

LUDLOW COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES

November 14, 2024

Mayor Chris Wright called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Laurie Sparks called the roll, which showed the following council members present: Steve Chapman, David Ziegler, Samantha Frank, and Julie Terry Navarre. Lori Davenport and Abigail Miller were absent.

ALSO ATTENDING: City Attorney Todd McMurtry, City Clerk Laurie Sparks, Police Chief Bart Beck, Fire Chief Mike Steward, Public Works Director Shane Hamant, Code Enforcement Officer Jamie West

Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Ms. Frank, to approve the minutes from the council meetings on October 10, 2024, October 24, 2024, and November 11, 2024. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.

STAFF REPORTS

Fire Department

Chief Steward discussed several items in his report including recent meetings regarding the school construction project, discussion on winterizing fire hydrants, and completing annual inspections. Approximately 192 elementary kids visited the firehouse for fire safety month. Six members of the fire department completed the Kentucky State Fire Marshall Office inspector class. Discussion on a recent meeting with BP in Bromley regarding their upcoming water line replacement. The fire department was not awarded a FEMA grant for gear and SCBAs. The Halloween event at the firehouse was a success. Ms. Terry Navarre thanked the fire department for participating in the SHINE trunk-or-treat event.

Public Works

Mr. Hamant advised that he recently applied for a sidewalk repair grant through the Kentucky League of Cities. The restrooms at Ludlow Memorial Park have been winterized. A portable restroom has been placed near Hollingworth Field. Anyone interested in curbside leaf removal should call the City or send an email to be added to the schedule.

Code Enforcement

Mr. West advised that the City's Fall Clean Up on October 12, 2024 went well; two large dumpsters of trash were collected. The next City Clean Up day will be on Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Norfolk Southern replaced 1,850 feet of fence along Adela Street, Harris Alley, and Poplar Street. The City is continuing to work with Norfolk Southern about fixing drainage issues in the underpass. Mr. Ziegler thanked Mr. West for getting an issue resolved on Stokesay Street.

Police Department

Chief Beck discussed the monthly call report. The police department is now fully staffed with the hiring of Officer Daniel Hampton, who previously worked at Park Hills. Discussion on recent training attended by officers in October.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Wright introduced Will Weber of Southbank, who has been working with the City and Ludlow Schools to get the Riverfront Commons project moving along. Mr. Weber discussed the relaunch of Riverfront Commons to make it a world-class active destination spanning eight cities along the Ohio River. Southbank hopes that construction of Phase II of the project from Hooper Street to Adela Avenue will begin in Spring 2025.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance—The Finance Committee did not meet. The bills in October were paid and the information can be viewed on the City's website.

Parks and Recreation—The Committee does not have any events planned but hopes to help with the Christmas Parade.

Public Works/Code Enforcement —The Committee met with Mr. Hamant earlier in the week and discussed the need to replace the oldest dump truck and to purchase a paint sprayer and seed/fertilizer spreader. There was also discussion about ranking the streets for paving projects. The Committee met with Mr. West to discuss sidewalks. Ms. Frank advised that homeowners are responsible for maintaining the sidewalk in front of their properties. The Committee met with an attorney with Mr. McMurtry's law firm, to discuss creating a sidewalk ordinance. The first reading of the ordinance will hopefully be in December. Discussion on the possibility of increasing the sidewalk rebate, which is currently 20% of the total cost of the project, up to \$200.00.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Tiffany Chatt, 309 Montclair Avenue, discussed the need for a disabled parking space in front of her home for her father. (The issue was voted on later in the meeting.)

Marilyn McDonald, 204 Highway Avenue, expressed concerns about the danger of the entrance to Cityview Station being right across from her house and requested that the City install high curbs in front of her home for safety. Mr. Hamant advised that he would contact the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and ask for permission to install higher curbs in that area.

Derek Gaiser, 304 Poplar Street, advised that the one-way sign on Poplar Street was taken down when Duke Energy replaced a utility pole, but the sign was never reinstalled. Mayor Wright asked Mr. Hamant to take care of the issue. Mr. Gaiser thanked Mr. West for getting Norfolk Southern to replace the fence along their property. Mr. Gaiser advised that he hopes the council will approve the appointment of a city administrator who is willing to hold Fischer Homes accountable. Discussion on the possibility of a merger between Ludlow and Bromley.

John Hall, 31 Kenner Street, advised that he had asked for transparency in the process of hiring a city administrative officer, including an opportunity for citizens to hear from the candidates, and that did not happen. Mr. Hall stated that the council is the voice of the community, and he was disappointed that two members of council were not in attendance at the meeting. Mr. Ziegler advised that he would like to have more input from the community before making a decision on hiring the city administrative officer.

Duane Dean, 40 Highway Avenue, discussed issues with water runoff from the hill on Highway Avenue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and Vote on Disabled Parking Space at 309 Montclair Avenue

Ms. Terry Navarre advised that after looking at the photos of the property, she could see the challenges of parking in such a narrow driveway and believes that it is appropriate to allow for a disabled parking space in front of the home. **Motion by Mr. Chapman, second by Ms. Terry Navarre, to approve the installation of a disabled parking space at 309 Montclair Avenue. Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.**

First Reading of Ordinance 2024-8

Mr. McMurtry completed the first reading of Ordinance 2024-8 *An Ordinance of the City of Ludlow, in Kenton County, Kentucky, Amending Section 70.01, Article X, and Article XI of the City's Zoning Ordinance.* The ordinance will designate where medical cannabis facilities can be located within the city.

Resolution 2024-13

Mr. McMurtry read Resolution 2024-13 *A Resolution Approving the Mayor's Appointment of Scott Smith to the Position of City Administrative Officer in the City of Ludlow, Kentucky.* Mayor Wright thanked everyone in the room because they realize what an important position it is and applauded everyone who reached out, including residents and business owners, about the city administrative officer position. Mayor Wright advised that he has taken feedback from the community and has been available to discuss the issue with the community at the monthly Coffee with the Mayor events. Mayor Wright discussed the interview process for the city administrative officer position, which he modeled after the process that school districts use to hire a superintendent. Mayor Wright had originally made a conditional offer to someone else, but he received an overwhelming level of support to appoint Scott Smith to the position. Ultimately, it is the mayor's job to appoint someone to the city administrative officer position and it is council's job to vote on that choice. **Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Mr. Frank, to pass Resolution 2024-13.** Ms. Frank appreciated the fact that Mayor Wright let council be a part of the interview process. Ms. Terry Navarre was glad Mayor Wright was willing to course correct after listening to concerns from city staff, council, and the community regarding the initial choice for the position. Mr. Ziegler stated that he believed that Mayor Wright had already made a choice by offering the job to someone else other than Mr. Smith and that decision should not change. Mr. Ziegler believes the vote to appoint a city administrative officer should be tabled to allow for public input. Ms. Frank believes that Mr. Smith has proven himself to the council that he is willing to do what needs to be done and worked to save the City from bankruptcy. Mr. Chapman advised that he believes Mr. Smith is the most qualified for the position based on the interviews. Mr. Chapman discussed the dire financial situation the City was in when Mr. Smith was appointed to the role of part-time city administrative officer by Mayor Josh Boone six years ago. At that time, the City almost did not have enough money to make payroll. Mr. Smith cut spending and put together a financial plan and now the City has \$900,000.00 in a contingency fund. Mr. Ziegler advised that he is in favor for voting on the appointment so he can contact the

pension board and have an investigation started. **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: three ayes, one nay (Mr. Ziegler).**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Ms. Frank, to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Sparks, City Clerk

Attest: _____
Chris Wright, Mayor