

The Berea City Council met in a regular session, Tuesday, August 1, 2017; Mayor Steven Connelly presiding. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Invocation and prayer.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Davis, B. Fraley, T. Schultz, B. Wooten, J. Little, S. Caudill, C. Wilson, R. Terrill

OFFICIALS: J. Gilbert, R. Stone, C. Chasteen, E. Fortner, S. Meeks, K. Hensley, P. Bloom, D. Gregory, S. Sandlin, D. Isaacs, D. VanWinkle

VISITORS: Teresa Scenters, Kelly McKinney, Mark Reiss, Gwen Childs, Virginia Bland, Jacqueline Bowling, David Rowlette, Andrew Sears, Ahmad Reynolds, Cassie Bradley, Brent Bradley, Tiana Moorer

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Caudill motioned, Schultz seconded to approve agenda; all ayes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Caudill motioned, Davis seconded to approve the minutes of July 18, 2017; all ayes.

FIRST RESPONDERS CAMP – FOLLOW-UP REPORT; WILL RODGERS, FIRE DEPARTMENT AND BRENT BRADLEY, POLICE DEPARTMENT

Will Rodgers and Brent Bradley reported the “First Responders Camp” was a huge success. This was the first year such a camp was held; the week began with 48, and ended with 47, 6th through 8th grade students. The camp was organized by both departments with many of the police officers, and firemen assisting with the daily activities throughout the week. The students were taught fire safety techniques, and they learned many of the roles the firemen and police officers perform daily in their jobs. The big hit of the week was taking the students to a Legends Ball Game in Lexington. Plans are already underway to grow the camp for next week. Pictures of the week-long activities were displayed for everyone to see.

LEVITT AMP CONCERT SERIES – GWEN CHILDS, BEREA ARTS COUNCIL

Ms. Childs reported the numbers attending the concerts have been really great; there are 6 more weeks of the series. Many of the concerns have been addressed and it is great to see this area of town come alive. The Berea Arts Council applied and received a \$25,000 grant which required a matching cash donation in order to put on the concert series. The Levitt Amp Foundation is invested in this community, only two cities in the state of KY received grants, and the City of Berea has been a great supporter, she thanked the city staff, Tourism and the various other departments of the city who have helped each week; Berea is a wonderful community to live in.

TOURISM DISCUSSION; COUNCILMAN JERRY LITTLE

Councilman Little presented each council member with a copy of the "Opinion of the Attorney General". Subject: "Whether a tourism commission may expend transient room tax and restaurant tax revenues for a hotel, motel, or civic improvements". Revenues from the transient room tax may not be applied to a hotel or motel, but restaurant tax revenues may be applied to any project that promotes tourism, and is in the public interest. He quoted highlighted areas of the opinion. He feels our Tourism Commission could cut back on their advertising and place funds into the city's General Fund to be used accordingly. He does not want to see the restaurant tax cut, but would like to see the tax used to promote something within the city. Discussion was held among the council; Tourism Director, Kerri Hensley invited the council to the next board meeting. A copy of the Tourism's Strategic Plan will be distributed to each of the council members. Council members urged Tourism to put more focus back into the community, letting our residents know, and see, what all Tourism does for Berea. Councilman Wooten stated his class at the college will help with a public relations campaign. Mayor Connelly gave a brief historical presentation of how Tourism came to be where it is in Berea, from the beginning when Berea College was first established. Berea College is our biggest Tourism draw to our town. Representative Lonnie Napier was instrumental in getting the State to invest in the ten-million dollar Artisan Center to be located in Berea.

CODES ENFORCEMENT BOARD RE-APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Connelly informed the council that Andrew Baskin and Ken Vasey's terms on the Code Enforcement Board are about to expire. They both has expressed their interest and wiliness to continue to serve. This board does require council approval. Little motioned, Wilson seconded to approve their reappointments; all council voting aye.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Audit & Finance – Caudill; the ad hoc committee of the council to work with the Tourism Commission will be; himself, Billy Wooten, Bruce Fraley and Tom Schultz.

Economic Development – Davis; the next committee meeting will Aug. 14th. Hyster-Yale and PGW are hiring.

Parks – Schultz; the committee met last week and discussed the Duerson Stadium and football field, widening the field for soccer is being considered. The softball fund raiser tournament that was held over the week-end was a huge event, special thanks to the Parks Department for all their work. A meeting will be held with the residents of Harrison Rd to hear their concerns of the dog park location, alternative locations are being considered. We are hoping to be able to promote Sports-Tourism activates in, and around Berea. The committee is interested in talking with the college to consider leasing property next to the park.

Personnel – Wilson; no report.

Public Works – Little; the committee discussed funding the many road and drainage projects needed in the future. Milling and paving will begin this Thursday on Glades Road from US25 to Hwy595, and should be completed prior to school starting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jacquelyn Bowling; is not opposed to the restaurant tax but would like to see consistency; why do some charge more than others? She asked why the Tourism Department is not audited separately, and if Arts and Crafts is not bringing people to our community, we need to look at other avenues.

Gwen Childs, Berea Arts Council; The AIR Institute will be bringing 150 artist to Berea the first week of September for an Arts Conference to see what all Berea does, and what the Arts do for our community. People do come here for our Arts and Crafts, it's not a dead or dying interest. Over 7,000 people attended the July Arts & Crafts Fair.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT; R. STONE

- The restaurant tax is the added cost of the meal, times 3% restaurant tax, times 6% state tax. This is a state law, so it is a tax on a tax. The restaurant owner can choose how he applies it and how much is passed on to the consumer, but the owner must pay the 3% to the city.
- The final construction plans for US25 North are ready; hopefully it will go from Highland Drive to the By-Pass.
- The building project is moving along as expected with the drainage portion to be completed soon. Total completion is still on schedule by early September.
- General Fund monies this week was \$1,855,000; and Tourism was \$489,000. Tourism is a department of the city but they are audited separately.
- The pool will be closing Sunday, August the 13th.
- Talks about the future stadium is on-going.
- The Purchase Power meeting discussion will be held August 10th at 5:30 p.m.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Wilson – thanked the “First Responders Camp” staff, it was really nice. Thanks to Ms. Childs for the Levitt Amp report; and for everyone who helped with the “Swing for a Cure Event” this past week-end.

Caudill – thanks to the officers who put on the “First Responders Camp”, they worked many week-ends and hours to prepare for it. It was a huge success and was a positive thing to involve our youth in, in this community. Thanks to all the other agencies who helped in putting it on.

Little – thanked everyone who came tonight; getting along and working together is the way to get things done, and make a better Berea.

Davis – echoed what Caudill said, the kids were excited about the camp every morning. Thanks to Ms. Bloom and her staff for the help with the ball tournament.

Fraley – the Spoonbread Festival will be held September 15th through the 17th and volunteers are needed; he challenged his fellow council people to sign up and help. Contact the Chamber to volunteer. The second Strategic Plan meeting held on July 25th was very productive. He was impressed with the KLC representatives handling the issues that are facing our city, and is looking forward to our next phases of our Strategic Planning.

Credits also go to Chester Powell, past council member who was the first person who came up with the idea to hold a First Responder Day. Thanks to all the officers in both the fire and police departments who helped out with the camp. When we interact and communicate with each other, we learn to respect each other, and work together.

Schultz – thanks to all the people who spoke, and to all the officers, and firemen who worked during the camp. Appreciated Ms. Childs explaining the process of the grant for the music series. Thanks to Parks & Rec staff for all their hard work. Thanks to his collages for being open minded, the future of Berea looks bright.

Wooten – he recently met with residents of the Berea Housing Authority about issues and concerns they have; he has drafted a report he shared with Ms. Wyatt, Ms. Olinger, Mr. Stone, and the mayor; he urged residents to email the council members at any time they have a question or concern, and do not want to go the director. He received a good response from Ms. Wyatt.

He will be working on an expo with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to help inform the students of what is available in our city, and help promote Economic Development.

He thanked Ms. Childs for her report. A group of students in his class will be working towards promoting our outside entertainment infrastructures such as the Pinnacles, Owsley Fork and our many Parks and Rec events. We will develop a web-site and promotional information to distribute to visitors to Berea. There is also plans to work with Tourism to show how our tax dollars are being spent in Berea, this project will start Aug. 23rd. Parks and Rec is working with the college on a pilot project for a movie night at Phelps Stokes Chapel. An electronic survey will be out soon to get citizens response.

Meeting adjourned: 8:04 p.m.