

CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES OF THE ELSMERE CITY COUNCIL

April 4, 2023

6:30 PM

LOCATION: Elsmere City Building.

CALL TO ORDER: Councilwoman Maria Vogt called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: The following members were present: Mayor Marty Lenhof, Councilwoman Maria Vogt, Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs, Councilman Malcolm Daniels, Councilwoman Serena Owen, Councilwoman Missy Tester, and Councilwoman Joanne Barnett Smith.

AUDIENCE REMARKS:

Mr. Willie Ewell, 1109 Plateau Street, Mr. Ewell addressed the council concerning another tree on his property. He would like someone to come look at it. It is leaning toward Plateau and looks like it might fall into the street. He said the roots are showing. Mayor Marty Lenhof stated that he would have Chris Zerhusen, Public Works Director, come out and look at it.

Mr. Eric Bunzow, 518 Ripple Creek Drive, addressed the council concerning chickens. Council informed him that it was on the agenda to be discussed later. He stated he is for having chickens but not the fence height.

Ms. Kayla Seimer, 322 Swan Circle, addressed the council concerning water issues at her property. She stated that since she moved in in 2018, she has had drainage issues that are affecting her foundation, flooding her yard, and mosquitoes. She stated there is a small pipe at the back of her property, however she gets all the water runoff from her surrounding neighbors. Her kids can't play in the yard because it is a swamp. She has had to replace the furnace, air conditioner, and washer and dryer. She already contacted the Water District and Sanitation District, and they said it is not their issue. Mayor Marty Lenhof stated he would have Chris Zerhusen go with him out there to look at it.

Ms. Sharon Gilliam, 125 Garvey Avenue, addressed council concerning the bar next door and their expansion. Greg Voss, City Attorney, said he would contact Chris Preston, with PDS, and see what is going on with that property. He stated that the City only knows about the back property and the board of adjustment hearing for that portion.

Phyllis Tyler, Chair of the Juneteenth Celebration, addressed the council thanking the City for its participation in the event last year. She wanted to let Council and Mayor know that they can have a booth, walk in the parade. She stated she will need help with a few things and may ask the City for some help.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

KLC Ethics Discussion – Councilwoman Serena Owen has requested and provided examples of, a free Elsmere City of Ethics Resolution during the past couple of Council and Caucus meetings. She is wanting the City Council to approve for the city to become certified city of ethics. Discussion among council and mayor happened, and Attorney Greg Voss stated to put it to a vote next meeting.

Chicken Ordinance Discussion – Councilwoman Joanne Barnett Smith is concerned with the fence language. Greg Voss stated they could amend the fence height. All council agreed to have the height of the fence amended to a 4ft. fence. There will still be a lottery and talk to neighbors will still be a part of it. It was stated that enforcement will be through PDS.

Councilwoman Owen asked that the pilot be for all residents interested instead of having a lottery for only a few chosen residents. She also asked council to remove the written permission from neighbors requirement from the ordinance so that the City of Elsmere does not inadvertently create conflict between neighbors.

Roberts Rules of Order Discussion – Councilwoman Serena Owen asked the City of Elsmere to consider adopting the use of Robert's Rules of Order to provide a procedure that addresses business one item at time, promotes courtesy, respect for all, accuracy, justice, and impartiality. It ensures the rule of the majority while protecting the rights of the minority and absent members. Councilwoman Serena Owen reiterated that Elsmere City

Attorney Greg Voss brought it to the Council's attention that the City of Elsmere has not adopted the use of Robert's Rules of Order. He agreed. The council discussed the proposal and feel they feel like these rules are already for the most part followed and don't need new rules.

Crown Act – Councilwoman Maria Vogt stated that it stands for respectfulness to women. Councilwoman Owen also shared that the CROWN Act stands for Creating a Respectful World for Natural Hair. Kentuckians are being fired from jobs, students are sent home and punished in schools, because of the way they wear their natural hair. Local cities like Covington have passed an ordinance to help protect their community members (*men, women, and children who are mostly people of color*) from hair discrimination and Councilwoman Owen asked that the City of Elsmere do the same for our community members. Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs stated she feels like it should be up to individual business should make that decision. Greg Voss stated he would find the ordinance and do one for a vote next meeting.

Juneteenth Discussion – Councilman Malcolm Daniels addressed the council concerning Juneteenth holiday with getting two flags and making it a city holiday. He would like a flag to be placed at the current city building and one at Billy Bradford Park. He researched and found that most cities around us have more paid holidays than we do. He is proposing for the holiday to be added as a paid holiday.

Councilwoman Serena Owen thanked the City of Elsmere for participating in the two previous Juneteenth Celebrations. She explained that it is a weekend long celebration starting in Newport at the Southgate House on Friday, at the Covington Landing on Saturday, and at First Baptist Church of Elsmere on Sunday. She invited the City to walk in the parade with our banner and host an information booth. Councilwoman Owen also thanked Mayor Lenhof for reading a City of Elsmere Juneteenth proclamation she requested at the First Baptist Church on Juneteenth in 2021 and again that Councilman Daniels requested for 2022.

Greg Voss stated he will work on getting the ordinance together for a first ready next meeting.

Councilwoman Maria Vogt made a motion to go into executive session KRS 61.810(1)(b) proposed or pending litigation against or on behalf of the public agency. Councilwoman Missy Tester seconded. All members aye. Meeting closed 8:17 pm. Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs made a motion to come out of executive session KRS 61.810(1)(b) with no action taken. Councilwoman Joanne Barnett Smith seconded. All aye. Meeting opened back up at 8:33 pm.

One young girl asked about having basketballs and soccer balls available at the parks, along with more park equipment. Council stated they would look into that.

No Further Action was taken.


ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Vogt adjourned the meeting at 8:39 pm.



Mayor Marty Lenhof

Attest:



Misty Ezell, City Clerk