

The Berea City Council met in a regular business session, Tuesday, June 2, 2026.

Mayor Bruce Fraley presiding.

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

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Mike Barnett, John Payne, Katie Startzman, Teresa Scenters, Steve Caudill, Barry Poynter, Ronnie Terrill

**COUNCIL ABSENT:** Jerry Little

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Jerry Gilbert, Shawn Sandlin, Robin Adams, Daniel Brindley, Donna Angel, Priscilla Bloom, Kevin Howard, Josh Gabbard, Eric Davidson, Susan Helton, Nancy Conley, Charlie Russell

**INVOCATION:** Teresa Scenters

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Ronnie Terrill

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - MAY 5, 2026 & May 13, 2026**

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

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

### **JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION WEEKEND PROCLAMATION**

Mayor Fraley read Proclamation and presented to the Berea Human Rights Commission, the Juneteenth Committee, and others in attendance.

Felicia Ballard, Chair, Berea Human Rights Commission, commented recognizing Juneteenth commemorated the end of slavery and honored our country, culture, and fellow citizens. This year, 2026, marked the third year Berea had observed Juneteenth. This year's theme was "Rooted in History, Rising in Power." Juneteenth Celebration weekend was scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. The event consisted of speakers, performers, reenactments, presentations, community personalities, information booths/tables, and more. Welcomed everyone to come and celebrate this rich part of our American history.

Reverend Andrew Baskin, NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), Madison County Richmond Branch, shared he always told his students, "You don't live in the past, but you have to know your past." Thought this was especially important, when we talk about the history of Berea and Berea College, that this community celebrated Juneteenth. This is when the nation began to move away from slavery and move toward freedom.

### **WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY PROCLAMATION**

Mayor Fraley read the Proclamation, noting the Proclamation was submitted by Kursten Napier.

**BEREA HOUSING AUTHORITY APPOINTMENTS**

Mayor Fraley requested City Council approval for the appointment of Casey Botkin to the Berea Housing Authority.

Scenters motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve appointment of Casey Botkin to the Berea Housing Authority.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

Mayor Fraley requested City Council approval for the re-appointment of Rick Fulton, Chair, to the Berea Housing Authority.

Caudill motioned; Poynter seconded motion to approve re-appointment of Rick Fulton to the Berea Housing Authority.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

**BEREA PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT**

Mayor Fraley requested City Council approval for the appointment of Beverly Harkleroad to the Berea Planning Commission to fill the unexpired term of Michael Barnett, to expire on January 17, 2027.

Startzman motioned; Barnett seconded motion to approve the appointment of Beverly Harkleroad to the Berea Planning Commission to fill the unexpired term of Michael Barnett, to expire on January 17, 2027.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

**BEREA ZONING ADJUSTMENT BOARD APPOINTMENT**

Mayor Fraley requested City Council approval for the appointment of George Mendoza to the Berea Zoning Adjustment Board to fill the unexpired term of David Wallace, to expire on February 17, 2030. Wallace had planned to move outside of City Limits and would no longer be eligible to serve on the Board.

Caudill motioned; Poynter seconded motion to approve the appointment of George Mendoza to the Berea Zoning Adjustment Board to fill the unexpired term of David Wallace, to expire on February 17, 2030.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

**MUNICIPAL ORDER #04-2026 A MUNICIPAL ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, ESTABLISHING THE STANDING LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR MEMBERS, AND THE CHAIRPERSON.**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Municipal Order #04-2026 in entirety.

Caudill motioned; Payne seconded motion to approve and adopt Municipal Order #04-2026.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE #06-2026 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, ADOPTING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY. -**

**1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #06-2026 in entirety.

**ORDINANCE #07-2026 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL PERIOD JULY 1, 2026 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2027, 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 #07-2026 in entirety.

**ORDINANCE #08-2026 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEREA, 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 SEPARATE HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY SCALES FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND FIRE DEPARTMENT. - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #08-2026 in entirety.

**ORDINANCE #09-2026 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BEREA, KENTUCKY, AMENDING THE PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, BY AMENDING THE PROVISIONS FOR SEASONAL AND PART-TIME PAY AND ELIMINATING THE POLICE AND FIRE UNIFORM ALLOWANCE. - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

Corporate Counsel, Gilbert, read Ordinance #09-2026 in entirety.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

Donna Angel, Director, Business Development

**Business Retention and Expansions**

- Construction expansion of Astemo Plant #1 and Plant #2 continued.
- Construction expansion of Hyster-Yale Materials continued the progress of moving a product from Greenville, North Carolina to the Berea facility.
- MP Kelly Design & Construction Company continued with the expansion of a second spec building to accommodate relocating suppliers closer to the industries.
- Renovation of Berea Baptist Church was underway.
- New Area Supply store was under full construction, Exit 76.

**New Business Openings and/or Coming Soon**

- Hoped to soon announce a new quick serve restaurant with 15-20 job creations.
- Hoped to soon announce the sale of approximately ten acres of land, Exit 77.
- Rural Health Clinic to open soon, Paint Lick Road.
- Mr. Keith Taylor, WKT Communications, LLC
- Chase Riddle (Law Offices of Croley & Foley), Richmond Road
- Campus Subs, Glades Road
- Tracey's Income Tax Services, Old Town
- Level Up Lounge Learning Center, Boone Square Mini Mall
- Whimseys Book Store, behind Berea College Log House Craft Gallery
- Bluegrass Vendors Mall, Richmond Road
- Unity Dance Studio, Glades Road

- Denna Brockman (Law Offices of Denna Brockman), Haiti Road / Chestnut Street
- Welcomed back the opening of Cabos Cantina & Grill (previously Mariachi's)

#### **April Census Report Released (Berea)**

- Population 16,436
- Median Household Income \$59,495
- Median Income \$99,637
- Median Gross Rent \$835
- Median Housing Cost \$245,532
- Average Persons per household 2.6
- Average Age 39.1
- Growth Increase of 7%

#### **Community Notables**

- Thanked the Codes & Planning Department for a well-balanced and knowledgeable team to handle the industry expansions, residential construction, etc.
- Thanked Bluegrass Area Development District's (BGADD) workforce team for assisting us in supplying jobs, funding, training, etc. in Berea and Madison County.

#### Nancy Conley, Director, Berea Tourism

Conley requested overage approval for budget line item #028-1000-53400, Small Tools & Equipment, for an additional \$1700 for a total of \$2700. The overage was due to equipping truck for watering new hanging flowers/flowerpots placed on utility poles.

Scenters motioned; Payne seconded motion to approve overage for line item #028-1000-53400, Small Tools & Equipment, for an additional \$1700 for a total of \$2700.

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

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

Howard recognized the following employees for their accomplishments and/or certifications:

- Josh Gabbard, Assistant General Manager, BMU
  - Completed the Utility Management Professional Program offered through Kentucky Rural Water and funded by the US Environment Protection Agency.
  - Currently serving as Vice President of Kentucky Water and Wastewater Operators Association (KWWOA), North Central Chapter.
- Electric Division
  - Once again, recognized by the American Public Power Association for Excellence & Reliability. The award was given to utilities that significantly exceeded the 5-year average of the top quartile of reliability for all electric utilities in the United States.
  - This award was open to all 2,003 public power utilities in the United States. BMU was one of only 244 in the nation and one of only six in Kentucky to receive this recognition.
  - The electric division routinely received recognition from other professional organizations for low rates, safety, and reliability.

- Each employee goes through Lineman & Advanced Lineman training through the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association (TVPPA) and highly skilled and trained in all aspects of powerline work. A testament to their daily work on the system and taking care of maintenance/upgrades that keep our grid top notch and their commitment to our utilities and community.
- Luke Brock, Wastewater Treatment Plant
  - Through a scholarship in late 2024, completed the California State University Water Program thus, enabling him to achieve his Class III Wastewater Treatment Certification. A tremendous accomplishment in a very short time.
- Chad Walling, Class IV Water Plant Operator
  - Recently awarded the Earl T. Mitchell Award for Water Operator of the Year in the Kentucky Water and Wastewater Operators Association (KWWOA), North Central Chapter.
  - Walling is also certified as a Class I Lab Analyst, Class I Water Distribution System Operator, completed the California State University Water Program, holds a bachelor's degree in construction management, and Risk Management Plan Coordinator, keeping BMU in compliance with all OSHA and EPA regulations.
- Teddy Himes, Wastewater Treatment Plant
  - Had obtained Class III Wastewater Treatment Certification, Kentucky Wastewater Lab Certification, and serves as the Wastewater Treatment Plant Lab Coordinator.
  - With over 2,100 Wastewater Operators in the state of Kentucky, Himes was nominated for and won the North Central Chapter KWWOA Wastewater Treatment Operator of the Year. He also won the KWWOA JC Chambers Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator of the Year award for the state of Kentucky.
- Reece Simmons
  - Recently began his career with the Electric Division. A lifelong Berea resident. Upon graduation from Madison Southern, completed the North American Lineman Training Center Program in Tennessee. Simmons also has OSHA certification and his Class A CDLs. He will be beginning the TVPPA Apprentice Lineman Training Program in September.
- Jake Mauck
  - Began his career with BMU yesterday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, as Water/Wastewater Operator. Mauck came to us from Florida and had been in the water/wastewater industry for fifteen years. He had his Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 certifications in which were honored by the Kentucky Division of Water as a Class IV Distribution Operator Certification.

Howard stated it was a pleasure to work with this group. Like all Departments, we were all fortunate to work with a great group of people in each division who were dedicated, took pride in their system, were proud of their community, and proud of the work they do.

#### Overage Approval – Water Withdrawal Fees

Howard requested overage approval for budget line-item #200-9200-54610, Water Withdrawal Fees, for an additional \$30,000 for a total of \$230,000.

Startzman motioned; Caudill seconded motion to approve overage for line item #200-9200-54610, Water Withdrawal Fees, for an additional \$30,000 for a total of \$230,000.

Voice Vote: All ayes Motion carried.

Owsley Fork Reservoir Dam Project Update

The Owsley Fork Dam Project was close to the point of requesting construction funds. Berea Municipal Utilities was currently working on finalizing approvals with Kentucky Division of Water, mailing letters to property owners, working on dam safety, floodplain management, expecting Army Corps of Engineers review next week, and finalizing exhibits for funding.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- Thanked Berea Municipal Utilities for what they do and what they have accomplished. A very qualified and professional utilities department. Appreciated daily.
- Appreciated Department Heads and their budget work, conversations with City Council and Administration on working through the budget. Felt budget for FY26-27 was a very good budget for the City.

MAYOR'S REPORT / COMMENTS

- Welcomed Mike Barnett to City Council. Barnett had previously served on the Planning Commission for approximately seven years.
- Recognized Jackson Schill, a rising senior at Berea Community High School and his desire to learn more about City government.
- Reminded everyone of the annual US 25 Yard Sale this weekend, June 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>. Encouraged participation and to take extra caution due to traffic and/or visitors in town.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

**Terrill** Berea Municipal Utilities was the best. Of the storms Berea had, the electric was still on. They all did a wonderful job, i.e., water, sewer, and electric.

**Poynter** Appreciated Berea Municipal Utilities and all they did. Good to see Jackson Schill. Kudos on the budget work, Helton, her team, and all Department Heads do a great job.

**Caudill** Appreciated the time taken to recognize the utility workers. It was important to show citizens the fantastic work they were doing, an exceptional job making sure all things are working well in our City. Welcomed Jackson Schill.

**Scenters** Echoed Terrill's, Poynter's, and Caudill's comments. Thanked Angel for her report. To Nancy Conley, Director, Tourism, the flowerpots looked pretty and could see they were already growing. Utilities do a fabulous job. Thanked everyone for being there.

**Startzman** No comment.

**Payne** Thanked the utility workers for everything they do. The planters looked amazing. L&N Day was coming up on Saturday, June 13th, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The list of candidates was on the County Clerks website for the next City Council election.

**Barnett** Thanked City Council for voting him in to fill the vacant City Council member position. Appreciated the support. Looking forward to working with everyone, the City of Berea, the people of Berea, and the utility company. Utilities keep the water running and lights on. As a heating/cooling contractor for forty years, he understood how important their job was. You do not know how much people appreciate the extra effort until the lights go off. Thanked and appreciated the Utilities Department.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Caudill motioned; Payne seconded motion to adjourn at 7:39 p.m.

Voice Vote: All ayes      Motion carried.

---

Mayor Bruce Fraley

---

City Clerk