

CITY OF LAWRENCE
Common Council
January 17, 2024
Regular Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: William Tyrrell Giles, Rick Wells, Lisa Chavis, Zach Cramer, Kristie Krone, Sherron Freeman, Carlos Jennings, Betty Robinson, and Liz Masur

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO, BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Leatrice Adkisson, John Gregg, Ice Miller

STAFF PRESENT: Chief of Staff Zachary Brown, Deputy Chief of Staff LeAndre Level

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Chief Bigsbee

Council President Betty Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was administered, following by a prayer given by Councilor Giles.

Councilor Robinson recognized there was a quorum.

COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: Councilor Freeman reported that she had a conversation with Miss Jackie, you would like the council to investigate the speed limit signs located on Lawton Loop West Drive, between Otis and 56th Street. Councilor Freeman also spoke with Miss Jennifer, regarding the absence of the blue “City of Lawrence” street sign at the entrance at, 56th Street, Franklin Road, and Benjamin Drive. After speaking with Jim Henegan, of DPW, and Deputy Chief of Staff, LeAndre Level, Councilor Freeman was told it would be taken care of. Councilor Freeman also spoke with Miss Nicole about a needed cross walk, directly across from of the Lawrence Community Park baseball field. She feels is needed because there’s only 2 traffic lights on Franklin Road. At Pendleton Pike & Franklin Road and 56th Street & Franklin Road. She would like the council to look further into this. Councilor Freeman continues to say she received an email from Mr. Ford. Whom stated he pays for an additional trash tote and only 1 was delivered. Councilor Freeman informed him she was told, the households that pay for an additional tote will receive it after each household has received 1.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 1-08-2024: Councilor Chavis motioned to approve the minutes. Councilor Cramer 2nd the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS 1-17-24: Councilor Giles moved to approve Payroll Claims for \$965,042.88 [December 15, 2023, payroll], Payroll Claims for \$887,786.90 [December 31, 2023, payroll], and Invoices [for vendors] as presented today [for \$2,209,812.30] Councilor Chavis seconded the motion. By a roll call vote, the motion was carried by the following vote of the Council: Eight (8) aye votes and one (1) abstain vote (Councilor Wells).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion on retaining Legal Counsel for the Lawrence Common Council. Councilor Giles moved a motion to select legal counsel for 2024. It was seconded by Councilor Chavis. Councilor Freeman asked for the names of the 2 attorney firms that are being considered, Frost Brown Todd and Ice Miller. It was asked by Councilor Giles if councilors could ask questions of the 2 firms. The question was asked by Councilor Giles to John Gregg, of Ice Miller who extend them the invite.

Mr. Gregg was then called to the podium to introduce himself and to answer any other questions. Councilor Cramer moved the motion for a vote, on if all councilors wanted to vote on legal counsel tonight. Councilor Wells 2nd the motion. Roll call vote, (8) aye and (1) abstention, Councilor Jennings. Motion carried. Councilor Cramer moved a motion to select Ice Miller as legal counsel for Lawrence Common Council 2024. Councilor Freeman, 2nd the motion. Roll call vote for Ice Miller, (3) ayes Councilors Robinson, Freeman, and Cramer, (5) nays, Councilor Masur, Krone, Giles, Wells and Chavis, (1) abstention, Councilor Jennings. Motion failed. Councilor Giles moved a motion to select Frost Brown Todd for 2024 legal counsel. Councilor Chavis 2nd the motion. Roll call vote for Frost Brown Todd (5) ayes, Councilors Chavis, Giles, Wells, Masur, Krone (3) nays, Councilor Robinson, Cramer, Freeman (1) abstention Councilor Jennings, motion carried.

Councilor Chavis moved motion to table NEW BUSINESS items B-G on tonight's agenda until next meeting (2/5/2025). Councilor Cramer 2nd the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION: LeAndre Level, Deputy Chief of Staff announced the mayor toured many fire stations and has met with several personnel. She plans to meet with many more this week. Former Mayor of Elkhart, Jim Perron, has been appointed to the board of Public Work & Safety by Mayor Whitfield. Along with Barbara Lawrence, Marion County Treasurer and Zachary Brown, Chief of Staff. The mayor will continue to make appointments in the coming days. Chief Wallace wants the Council to know Fire Station #37 on German Church Road had a water sprinkler system burst. It is now fixed, and the damage is being assessed for insurance purposes. DPW has released permits for remodeling on the Burnett Building, 5731 Lawton Loop East Drive. Total estimated investments are 7 million dollars. The remodeling of Walmart on Pendleton Pike is an estimated investment of 2.5million-dollar project. The Oaklandon Golf Course is also being remodeled. This project is estimated at 1 million dollars. The Parks and Recreation Director, Eric Martin, wants the council to know the board accepted and awarded construction for the Lee Road Trail. The bid for this project was as high as 1.6 million dollars and as low as \$940,000. The Board also approved a construction and inspection agreement with United Consulting, to provide the city with inspection reports, contractor meetings and assurance of the construction standards throughout the trail construction process. This will total \$136, 000. All the funding above will be paid for with the 1.7-million-dollar Next Trail funding grant, round 3.

Councilor Wells voiced his concerns with the zoning issue and enforcing the city's zoning laws in his district. A variance was granted to a business owner 3 years ago with a promise that has not been fulfilled. This commitment was given to the Zoning Board. Councilor Wells would like this to be addressed at the next Zoning meeting. LeAndre did inform the council that the mayor is aware of this issue.

Councilor Giles wanted to know if live council meetings would be re implemented in the future. LeAndre did inform the council this is something that is in the works.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m., by President Robinson.

Betty Robinson, President

Leatrice Adkisson, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions.