that this location has been added, and there is money in the new budget to address these.

**Dwayne Culver** followed up on a previous request to upgrade the flashing caution light near the bridge to warn drivers when the signal is about to change. Mayor Ciresi said he has not yet been able to get in touch with the state transportation department but still intends to follow up. Also reported ongoing issues at the corner of Geoghegan and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. He said trash has been accumulating on the property, stored in sheds and beneath tarps, and that downed trees have remained untouched for over a year. He requested that Code Enforcement take further action.

Mayor Ciresi confirmed the property had been visited before and agreed it should move forward in the enforcement process. He noted that code enforcement has been slowed by flood recovery but asked Culver to email a reminder so it could be added to the city's list of problem properties.

**Butch Curl** No comment.

**Kevin Duke** No comment.

**Chris McVey** no comment.

**Jo Sabol** noted that several streetlights are currently out and said she would provide the addresses to the mayor so they could be reported for repair.

She also asked several questions regarding the current budget. She inquired under which line-item Bob Heuglin's salary appears, and it was confirmed that it falls under Administrative Salaries. Mayor Ciresi explained that Bob has received very little pay this fiscal year, due in part to ongoing personal issues and limited availability, and that enforcement activities have been minimal.

Jo also asked whether any fines had been collected this fiscal year. Mayor Ciresi stated that no fines have been collected and that the City has been focused on voluntary compliance.

Jo questioned a \$166 entry labeled 'Professional Fees-Code Enforcement' and asked whether any expenditures had been made. Bonnie clarified that no funds had been spent to date in that category, and that the amount referred to was the amount budgeted, not an expense.

## **X. CITIZEN CONCERNS –**

**Billie Circle** voiced concerns about worsening conditions in the area of Mulberry and Geoghegan Streets, citing a severe rat infestation, accumulating garbage, and suspicious nighttime activity. She identified 1508 Geoghegan as a major problem, describing it as unsafe and overrun with vermin. She also reported that trash was being stored in sheds and under tarps, spilling into

yards and the street. She expressed frustration at the lack of improvement despite prior visits by Code Enforcement.

**Scott Young** added to her comments, stating that the issue went beyond aesthetics or general upkeep.

He stated that rats had been observed in the street and that the conditions existed within 50 to 60 feet of homes occupied by heart patients and immunocompromised residents. He also noted that a school bus stop is nearby, further heightening concerns about health and safety.

**Sandy Sabol** said she needed to voice concerns about unsanitary and hazardous conditions near the intersection of Mulberry and Geoghegan Streets. She described the area as resembling a slum, with garbage left out for weeks.

She submitted a stack of written complaints that had been filled out by multiple residents to the council and asked whether the ongoing accumulation of trash posed a health risk. Mayor Ciresi confirmed the concerns would be addressed.

**Billie Circle** asked why the City could not have a second code enforcement officer to help manage the growing number of complaints. Mayor Ciresi responded that additional enforcement staff are difficult to find and hire, but that the City will continue to pursue compliance through available means.

**Eric Duvall** asked about the possibility of a FEMA property buyout for flood-damaged homes, similar to previous programs. Mayor Ciresi explained that the City has submitted several properties for consideration under the hazard mitigation program, but progress cannot move forward until the federal Public Assistance declaration is issued. He said the process is underway, but there is currently no timeline for when funds might become available.

**Laurice Bryant** asked why when garbage cans would be returned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Street ramp, noting that without them, people were throwing trash over the bank. She said she had personally picked up items, including a dirty diaper, but had nowhere to dispose of them. Mayor Ciresi said the City would work to replace the cans and pointed to the ongoing lack of electricity and water in the park as just one example of the many recovery efforts still underway.

**Scott Young** informed the mayor and Council that the park bathrooms had been found open on Mother's Day, despite the water still being shut off. He said several families entered the facilities and were met with unpleasant conditions due to the lack of running water. Mayor Ciresi stated he had not been aware they were unlocked and would follow up to ensure they remain secure until utilities are restored.

**Lena McVey** reminded everyone that the annual Crusade for Children fundraiser is approaching. She said the Ladies Auxiliary will host a street dance on Friday, June 6, at the firehouse, with proceeds benefiting the Crusade. Due to recent flooding and graduations, the event will be scaled back but still includes music, concessions, and possibly an auction. She encouraged all to attend, even those unable to donate.

**Roszelle Moore** thanked all the volunteers who helped distribute supplies during the flood recovery, including those who delivered to residents and assisted with meal service. She recognized the

support from the local fire department, ladies auxiliary, churches, and outside organizations such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army. She also acknowledged the efforts of the county Magistrates and other officials who came to assist. Moore expressed deep appreciation for the strong community response and everyone who stepped up to help.

**Michell Heavrin** wanted to recognize **Marvin Greenfield** of **Right Way Hauling** for his continued support of the City, noting that he often steps in without being asked. She specifically mentioned his help during the flood recovery and praised him for hauling off a large barrel that had caused a stir on the community Facebook page.

Mayor Ciresi added that Rite-Way has consistently demonstrated extraordinary commitment in assisting the community and will be providing demolition pricing for condemned properties, which may allow the City to compensate him for some of his efforts. His efforts were acknowledged with unanimous appreciation from the officials and citizens present.

**Lisa Beard** thanked Council members Amy Bickel and Jo Sabol for taking the time to respond to her regarding the future of the old school building. She said their responses helped her better understand the various perspectives involved, and although she still wished the building could be preserved, she appreciated gaining a clearer view of both the pros and cons.

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT –**

A motion to adjourn was made by Butch Curl and seconded by Dwayne Culver. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at **8:06 p.m.**

**CITY OF WEST POINT**

  
Richard A. Ciresi, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Ashley Gates, City Clerk