

**CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS, MISSOURI
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND MAYOR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 04 2024-7:30 PM**

PRESENT Mayor Dinah Tatman, City Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman, Interim Chief of Police Major Timothy Sanders/Major Warren Willis, Director of Finance Lori Lenz and City Clerk Semmie Ruffin-Hall.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

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

- **Alderwoman Alicia Smith-Present**
- **Alderwoman Alease Dailes-Present**
- **Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-Present**
- **Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Present**
- **Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern-Excused Absence**
- **Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-Present**
- **Alderwoman Theresa Hester-Present**

Six Present/One Excused Absence -Quorum was established.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion by Alderwoman Alease Dailes motioned to approve the agenda to add an amendment to add dialogue after the police report on matters that was discussed in the pre-meeting, Seconded by President James Thomas, Sr.

City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll for approval of agenda:

- **Alderwoman Theresa Hester-Yes**
- **Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-Yes**
- **Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes**
- **Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes**
- **Alderwoman Alease Dailes-Yes**
- **Alderwoman Alicia Smith-Yes**

6-Yays/0-Nays. Motion passes.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (With 3-minute time limit)

Marcie Gooden-94XX Duenke Drive

- Happy New Year
- Just two points. I know we do not talk about elections here and I just want to ask all citizens, I do not care if you are a renter, homeowner it does not matter. Be mindful and make comments about and learning about the city and ordinances. Do not take everything you hear as being trustworthy and just do your homework.
- That goes for all of us as well as those who are running.
- I want to ask the board, I wish you guys would do your homework that is all I am going to say. You are ill prepared, and you guys are just not ready. In addition, we, looking inward it just looks like you guys are never prepared so I need you guys to do your homework.
- We are preparing candidate forms so we will have more coming in the coming weeks so be prepared. These are the citizens of Bellefontaine Neighbors. More information will come out on the forms on all nine candidates.

Anthony Green-92XX Waldorf Drive

- Disappointed in not seeing our treasurer here, because one of my comments was for him.
- Based on the last meeting we had on December 21, 2023, I think the mayor indicated the treasurer was working on the bank reconciliations. My understanding is at least 24 months bank recs are behind. Initially there were 12 cash accounts, quick arithmetic 24 months we haven't done with 12 accounts equal roughly 288 individual bank reconciliation that need to be done.
- The board needs to ask Rick in each meeting how many of those he has done. The Board needs to keep track of that.
- We need to get a list of your priorities what your priorities, like the top five things the board is working on by quarter. We have no way of tracing your strategies.
- I saw the brochure on public safety to Mayor Tatman and to Major Willis and Major Sanders. The police budget is 2.7 million. I believe when those crimes happen a brochure should be given to those

whose car has been broken into. Things they can do and numbers they can contact to help secure their cars better.

Bryant Nelson-9XX Marias Drive

- Quick shot out to our code enforcer Felicia Bishop. Some residents in St. Cyr Apartments who were living in deplorable conditions. Hole in ceiling, no heat and sewage backup. Felicia came out in 3 minutes and had the situation taken care of.

Jamie Papinder-1265 Nectar Drive

- We have had an incident across the street from my neighbors and myself.
- A resident that is a non-resident.
- I spoke to him and said to him are you my new neighbor and he in return said who tha "F" are you.
- New neighbor called her Karen, ten single women just in our radius that are 30 to 80 years old that are in harms way. Where does that put us?

Carla Colbert-12XX Nectar Drive

- I will piggyback off her; this guy has been there since November.
- I am the one that noticed it because I have to get up at 3:30am.
- This is scary for us, he moved in in the middle of the night.
- I thought we had an ordinance not to move in in the middle of the night.
- I have been here 30 years and I do not feel safe anymore.
- Our Ward looks a mess, never looked like that before.
- No improvement at all. We can do better I know we can.
- We need to see all our aldermen.

Mayor stated that we are concerned and we will be reaching out to you.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES (LORI LENZ)

- 12-20-23 through 01-03-24-\$66,430.07

Alderwoman Alicia Smith made a motion to table the bills for December 20, 2023 through January 2, 2024 in the amount of \$66,430.07. Alderwoman Alease Dailes, second.

Mayor called for any questions. President Thomas asked tabled until when. Alderwoman Smith stated until Monday, January 8, 2024 at 6:00pm, Alderwoman Dailes seconded.

City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll for invoices to be tabled:

- Alderwoman Theresa Hester-Yes
- Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderwoman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderwoman Alicia Smith-Yes

6-Yays/0-Nays. Motion passes.

TREASURERS REPORT (RICK ROGNAN)

- NOT PRESENT

PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT (DIRECTOR-JIMMY KIRINICH)

- Report Attached

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT (DIRECTOR-JEFF ROSS)

- Report Attached

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT-(ATTORNEY DOROTHY WHITE-COLEMAN)

- No report at this time, but would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor called for Alderman's Report.

Alderwoman Dailes stated they would like to do the dialogue now.

- We have noticed our attorney bill has went up calling every day with questions that can be found at the Missouri Municipal League or St. Louis County Municipal League. Before we work on an ordinance since we do not have a Ways and Means Committee, the board has to be asked first, before an ordinance can be gone forward with.

- First one. The Public Works Department wants to increase the fee, will ask Semmie to have Jeff's assistant to email everyone what the fees will be and if everyone on this board is in agreement with us increasing the fees and we will move forward and ask the attorney to redo the current ordinance that we have with the increase of fees.
- One of the ones we need to talk about now is the dog fees, which is two dollars right now. I say we should increase it. Every June, Bellefontaine has a dog clinic, which we collaborate with Ferguson Animal Clinic. My opinion is \$10. I am asking the board what everyone think of the fee.

Alderwoman Warnusz stated she thinks there is currently a misunderstanding about the dog fee; the dog fee is currently at two dollars, raising the fee is fine with me. They are not paying for shots with that amount of money. The veterinarian will give your dog whatever shots you want. The amount of money you are paying is just to put your dog on the occupancy permit.

Alderwoman Dailes stated if she did not say that she apologizes. The two dollars is to have the dog at your property. I say ten dollars.

President Thomas stated most communities only charge a minimum amount for the permit, because the permit is letting the city know that a dog is in the house. I think five dollars may be ok, but ten dollars to me would be too much. The clinic is good because it actually takes care of your added cost. In my opinion, five dollars a year would be sufficient to take care of my pet as long as everybody is doing it. Then there comes the enforcement part, I think there can only be two animals (just dogs and cats) in the home.

Alderwoman Warnusz what they need to be aware of is when you go for your tag, which is the registration you have to show your dog has a current rabies shot and they will make a copy of that and give it back. You just cannot walk in and say I want a tag.

Alderwoman Dailes stated the purpose of the clinic is for them to get their rabies shots and issue the St. Louis County rabies tag, but you have to pay for that, along with other shots you ask for. Now what I did find out is that when you come to the Clinic that Bellefontaine offers if you board your dog

or if you want your dog to get the flu vaccine they do not offer that they just offer the basis rabies shots that they give all the pets.

President Thomas stated we could solve that problem we have our people here when the vaccine is given and you have to get your permit if you live in Bellefontaine. If you give a Bellefontaine address, you have to purchase your permit at that time also. **Aldерwoman Dailes** stated that is how they do it, she asked **Lori Lenz (Finance Director)** and she stated yes.

Aldерwoman Dailes stated let us take a consensus, five or ten dollars. Jeff will send a form of what the permit fees are going to be.

Aldерwoman Hester stated so Jeff wanted us to increase it. Did he say why he wanted to increase it?

Aldерwoman Dailes stated we are going to increase all the permit fees and we are going to change the ordinance. We did not think it would break the bank we want people to have something that lives here in the city it is just like your occupancy permit. All the fees are going up it is just covering the cost of some of the things that we have to do.

Aldерwoman Warnusz stated she has talked to Jeff and Felicia about the dog thing and one of the things in part involves the police department (and they have a lot on their plates). But one of the things is there is a dog that they take that is loose or we suspect a house is breeding dogs they can give the owner depending on the situation the police can give the owner a warning and then if they are called to the same place they get a ticket. How can we enforce it, and that is by having a tag. I would like to have a sign put on Bellefontaine Road when it is time to have a clinic.

Aldерwoman Dailes stated we have a portal and that is one way the police can go into the portal to see what type of dog it is and the dog owner that is one way to enforce it. Question is are we in agreement that Jeff wants to raise the permit fee on many things and he will send a list out. The other question is for the board is that we would have to create an ordinance because I do not think we have one. Do we want AIR B&B and short-term rentals in the neighborhood? I mean that is a yes or a no. If we do not make legislation, they can come up everywhere.

President Thomas stated is there a legal ramification in stopping anyone, I know we can make the law, but is there any reason why that would cause us to go into some type of litigation if we said there is no Air B&B, there is no short term rentals in the city of Bellefontaine Neighbors.

Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman stated she would need to look at the landscape currently. But I know other cities are passing laws to regulate Air B&B's. They regulate, but not prohibit all together. We were just talking about the fact they were talking about that at the State level as well. I do not know if it has gone anywhere but I can certainly look at the issue.

Mayor Tatman stated she serves on the Missouri Municipal League Committee for Economic Development and Human Resource. That is one of the issues that has become before the board for the last three years. It is very litigious because some municipalities and states have tried to regulate, you can regulate but right now you cannot prohibit. That is the state law. But, that is one of the things we are working on to see how we do that because of the home based business is what the components are trying to put it up under. No we cannot prohibit, but we can regulate.

Alderman Dailes stated we are going to have a meeting on the 22nd regarding residential rentals. It will be myself, mayor, city attorney, director of public works, code enforcer and the city clerk. I would like one member from each ward to attend the meeting so we will not have a quorum.

Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman stated in order not to have any sunshine issues we need to limit it to two members of the board.

Alderman Dailes stated our Attorney says only two members of the board.

ALDERMAN'S REPORT

Alderman Alicia Smith

- Happy New Year everyone
- Thank you for coming out
- Alderman Dailes and I will continue to drive the city on Sundays.
- I did here several of the citizens discuss trashcans. Alderman Dailes and I drive the city and that is one of the things we do.

- We ask that all citizens please pull your trashcans in right after the trash man empties your trash. We do understand some citizens who are seniors and are disabled and we do go and assist to pull their trashcans in and out.
- Please know that the trash company does pull your trash out for you if you are handicap and you contact them. They are unaware if you are a senior or handicap and cannot do this for yourself.
- If you do not pull, your trashcan is still out on Sundays you will have an ordinance stuck in your door.
- If you do not want me to knock on your door, please pull your trashcan in.
- Please continue to go out and meet your neighbors.
- Alderwoman Dailes, myself along with a good citizen of ours do send out welcome letters to those that are newly moving into our community.
- Numerous calls on why I did vote no on the fence ordinance. It conflicts with state statues.

Alderwoman Alease Dailes

- Happy New Year everybody
- I am piggyback on what we do. We have had citizens call and talk about what has happened next door to them. Police show up, drive by and point at the house that called.
- In Ward 4, if you have an issue you call the alderwoman and we call the police. We have issues out the wing Wang, and we do knock on doors and we do put notices on doors.
- It is many things you see in the city, that is in the driveway and everything, If it dealing with a vehicle that is the police department. I just asked do we follow the ordinance, nope, we do not and we have not followed the ordinance since 2015 when we got the former chief. That is why the city looks like that. However, we not going to blame. I have been here for thirty years, I remember your garage door open, and they put a sticker on your door.
- In our ward we do not let anyone call because the police will definitely come and point at the house that called. That is why people are killed. Unfortunately, that has happened and just happened this past week.

- The other thing is numerous calls from people in Ward 4. I know there is somebody out on next-door that is blowing me up, but that is Ok. Because when people talk about you, they either want to be like you jealous of you or something. In addition, I will make a statement on that. I also been told how I have been dogged out last week. My name has been drug in the mud. That is ok if that is what you have to do to be elected.
- For the record, it is unfortunate but this the game that we are in when dealing with politics it is not always fair.
- We have
- A lot of senior citizens in our neighborhood. I do have a form if anybody here wants to be a member of the Federation of Block Units. The more we have the more we can do around the holidays to get our senior citizens baskets, Christmas dinners anybody that needs that you can reach out to me.
- If you have issues, you can always call me we are always driving.
- My colleague and I have gotten up at midnight to go look at property that are giving the neighborhood.
- One house we have been dealing with for three years that is a problem.
- We will try to help as many people as we can.
- Always remember walk with love, walk with forgiveness. People gonna say what they want to say. But actions speak louder than words.
- Thank everyone for coming out and hopefully we can keep this campaign clean.

Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward

- We do have a lot of work to do in our community. It will be a long road but we can do it if we come together as we should.
- Being on the same page, I believe everyone in the community wants the same thing. We just have different ways going about getting it done. We have to come together on the same page to get anything done.
- I want to make a statement-I do not know if you are aware, we are getting ready to have a juvenile facility built at the end of Bellefontaine Road its on State property so it is not, as if it is anything

we can do about that. However, I just want to let you all know that if you have any questions about that about how it is going to go work and how it is going to go. I have the answers to all your questions. The particular facility that they are bringing out here I worked at the division for 28 years that is where I retired. I talked to the facility manager that will be over the facility. She invited me to be on the liaison board so we can have that partnership between the city and the Division of Youth Services.

- I have a layout of what the facility is going to look like.
- Even though we are not getting any revenue from this, this is an all-state thing. I know you have concerns about safety an things of that nature.
- If you have, any questions please feel free to call me and ask me and I will have an answer for you.
- Thank you for coming out and I hope you have a BLESSED New Year.

President Thomas made motion for the workshop on January 19th, 2024 at 6:00 pm Via Zoom to discuss the fence ordinance; Alderwoman Dailes seconded.

City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll for Fence Ordinance Workshop on January 19, 2024 at 6:00pm Via Zoom

- Alderwoman Theresa Hester-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-**Yes**
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Alease Dailes-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Alicia Smith-**Yes**

6-Yays/0-Nays. Motion passes.

President James Thomas, Sr.

- Read a letter on Behalf of Riverview Gardens School District; Ribbon cutting for Health Center at RGHS on January 9, 2024 from 4-5 pm.
- Great day for Riverview Gardens School District to continue to strive toward accreditation and to also add a health care component inside the school so we can help our children be more healthy.

- Thanked Citizens for coming out tonight. Those citizens in Ward 3 you call me, and I will call you and we will work it out. There is nothing we cannot work out.

Alderman Peg Warnusz

- Happy New Year
- I am concerned about communication. Nothing gets done if we are not communicating well with one another. I get information because I am an alderperson, but the city needs some of that information to and is that portal that Jeff has out there does it come from me or the citizen?
- If they do not feel they have a way of communicating with us then nothing gets done, I guess I want to look at how we communicate within the city.
- All this is going on but nothing gets accomplished.

Alderman Theresa Hester

- Happy New Year 2024
- Hopefully we can get some legislation done in 2024 because we have not done much this pass year.
- Thanks for coming out.

Mayor Dinah Tatman

- My report is on the table (Attached)
- I encourage because it has been decided because I think it is good. Any response to my letter if you email it to the city clerk it will be put on the website for everyone to read.
- My letter is there and any citizen's responses will be put there as well. So that gives us an opportunity to dialogue. That's my report we have had citizens to respond so that is the way to dialogue.
- All citizens' responses will be placed on the website, which gives us another way to communicate as well as the next-door app and the Facebook page.

Adjournment

President Thomas, Sr. motioned to adjourn, Alderman Harmon-Ward, seconded.

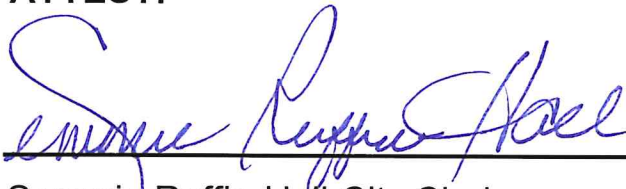
City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll for adjournment:

- Alderwoman Theresa Hester-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-**Yes**
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Alease Dailes-**Yes**
- Alderwoman Alicia Smith-**Yes**

6-Yays/0-Nays. Motion passes.

Adjournment at 8:28 pm.

ATTEST:



Semmie Ruffin-Hall-City Clerk

Approved by the Board of Aldermen on:

2-15-24