

**3CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS  
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY MAY 18, 2023 – 7:30 P.M.**

**PRESENT** Mayor Dinah Tatman, City Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman, City Engineer Clayton Klein, Planning and Zoning Board Chairman Pat Barrett and City Clerk Semmie Ruffin-Hall.

**EXCUSED ABSENCE** Alderman Lynette VonSeggern and Treasurer Rick Rognan

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY** Mayor Dinah Tatman at 7:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Theresa Hester-Present
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Present
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-EXCUSED ABSENCE
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Present
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Present
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Present
- Alderman Alicia Smith-Present

**Six Present/One Excused Absence** -Quorum was established.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mayor** called for a motion to approve the agenda. **Alderman Theresa Hester** made a motion to approve agenda, second made by **Alderman Peg Warnuz**. **Mayor** called any further discussion. **Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to amend the agenda, second made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward**. **Mayor** called any further discussion. **Mayor** stated all in favor:

**6-Ayes/0-Nays. Motion passed to amend the agenda.**

**Alderman Alease Dailes** would like to add to the agenda closed executive session for the Board and the Mayor for the next session according to **Section 610.021, RSMo: THE BOARD OF ALDERPERSONS MAY HOLD A CLOSED MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING MATTERS RELATING TO ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: LEGAL ACTIONS, CAUSES OF ACTION, LITIGATION OR PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE CITY'S REPRESENTATIVES AND ITS ATTORNEYS (SEC. 610.021(1); LEASE, PURCHASE OR SALE OF REAL ESTATE (SEC. 610.021(2); HIRING, FIRING DISCIPLINING OR PROMOTING EMPLOYEES (SEC. 610.021(3); PREPARATION FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH EMPLOYEE GROUPS (SEC. 610.021(9); BIDDING SPECIFICATIONS (SEC 610.021(11); AND /OR PROPRIETARY TECHNOLOGICAL MATERIALS (SEC 610.02 (15)** and I would like the meeting to start at 6:30 pm at the next board meeting on June 1,2023. I would like to remove item # 13-A under New Business to be tabled for after the closed executive meeting. **Mayor** called for all in favor: **Ayes have it/Nays no one spoke.** Mayor called for a roll call vote:

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-No
- Alderman James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes

**5-Ayes/1-Nays. Motion passed to approve the agenda.**

**PRESENTATION OF UNAPPROVED MINUTES (B.O.A Regular Meeting Minutes 05-04-23)-Alderman Alicia Smith** made a motion to approve the unapproved minutes, second made by **Alderman Alease Dailes.** **Mayor** called for any questions. **Mayor** stated all in favor:

**6-Ayes/0-Nays. Motion passed to approve unapproved minutes.**

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES OVER \$500–(April 27 through May 16, 2023)- \$173,869.89-** **Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to approve, second made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward.** **Mayor** called for any questions. **Mayor** stated all in favor:

**5-Ayes/1-Nays. Motion passed to approve the invoices over \$500.**

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES UNDER \$500 (May 1 through May 16, 2023 ) \$9,948.05-**

Motion made by **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward** to approve invoices, second made by **Alderman Alease Dailes**. Mayor stated all in favor:

**6-Ayes/0-Nays. Motion passed to approve the invoices under \$500.**

**CITY ENGINEER/BUILDING REPORT-CLAYTON KLEIN**

- Rec Center-Working with Jimmy and Pat reviewing work progress, approving pay applications, meetings/discussions with CRallo.
- Setting up a site meeting with Travers Logistics to review current site work progress and come up with a plan/time frame to finish.
- Reviewing drawings for a 12x20 shed.
- Review request to add a 2-car garage at 10301 Seaton Drive.
- Architect for Conoco Gas Station at Chambers & Bellefontaine is looking at possibly adding on to the existing building.
- Met with JTL, contractor working on the water lines on Fontaine.
- Meeting with Mayor Tatman to discuss the future planning for adding street humps and working with Ameren UE to change existing bulbs that are not bright to new LED bulbs.

**PLANNING AND ZONING-PAT BARRETT**

- Since there was no new business for Planning & Zoning before our April and May meetings, both meetings were cancelled.
- Sometime in April, our attention was directed to a possible new lessee of the restaurant at 9312 Lewis & Clark Blvd: Ms. Tawana Austin who would like to operate Royalty Café & Events in that space. This space was previously approved for Your Kitchen LLC, operated by Raphael & LaTonya Lewis. We spoke with Ms. Austin briefly, letting her know that operating a restaurant in that C1 Local Business District would require her to apply for a Conditional Use Permit and forwarded information about the procedure for doing so to her. We suggested that the owners of the property, A Red Circle (Erica Williams), share in the cost of generating documents, especially the survey, since that information may be helpful when attempting to lease out other spaces at the shopping center. We requested a letter-of-intent describing the intended business. We let her know that passing inspections

by North County Fire & Rescue would be required along with an occupancy inspection & permit by Bellefontaine Neighbors.

- In our e-mail, we also gave her the option of coming to Planning & Zoning for an informal discussion prior to a formal CUP application, something that can help people attempting to start a business learn more about the City's requirements before committing significant funds. We have not heard back from Ms. Austin since that time. Drive-by inspection of the shopping center twice today seemed to indicate no activity.
- A Red Circle purchased Hathaway Hills Shopping Center on March 17, 2023.

#### **CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT -JEREMY IHLER**

- Discussed crime and activity year-to-date. Vehicle theft is a significant concern.
- Discussed proposed changes to the Administrative Warrant Process – TBD by legal review.
- BN Emergency Operations Plan in process of update.
- The Mayor, Police Chief, and other officers of the Department attended 31st Annual Police Memorial Prayer Breakfast.
- Continuing to seek and secure diverse candidates of police employment.

#### **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT -DOROTHY WHITE COLEMAN**

- Good evening everyone. The 2023 Legislative session ended last Friday and one bill in particular, which failed, I would like to bring to the boards attention. There was a bill pending which would modify the home base business that went into effect August 28, 2022. Because that bill was being considered, the city did not make any changes to its code provisions. Since that bill has now failed, the city can proceed to modify its code provisions related to home base businesses. In addition, there are a number of those provisions that need to be brought into compliance with the state law that was passed last year, in 2022.
- The other bill I wanted to mention because a couple of the alder people have asked me about this was a bill that provides tax relief for senior citizens. This bill will authorize the granting of the property tax credit to eligible taxpayers residing in the county and eligibility would be based upon whether or not they receive Social Security Benefits, whether or not they were the owner of record at the time or liable for the property tax on the

homestead. Therefore, those are the considerations set forth in the bill for granting that tax credit.

- The other bill I found notable was a bill that made changes to The Sunshine Law and these changes in addition to doing other things would provide protection to the police for requests for GPS information, security measures, data that comes through on a tip line or other information related to suspicious activity.
- Those are just a couple; there are a number of them. I do not want to go into all of them but I did want to point those out to the board.

#### **Lori Lenz-Certification of Completion-Payroll Law**

- **Mayor** commended Lori for completing the Payroll Law Certification. One thing Lori asked for and that is training.
- **Alderman Alease Dailes** also congratulated Lori.

#### **OLD BUSINESS: (TABLED) Court Report from 05-04-23 meeting**

- **Alderman Alicia Smith** had a question: On the Municipal Division Summary Report, Sec3 warrant information. It says "0". Are there any ever any warrants issued and if so are they ever part of this report. **City Clerk-Semmie Ruffin-Hall** stated she would find out and email the board tomorrow.

#### **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT)**

- **Anthony Green-92XX Waldorf Drive**

-Chief Ihler went over our crime stats from January through March of last meeting. Motor vehicle theft increased significantly from 14% (January through March of last year) to 42% this year. That is a lot. We need to find out what is going on. There is a bevy of things but I am not comfortable.

-When I was looking at our bond rating I know you (**Mayor**) have done a great job at communicating that on Next-door and on the website. I honestly believe that is letter worthy to me to the house. That is a significant change to me. I know it does not affect our finances to speak but it is many things going on from an internal control standpoint and I just think those who cannot make it to the meetings should know the situation that we are in. Not everyone uses Next-door, or the website. I think that is

a letter you get to write the narrative for that you notify the public that this is substantial change and here is our action plan to address it.

- **Wanda Lane-99XX Martingale Road**

Mayor I am going to really talk fast about the Riverview Garden School District. It has been awhile since I have been here so I want to bring the citizens up to date.

-There is always policy change. One of the recent policy change is parent and family involvement and engagement. By state and Federal Law, school districts have to have parent involvement policies. In addition, it actually kind of ties in to what the fourth ward alder people (I am sure just not happening in the fourth ward) are saying about people moving in and out of houses. Right now 50% of our students are what we call student in transitions. That means 50% of the students that are registered right now in the Riverview Garden School District will not be here for the next school year beginning August 2023. Parents are moving somewhat willy-nilly and it effects everything. It effects our scores; this is one of the reason why our district is not fully accredited. We just do not have consistency. Therefore, one of the policies I believe personally, parents are the most important teachers they can have. There is a Federal and State Law that is requiring parent and family involvement. We are in the process of writing this new policy so I am going to ask when you see and hear about it please pay attention and try to get involved State Representative Marlene Terry and Citizens

- The Missouri Assembly passes budget only by the skin of its teeth. They passed a \$19.96 million dollar for teacher recruitment and retention program. The reason that is important we have such a deficient in teachers right now in our district. The board right now is considering entering into employment contract to hire teachers from the Philippines to come and teach in our district because we just do not have enough teachers. Retired teachers, if you know anyone that can teach please encourage them to consider and it is lucrative.

- **Marcie Gooden -94XX Duenke Drive**

-Thanked the Chief and herself for getting rid of that Black Mercedes which has been on Waldorf for three years.

-I want to make a comment because the Your Kitchen. I remember that whole conversation we bonded as a community and now she is gone. I remember when Royal Café came and I sent an email to the board and the former mayor asking who is this business and why are they having business. In addition, they had business because they had an election event, at a business where they did not have a license. So if the elected officials are asking the citizens if they see something say something. We need you all to do the same. I need you all to do the same, I cannot talk for everybody. So if you know someone is having an event and they are not up to par they cannot have that event. Therefore, I am a little upset about that one.

-I just want to thank the citizens, everybody because we pick up trash.

## **ALDERMAN'S REPORT**

### **Alderman Theresa Hester**

-Thanked everyone for coming out. Also those that came out for the Cleanup day.

-Anyone interested in North County Labor Legislative Club they are having a picnic on June 5(that is a Monday). It will start at four; they will have food, drinks as well as networking. It will be at St. Ferdinand Park in North County.

-Again, thank everyone for coming.

### **Alderman Peg Warnusz**

-Thanked everyone for coming.

-I just have one little comment to make I came to tonight's meeting thinking we were going to fill some of the board positions and get moving and we are sitting here again and we are not moving. I do not exactly what to do. We cannot do the work people voted for us to do if we do not have committees to move forward with.

-If you have not volunteered for a committee do so, or if you have, questions about one ask and you will be able to find out.

### **Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward**

-Thanked everyone for coming out.

- Address the juvenile problem. I have a lot of experience with that, but from what I witness and speaking with people still in the system that I retired from, it is like everything else there is not enough people in the facility. Many of the juvenile facilities have closed. Down on Vandaventer they do not have enough people. That is why many juveniles are picked up and then put back on the street, because they have nowhere to put them.
- These kids know the law and they manipulate the law. They know they will not be kept. It is like lawlessness because they know nothing will happen to them and they use it to their advantage. We have to get these systems back up and running.
- Another thing is what they do not understand is there is a paper trail being done and once they get them, they are going straight to the penitentiary. There is nothing their parents will be able to do then. We have corporations building penitentiaries for money making businesses and they are not building them for their children, but ours. Once system is tired of you there is nothing Mama or Daddy can do for you then.
- I want to invite everyone out to Bissell Hills this Saturday (05/20/23) 10-1 for a meet and greet for Ward 3. Light refreshments.

### **Alderman Alease Dailes**

- Greetings everyone and thank everyone for coming out.
- I have had a busy week. Madam Chair /Councilwoman Shalonda Webb had a great event this past week for Mother's Day. The theme was You Lead, I Lead, We Lead. It was a phenomenal event a lot of strong leaders there to talk about building up. Everyone had to bring in shoes for Dress for Success. It was really a nice event, I want to give a shout out to Madam Chair she is the Chair Woman of St. Louis Councilwoman, and she is the Councilwoman for District 4.
- We are having a week event for Juneteenth and it is on our website if you are interested. Please check our website out for information and share with any young person that lives in District 1 and District 4.
- Ward 4 we will have our Meet and Greet in June and we will give out more information at the next meeting.
- I want to piggyback on, we, the board some of us want to know what is going on.

### **Alderman Alicia Smith**



- Thank you everyone for coming and staying.
- My 9-5 is in HR. In HR, of course you get to meet and greet the employees that work alongside of you. I enjoy putting a face with a name. I personally would like to meet you. Please stop me at the end of the meeting and tell me who you are, what ward you are in and tell me a little about yourself.
- Thank you everyone again for coming.

### **State Representative Marlene Terry**

- Session did end Friday. It has been a very rough session, but I do it for the 66. A lot of tax credits many things I want to share with the community, a some good some bad. I always have an end of session meetings, which will be on June.8. I am inviting each one of you. I have all the municipality police departments and chief you cannot say you did not get an invitation this year.
- I have many bills cutting taxes for seniors.50% tax cut.
- Tonight seems to be a good meeting. I do not know what your bylaws are but as a chair or a mayor. The Mayor should be able to make some decisions. You have to have trust in your leader. In order to move forward just try to work with your leader let us try to work together. So that our community can move forward. It is time for us to move forward and we can only do that by working with one another. We can do nothing by ourselves.
- Hold me accountable for things that makes me work harder.

### **Mayors Report**

- I am not going to make a report, because my report is on the table.
- You will be getting a mayors report twice a month.
- A few important things on my report.  
What we have tried to do is send emails to everybody. As much information as you see there we have sent out to the whole board. We have looked at what we needed. In addition, I would say again to trust your leader. The people that we picked to be on the boards because we did reach out to the board on four different occasions and say hey if you have some citizens in your ward that you want to recommend then do that. We got one or two recommendations. We for the last 34 days have sent out information concerning if you have someone wanting to serve. All of the people that are this list are citizens that have a plethora

of not only expertise but they have a passion. The information that you all received in your packets was sent Thursday of last week. I did not get a call to say hey can we talk about this so I assumed if no one is communicating that that what we are doing is ok. You are not telling me hey I am not ok with this. I do not know it until we get to a meeting and I would ask the same courtesy. When we send out emails seven days in advance and we are constantly asking your input and your information than I am saying Oh they are Ok with it. However, to come to a meeting to find out you are not. We said we were going to do this and to come to a meeting to find out you are not, is disingenuous. I phone call or email to say hey we want to meet the people first. It is not in our ordinance where it says the people have to appear before the board. I am asking the board to talk to me, not wait until we get to a meeting.

-There is a lot of information on the table.

-We were going to have the audit ready by tomorrow, we received email today from Angela Dorn stating had some issues with formatting the statements in our Quality Control Department and they are just now getting it to review.

-ARPA money has been approved and spent

-Essential employees will be hired. Most of the issue is because we do not have enough Staff.

-We have had significant meetings with people in local state and federal government.

-We have been encouraged to apply for a plethora of grants.

-We have three grant writers on staff.

-We are building partnerships about writing grants.

-Grants we are looking to apply is Safe Streets, Roads, and Strategic Planning.

**ADJOURNMENT-Alderman Alease Dailes** made a motion to adjourn. Second made **Alderman Theresa Hester**.

Meeting adjourned to close session at 9:14pm.

ATTEST:

  
Semmie Ruffin Hall, City Clerk

Approved by the Board of Aldermen on 6-01-23