**BEREA CITY COUNCIL \_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_ REGULAR MEETING \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ MARCH 19, 2024**

The Berea City Council met in regular session, Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

Mayor Bruce Fraley presiding.

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Jim Davis, Teresa Scenters, Katie Startzman, David Rowlette, Jerry Little,

Steve Caudill, Cora Jane Wilson, Ronnie Terrill

**COUNCIL ABSENT:** None

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** J.T. Gilbert, Rose Beverly, Robin Adams, Tommy Horn, Priscilla Bloom,

Amanda Haney, Jason Hays, Susan Helton, Kevin Howard, Shawn Sandlin

**INVOCATION:** Jerry Little

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Jerry Little

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Startzman motioned; Scenters seconded motion to amend Agenda to add 5a. Small Business Development Center Day Proclamation.

Voice Vote: All ayes

Rowlette motioned; Little seconded motion to approve agenda as amended.

Voice Vote: All ayes

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES - MARCH 5, 2024**

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

Voice Vote: All ayes

**SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER DAY PROCLAMATION**

Mayor Fraley read Proclamation in entirety and presented to Vallorie Henderson, Business Coach and Center Director, Kentucky Small Business Development Center.

Henderson thanked the City for recognizing National Small Business Development Day and grateful for the continued support. Currently, there were fifteen Centers in Kentucky. Appreciated and enjoyed working with the City of Berea.

**HOPE’S WINGS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM UPDATE**

Jennifer Lainhart, Executive Director, Hope’s Wings Domestic Violence Program, shared an update stating Hope’s Wings had been extremely busy. Currently there were twelve women and six children in their shelter. As expenses continued to rise, along with grants, they were preparing for their largest fundraiser of the year, Jail & Bail. Lainhart encouraged elected officials to participate, stating the key to their success, i.e., more participation, more financial support. This year they were promoting local businesses, requesting business owners to participate in the Jail & Bail fundraiser, stating they could not raise funds without the citizens’ help.

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**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT**

Mayor Fraley requested Council approval for the Planning Commission Appointment of John Eipert to the Berea Planning & Zoning Commission, to serve a four-year term, expiring April 1, 2028.

Rowlette motioned; Wilson seconded motion to approve appointment of John Eipert to the Berea Planning & Zoning Commission, to serve a four-year term, expiring April 1, 2028.

Voice Vote: All ayes

**RESOLUTION #04-2024 A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, TO MAKE APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 1965 AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS.**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Resolution #04-2024 by summary title.

Caudill motioned; Startzman seconded motion to approve and adopt Resolution #04-2024.

Voice Vote: All ayes

**ORDINANCE #09-2024 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, MAKING CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL CHANGES TO SECTIONS 56.004(G) AND (H); REVISING SECTION 56.004(P) TO PROVIDE FOR A SAMPLING LICENSE PURSUANT TO KRS 243.0307; REVISING SECTION 56.005 TO MAKE PROHIBITED BUSINESS HOURS THE SAME FOR DISTILLED SPIRITS, AND WINE BY THE DRINK, AND PACKAGE SALES OF DISTILLED SPIRITS AND WINE, FOR CONSISTENCY; AND DELETING SECTION 56.005(B)(3)(f)2 PROVIDING FOR DIFFERENT BUSINESS HOURS WHEN CHRISTMAS OR NEW YEAR’S DAY FALL ON A SUNDAY. - 2ND READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #09-2024 by summary title.

Caudill motioned; Little seconded motion to approve and adopt Ordinance #09-2024.

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

Nays - None

Motion carried.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Susan Helton, Director, Finance**

Since her report in December, Helton shared staffing changes. Sheila Wolfe, Utility Billing Clerk, would be retiring at the end of April after seventeen years of service with the City. Krista Carpenter, Customer Service Representative (CSR), for seven years, would fill Wolfe’s position. Emily Reynolds, CSR, had transitioned into the Tourism Department, thus leaving two vacancies for CSR positions. Mia Currington and Brittney McLemore filled the two CSR vacancies which began on March 4th.

The City of Berea had received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (DBPA) for Fiscal Year 2024 Budget, which was received from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). This was the third year the City had received the award. The award recognized the Berea Budget document for their excellence in the policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and a communications tool. Currently, only five other cities in Kentucky had received the award. Hoped all involved in the budget planning were proud of the award and hoped it supported the public’s confidence in the level of professionalism and transparency the annual budget provided.

The 2025 budget was already in process. The budget draft presentation had been tentatively scheduled for May 30th.

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The Finance Department continued their recurring tasks. As Spring marked tax season, they would be receiving approximately 1300 net profit returns during that time.

As mentioned at the March 5th City Council meeting, the Audit & Finance Committee had selected RHF CPAs as the independent auditors for the 2024 Financial Statement. The engagement letter had been received from RHF and beginning review of prior auditor’s work papers. Helton expressed appreciation for Baldwin CPAs and their work for the past six years.

Moody’s Investors Service released their annual Issuer Comment Report on Berea, a research publication for investors and creditors providing updates and key indicators used in formulating ratings. Berea currently had an Aa3 Credit Rating, the fourth highest rating on a scale of 21, classified as a high investment grade.

As required annually by the US Environmental Protection Agency, a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), regarding the quality of drinking water and sampling results was available. The next billing would include instructions on how to obtain the report.

Service Line Warranties of America (SLWA) would be sending out letters which offered service line insurance and completely optional. Berea Municipal Utilities (BMU) suggested consideration of the insurance as many residents were not aware that maintenance of their service lines was their responsibility.

**Jason Hays, Chief, Berea Police Department**

Chief Hays provided a briefing regarding this morning’s incident at Madison Southern High School and the procedure(s) in which the incident was handled. As the end result was positive, Hays thanked all responders/agencies involved, i.e., Berea Fire Department, Volunteer Firefighters, Madison County Sheriff’s Office, EKU Police, Kentucky State Police (KSP), Madison County Emergency Management System (EMS), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The Richmond Police Department and Jackson County Sheriff’s Office also offered any assistance needed.

Encouraged parents to watch social media as the Police Department tries to be quick and helpful with information. Requested that parents trust them.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

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

* Proud of Berea Police Department and all involved in today’s events at Madison Southern High School. Gratitude could not be expressed regarding the bravery, selflessness, and how proud she was to have skilled employees / first responders.
* Berea Municipal Utilities (BMU) employees would be conducting a trash pickup at Owsley Fork Reservoir on Wednesday, March 27th. Staff would be on the Radford Hollow side of the lake beginning at the roadway and working toward the shoreline to collect trash. The pickup was in partnership Berea Earth Warriors conducting their annual cleanup the following weekend. The City thanked the Earth Warriors group for their efforts and dedication in maintaining the beauty and high-water quality of the reservoir, certainly making a difference.
* One bid was received, from the Allen Company, for the Spring resurfacing project. Streets included in the bid were Rose Street, Glades Street, Fairway Drive, Wilson Street, Davis Street, Elkin Street, Ridgewood Drive, Village Drive, Legacy Drive, Keith Drive, and Pauley Court. The bid came in at $113.50/ton, with milling, for a total of $255,823.00. This year, $300,000.00 had been budgeted for resurfacing. Council would be notified of any changes.
* Public Works was currently in the process of working on drainage issue on Pauley Court.

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**MAYOR’S REPORT / COMMENTS**

* Welcomed back Councilman David Rowlette.
* Reiterated Beverly’s comments regarding everyone involved in the Madison Southern incident. The level of training, preparedness, and professionalism was impressive. Proud of Chief Hays, his leadership team, and all involved. Compliments to the Madison County Public School System, administration and school staff involved. Outstanding response across the board.
* March 12, 2024, St. Joseph Berea received the 2024 Outstanding Patient Experience Award.
* March 15, 2024, St. Joseph Berea was recognized as one of the best places to work in Kentucky by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Startzman** No comment.

**Scenters** Hoped the State would look at options regarding the new bypass lighting. Grateful for Chief Hays stating his staff would not wait to enter a school in an emergency. Thanked Hays, his team, and everyone involved in today’s incident. Welcomed back Councilman Rowlette.

**Davis** Welcomed back Councilman Rowlette. Regarding today’s events at the school, thanked Chief Hays and his department, Fire Department, Street Department, all other law enforcement agencies that participated, and the school system. Hoped the person responsible would be found.

**Terrill** No comment.

**Wilson** Thanked the Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works, School Administration, and everyone who had a role in today’s school event. Appreciated everyone involved to help ensure the safety of the children and all employees. Thanked all who came tonight. Seeing Councilman Rowlette back had made her day. Have a great Easter.

**Caudill** Great to see Councilman Rowlette. With exceptional leadership in many departments, this was exceptionally true in the Police Department. Today’s event puts things into perspective. Thank you to the Police Department.

**Little**  Glad to see Councilman Rowlette back. Thanked the Police Chief and all involved in today’s school incident. Thanked Helton for her Finance Report. He and Terrill had signed up to run for Council this year as there were a lot of projects to finish during the next 2.5 years.

**Rowlette** Congratulated the First Responders and all involved in today’s school incident. Explained his absence due to illness with continued rehabilitation. Thanked those at St. Joseph Berea who had helped with his rehabilitation, they do a great job. Commended St. Joseph Berea on their awards as the hospital was an asset to our community. Looking back at planning the bypass, felt they should have taken ownership and worked a little closer by attending meetings on the project. Felt it could be better and lighting would certainly help, looking closely at the intersections. Proud to be in attendance this evening, appreciated all comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Caudill motioned; Little seconded motion to adjourn at 7:25 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes

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Mayor Bruce Fraley

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City Clerk