

## MEETING MINUTES OF THE ELSMERE CITY COUNCIL

October 10, 2023

6:30 PM

**LOCATION:** Elsmere City Building

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE:** The invocation was given by Councilman Malcolm Daniels, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Councilwoman Barnett Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023, Council Meeting. Councilwoman Grubbs seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion carried and so ordered.**

Councilman Daniels made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2023, Caucus Meeting. Councilwoman Vogt seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion carried and so ordered.**

Mayor Lenhof stated that if the council does not mind, he would like to skip the administrative reports for the time being to read item number five under the General Items, which is Resolution number 11-2023. Councilwoman Owen asked if after reading Resolution 11-2023 if the council could also read the Safe Schools Resolution. Mayor Lenhof stated that the council would go from Resolution 11-2023 back to the Administrative reports.

City Clerk Misty Ezell read Resolution 11-2023 in summary. Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs made a motion to approve the resolution as read. Councilwoman Joanne Barnett Smith seconded the motion. Mayor Lenhof asked for a roll call vote. Councilwoman Owen – Yay, Councilwoman Tester – Yay, Councilwoman Vogt – Yay, Councilman Daniels – Yay, and Councilwoman Grubbs – Yay. Motion Carried 6-0.

Chief Wood stated that he is grateful and honored to be the next police chief for the City of Elsmere. He stated that he did start his career in the city and learned a lot. He stated that the city was his learning ground, and it has taken him twenty-two years to be back where he always wanted to be, and he had always wanted to be the police chief of this city. The Chief introduced his family to the council. Councilwoman Barnett Smith welcomed Chief Wood to the City. Councilwoman Grubbs stated that not only the police chief, their spouses and families do a lot in the background that most people do not notice, and the council appreciates the things the officers do. So, thank you to the officers and to our new police chief.

Mayor Lenhof asked for a motion to go into recess to take pictures. Councilwoman Grubbs made a motion to enter into recess for ten minutes, Councilwoman Barnett Smith seconded the motion. All members voted yay. Motion Carried. The council went into recess at 6:45 pm.

Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs made a motion to reconvene regular session. Councilwoman Barnett Smith seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of reconvening the regular session. Motion Carried. The Regular session reconvened at 7:01pm.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:**

**Code Enforcement Officer Chris Preston & Zoning Administrator Rich Aliff** were not in attendance but submitted written reports to Council.

**City Attorney Greg Voss** stated that he has been working with City Administrator Bartlett to get him up to speed. He stated that the good thing is that everything is running smoothly.

**Public Works Director Chris Zerhusen** reported that the department has been working on completing concrete repairs on Fallbrook Drive and Waterfall Way. The department needs to go back and crack seal the area. The

department attended some disaster training that was put on by the Northern Kentucky APWA. All public works staff will be attending this training.

He stated that Asphalt repairs on New Buffington Road are in the process of being completed. They had planned to wait for the bridge project to be completed but is not going to be completed until the first of the year.

He stated that short line stripping was completed in several areas around the city. The department partnered with Kenton Count to complete the long line striping on Garvey Avenue and New Buffington Road. This will be completed this fall.

The department plans to be completed as much crack sealing as possible.

He stated that the winter equipment is in storage and the department will start bringing it out and moving mowers down to storage.

Councilwoman Owen asked about the question from a resident about the light on Kims Street, which is down by the cemetery. Mr. Zerhusen stated he had not received a request concerning a light, but wanted clarification if the resident wants a new light installed. Ms. Owen stated that it was brought up a few meetings ago and that the street had no streetlights, and a resident has come to her about how dark it is. Chris stated that the city could look at the area and he said that the reason it doesn't have lights is that it is all underground utilities. He asked for clarification of the location. Councilwoman Owen stated that it is by Mary Smith Cemetery. Chris state that he could see that it might be a large undertaking. He said it might be a substantial cost to the city and that it is not currently a budgeted item.

Councilwoman Vogt stated that the council had talked about updating the Rosella Porterfield Park. A shadowbox had been installed and that Rosella Porterfield Park and they did a really nice job with it.

Councilman Daniels stated that Mr. Zerhusen had mentioned in his report that there was an issue with litter on Garvey Avenue between New Buffington and Foundation. He asked if this has always been the case, or has it picked up now that the area is more occupied. Mr. Zerhusen stated that the amount of litter has increased, and he stated that is the same stuff each week. He stated that it may be a dumpster truck that is losing the bags. He thinks it would be a lot of dedication for an individual to throw this out each week. He has talked with the mayor about possibly installing cameras in this area.

Councilwoman Barnett Smith mentioned the work that was completed on Eastern Avenue she stated that the contractor took all the cones.

Councilwoman Barnett Smith stated on the Corner of Sunset on the pole there used to be a button and it has come loose and is swinging out in the road. Chris stated that he would contact Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District Six to repair that.

Councilwoman Barnett Smith stated that it is October and it's time to investigate replacing the tree at Billy Bradford Park. Chris stated that he had already contacted Baeten's Nursery.

**Police Chief Tim** Chief Thames stated that Officer Jones attended the Midwest Crisis Negotiations Conference. Officer Jones serves as a Crisis Negotiator on the Northern Kentucky Regional Swat Team.

Detective Higgins attended the Missing and Exploited Children training in September. He also attended the Northern Kentucky Justice Collaborative.

Sgt Michael Metzger was recently awarded the Certification of Law Enforcement Manager from the Department of Criminal Justice Training Career Development Program.

October 10, 2023, Council Meeting Minutes

The department will be attending the Trunk or Treat event at Prestige Marketing on October 29<sup>th</sup>. They will also be attending the Trunk or Treat event at the Kenton County Detention Center on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Chief Thames wanted to remind residents to pay attention to speed, stop signs, and children.

Councilwoman Owen stated that she wanted to thank Chief Thames for his service and coming back to help the city out. She stated that the city appreciated him and would miss him.

Councilwoman Grubbs wanted to thank Chief Thames for stepping up when the city needed him. Thank You for your service to the residents of Elsmere.

Mayor Lenhof stated he wanted to thank Chief Thames. He said the city had a lot of things going on in the city the last few months and Chief Thames was the only person he could think of to come in and fill the position. He stated that Chief Thames baled the city out. He stated that he is always welcome to come back.

**Parks and Recreation Director Denise Donahue** submitted a written report. She stated that the city had Jimmies Roller Rink event during September and around 125 people attended. The next event is the Halloween Party on October 28<sup>th</sup>. There will be a costume contest, games, and treats. She and Councilwoman Barnett Smith met with Amy from Bluegrass Playground Equipment. Amy will formulate a plan for the parks.

**City Clerk Misty Ezell** is working on property tax bills, and they will be mailed on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Councilwoman Joanne Barnett Smith stated that the city does not have any control on the County bills.

Councilwoman Owen asked about grant funding for parks or for city in general, who would she go to. City Clerk Ezell stated that she should reach out to City Administrator Michael Bartlett. She stated that she liked to write Grants and she had learned from some at the Kentucky League of Cities Conference.

**City Treasurer Jessica Lucius** submitted a written report. There were no questions for this department.

**Community Center Director Carol Cope** submitted a written report. There were no questions for this department.

Councilwoman Barnett Smith made a motion to approve the Administrative Reports. Councilwoman Owen seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion carried and so ordered.**

**The mayor's Report** reported that he had been spent time interviewing for a new City Administrator and Police Chief.

He stated that there were representatives from Summitt Engineering at the city building. He said that the city had a plan to move forward.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, the city clerk and treasurer will be out of town, the city administrator and mayor will be answering calls.

#### **City Administrator's Report**

He stated that he was involved in the Police Chief Selection and excited to be a part of it.

He learned a little geography; he received a call from a gentleman who would like to donate a flag to the city. After speaking with the gentleman, he learned that he was located in Elsmere, Delaware.

Councilwoman Owen stated that she loved the flag story and it brought to mind how we honor our veterans here and was wondering when the city would be able to get United State flags to fly in conjunction with our veteran flags? Councilwoman Barnett Smith stated that our poles not fitted to hold the U.S. flags. Mayor Lenhof stated that there are some poles that we cannot put anything on.

Councilwoman Owen stated that during the caucus she shared about some shootings within that the City of Elsmere. She stated that there are parents that are concerned about bullying, which has been on the news. She stated that we love our community and want to keep it safe. She said there is a student that attends Lloyd High School that has shared her concerns about student safety. Attorney Voss shared that maybe the City Administrator and our new Police Chief can work together to create a safety forum for our residents. She wanted to put this on Mr. Bartlett's radar. She offered to get together soon to start planning the forum.

Mayor Lenhof stated that the city should get the schools involved in this as well. Mayor Lenhof stated that the school resource officers are available twenty-four seven.

Councilwoman Owen stated that she agrees that the city should get the schools involved but it would also be good for the city to take a stand and lead the initiative to make sure that our community members know that Elsmere is a safe place to live. And to help ensure that and start those conversations. She stated that other people carry guns and have shot other people within the city. We just want it to be a safe place and some of it does not have anything to do with schools and some of it does.

Mayor Lenhof stated that Councilwoman Owen and Councilwoman Barnett Smith could speak with City Administrator Bartlett.

Councilwoman Owen stated that she is excited that the city administrator will work with her to create the forum.

**General Items:**

**November Election Day** – Councilwoman Grubbs made a motion to cancel the caucus meeting for Tuesday November 7<sup>th</sup> due to election. Councilwoman Missy Tester seconded the Motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion Carried.**

**Resolution 8-2023 – Safe Schools Resolution**

City Clerk Misty Ezell read the resolution in summary.

Councilman Daniels made a motion to approve the resolution as read. Councilwoman Tester Seconded the motion. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried and so ordered.**

Councilwoman Owen stated that she wanted to thank Destiny Owen, she has been advocating for safe schools and students for the past few years. She wanted to thank her for her advocacy and for advocating for safe schools and students.

**Resolution 9-2023 – Declaring a Bullet Proof Vest as Surplus Property and Authorizing the Transfer to the City of Edgewood**

Mayor Lenhof stated that this is Officer Machal's, he recently retired and will be going to be an SRO for the City of Edgewood.

City Clerk Misty Ezell read the resolution in summary.

Councilwoman Barnett Smith made a motion to approve the order as read. Councilwoman Tester seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion Carried.**

**Resolution 10-2023 – Authorizing Mayor to Execute a Consolidation Deed**

Attorney Voss stated this is to consolidate the parcels where Billy Bradford Park is located.

City Clerk Misty Ezell read the resolution in summary.

Councilwoman Grubbs made a motion to approve the order as read. Councilwoman Barnett Smith seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion Carried.**

**Municipal Order 10-2023 – Authorizing Mayor to Execute and Deliver a Consent to Close a Portion of Fuchs Road**

Attorney Voss read the order in summary.

October 10, 2023, Council Meeting Minutes

Councilwoman Grubbs made a motion to approve the order as read. Councilman Daniels seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. **Motion Carried**

**Ordinance 1830-2023 – Vacating a Portion of Fuchs Road Right of Way**

Attorney Greg Voss Read in Summary Ordinance 1830-2023 for the first reading.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Joanne Barnett Smith Seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Attest:

Misty Ezell  
Misty Ezell, City Clerk

Marty Lenhof  
Mayor Marty Lenhof

