

The Berea City Council met in a regular business session, Tuesday, May 5, 2026.
Mayor Bruce Fraley presiding.
A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

WORK SESSION
Waste Connections Amendment to Contract

COUNCIL PRESENT: John Payne, Katie Startzman, Teresa Scenters, Jerry Little,
Steve Caudill, Barry Poynter, Ronnie Terrill

COUNCIL ABSENT: Steve Davis

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Jerry Gilbert, Shawn Sandlin, Robin Adams, Daniel Brindley, Priscilla Bloom,
Jason Hays, Charlie Russell

INVOCATION: Katie Startzman

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: John Payne

RESIGNATION OF COUNCIL MEMBER, STEVE DAVIS

Mayor Fraley announced the resignation of Council Member, Steve Davis, effective May 5, 2026. Resignation was due to personal reasons. He thanked Davis for his service to the City and citizens and always putting the citizens first.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Caudill motioned; Payne seconded motion to approve agenda as presented.
Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - APRIL 21, 2026

Startzman motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve minutes as presented.
Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Melissa Gmuer de Mora, Berea

Gmuer de Mora and her family moved to Berea one year ago. Although they expected to settle in slowly, they were welcomed by neighbors, strangers, and a community which seemed to genuinely care about one another. Thanked the Council for doing the work that made Berea possible, a place where strangers are welcomed as neighbors. A gift they will not forget, they are glad to be home. Thank you.

BEREA LIONS CLUB PROCLAMATION

Mayor Fraley read Proclamation and presented to the Berea Lions Club.

Jim Snyder expressed his thankfulness for the recognition. He was impressed by the volunteer and 'can do' spirits of the community and honored to be a member of this community.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH PROCLAMATION

Mayor Fraley read the Proclamation and presented to Berea Home Village, Berea Human Rights Commission, Berea Housing Authority, Berea Senior Center, and Berea College Adopt a Grandparent.

Katie Heckman, Executive Director, Berea Home Village, reminded everyone that someday they are all going to get old and a wonderful thing to look forward to. Berea Home Village was an organization that provided volunteer services to older Bereans to assist them in remaining independent in their own homes. They offered transportation, telephone calls, home repairs, social events, etc. Encouraged others to become volunteers as they would never get such a good feeling. Cheers to all the older folks in Berea.

Felicia Ballard, Chair, Berea Human Rights Commission, thanked Mayor Fraley and City Council for recognizing Older Americans Month. They had worked a long time with Heckman and the Berea Home Village organization and the Housing Authority. Looked forward to continue working together in efforts to build up the City of Berea.

NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK PROCLAMATION

Mayor Fraley read Proclamation and presented to City employees.

Shawn Sandlin, City Administrator, stated on behalf of all City employees, thanked and appreciated Council for their support given each year.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Priscilla Bloom, Director, Parks Department

- As a lot went into getting ready for the season, they were busy at the park with entire team engaged in pool preparation efforts with a goal opening date of May 23rd.
- The maintenance crew finished several projects and had spent a lot of time getting the ballpark looking nice and fields ready for Berea Youth League's opening day. Now that the season had begun, ballfield preparation would be added to their daily maintenance tasks, i.e., mowing, trimming, cleaning, and maintaining all park grounds and facilities.
- Recent programs included:
 - The 5th Annual Special Needs Gala, alongside Tourism, Police Department, and wonderful citizens, with approximately 100 in attendance.
 - A Day of Horsing Around, teaming up with the Madison County Library and Berea College's Art in Action, with over 100 kids who came out for several Kentucky Derby themed activities, food, and drinks.
 - Parks would be hosting a Kite Festival at the skatepark on Saturday, May 9th. Kites would be available while supplies last. Keep fingers crossed for nice weather and a good breeze.
- Shared a slide presentation regarding recent Park improvements and projects, i.e., pickleball courts, skatepark, resurfacing the basketball court, shade structure at the ballpark, new pool slides, liner, deck, & diving boards/stands, Trailhead Restroom / Concessions building, and swim lessons.
- Bloom shared her appreciation for our Police Department and First Responders. Hoped God gave comfort to families and victims of those who lost their lives last week.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- Expressed his deepest gratitude to our Berea Police Department. They did an amazing job last week working with our law enforcement partners throughout the City, State, and County. The technology available today, as a result of the Council investing in our Police Department, helped identify and apprehend a suspect in the recent incident. Thank you to Hays and his staff within the Police Department.

- A Special Called Audit & Finance Committee Meeting, for budget presentation, was scheduled for Tuesday, May 26th, with budgets delivered by May 16th for review.
Note: Meeting was rescheduled for Thursday, May 28th.
- Blacktop milling and resurfacing scheduled to begin Wednesday, May 6th.

MAYOR'S REPORT / COMMENTS

Mayor Fraley expressed the City's heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and coworkers of Breanna Edwards and Brian Switzer, who lost their lives in a senseless act of violence at US Bank on April 30th.

It was difficult to find words to adequately describe the sadness that was felt by our entire community, including our city staff and elected officials. There was some consolation in the way our community had come together to collectively wrap our arms around those who were closest to Ms. Edwards and Mr. Switzer, which was clear by the numerous phone calls, email messages, and other communications received by the US Bank family, our city staff, and others from our local citizens, from former Berea residents who have reached out, and from our neighbors from surrounding counties and across the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky.

For Breanna Edwards, the visitation and funeral services were scheduled for Wednesday, May 6th in the afternoon with Marvin Owens Funeral Home in Broadhead in charge of arrangements.

Funeral services for Brian Switzer were held in Garrard County earlier today.

We ask everyone to remember them, and to keep their families, friends, and coworkers in your prayers.

Many have asked how they could help. The District Manager for US bank in our area shared that anyone wanting to donate to the families of Mr. Switzer and Ms. Edwards could do so at any US Bank location, and all funds raised would go directly from the bank to the families to support them in this difficult time. The US Bank branch on Main Street in Richmond is the closest location to make donations, at this time.

He commended the law enforcement community for their tenacity in responding to this situation so quickly, and in apprehending the suspected perpetrator of this violent crime within 15 hours. The level of cooperation and professionalism shown by the Berea Police Department, the Madison County Sheriff's office, Kentucky State Police, Federal Law Enforcement and neighboring law enforcement agencies was nothing less than outstanding and deserving of the highest praise.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Payne Hard to express how much our hearts went out to the victims, families, and survivors at the bank, what they have gone through and moving forward. Thanked emergency responders, Chief Hays, and to Mayor Fraley and City Administrator, Sandlin, for coordinating the situation, coming together as a community, protecting one another.

Startzman Mayor Fraley articulated her feelings, as well, regarding last week's tragedy. Thanked Davis for his service on City Council, a pleasure to serve with him, admired him as someone who lives his faith.

Scenters As so much had happened this week, there was such a heavy feeling. Thanked Gmuer de Mora for her comment tonight. Although our community does not always see eye to eye on everything, when such a tragedy happens, we know we are Bereans and together. If this week had taught us anything, is that your life can be taken in a minute, anything could happen. Even though she did not know either of the victims, believed they were ready to meet Jesus. That is the only thing anyone could be.

Terrill Hated what had happened this week, felt sympathy for the victim's families. Glad law enforcement was able to find the suspect. Was well worth what was spent on equipment for the Police Department to help in the situation, we probably need more.

Poynter Thanked Mayor Fraley for his comments. Appreciated Davis's service. Thanked Gmuer de Mora for coming.

Caudill Thanked Gmuer de Mora for her comments and uplifting message as it was what we strive to be as a community. Thanked Mayor Fraley for his comments. Appreciated all city employees, thanked them for everything they do, their dedication, efforts, and level of integrity.

Little Echoed all comments regarding last week's tragic event. Thanked Davis for his service on Council. Thought he was a really good Councilman.

ADJOURNMENT

Caudill motioned; Payne seconded motion to adjourn at 7:10 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

Mayor Bruce Fraley

City Clerk