

City of Bloomfield City Council Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2024

6:30 p.m.

A regular scheduled City of Bloomfield City Council meeting was held Monday, February 19, 2024 at the East Nelson Fire Department 130 Perry St., Bloomfield Kentucky.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor Dudgeon led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to Order:

Mayor Dudgeon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Presiding Officer:	Christopher Dudgeon, Mayor
Council Members:	Laura Barnett
	Scott Stevenson
	Judy Wilson
	Tina Long
	John Hammond
City Attorney:	Thomas Hamilton
Water Superintendent:	Derrick Hagan
City Clerk:	Toni Burton

Public Comments:

Angie Keeling shared a couple of months ago the council approved to use ARPA funds to put in a pickleball court at the park. Ms. Keeling asked if that quote included the \$21,000 dollars for lighting at the park. Council Member John Hammond replied, no it was left off on purpose. Ms. Keeling asked if there were funds available to install cameras at the park and at city hall. Mayor Dudgeon shared the park has a budget of \$10, 000 dollars. The budget did not include the purchase of the cameras. Going forward we can look at next years budget or amending this year's budget to purchase cameras. Derrick and I have been talking about it. Council member Laura Barnett asked would the cameras at the park be considered a safety issue, and if so, could ARPA funds be used to purchase the cameras. Mayor Dudgeon said, yes probably, but city council has already approved to use ARPA funds to put in a pickleball court and we should proceed with that. Council member Laura agreed.

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Public Comments Continues:

Ken Lemoine asked the status of hiring a police officer. Mayor Dudgeon shared we have that on the agenda to talk about. Ken replied, okay.

MO Rashad shared Mr. Williams with Channel 32 said that Bloomfield has the highest property tax rate in all of Nelson County. When is it going to be lowered? Mayor Dudgeon said that he has been mayor for five years. The first, four years the city took the compensating rate and that actually lowered taxes. Then inflation hit, last year we took the four percent rate. Council member Laura Barnett said it could be where the PVA has went around and reassessed the properties.

Christina Taylor shared that she is interested in serving on the city council.

Approval of the January 22, 2024 Special Called Meeting Minutes:

Tina Long made the motion to approve the January 22, 2024 Special Called Meeting minutes. Second by Judy Wilson. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

Approval of the January 2024 Financial Statements:

Judy Wilson made the motion to approve the January 2024 financial statements. Second by Tina Long. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

Water Department Report- Derrick Hagan:

Water Superintendent Derrick Hagan, shared Cornish Road is coming along. Hoping to be completed in the next 3 weeks and then will start testing. Derrick went on to share the water load station has been challenging. I believe I got most of the kinks worked out. Currently, talking with a company out of Kansas about options on how individuals can pay for there water. Mayor Dudgeon shared the city is looking at two different options either paying with a credit card or setting up an account and pay as you go. We are looking at the possibility of moving the water station, but do not have a specific location picked out at this time.

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Ethics Appointment:

Mayor Dudgeon shared that Laura Barnett reached out to him last week about the status of the city/county joint ethics board and the appointment of the current ethics board. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say two meetings ago Laura brought up that Nancy Glisson was interested, but no motion was ever made to appoint Nancy. Laura replied, right. Mayor Dudgeon said you all can do that tonight if you wish to. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say City Attorney Thomas Hamilton has been talking with KLC and the Bardstown City Attorney about this and he is working on our ethics ordinance. City Attorney Thomas Hamilton said that he hopes to have a draft ordinance to the council this week via e-mail. That it would amend our current ordinance and mirror the county's ordinance. Laura asked if city council would be able to appoint somebody to the joint board. Mayor Dudgeon replied, yes and that we have a certain time frame to do it. If the city does not appoint somebody the joint board will then appoint somebody themselves. Laura said the county ordinance has some qualifications to serve. Mayor Dudgeon agreed.

Laura Barnett made the motion to approve Nancy Glisson to the ethics board. Second by Tina Long. Council member John Hammond wanted to verify that Nancy Glisson is being appointed to the current ethics board and not the city/county joint board. Mayor Dudgeon said that is correct and that once the ordinance passes, she will come off. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

Police Update:

Mayor Dudgeon shared that Laura Barnett and several community members have asked for an update on the hiring of a police officer. We ran ad in the paper last year. Then when Toni come on; we ran the ad again. Toni has reached out to some retired officers that she knows and I have reached out. I was contacted by 3 individuals; none of them are retired. We added Derrick to the bank accounts to get a credit card. Toni and I sat down and posted the job on Indeed. Toni shared we received about 6 applications; none of which are retired. Mayor Dudgeon shared everybody is experiencing a police shortage. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say he was talking to KSP Officer Kevin Davis. KSP is experiencing a huge shortage. Last year we talked about possibly contracting with the sheriff's department. As you may know City of New Haven partnered with the Sheriff's department. Toni reached out to get some information. New Havens budget for the police department is about \$86,000 dollars a year. We have contingency funds on the city side; we may be able to increase our police budget. A member of the audience asked if we could possibly look at increasing the hourly rate for a police officer. Another member of the audience shared that Bloomfield is part of Nelson County and the Sheriff's department should not get a "That a boy" for doing their job. Sheriff Ramon said I already have the task of responding to calls. KSP only responds if they have units available. The sheriff's department comes regardless. I have been hesitant about entering into a contract with Bloomfield because of these attitudes.

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Police Update Continued:

Sheriff Ramon said that he has reached out to several retired officers to work in Bloomfield; nobody wants it. In today's culture when police officers retire, they stay retired. Council member Tina Long shared the average rate for a lateral officer is between \$29 and \$31 dollars. Tina asked if we could put a time limit on posting on Indeed. If we do not get anywhere with Indeed then go back and explore the option of contracting with the Sheriff's department. Sheriff Ramon said that the city create a flyer and he would post it on the sheriffs Facebook page. Mayor Dudgeon shared that he has spoken to Toni and KLC we could possibly hire 2 part time officers. Laura asked how long does the ad run on Indeed. Mayor Dudgeon shared you run it for as long as you want to. Tina Long said let us take some extra time to and try to find the right officer. Make sure their background checks out, and they are a good fit for Bloomfield. Mayor Dudgeon shared the City of New Haven also has an Insurance Premium Tax to pay for their police officer. The Insurance Premium Tax is on top of property tax; and we do not have that here. I do not want to do add another tax just to fund a police department; when we already have coverage. Also, several citizens have posted on Facebook and council members have said we need to go ahead and purchase a police vehicle. I do not agree with that; I think we should wait until we do hire an officer. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say I have gotten a quote for a new Dodge Charger. The mayor gave each council member a copy of the quote. Mayor Dudgeon said the quote of \$36,000 dollars is for the vehicle only and that it would cost another \$10,000 dollars to equip the vehicle. Several citizens asked about the current police vehicles. Mayor Dudgeon shared they are old, but citizens have posted on social media along with council members have continuously said we need to purchase a new vehicle. I have not purchased a new vehicle, because we did not put it in the budget. Myself and the staff get together each year and gather information money coming, expenses going out, list of projects. I bring that information to the council; it is the council's job to set the budget. As far as amending the budget, I have no authority. It is the council's job to amend the budget. The mayor provided each council member a copy of the current budget ordinance, and said if any of you want to make a motion to amend the current budget just, please a few people who come to the meeting, go ahead. Council member Laura Barnett asked Sheriff Ramon if you were going to come work for Bloomfield and they told you they were going to buy a new vehicle would you believe them. Sheriff Ramon said yes. Mayor Dudgeon said let me clarify something. If I am interviewing a candidate and I tell them were going to purchase a new vehicle before the council has agreed to buy it. Then that is me lying to them. Laura agreed. Ken Lemoine asked if the Indeed ad has been placed yet. Toni Burton replied yes, but I froze it this morning; because the mayor had some things he wanted to talk to the council about. Ken Lemoine said, Toni I talked to you last week. Toni said, yes you called me. Ken Lemoine said, I have been looking in the paper the last couple of days for the police chief ad. Toni, I told you those ads were ran in January. Toni Burton went on to say, I believe i gave you the dates of January 14th and 17th.

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Police Update Continued:

Mayor Dudgeon asked the council if they had any other questions or comments about hiring a police officer or purchasing a cruiser. Nobody said anything. No action was taken.

ARPA Funds:

Mayor Dudgeon said Laura reached out about ARPA funds. I am going to let her talk about it because I am not sure what she wants. Council member Laura Barnett said it was about buying police equipment with ARPA funds. Mayor Dudgeon said remember we have already approved using ARPA funds to put in a pickleball court and upgrades at the park. John Hammond is working on getting an actual quote.

BOA - Nathan Jones:

Jan with Planning & Zoning sent us a letter. You all received a copy in your packet. Nathan Jones serves on both the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustments. Nathan's term on the BOA is up and Jan said he is willing to continue to serve. We have 30 days to appoint somebody or we can re appoint him. Council member Tina Long suggested we leave this on for the next meeting until we can communicate.

Tim Benham Resignation:

Mayor Dudgeon shared that last month we had a Special Called meeting and had to follow the agenda. Right before the meeting Tim handed me his resignation, but we could not speak about it. We have 30 days from today to appoint somebody. Tomorrow, I will post it on the city's Facebook page. I know Christina Taylor has said she is interested in the position. At our next meeting we will appoint somebody. Council member Laura Barnett shared that Ken Lemoine was interested in it. Mo Rashad asked what is the city's way of notifying the public. Mayor Dudgeon said Facebook. Mo asked what about folks who does not use Facebook. Mayor Dudgeon we are going to talk about website. Derrick and I have been talking about software that pushes text messages.

Website/E-mail Addresses:

Mayor Dudgeon told the council in their council packet was a copy of the agreement for our new website. Mayor Dudgeon encouraged the council to look at City of New Havens website. The same company that did theirs is who will be doing ours. This company gets paid off credit card fees. So, if somebody wants to rent the park they can go online fill out the paperwork

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Website/E-mail Addresses Continued:

and pay the fee. There is going to be a lot of work to go into this; so, it is going to take some time. Council member Laura Barnett shared the agreement says one person will be in charge to manage it. Mayor Dudgeon said that will be Toni. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say that Bardstown Cable has sold out to Spectrum. Nobody knows if Spectrum is going to keep the email services. The city has their own domain. We are working all new email addresses. I set my new one up over the weekend and its working. It is cdudgeon@bloomfieldky.org. It is two factor authentication.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Dudgeon said he has two things to share under mayor's report. Toni and I have been working with KLC representative on Employee Handbook. There are several items that is standard topics that need to be in the handbook. Toni has brought each you a copy to start looking over it. The KLC representative will come down and do training. Council member Laura Barnett asked what this training would be. Toni Burton responded most of the handbook is for employees; however, their items within the handbook that are for elected officials. A portion of the training will be for Supervisors, a portion for supervisors and employees and a portion for elected officials.

Council Report:

John Hammond had nothing to share.

Tina Long shared that the city operates under Roberts Rules of Order. The public is given opportunity to speak. When it is time for the council members handle the city's business; please be respectful and allow us to speak without being interrupted.

Judy Wilson shared the church's Easter Egg Hunt will be on Sunday March 24th at 2 o'clock.

Scott Stevenson asked Mayor Dudgeon for an update on the railing on Fairfield Rd. Mayor Dudgeon said he gave the task to maintenance worker Lane Mattingly, and asked Maintenance Supervisor Derrick Hagan to check into it.

Laura Barnett had nothing to share.