**BEREA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 2, 2018**

The Berea City Council met in a regular session, Tuesday, October 2, 2018; Mayor Steven Connelly presiding. A quorum being present the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** J. Davis, B. Fraley, T. Schultz, D. Rowlette, J. Little, S. Caudill. C. Wilson, R. Terrill

**OFFICIALS:** J. Gilbert, R. Stone, C. Chasteen, K. Puckett, S. Sandlin, D. Brumley, K. Howard, P. Bloom, K. Hensley

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Fraley motioned to add 2020 Census Report to the agenda; Davis seconded, all ayes. Caudill motioned to approve the amended agenda, Little seconded; all ayes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: SEPT 18, 2018**

Caudill motioned, Little seconded to approve the minutes of September 18, 2018; all ayes.

**2020 CENSUS INFORMATION**

Michelle Ellison, Census Partnership Specialist explained the importance of the census; the population totals from the census determine the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives, we lost one seat after the 1990 census. The total count also affects funding in our community, it determines transportation needs, housing assistance programs, assists in designating facilities for people with disabilities, the elderly, and children. The surveys are confidential. Recruiting for jobs to help with the count will begin in March, during “March Madness”, and another during Derby week-end. Go to their website and apply online. Residents can also complete their census on line when it becomes available.

**WOOD SONGS CONFERENCE EVENT – EDDIE KENNEDY**

Mr. Kennedy stated the Berea Arena Theatre just began its twelfth season. He added how much he enjoyed the Friday night events in Old Town, it is so much fun to see the town’s people dancing and enjoying the variety of music presented at these events, special thanks to the Berea Arts Council, Berea Tourism, and to Ali Blair for making things happen. He announced that on Friday, Oct. 12th and Saturday, Oct. 13th from 7-9pm each evening, there will be a gathering of “Song Farmers”, and an Old-Time Picking Party. The concerts will be free, over 350 people from 23 states are expected in Berea during the week-end. More information and brochures will be located at various businesses around town.

**PROCLAMATION – BEREA AREA SKATING RINK**

Mayor Connelly read the proclamation presented to the Berea Area Skating Rink. This is their 59th year of being in business. The skating rink started in 1960 by Charlie and Polly Wyatt. Their son George, and daughter-in-law Doris, now carries on the business. October was declared as “Roller Skating Month” in the City of Berea.

**PROCLAMATION – KENTUCKY VETERANS**

Mayor Connelly read the proclamation declaring the city’s intent to nominate a veteran to be recognized into the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame from our community.

**ORDINANCE #15-2018; ANNEXATION 180 GINGER DRIVE – 1ST READING**

Corporate Counsel read the ordinance in its entirety.

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Audit & Finance – S. Caudill**

Caudill asked the committee to check their calendars and to schedule a meeting sometime during the next three weeks.

**Economic Development – J. Davis**

The committee met to hold a follow-up discussion for this year’s Business Fest and start plans for next year.

**Parks – T. Schultz**

Next meeting will be Oct. 11th at 6pm; the November meeting will be Nov. 15th.

**Personnel – C. Wilson**

No report.

**Public Works – J. Little**

Little motioned to accept Lee Page Ct. in “Edgewater’s Subdivision”, 1.085 feet, with an estimated cost of $271,250 of assets to the cities maintenance plan; all ayes. Motion approved.

The next meeting will be Monday, Oct. 8th at 5:30 p.m.

**DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

Public Works Director, Dwayne Brumley informed the council and public that Johnson Road would be shut down briefly, next week, for a culvert replacement.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

*Peter Hille*, representing the Human Rights Commission presented a statement to the council and public; The Berea City Ordinance that establishes the Human Rights Commission states that it is the Public Policy of the City of Berea to promote fair treatment for all people, and the HRC shall encourage fair treatment and equal opportunity for all people, and shall promote mutual understanding and respect among all economic, social, racial, religions, sex, age and ethnic groups.

In light of this charge, which the ordinance confers upon the commission; the members of the BHRC are obligated to make known their concerns of the post on social media last week, as reported in the Richmond Register, and on Chanel 18. These posts demonstrated a deep lack of respect for women, the very kind of respect for others that the commission is charged to promote. It is not acceptable for anyone to disrespect the rights and dignity of women, or anyone’s rights or dignity, and the bar must be set high for our elected officials. Things are changing, and it is time for men to change, and be better role models for the young people who look up to us. Respect and mutual understanding, are by law, the public policy of the City of Berea, and that those who are entrusted with that governess must govern themselves by that high standard.

*Tim Taylor*, resident of Paint Lick stressed his support for the person the BHR member was talking about as both a business man and person. That person is not perfect, we all make mistakes and he has apologized for it. We need to respect one another, Berea doesn’t do that anymore, he is one of the finest men he knows, and he did not do that post. He thinks any elected official should not make any comments about not voting for a person just because they disagreed to the post. He saw the papers that someone distributed earlier, it was 10 times worse than the post that was on Facebook.

*Jacqueline Bowling,* Harrison Court; she stated a council members wife posted on Facebook, and after he saw the comments and the post, he took the post down and since apologized. A certain minority group began to share it on Facebook and was making negative comments. When she saw the post, she didn’t find it offensive, it could have been her back in the day. Is the council member any guiltier than the people who have continually posted it? This group has brought shame to themselves once again, shame to our town by calling the media, the same people who says they want to be a part of our community through love and peace, but continue to impact us with negativity. We, as a town are waiting for their apologies for having an outrageous reaction to something, in order to cause division and hatred, all the while claiming to be social justice warriors.

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*Lenora McGill*, Christmas Ridge; stated she stands for fairness for the elected officials, unless they have demonstrated something contrary to that belief. If they are in the right, she will support them, if they are in the wrong, she’s the first to condemn them. The subject that we are talking about tonight, she fails to see any misconduct on Mr. Little’s part.

*Kelly Smith*, Terri Avenue; stated the post was in response to a national issue which is a woman reporting of being sexually abused. October is National Domestic Violence Prevention Month; every 10 seconds a woman is assaulted in the US. There is a 24-hour hot line in the Bluegrass that anyone can call and speak to a crisis counselor. Berea is an amazing place to live, but social media allows people to vocalize about things that they wouldn’t say in real life. She feels the city council members, and elected officials should not condone the mean spirit-ness that takes place on social media, once things are posted, it’s out there, be careful of the tone. It is hurts when they participate with things on-line that are hurtful.

*Mike VanWinkle*, Misty Drive; he has researched the “Code of Conduct”, it has not been changed in the city in over 100 years; he asked the council to look in to it, and set a true defined “Code of Conduct” for every elected official.

*Peggy Coyne*, Burnell Estates; she is a “Green Dot” volunteer trainer at Berea Community School. The purpose of the program is to turn around bullying, sexual assault, and rape; that is so prevalent, in our society. The post she seen on FB by one of our elected officials is exactly what we teach the young adults in our schools, that is not acceptable. She encouraged all the council to address this issue and consider attending the green dot training. The elected officials need to be held to a higher standard, and they should reflect these standards; personally, she would like to see the individual in question step-down.

*Kent Gilbert,* Harrison Rd; Berea, representing the Madison County International Committee stated this year’s committee will be leaving for Hokoto, Japan on Monday, Oct. 15th. Sixteen representatives from Madison County will be making the trip. Codes Director, Amanda Haney is the city’s representative.

*Jackie Pullman*, Crawford St.; she asked all the council to hold each other to higher standards; to think about everything they say, and do in their everyday lives, the ripple effect is real, and it is inexcusable. Regardless who in our homes, who uses the electronic devices, and shares unsightly, inconsiderate, hurtful photographs or comments, it is not ok, especially not ok for the city council members. She asks the council to remember that they are representatives of our town, and all of us, she is ashamed.

*Tony Crachiolo*, Suncrest Meadows; stated that he loves Berea, and he commends the job the city council, and our mayor does in making us a physically heathy community. Back when he was younger, many people made jokes about ethnic people, jokes of people battling mental illness, or disabilities, jokes about African Americans; we don’t make those jokes anymore, we have learned better, people were hurt, and we understood it. When women see post by those in public office, it discourages their experiences, in coming forward and it be made into a joke, it creates fear in coming forward, it harms our community. Many women have the fear to come forward and speak, they fear it is not worth the price of what they might go through. He begged everyone to find empathy and compassion.

*Tina Marie Johnson*, Berea; she came to Berea College from a domestic abuse home life situation. (She then described the picture that a council member posted on social media), that person was someone she had voted for in the past, whom thought that it was appropriate; but that judgement call (to even have it posted in the first place), she finds completely unacceptable. Berea College got her out of her bad situation, but to see that photograph took her back, to many bad memories in her life, and of her own mother being abused many times. People who put things like this on their social media, need to have a thought, about women and our rights, and that we deserve respect, and if they can’t do that, they don’t deserve to serve us, that they do not deserve our votes.

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*Martina LaForce*, Berea; it’s really hard when something like this happens in Berea, we know each other, we work together, we are neighbors, and we vote for people. It’s hard because, how do you separate yourself from the other work that you do; she is scared by speaking this evening, if it means the programs she runs, and support, will no longer have support. The council has power, potentially over people. She is not representing anyone but speaking for herself, and as an everyday woman who has experienced sexual harassment, and sexual abuse, even when she is with her young son. She has been told, “get used to it”. This is a time when many people are going through something, a lot of hard reflections, memories of bad experiences. Rape, abuse, violence and molestation, have affected, and changed the course for so many, not just victims, but their families as well, nothing goes back after it happens. It is important to have a council that represents all of Berea, it is important to have a council to serve as example for our community, and to help us find common ground. A city government that works together to make us stronger; a public office needs to be held to a high standard of conduct, and lead by example. She would like to know that she is respected, and valued, as well. There are often, hard lessons in Berea, but she doesn’t want to see anyone punished, or resigning, but wants to see how we are going to move forward, and how we are going to become an inclusive community, we all make mistakes, we own those mistakes, then we do something about it. She hopes we all do something about it, starting now.

*Shane Morris*, Kara Drive; he’s been a flaming heterosexual all his life, and everything people have heard about him is true. The deputy director of the democratic national committee, a few weeks ago, beat a woman’s eyes together, a former president who raped a woman, is out walking the streets a free man, and the chief executive in this room, spent untold minutes and hours, constructing a letter, attacking a woman who sits in this room, Jackie Bowling. He is not here to talk about those hypocrites, but he’s is here to address the patriots in this room and the ones watching who continue to vote for county elected officials who are not smart enough, or do not have the back bone to leave that party. We are seeing agitation in that party, just like we have seen in Washington, DC., this week. Just as sure as the democratic party hurled this county to blood 160 years ago, they are doing it again today.

*LeJane Leibhart*, Popular St.; private individuals have the right to have their own opinions about anything, but when an elected Berea representative speaks, he not only speaks for himself, but for everyone in this community. When they post crude and degrading images shaming a victim of sexual harassment, they are also shaming our community. They are sending wrong messages to the women in our community, and the wrong messages to the young men in our community, and to visitors in our community.

*Judith Weckman*, Blue Bird Ave.; she is a big believer in reconciliation; she suggested for Mr. Little and other council members to write a letter to the Berea Citizen, and let us know where they are on this issue. She agrees the council should talk about a Code of Ethics, what it means to represent our people, and represent our community.

*Andri Kukas,* Berea resident; business owner. She moved to Berea fifteen years ago; two things made a strong impression on her when she moved here. First were the good-natured community who would come together at garden parties, to work together. The second was as being a pedestrian on Chestnut Street; coming from Lexington, she was used to walking in town, but she received many sexual harassments from men passing by, one even stopped and frightened her. She experienced sexual assault as a young child, and as a teenager. In light of the “Me-Too” movement, in-light of and the many prominent men who have been proven to be sexual predators, and particularly in-light of the recent posting on Facebook by a council member, she is requesting the city council members be required go to a Diversity and Justice training, so that they can become aware of how hurtful and degrading the posting is, to the women in Berea. This can ensure in the future, that the council and city employees, are not holding biases to certain populations, and will make policies fair to the citizens, after this education.

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**CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT: R. STONE**

* In the past couple of years, we have carried $150,000 in our budget to renovate the playground near the football stadium; we had plans to apply for a grant, but we will likely not get a grant this year. In working with “Lil Tikes” playground equipment, we will be installing a three-height playground. The original cost of this unit is $118,418; we are receiving this as a model/regional playground from Lil Tikes, at state contract for $59,209. The city will cover the installation cost at $25,000, delivery is free. For a $147,209 unit, we will be paying $84,209. Our Public Works Dept will be working on removing, and installing the new unit in the coming weeks.
* We will hold an exit meeting with the auditors and the Audit & Finance Committee on Wed, Oct. 10th at 5:30. We hope to have the final report at the next council meeting.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

**Wilson** – in no way does she want anyone to say that she would support sexual abuse of any kind, that is not her. She thanked everyone who came this evening, she wasn’t going to address the post on Mr. Little’s Facebook page, but in reading the many responses, she has seen and heard, she feels she needs too. First of all, it shouldn’t have been shared, but she knows Mr. Little and his wife, she has known them over 30 years, and in no way is that post a reflection of who they are, they would never stand for a woman to be abused, or mistreated. She asked for anyone here tonight, that’s never made a mistake, or done something they totally regretted, to please stand-up, they can also raise their hands. You see, if we are really honest, no one should be standing, we have all made mistakes, and we’ve all had to say I’m sorry, and hopefully we learned a lesson. She quoted bible verses to the audience about forgiveness. We need to treat others as we want to be treated.

**Caudill** – this has been a difficult week for our city, he hopes that from the information that was received this evening that people can seek help for sexual assault, or abuse whenever they need it. Our city, and our police department will support them. Please reach out to the hot-lines and support groups that can help. We can work together and move forward for our entire city.

**Little** - I’ve really had a sad week; he has always thought and told others that people here in town are the nicest, good loving folks you could meet anywhere. But, he has encountered some recently, that have tried their best to get others, not from Berea to influence our town. Those who were recruited have called him and his family every bad, and vulgar name you can imagine. “These people have never met me, or know nothing about me, I lost my dad at a young age and was raised by my mother”. “In no way, do I condone to violence or mistreatment to women, or anyone, I will always do what I feel is the best for our citizens of Berea”. He looked at the mayor’s web-site, and it hurt him, the mayors statement said the voter’s need to respond appropriate to this in the election; if people don’t want me in office, then vote me out, that’s fine, he has no problem with this. He couldn’t believe the mayor done this, he wanted to run a clean campaign, but the mayor crossed the line, he knows some real important facts why Mr. Connelly shouldn’t be re-elected for Mayor. He is not one to throw mud, but he may have to fight for his good ten years of service for Berea. He just voted a few weeks ago with the council to give money to “Grow Berea”, shortly after he saw a post on-line from that person (who had asked the council for money), that said the only reason the churches give out money is to help indoctrinate people into believing the way they do. This is upsetting to him, churches’ help people who come to them in need. He thanked our city administrator, Mr. Randy Stone on all the accomplishments in our past ten years of service. He encouraged everyone to go out and vote, and vote for their candidate of choice.

**Rowlette** – he acknowledges that we do live in a large fish bowl, this is something we all learn very quickly as public elected officials, we are held to a higher standard. Most of us spend way too much time on social media, and he knows for a fact, that if Jerry could go back and change the chain of events, he would. He encouraged everyone to put down the social media for a while, and roll up their

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sleeves, and volunteer at some of the non-profits, we need to help these groups in our community. He would like to see the council to get current on the “Code of Council’. Deadline for voter registration in Oct. 9th.

**Schultz** – thanks to all the people who shared their soles this evening, it took a lot for many to do so. He feels the council should look in to the Diversity Training.

**Davis** – thanks to all who came tonight; for their comments and voicing their opinions.

**Fraley** – thanks to everyone that told their stories and expressed their opinions; we have a wonderful city to live in; people here are civically engaged, and they want to have their opinions heard. We need to remember to try and keep our city government, non-partisan. Many of the things that filter down, or happen on the internet are very politically charged, we are all non-partisan for a reason, to serve everyone in our community. We can come together as a community and move forward. He remined every one of the “Keep Berea Beautiful” event that will be held Sat. Oct. 20th at 9am; meet at the city hall parking lot. There will be a flyer distributed to all the businesses in town. Compliments to everyone that helped with, and made another successful Spoonbread Festival happen, despite the rain. Thanks to the Chamber and the numerous volunteers who helped during the event.

Caudill motioned, Fraley seconded to adjourn, all ayes.; meeting adjourned: 8:18 p.m.