**BEREA CITY COUNCIL \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_ REGULAR MEETING \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_DECEMBER 19, 2023**

The Berea City Council met in regular session, Tuesday, December 19, 2023.

Mayor Bruce Fraley presiding.

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Jim Davis, Teresa Scenters, Katie Startzman, Jerry Little, Steve Caudill,

 Cora Jane Wilson, Ronnie Terrill

**COUNCIL ABSENT:** David Rowlette

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Rose Beverly, Robin Adams, Daniel Brindley, Susan Helton, Aaron Boycan

**INVOCATION:** Katie Startzman

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Jim Davis

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Startzman motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve agenda as presented.

Voice Vote: All ayes

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES - DECEMBER 5, 2023 & DECEMBER 13, 2023**

Caudill motioned; Little seconded motion to approve minutes as presented.

Voice Vote: All ayes

**ORDINANCE #11-2023 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, ADOPTING A REVISED PURCHASING POLICY MANUAL, AND AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, BY REVISING SECTION 24.309 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REMAIN CONSISTENT WITH THE REVISED PURCHASING POLICY MANUAL. - 2ND READING**

As being subject to a Work Session and entire reading of Ordinance #11-2023 on December 5, 2023, Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance by summary and amendments.

Little motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve and adopt Ordinance #11-2023.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes - Davis, Scenters, Startzman, Terrill, Wilson, Caudill, Little

 Nays - None

 Motion carried.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Susan Helton, Director, Finance**

As of September, Property Tax had been the major activity in the Finance Department. Property Tax cards/bills were mailed in September. Payment had been received on 5,220 of those bills in the amount of $896,000, representing 88% of all tax bills and 92% of tax revenue. The deadline for property tax payment at face value was December 31st, without penalty and interest.

Year-end reporting was in process. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) was now requiring 1099 Forms to be e-filed in lieu of paper filing. Their Accounts Payable Specialist had been researching to ensure correct processing and/or submitting to the IRS. Recipients of the 1099 Form would continue to receive the paper copy.

The amended budget process was well underway with submission of requested changes due from Department Heads by December 31st. An amended draft would be sent to Council by the end of January with a Work Session and Ordinance Readings scheduled for February.

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A Request for Proposal (RFP) for Audit Services was due, based on a five-year target recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The RFP would be sent out at the beginning of the year to a list of audit firms withing the region specializing in government audits. Once received, the proposals would be reviewed and rated based on criteria provided by the GFOA. The top three would be interviewed by the Audit & Finance Committee. Goal was to have the final decision by mid-March.

December was the month Helton worked on required Continuing Education by participating in webinars regarding new accounting standards.

The week of December 18th was Staff Holiday Spirit Week for the Finance Department with festive attire and Secret Santa Gift Exchange.

Wished everyone a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a safe New Year.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT -** Rose Beverly

* Continued to wait on the State contract for the contractor for on-site inspection requirement for the Ellipse Street project.
* Scaffold Cane Rights-of-Way plans were close to being finalized. The next step was to finalize the easements. Plans were to put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) by next fall or the beginning of 2025.
* Staff budget amendments were due by December 31st. The draft budget would be submitted to Council by January 26th with 1ST Reading on February 6th.
* Water Supply Update, per Howard, General Manager, Berea Municipal Utilities (BMU)

The City had approximately 135 days of water supply as of December 18th. Owsley Fork Reservoir was down 9.5 ft, Cowbell Hollow Reservoir was down 15 ft., and B-Lake Spillway was down 2 ft. If levels did not improve by the end of the year, BMU would be asking for a voluntary water conservation in January. In the last two weeks, 1.3 inches of rain was received, which slightly helped maintain water levels.

* Owsley Fork Dam Project Update, per Howard, General Manager, BMU

90% of the design had been submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the National Design Center in Fort Worth, TX. Comments should be back by the end of January. Hoped to have a 100% design and project approval by the end of March.

* Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, hoped everyone had a good New Year.

**MAYOR’S REPORT / COMMENTS**

Wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season. Enjoy time with family. Encouraged everyone to reach out to those who were lonely or needed a helping hand.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Davis** Merry Christmas.

**Scenters** Appreciated Helton’s report. Appreciated Howard’s report. Considering weather reports, maybe we would get rain for Christmas. Everyone have a Merry Christmas.

**Startzman** No comment.

**Terrill** Merry Christmas.

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**Wilson** Thanked Helton and Howard for their reports. Looks like we do need to pray for rain. Wished everyone a Merry Christmas, remember why we celebrate the season. Councilman Rowlette had been out the past few meetings, asked everyone to keep him in your prayers for healing and good health.

**Caudill** Thanked Helton for her report. Always good to hear from the Finance Department, they do a fantastic job throughout the year. It is a blessing for our City that we do not have to worry about the City.

Echoed Mayor Fraley’s comments regarding reaching out to those around you, helping those in need, as sometimes the holidays are not the easiest for everyone and we sometimes tend to forget. Merry Christmas, everyone stay safe, and hopefully we will get some rain.

**Little** Thanked employees, Administration, and Council for a good year. Hard work, dedication, and working together gets the job done. Thoughts to consider for next year were affordable housing, suggesting the reduction of lot size requirements from a 100 ft. front to an 80 ft. front possibly keeping property and housing cost down. Wished everyone a safe, healthy Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

 **ADJOURNMENT**

Wilson motioned; Little seconded motion to adjourn at 6:59 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes

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Mayor Bruce Fraley \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 City Clerk