

CITY OF NEWPORT, KY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Monday, November 16, 2020
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Peluso at 7:00 p.m. and held via video teleconference via the Zoom meeting application with a live stream to the City's Facebook page. The mayor opened the meeting with a moment of silent prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Clerk's note: In accordance with the Governors Emergency Order and the provisions of SB 150, it is allowable to conduct the meeting via a live video teleconference. The meeting agenda published on the city website, posted at the city building, and distributed to media of record advised the public how to comment in advance or during the meeting. No advance comments were received by staff.

In attendance via video teleconference were: Commissioner Beth Fennell, Commissioner Frank Peluso, Commissioner Thomas Guidugli, Jr., Commissioner Ken Rehtin, and Mayor Jerry Peluso. Also in attendance were: City Manager Thomas Fromme, Assistant City Attorney Dan Braun, Police Chief Chris Fangman, Fire Chief Bill Darin, Finance Director Lenny Kuntz, Human Resource Director Terry Fornash Assistant City Manager Larisa Sims, and Interim City Clerk Joy Rovno.

PERSONNEL ORDERS

The city clerk read by title and summary **R-2020-048**.

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY, **PROMOTING ADAM BROWN TO CAPTAIN, KENT HALL TO LIEUTENANT, AND BRIAN WALDORF TO SERGEANT** IN TH NEWPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 16, 2020.

Chief Fangman stated these officers are intelligent and do a great job for the city. He added their administrative work keeps the department at its high level.

Commissioner Peluso made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennel. The mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0**.

The city clerk read by title and summary **R-2020-049**.

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY, **APPOINTING JOSHUA ILG** TO THE POSITION OF ENGINEER/MEDIC GRADE 0 IN THE NEWPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 30, 2020.

Chief Darin stated the appointment of both firefighters are the result of an application for the SAFER Grant. He stated he hopes to have another firefighter appointment in December. Joshua comes from Campbell County Fire District 1 and lives in Independence.

Commissioner Fennell made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Rehtin. The mayor called for a vote; **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk read by title and summary **R-2020-050**

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY, **APPOINTING NOLAN KRESSER** TO THE POSITION OF ENGINEER/MEDIC GRADE 0 IN THE NEWPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 30, 2020.

Chief Darin stated he looks forward to working with the new firefighters, which start the academy on November 30th. Chief Darin went on to say Nolan comes from Hebron Fire Department and lives in Burlington.

Commissioner Peluso made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennell. The mayor called for a vote; **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

PRESENTATIONS AWARDS AND PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Peluso presented a Proclamation declaring November 28, 2020 as Shop Small Business Saturday.

Commissioner Rehtin made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennell. The mayor called for a vote; **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Fennell made a **motion to approve the** minutes of the October 19, 2020 regular meeting second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Rehtin. Upon hearing there were no corrections or questions, the mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

OLD BUSINESS

The city clerk gave second reading by title and summary to **O-2020-038.**

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY CONSENTING TO THE ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER OF CONTROL OF IT'S CABLE SYSTEMS FRANCHISE AGREEMENT WITH CINCINNATI BELL.

Mark Gilfoyle and Ted Heckman with Cincinnati Bell explained this transaction will not present any change to cable TV subscribers or for city administration. He stated the current Cincinnati bell franchise holder is Cincinnati Bell Extended Territories, which is being acquired by a global asset manager Macquarie. Macquarie manages cable TV and other infrastructure assets around the world. Cincinnati Bell Extended Territories and Cincinnati bell will remain. Subscribers will not see any change in service.

Commissioner Fennell asked if the residents will still call the same people if there are problems or if residents have questions.

Mark Guilfoyle replied yes, there will be no change to local contacts, personnel, billing or service. Ted Heckman has been the go to for the City of Newport, and he will remain Cincinnati bell's partner with the city. He stated the Federal Governments requires the city's approval, which Cincinnati bell does not take lightly, but nothing is going to change with this transfer.

Commissioner Peluso made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Guidugli. The mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk gave second reading by title and summary to **O-2020-018.**
AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY AMENDING SECTION 31.42 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES CONCERNING OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER.

Commissioner Rehtin made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Peluso. Upon hearing there were no comments or questions, the mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk gave second reading by title and summary to **O-2020-19**
AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY AMENDING SECTION 153.44 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES CONCERNING MAP AMENDMENTS.

Commissioner Peluso made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Rehtin. Upon hearing there were no comments or questions, the mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried, 4:1.**

The city clerk gave second reading by title and summary to **O-2020-020**
AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY ENACTING AND ADOPTING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY.

Commissioner Rehtin made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennell. Upon hearing there were no comments or questions, the mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk gave second reading by title and summary to **O-2020-021**
AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY AMENDING SECTION 9.33 (C) AND RELATED SITE SPECIFIC SIGN LOCATIONS OF THE OFFICAL ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY CONCERNING THE SIGN OVERLAY DISTRICT (SOD).

Commissioner Guidugli made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Peluso. Upon hearing there were no comments or questions, the mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

NEW BUSINESS

The city clerk gave first reading by title and summary of **O-2020-046.**
AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY AUTHORIZING THE SELECTION OF ATKINS-ELROD&ASSOCIATES AS THE CITY'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) AMINISTRATOR/CONSULTANT FOR THE CITY'S FY '20 AND FY '21 CDBG PROGRAM FOR CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PROJECTS.

Tom Guidugli and Dennis Elrod with Neighborhood Foundations explained the preliminary plans. He stated there will be five new builds located on W 10th Street, Patterson, Lindsey and Central Avenue, Central Avenue design will have a wrap-around porch. The rehabs are located at 1027 Ann Street and 1130 Liberty Street. There will be off street parking available.

Commissioner Fennell asked if these would be single family home ownership.

Tom Guidugli replied yes all will be single family home ownership.

Commissioner Rehtin asked for clarification of the design of the homes.

Tom Guidugli replied, there will be three new designs, such as a wrap around porch, the roof will be pitched not flat and addition of brick, siding or an addition of scallops.

Commissioner Peluso asked the price of the homes.

Tom Guidugli replied, \$160- 165K, with the 20k down payment.

Commissioner Rehtin asked if consideration was given to single floor, no stairs, a slab construction for handicap or elderly residents.

Tom Guidugli replied a handicap accessible home is always part of their developments.

Commissioner Rehtin asked if a single story construction is possible.

Tom Guidugli replied it's a consideration, not in this development but possibly in future projects. He stated there are some lots on Ann Street that could be single story with one or two bedrooms.

Dennis Elrod stated one of the issues is all the plans have to be approved by the State Kentucky Heritage Council. This is one of the reasons why there are variations of the homes throughout the city. One of the reasons you see a variation in these construction plans is the state wanted to see something different from what we had submitted for other developments. It would be an uphill fight to get a single family slab on grade design approved by the state.

Commissioner Rehtin asked even though there are several single family one story cottages on the west side.it would still be difficult to get approved?

Dennis Elrod replied yes, everything is an uphill battle with the Kentucky Heritage Council, it is a 4 to 5 year process to get approvals. This development has a series of different front elevation looks but the floor plans are identical. Mr. Elrod stated these plans have to be approved by the Kentucky Heritage Council. After review the Kentucky Heritage Council stated the plans looked the same as the last development and asked that the plans be modified such as a facade or elevation modification. He stated these plans reflect those changes.

Commissioner Peluso asked for clarification on the 20K assistance program

Tom Guidugli replied this is a down payment assistance program, the applicant has to have good credit and to earn a minimum of 45k annually. To encourage development. The rehabs are selling faster than the new builds. 20K is a 0 interest loan, forgiven 10 percent a year for 10 years.

Commissioner Fennell asked if someone is interested in this program who should they contact.

Tom Guidugli replied they should contact Ms. Linda Fields at Neighborhood Foundations.

Commissioner Fennell stated its important applicants know there is a process and the process takes time.

Dennis Elrod replied there are restrictions on this application, applicants have to complete a home ownership training course, there is a fair amount of work the homeowner needs to do.

Commissioner Rehtin asked about the competition to be awarded this grant.

Dennis Elrod replied they are competing with every small city in the state, they have been very successful. Every project they have submitted in the past 10 years has been awarded. He stated he believes the chances are good for receiving funding.

Commissioner Guidugli thanked the applicant for their efforts to continue to find affordable housing for our residents and bringing awareness about these programs. There are often questions about affordable housing in Newport, we have many homeowner opportunities in Newport and continue to provide more.

Dennis Elrod stated ten years ago the city had about 40 percent of home ownership, currently the city is at about 52 percent.

Thomas Fromme asked if the Heritage Council guidelines pertained to all areas of the city, as the demand for ranch style housing for seniors or handicap persons grows.

Dennis Elrod replied yes, any time these funds are applied for the Kentucky Heritage Council would have to approve the plans.

Thomas Fromme asked if Neighborhood Foundations had reached out to the school Superintendent about affordable housing for teachers.

Tom Guidugli replied yes he had spoken with Tony Watts concerning housing for teachers.

Thomas Fromme asked about the demand or the market for tiny homes.

Tom Guidugli replied there are two tiny homes on Forrest, the demographics for these homes are seniors and retirees.

Mayo Peluso thanked the Board for supporting the Community Development Block Grant, he stated in the last ten years the housing stock has improved tremendously a lot of it can be attributed to these grants, the support of this board, Newport Foundation, County Fiscal Court and Tom Guidugli and Dennis Elrods' efforts, that has allowed the city to move forward on these developments. Providing our residents with affordable housing.

Commissioner Fennell made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Guidugli. The mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0**.

The city clerk gave first reading by title and summary of **O-2020-053**.

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER, THOMAS J. FROMME, TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH CUSTOM DESIGN BENEFITS TO ACT AS THE CITY'S THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR WITH VARIOUS INSURANCE COMPANIES AND WITH DENTAL CARE PLUS TO PROVIDE FOR THE CITY OF NEWPORT'S EMPLOYEES' HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE NEEDS.

Lisa Stam with Sheryl Morgan, gave a brief explanation of benefits. She stated there are minimal changes to the program. They are recommending retain current health and dental plan with the addition of a new service, for employees to save money on drug cost, this service would be provided by RX Help Centers. It's a prescription advocacy firm, which help members of the plan to find alternative sources for their prescription medications. In many cases they are able to find the medication at no cost to the plan or member. The goal is to help save the city and its' employees money.

Commissioner Peluso asked for clarification on the specialty drugs.

Lisa Stam replied part of the RX Centers program is to change the prescription drug formulary to excluded specialty drugs, the reason is, when they are excluded from the formulary it opens up more alternative sources.

Commissioner Peluso asked if the plan would work with those employees on specialty drugs to make sure their needs are met.

Lisa Stam replied absolutely, no one will go without their medication, the alternatives that are looked at are manufactures, foundations that work with individuals to be able afford their medications and mail order, which has a reduced cost to medications. When all else fails the city will reimburse the employee for their out of pocket expense.

Commissioner Fennell stated RX Help Center is not just for specialty drugs.

Lisa Stam replied correct, they are also available for drugs or generic drugs that the member needs help to pay for.

Commissioner Fennell asked how a member would sign up for the benefit.

Lisa Stam replied the RX Center will reach out to those members that have high cost of prescription drugs and there will be a dedicated link to reach out to RX Help Center, within 48 hours RX Help Center would start the process of trying to find alternatives to the expensive medications

Commissioner Guidugli made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennell. The mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk gave first reading by title and summary of **O-2020-047.**

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY, ACCEPTING THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE YEAR 2021.

Commissioner Fennell made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Peluso. Upon hearing there were no comments or questions, the mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk gave first reading by title and summary of **O-2020-051.**

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY AUTHORIZING THE ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION TO BOTH THE EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT FUND AND THE POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS PENSION FUND TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR EACH AT 100% OF THE ANNUAL ACTUARIAL VALUATION REPORT, PAYABLE FROM THE GENERAL FUND.

Thomas Fromme stated a couple years ago in the budget the city started designating funds for the legacy/ old timers pension, this verifies this has been done, if this hadn't been done it would show a large unfunded liability on our CAFAR but the funds have been designated necessary to meet our obligations for the fund.

Commissioner Peluso made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennell. The mayor called for a vote; the **motion carried unanimously, 5:0.**

The city clerk gave first reading by title and summary of **O-2020-052.**

AN ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT KENTUCKY, REAPPOINTING COMMISSIONER ELISABETH FENNEL AS REPRESENTATIVE AND APPOINTING LARISA SIMS AS ALTERNATE FROM THE CITY OF NEWPORT KENTUCKY TO THE OHIO-KENTUCKY-INDIANA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS.

Mayor Peluso thanked Commissioner Fennell and Larisa Sims for their continued service.

Commissioner Peluso made a **motion to approve**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Guidugli. The mayor called for a vote; by show of hands, the **motion carried unanimously, 4: Commissioner Fennell Abstain.**

COMMENTS FROM CITY DEPARTMENT HEADS

Dan Braun

- Congratulated Board on reelection

Lenny Kuntz

- Completing processing first quarter revenues, should be ready for Board soon.

COMMENTS FROM CITY MANAGER

- Congratulated Board of Commissioners on their reelection
- With stable elected leadership the city is able to consistently outperform surrounding cities on development, due support of our Board.
- Working with small businesses due to Covid, such as prorated fees.
- Looking for additional funding from State to help small business during this difficult time
- Congratulated Larisa Sims and Lenny Kuntz on their work on the CAFAR report. Hoping for completion for next meeting in December if not a Special Call by the end of the year, this is keeping with the qualifications for the GFOA. Government Finance Officer Award.
- Lenny Kuntz stated he is looking into extending the due date.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Guidugli

- Congratulated promotions and Board of Commissioners
- Thanked the voters of Newport

Commissioner Peluso

- Congratulated promotions and Board of Commissioners
- Thanked citizens of Newport for allowing him to serve another two years
- Wished everyone a blessed and happy Thanksgiving
- Thanked interim city clerk on doing a good job.

Commissioner Rehtin

- Congratulations to the officers and their promotions, and welcomed the new firefighters to the Newport family
- Congratulated Mayor elect Tommy Guidugli
- Looking forward to serving for another 2 years
- Thanked Gordon Henry, Jason Walters, John Santini and Robby Hall for getting involved politically.

Commissioner Fennell

- Congratulations to new hires
- Thank you to voters of Newport
- Thanked fellow OKI board members for allowing her to serve another term
- Brent Spence Bridge funding plan. Encouraged everyone to contact legislature about funding plan. Questions and current conditions contact transportation.ky.gov or transportation.ohio.gov

Mayor Peluso

- Congratulations to promotions and new hires, welcomed to Newport
- Thanked the Board and their supporters in the election and looks forward to working with them for another 2 years.
- Support small businesses throughout the year

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Rehtin made a **motion to adjourn**; second to the motion was offered by Commissioner Fennell. The motion carried unanimously, 5:0. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joy Rovno, Interim City Clerk

Date Approved/Signed

Jerry R. Peluso, Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk