

The Berea City Council met in a regular business session, Tuesday, June 3, 2025.

Mayor Bruce Fraley presiding.

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

**WORK SESSION**

5:45 PM - 6:10 PM

Electric Rate Adjustments

Kevin Howard, General Manager, Berea Municipal Utilities

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Steve Davis, John Payne, Katie Startzman, Teresa Scenters, Steve Caudill, Cora Jane Wilson, Ronnie Terrill

**COUNCIL ABSENT:** Jerry Little

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Jerry Gilbert, Shawn Sandlin, Robin Adams, Tommy Horn, Donna Angel, Priscilla Bloom, Amanda Haney, Jason Hays, Susan Helton, Kevin Howard, Charlie Russell, Nancy Conley, Josh Gabbard

**INVOCATION:** Steve Caudill

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Steve Caudill

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES - MAY 22, 2025**

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

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**JUNETEENTH DAY OF CELEBRATION PROCLAMATION**

Mayor Fraley read proclamation and presented to Human Rights Commission Members, Sharyn Mitchell (Chair), Miriam Pride, and Felicia Ballard.

On behalf of the Human Rights Commission, Mitchell shared they were proud to accept the proclamation, acknowledging the accomplishments of our joint community. Juneteenth was in celebration of the end of slavery and the beginning of a new era. To honor Juneteenth, they created the annual Juneteenth Musical community event, "Journey to Freedom." Mitchell invited everyone to attend the free event, June 15<sup>th</sup>, at the Chestnut Street Pavilion, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The event would include music, local performers, history from local organizations, face painting, food trucks, and more. Something for everyone.

**ORDINANCE #07-2025 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BERE, KENTUCKY, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 20-2024, CORRECTING THE FRANCHISE FEE AMOUNT FOR THE FRANCHISE FOR THE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE WITHIN THE CITY OF BERE, KENTUCKY AWARDED TO WASTE CONNECTIONS OF KY, INC., IN ORDINANCE NO. 20-2024. - 2<sup>ND</sup> READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #07-2025 by title summary.

Wilson motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve and adopt Ordinance #07-2025.

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

Nays - None

Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE #08-2025 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BERE, KENTUCKY, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL PERIOD JULY 1, 2025 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2026, BY ESTIMATING REVENUES AND RESOURCES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF CITY GOVERNMENT AND PROVIDING FOR A LONG-RANGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AND PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BUDGET AND PLAN. - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #08-2025 in entirety.

**ORDINANCE #09-2025 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BERE, KENTUCKY, REVISING THE AUTHORIZED POSITIONS' ASSIGNED PAY GRADE AND PAY SCALE TO INCLUDE A FOUR PERCENT (4%) COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) AND TO CREATE AND INCLUDE A POSITION TITLED COMMUNICATIONS & EVENT COORDINATOR. - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING.**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #09-2025 in entirety.

Scenters requested, to better reflect the new position and duties, the title be changed to 'Communication & Community Outreach Coordinator,' as to not be misleading in relation to Tourism.

**ORDINANCE #10-2025 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BERE, KENTUCKY, REVISING THE BERE MUNICIPAL UTILITIES ELECTRIC AND CONNECTION RATE SCHEDULE FOR ELELCTRIC SERVICE. - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #10-2025 in entirety.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Donna Angel, Director, Business Development**

Angel shared the following 2025 updates for Economic Development:

**New and/or Small Businesses**

- Year to date, eighteen new businesses had opened with only one closure, Gold Star.
- Year to date, three Small Business classes were held, the next class was scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Held a Small Business Start-Up Workshop in January with a follow-up Workshop planned for October.
- Shared several new businesses scheduled to open in 2025 or local businesses that had relocated to other areas within the City.

Industry

- Hitachi B1 & B2, Automotive & Electric, would be hosting a name change to become one. Their new name would be Astemo Americas, Inc. and no longer Hitachi Astemo Americas, Inc. They would be expanding and signage change, to reflect the name change, was scheduled to be completed by end of September.
- Mastronardi was working on an inside expansion to add another product to their facility.
- Vitro Glass continued with interior renovations and rail spur.
- Motor Wheel continued interior renovation for product line changes and additional use for the robotic paint booth.
- KI-USA would be working on infrastructure work.

Corporate & Small Business Construction Projects

- Holiday Inn Express was finishing a three-story remodel.
- Boone Tavern continued with dining room and lobby renovations, scheduled to be completed in July.
- Mariachi's continued a complete interior and exterior remodel.
- Auto Zone was currently building a new facility.
- Housing construction for Berea continued to stay strong.

Small Corporate/Business Highlights & New Business Updates

- Angel highlighted many small corporate and/or food businesses in the community regarding restaurants, bakeries, catering, community partners, meeting space facilities, retail, renovations, relocations, etc.

Census Report Update for Berea / Know Your Data & Status for Your CityUS Census State-County-City Population Estimates

World Population Review Data Source: [www.populationreview.com](http://www.populationreview.com)

- Currently growing at a rate of 0.81% annually.
- Population had increased by 4.2% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of 15,605 in 2020.
- Current population was 16,260 for 2025.
- Population percentages were 48% male, 52% female.
- Median age in Berea was 34.1 years old - 33.2 years for males, 35.3 years for females.
- Average household income in Berea was currently \$70,261.
- Median (married families with two incomes) was at an average income of \$79,049.
- Families (owner/renter of a house along with everyone else in the house, i.e., 2-3 additional roommates) were at an average income of \$64,330.
- Walk Score was 58% out of 100 (walkable city limits)
- Labor Force was 49,383 (including employed and unemployed)
- Upward Mobility rate was at 38.1% with a national average of 67%.  
Upward Mobility rate referred to the rate at which employees advance not new roles, and better compensation.
- Yearly Crime rate was at 1.0% (number of reported crimes divided by total population)
- Violent Crime Rate was at 0.10% (divided by reported violent crimes divided by total population)

- Property Crime rate was at 1.00% (divided by reported crimes of burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson by total population).
- Living Expense vs National for Berea was 16% less than National. Berea was more affordable than any other city in the nation based on food cost, housing, and transportation numbers.

#### Other

Reminded citizens of the Codes Department's 2025 Comprehensive Plan update and encouraged everyone to participate in events and provide feedback for the future of our City.

#### **Kevin Howard, General Manager, Berea Municipal Utilities (BMU)**

At a recent Kentucky Water & Wastewater Association Annual Meeting, the City's J.C. Chambers Wastewater Treatment Plant was recognized for the Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year Award in the State of Kentucky, out of 250 Treatment Plants in Kentucky. An honor, a very sought after award. After the latest rain event, he followed up at the plant with everything under control. This comes with day-to-day hard work, dedication, and professionalism. There had not been any notice of violations within the past ten years. Throughout the year, they process approximately 890 compliance samples, 2,600 process control samples, and 2,200 quality control samples without violations. They also manage a State Approved Wastewater Treatment Plant Lab.

Howard recognized Scott Johnson (Chief Operator), Teddy Himes (Lab Director), Luke Brock (Class I Operator), and Bobby Powell (Class III Operator) and presented them with the Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year Award.

#### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

- No report.

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT / COMMENTS**

- A 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Blazing of Boone Trace ceremony took place today. Beginning April 2025, a group of hikers were hiking from Kingsport, Tennessee, following the Trace through Virginia, Cumberland Gap, ending at Fort Boonesborough. Today, the hikers passed through a known section of the Trace at Brushy Fork, in Berea, with a celebration at the Berea Municipal Utilities location. All involved did a wonderful job. Thank you to Dr. John Fox for his mission of preserving the history of Boone Trace.
- The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual US HWY 25 Yard Sale, from Williamsburg, Kentucky, to Walton in Grant County, was scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>. Encouraged everyone to support fund raising groups, thanked all organizers, and good luck to all participants.
- As the Comprehensive Plan process had just begun, there was still plenty of time for input. An important process and encouraged citizen engagement. Future event dates were still to be determined.

#### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Terrill** No comment.

**Wilson** Thanked everyone for coming. The BMU awards were a great accomplishment, proud of them. Everyone should visit the Wastewater Treatment Plant to realize how the process works.

**Caudill** Congratulated the Wastewater Treatment Plant crew, a huge honor. The City's Utilities does an exceptional job and thankful for the work they continue to do in making sure we have a clean, safe City. The Park Staff had killed it...in a season of horrible weather, thanked the Parks Department for investing in the City's facilities. If you enjoy the parks, thank a Parks Staff Member. Our facilities were as good as anywhere, better than a lot of our neighbors.

**Scenters** Congratulations to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Staff. Appreciated hearing from Sharyn Mitchell. Angel's facts and figures were very informative.

**Startzman** Echoed everyone's comments. Neat to hear from Angel of the progress made during the last year. Thanked the Wastewater Treatment Plant staff for the work they do and their representation in the State. Great work.

**Payne** Echoed previous sentiments. Glad to hear Berea's staff were bringing their A-game. Thanked Angel for her work that went into her presentation. Quoting Jim Davis, "If you want to keep a business in Berea, spend your money there."

**Davis** No comment.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Caudill motioned; Payne seconded motion to adjourn at 7:27 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

---

Mayor Bruce Fraley

---

City Clerk