

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF FORT THOMAS, CAMPBELL
COUNTY, KENTUCKY, ON MONDAY,
MARCH 15, 2004.

Mayor Pro Tem Barbara Runge called the Regular Meeting to order and led the group in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. She asked for the Clerk to call the Roll; the following Councilmembers were present, in addition to Mayor Runge: Karen Lied, Eric Haas, Roger Peterman, Tom Lampe. Mr. Doepker was absent. Also present, in addition to Clerk Dottie Ivie, were: City Administrative Officer Jeff Earlywine, City Treasurer Fred Ewald, City Attorney Jann Seidenfaden, Chief of Police Steve Schmidt, and Fire Chief Dale Edmondson. Minutes were presented, with a paragraph on page 2 corrected by the Clerk, and upon motion (Lied), second (Lampe) and unanimous Aye voice vote, they were approved as amended.

The Monthly Report of the Fire Department was presented by Chief Dale Edmondson. He stated that the big story for this month is the change in the ISO Public Protection Rating from a 5 to a 3. He reported there were three car fires during this past month; one was a child playing with matches inside a car parked near a house, which burned a portion of the adjacent garage. He also said that the Department's Local 1928 sponsored a fund-raiser recently, and the Corn Hole Tournament was very successful, resulting in \$4,500 being donated to the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation. During February, 2004, there were 128 incident responses, of which 81 were Emergency Medical type responses.

The Police Department's Monthly Report was presented by Chief Steve Schmidt. He said that Patrolman Dean Windgassen is now back at work after an earlier injury. Also Rich Whitford has sustained an injury from a fall earlier this year. Schmidt has received e-mails from former Police Lt. A. Wayne Turner, who is now in Iraq and assigned to a Military Police unit. It seems that he is "in the thick of the action." He then reviewed the Department's Annual Report, which was designed and prepared by Lt. Ken Fecher. He commented on the changing aspects of the Police Department since the last Annual Report, saying that it was "overall, a fairly quiet year." Schmidt pinpointed efforts of the Department to provide an even better "sense of order" which makes Fort Thomas "such a nice place to live," he said. Some of those efforts include: acquiring Mobile Data Terminals for cruisers, rewriting the Policy and Procedures Manual, and preparing for Police Accreditation (which occurs every five years) There was some discussion from Council members on some of the statistics, including a doubling of the number of juvenile charges since last year (126 in 2002 and 237 in 2003). He said there were 2,065 traffic charges over the past year. A total of 980 speeding charges were written up; however there were 3,600 warning tickets issued. There are currently 22 officers, with one (Lt. Turner) deferred to service in the U.S. Army, plus the Chief, and two Police Clerks.

The Police Department records an average of over 43 calls per 24-hour day, with an annual total number of dispatch center calls recorded at 15,750 calls. Mayor Runge commended the Chief for his report, saying that it is "very well done and informative."

Don Brindle, Director of Recreation, presented and commented on his Department's Annual Report, stating that this is now his "30th year with the City" and his job "continues to be hard work, but interesting and fun." He especially enjoys teaching the Teeter Tots and Kinder Gym sessions, and said that one of the best things Council has done to benefit a large number of City residents is the purchase of the Soccer Park property adjacent to Pendery Park in Melbourne, on Route 8. He added that the soccer parents groups are "contributing in numerous ways, paying off debts as well as caring for the fields." He said that this assistance results in there being "excellent quality fields to play on." He brought along a large album with photographs and copies of informative flyers that the Department has distributed in support of the previous year's activities. He noted that "tennis is on the way back" and there is good participation in the leagues we currently have, plus for the two popular tournaments on 4th of July and Memorial Day.

In general, all shelters are booked every weekend for the rest of the year, and all weekends are booked solid for the Community Center (with wedding receptions or meeting) through 2004 and most of next year as well. Brindle reported that the concert series "just hasn't been a hit and this past year was the worst year ever in terms of attendance." There was some unfavorable weather that interfered, but the bands that were booked have been good ones suitable for general audiences. The Department is going to try a musical program for children this year to start things off. Mayor Runge suggested that a survey be taken to see what the residents might support.

With the assistance of former Police Officer and now Recreation Department employee Jim Young, the Armory Building restrooms and the kitchen in the Community Center have been renovated. Two Lexmark lawn mowers have been purchased that have given considerable help in the mowing tasks of the Department. Fencing is now being installed at the proposed Dog Park (Highland Hills Park, end of Mayfield Avenue) and hopefully by the end of April, this should be opening. There is a need to get some concrete poured and areas mulched prior to this. There will be mutt mitts available and staff members are currently working on the final "rules" for use of the area.

There are increasing numbers of permits issued each year for sports play and practice and these are issued for the following City fields: Tower Park, Highland Park, Winkler #1 and #2, Moyer, Rossford #1, #2, #3 and #4, Shawnee, Storrs, River Road, South Park, Sports Complex and Soccer Park. There are also basketball leagues and play, volleyball leagues and play, and tennis leagues and play. Mayor Runge thanked Mr. Brindle for his excellent report and enthusiastic comments.

Mr. Earlywine said he wanted to return to a statistic within the Police Department's Annual Report, that of comparisons between 2002 and 2003 on speeding citations and warnings. He noted that for 2002, there were 2,200 speeding and 1,700 warning given, while in 2003, there were 1,000 speeding citations and 3,600 warnings, which is a reversal of focus that he wanted to recognize.

He then reviewed current and upcoming capital projects including the completion of CBD Phase I crosswalks at Highland and North Ft. Thomas Avenue during the week prior to and the week during Spring Break. Some CBD Phase II utility work has already begun and bid notices are out and to be opened on March 26, 2004. A Public Hearing for both the CBD Phase II project and the 2004 Street Resurfacing Program will be conducted by the Public Safety Committee on March 29, 2004, beginning at 7:00 P.M. Comments and bids will be tallied for presentation to Council at the next Regular meeting on April 1, 2004.

Under New Business, there was some discussion of the terrible condition and uneven pavement on Route 8. Mr. Earlywine said the City has met with the Ky. Dept. of Transportation about this area and near the intersection with Tower Hill Road, where our box culvert is almost filled and needs to be dredged out and restabilized. As far as the discussion went, there are currently no plans of KDOT to make any real improvements on Route 8. There was some discussion of the fact that this roadway is traveled by our residents and numerous soccer parents on the way to the playing fields. Mrs. Runge asked if some inquiry could also be made about improvements to these areas as well as the current bad condition of Covert Run Pike as it passes through the County and Bellevue jurisdictions. The City recently had to provide emergency stabilization and repair work along the south side of lower Tower Hill Road where there was a slide, which will cost approximately \$20,000 from the Municipal Road Aid Fund.

The Finance Committee presented a Report on their meeting with the City's Auditors, Rankin & Rankin, to review the final audit report for Fiscal Year 2003. There is a new format and reporting standards that the City must comply with, as well as requirements that depreciated infrastructure assets be reflected on the City's combined balance sheet. Upon motion (Lampe) and second (Lied), to concur in their recommendation for acceptance of the report, a voice vote was taken that reflected Council's unanimous approval of this action; motion carried.

The Finance Committee's Report on Vouchers was presented, recommending that vouchers be processed for payment; upon motion (Lied), second (Lampe) and Roll Call vote, all voted Aye; motion carried.

Ordinance O-5-2004, Amending the Rate of Municipal Insurance Premium Tax, was adopted upon motion (Lied), second (Lampe) and unanimous Aye Roll Call vote (4 – 0). A copy of this Ordinance will be sent to Frankfort for recording, in addition to its publication in the last edition of the Recorder newspaper.

Several announcements were made, including the upcoming Public Hearing on the proposal from Fischer Homes for a development plan (Grand Communities) on Wednesday, March 17, at 7:00 P.M. The City's Spring Egg Hunt, with the Easter Bunny, will take place at Tower Park near the Community Center on Saturday, April 10, 2004, starting promptly at 12 Noon. There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.

SIGNED:

Mary H. Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:

Dorothy A. Ivie, City Clerk