

The Berea City Council met in a regular business session, Tuesday, October 7, 2025.

Mayor Bruce Fraley presiding.

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

COUNCIL PRESENT: Steve Davis, John Payne, Katie Startzman, Jerry Little, Steve Caudill,
Cora Jane Wilson, Ronnie Terrill

COUNCIL ABSENT: Teresa Scenters

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Jerry Gilbert, Shawn Sandlin, Robin Adams, Daniel Brindley, Donna Angel,
Priscilla Bloom, Jason Hays, Susan Helton, Kevin Howard, Nancy Conley,
Charlie Russell

INVOCATION: Steve Caudill

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Steve Caudill

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

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

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Laura Manges, Berea

Manges had spent most of her working life in healthcare, retiring in 2020. She had been active in the community, i.e., co-founding Common Ground, a grassroots group addressing an earth gas issue, started the Berea Environmental Project, a recycling and education center aimed at empowering citizens to understand the importance and feasibility of recycling in response to increasing waste. Manges was concerned about proposed government cuts, particularly to Medicaid, which would significantly impact our local hospital and two nursing homes in Berea. As the Council has not yet heard from the St. Joseph CEO regarding the situation at our hospital, she provided a recent Richmond Register article featuring Baptist Health CEO Greg Gerard's comments on the state of health care in Madison County to help inform the Council's consideration of this critical issue.

Shane Morris, Berea

Morris expressed concern over noise complaints related to the Pride event, noted that while it occurred on private property, the Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) could apply if large groups affect public spaces. Morris urged the Council to revisit the City's juvenile curfew ordinance, specifically section 55.001, which outlines protections against loud or disruptive noise. He suggested using its language to create a standalone noise ordinance, citing personal experience of hearing loud music and obscene lyrics from inside his home during the event, which was inappropriate for nearby children.

HOPE'S WINGS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION

Mayor Fraley read a Domestic Violence Awareness Month Proclamation and presented to Kaylynn Carpenter, Assistant Executive Director, Hope's Wings.

Carpenter thanked Mayor Fraley and the City of Berea for their support. This year's proclamation luncheon was held in the City of Richmond and will return to Berea in 2026. Hope's Wings had a 5K run scheduled for October 17th at White Hall. Registration was available on Hope's Wings Facebook page and a good way to show awareness and support. Carpenter also reminded Berea citizens that they were part of Hope's Wings service area.

BEREA POLLINATOR GARDENS PROJECT

Judith Weckman, Berea College retiree, shared a slide presentation on 'How to Improve the Local Ecology.' Weckman discussed efforts to improve Berea's local ecology through Berea Pollinator Gardens, a volunteer initiative launched in spring 2023. The project focused on scientific discipline on the relationship of living organisms to their environment, restoring native plants, supporting local wildlife, and providing peaceful, beautiful spaces for all to enjoy along Berea's walking and biking paths to support pollinators, i.e., bees, butterflies, birds, etc.

Drawing from her ecology background, Weckman outlined a "three E" framework, i.e., ecology, education, and economy, sharing how native plant gardens enhance biodiversity, foster environmental awareness, and contribute to Berea's tourism and identity as a sustainable 'pollinator-friendly' town.

Three established gardens included the Woodland Garden near Brushy Fork Creek, the Prairie Garden beside Tillie Dog Park, and the Memory Garden near Stevenson Trail.

The gardens had become community gathering spaces, hosting musical events that attracted over 100 attendees and connecting Berea's environmental goals with its musical and cultural heritage. Volunteers have worked extensively to clear invasive species and maintain these areas. The group plans to expand biodiversity on city property, collaborate with tourism to map gardens on public trails, and replace mowed grass with native plants to save energy and reduce pollution. They aim to boost sustainability, community wellness, and economic potential. Volunteer, Wes Moody, shared how residents express gratitude for the gardens' beauty and tranquility.

BEREA HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD APPOINTMENT

Mayor Fraley requested City Council approval for Berea Housing Authority Board appointment of Tracy Blevins to fulfill the unexpired term of Jeannie Hogg to expire on January 17, 2027.

Mayor Fraley expressed gratitude to Jeannie Hogg who served well on the Berea Housing Authority.

Little motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve appointment of Tracy Blevins on the Berea Housing Authority Board to fulfill the unexpired term of Jeannie Hogg, expiring on January 17, 2027.

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**Susan Helton, Director, Finance Department****Property Tax Collection**

Property Tax bills had been sent out three weeks ago with payments received of approximately 17%, for a total of \$183,611. Payments could be made online, in person at City Hall, drive-thru drop box, or by mail. Helton noted property tax bills paid before November 31st would receive a 2% discount.

Annual Audit

The annual audit year ended June 30th. Auditors visited during the week of September 8th and were continuing work remotely. The audit was progressing well with expectations of a clean audit and strong financial results. The final report, usually delivered at the second October Council meeting, would be delayed due to the federal government's delay in releasing the finalized compliance supplement (guidance for audits of federal expenditures) by the Office of Budget Management.

Other Ongoing Work

Continued collaboration on 911 data.

Preparations for the AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) project.

Upcoming focus was on the amended budget process.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- Thanked Helton and her team for their work. They were an excellent example of having fun at work and still getting the job done.
- Fall Clean-Up Week was scheduled for the week of October 20th – October 24th. This was in partnership with Waste Connections and would coincide with the normal daily garbage pick-up. Additional information would be published for the next two weeks in the local newspaper.
- Pool punch-list had been completed. Contractors were addressing each item that had been identified and moving toward completion of the project.
- The Allen Company was wrapping up the final details of the Ellipse Street Project and Berea Municipal Utilities (BMU) had installed lights along the trail.
- Pickleball Court(s) asphalt was down, lights and fences should be up next week. Tennis Technologies should be on site after next week to put down the surface and install nets. As Brian Reed had done an excellent job in managing the project, he had also secured enough funds to install two sets of bleachers.
- All paperwork had been submitted to Bluegrass Area Development District (BGADD) to meet grant requirements for the Farristown Community Center. Funds were expected to be released this year. Plans were to hold the project until February to find out when the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) planned to extend Mayde Road. Hopefully, the two projects would coincide at the same time.
- Public Works had begun larger box culvert installation on Ginger Drive. This project would help stormwater and potential development in the future.
- Four proposals were received for the Trailhead Restrooms Project. Brian Reed would be evaluating the proposals, and a contractor would be decided on within the next two weeks. Plans were to have the current building removed before winter and construction fencing up.
- Continued to work diligently on the 911 Funding. A work session would be scheduled for discussion.
- Credit was given to Berea Tourism and the Tourism Commission for financial support on current projects.

MAYOR'S REPORT / COMMENTS

- Complimented Brian Reed, Assistant Codes Administrator, and Shawn Sandlin, City Administrator, for their work on current Capital Projects. The projects improved the quality of life for the people who live in Berea, i.e., our neighbors and citizens.

- Credited Sandlin, City Administrator, and Curtis, Public Works Director, in the presentation on the Pollinator Gardens. They were hands-on with assistance and/or guidance with questions from the volunteers.
- Central Kentucky Business Park Authority (CKBPA) had made the first round with the Kentucky Product Development Initiative, a state program to provide funding for manufacturing large industrial business sites. There would be funding of up to \$4M directed toward the Central Kentucky Business Park in Berea and at the end of Farristown Industrial Drive. Although Berea had not yet received the award, a site visit from independent consultants would be scheduled to evaluate the site and determine receipt of funding or not. Optimistic and looking forward to the visit in October.
- As Halloween Trick-or-Treat date was traditionally set by City Council, Mayor Fraley requested a motion to establish the date for October 31st, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., as Halloween Trick-or-Treat.

Caudill motioned; Wilson seconded motion to establish October 31st, 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m., as Halloween Trick-or-Treat for Berea.

Halloween at the Park would remain the same, i.e., October 31st, 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Terrill Asked if the City could get a grant to install streetlights on the bypass.

Wilson Thanked everyone who came out tonight. Really neat about the Pollinator Gardens and had even noticed a butterfly bush at her church. Thanked tonight's presenters.

Caudill Thanked everyone for coming tonight and those who presented. Anytime Berea had a group of people who were passionate about something, they did a great job of coming together and making Berea better. Felt this was part of what set our town apart from a lot of places. Thanked Helton for her presentation, as no one liked to discuss finances, she had done a great job of budgeting financial planning for the City. Appreciated the work she does. Thanked those who shared public comments.

Little No comment.

Startzman Thanked Manges for sharing, appreciated her commitment to the ways she had served Berea over the years. Looked forward to reading the article she shared. Congratulated and thanked the Pollinator crew for their work and directing their energy in a positive way to benefit other people in our community. Thanked Sandlin for his updates, so much good stuff going on.

Payne Echoed Council's comments. The recent astronomy event at the Forestry Center was a wonderful event. Support and/or participate in Hope's Wings' 5K event on October 17th at White Hall. The Old Town Fall Festival and the Fall Art Market at the Kentucky Guild of Artists & Craftsmen Building were scheduled for October 18th. Great opportunities to mingle and support your community and Tourism.

Davis Always liked to see the public out and appreciated public comment. Hoped they took public comment to heart and looked to find out if anything mentioned was feasible for Council. Noted the pickleball court came from a council presentation from the public, so things do happen around Berea when you come to Council meetings and present. Encouraged the public to continue to come to Council meetings. Always loved and appreciated the public coming because that is who the Council worked for.

ADJOURNMENT

Payne motioned; Caudill seconded motion to adjourn at 7:29 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

Mayor Bruce Fraley

City Clerk