

**LUDLOW COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MINUTES**

**July 11, 2024**

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

*ALSO ATTENDING:* City Attorney Todd McMurtry, Police Chief Scott Smith, Fire Chief Mike Steward, Code Enforcement Officer Jamie West

**Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Ms. Frank, to approve the minutes from the council meetings on June 13, 2024, and June 27, 2024. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.**

**STAFF REPORTS**

Fire Department

Chief Steward advised that fire hydrant testing is continuing, and they are finishing up business fire inspections. There are five new interns at the Fire Department.

Public Works

Mr. Hamant's report was included in the packet. Mayor Wright advised that there is a delay in getting the parking ordinance amendment for Reeves' Market. The ordinance should be on next month's meeting agenda once Mr. Hamant measures the area for the parking spaces.

Code Enforcement

Mr. West discussed the number of open and closed code enforcement cases. There are twelve property owners who have not purchased a rental license and a lien has been placed on the properties. Last year, there were approximately 400 rental properties in the city. The Urban Design Review Board issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of a composite roof with a metal roof on 8 Butler Street. Mr. West thanked all the City employees and volunteers, including Mr. Ziegler, Mr. Chapman, Cindy Powell, and Paula Graszus for their assistance with Movie Night in the Park and the Fireworks Festival. Mr. West also thanked the vendors and the sponsors, including Movie Night sponsors (Ideal Supplies, Hater's Dry Goods, Ronald B. Jones Funeral Home, and The Lagoon Saloon) and the fireworks sponsor (Fischer Homes).

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Peter Bishop, 329 Skyview Court, thanked the police and fire departments for responding so quickly to a recent fire at River's Breeze.

Will Weber, Southbank Partners, advised that the Riverfront Commons signage will be installed on the existing path and work should begin soon on the next phase. Mr. Weber advised that the results of a study to find more effective ways to bring people to the downtown restaurants and businesses will be available soon.

Jason Goff, 139 Highway Avenue, advised that he has not heard anything back from Fischer Homes regarding the issue of water in his basement. Mayor Wright advised that representatives from Fischer Homes, including their engineer and Greg Fischer, will be at the next caucus meeting on July 25, 2024.

Bob Augsburger, an investor who lives in Northern Kentucky, advised Council that he is interested in purchasing 233 Oak Street, but not with over \$100,000.00 in liens filed against it. Following discussion, Mr. McMurtry advised that the City could foreclose on the property and Mr. Augsburger would have an opportunity to purchase it at a Master Commissioner's sale.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Wright thanked everyone who came out to Movie Night in the Park and the Fireworks Festival and thanked the city staff and volunteers who assisted. Mayor Wright advised that he received overwhelmingly positive reviews, especially for the fireworks night, which is something that he wanted to bring back to the community during his term as mayor. Chris Courtney with the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) will be at the July 25, 2024, meeting to provide an update on programs, incentives, and activities taking place throughout the region.

Mayor Wright discussed the status of the City Administrative Officer search. The deadline to apply was June 30, 2024. Of the ten resumes received, only one out-of-state candidate met the qualifications. Mayor Wright expressed concern about having such a shallow pool of candidates and would like to open it back up and move the application deadline to October. Mayor Wright received a letter containing over thirty employee signatures, with the majority of those employees in attendance at the meeting, requesting that the application deadline be extended to allow Chief Smith an opportunity to apply for the position. Mr. Ziegler stated that he respects everyone's support for Chief Smith; however, he believes the position should be filled as soon as possible. Mr. Ziegler expressed concern that extending the deadline to October could be perceived as a pre-arranged agreement to hire Chief Smith. Mr. McMurtry advised that although Mayor Wright can recommend anyone for the city administrative officer position, Council will get the final say on who will be hired. Mr. Chapman advised that the City has had many administrators come and go and we have a lot of good stuff happening right now. Mr. Chapman stated that he does not have a problem with waiting a few more months as long as we make the right decision on the best person for the job. Mayor Wright advised that he would like two council members to sit on the interview panel. Mayor Wright stated that he personally likes Chief Smith, but ultimately wants to hire the best person for the City, even if that turns out to be a different applicant. Discussion on the interview process. Ms. Frank advised that she received a call from an employee requesting her support of extending the deadline because the employee would like Chief Smith to have the opportunity to apply for the position. Ms. Frank advised that she is in favor of extending the deadline to allow Chief Smith to apply. Ms. Terry Navarre advised that she has been working with Chief Smith throughout his tenure as city administrative officer and cannot say enough good things about the turn the City has taken in the last five and a half years. Ms. Terry Navarre advised that Council was elected to take the best care of the city and, in her opinion, the best thing they could do for the city is to give Chief Smith an opportunity to apply for the job. All the employees in attendance at the meeting applauded. Chief Smith stated that the retirement board attorneys advised that he cannot apply or submit a resume until after his official retirement date of October 1, 2024. Chief Smith advised that he has put the time in, established good relationships with everyone, and mended shattered fences and is only asking

for the ability to apply for the city administrator position. Chief Smith also advised that if someone applies that is more qualified, the City would be a fool to not hire them. In response to Ms. Miller's question, Mayor Wright advised that the current six members of Council will be approving the hire for the position. Following discussion, Mayor Wright advised that will open the position back up and extend the application deadline.

### **COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Finance* – The Finance Committee met on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, to review the statements and everything appeared to be in order. The City has \$900,000.00 in a contingency fund and will be able to pay off the remaining \$75,000.00 Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) loan this year.

*Parks and Recreation* – Hot Dogs in the Park will be on July 12, 2024. There will be a story time presented by the Kenton County Public Library. Ms. Davenport advised that she has been unable to assist with Hot Dogs in the Park and thanked Mr. Ziegler for doing a great job.

*Public Works/Code Enforcement* – The Committee plans to meet with Code Enforcement on the second Monday and with Public Works on the second Wednesday of next month.

### **CITY UPDATE/POLICE UPDATE**

Chief Smith advised that Mr. West does not give himself enough credit for all the work he did with the Movie Night and Fireworks Festival. Chief Smith advised that Greg Fischer will attend the meeting on July 25, 2024, along with his team and our city engineer. A metal fabricating company that will employ 126-130 people will be opening soon at the Sandbank Road property. Chief Smith is looking into having more festivals and entertainment in the city over the next year. Discussion on the former Bullock Funeral Home building that someone is rehabbing into office space on the first floor and apartments on the second floor. Discussion on the possibility of the City purchasing or leasing land from the railroad. Discussion on the status of potential development on the west end.

Chief Smith praises the police officers every month and advised that they are very proactive. The City purchased two new gray Dodge Durangos for the police department. Mayor Wright advised that the heavy police and fire department presence at the festival was a hit and thanked the fire department volunteers for monitoring the bounce houses.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Terry Navarre announced that Cars & Coffee will be on Sunday, July 14, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. until noon at Ludlow Plaza. The Ludlow Heritage Museum will also be open during the event. Ms. Frank thanked everyone to come out for Walk 'n Talk 'n Trash. This month, they teamed up with LiveWell Ludlow and had enough people to cover a large area, including Ludlow Park. They meet on the second Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Ziegler announced that Limburger Fest will be on July 27, 2024, and Hot Dogs in the Park will be on Friday, July 12, 2024.

**Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Mr. Ziegler to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Laurie Sparks, City Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Wright, Mayor