

MINUTES
SMITHS GROVE CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
SMITHS GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, February 27, 2023 -7:00 p.m.

Mayor Stiffey called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Members Present: Commissioner Maurice (Buddy) Marr, Commissioner Eric Schroader, Commissioner Bob Buehl, Mayor David Stiffey, Commissioner Jennifer Cartwright, City Attorney Hamp Moore, Police Chief Franks, Assistant Chief Rick Bessette and Assistant City Clerk Debbie Joyner

Members Absent: None

Recognized Guests: Ben Peterson, Executive Director City-County Planning Commission, Eric Sexton, Executive Director BRADD, Fire Chief Kenneth Priddy, Magistrate Rex McWhorter

Invocation was given by Commissioner Jennifer Cartwright
All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Stiffey asked the Commissioners if there were any corrections or additions to the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 23, 2023. With no additions or revisions, the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report – January 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Marr to accept the Treasurers Report as read and was seconded by Commissioner Schroader. The Treasurer's Report was approved by 5-0 vote.

Administration Report

Mayor Stiffey deferred to Ben Peterson to highlight changes to the FOCUS 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Peterson stated these changes should have limited impact on Smiths Grove. Temporary signs which can no longer be placed in rights-of-way: businesses may negotiate with existing commercial property owners and place signs with their approval. A group within the tourist industry has requested to include AIRBNB for RV's and campers in some public areas which include wineries. Businesses would be allowed 1, up to 4, spots for overnight use. Federal Fair Housing Act: disabled persons now includes recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. Facilities for these persons will be allowed in any residential zone with a limit of 2 persons per bedroom. Mr. Peterson stated changes were made to 87 of the 250 pages in the FOCUS 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Peterson state the proposed changes become law on April 19, 2023. If the City of Smiths Grove allows the 90 day notice to expire, the updated document becomes law and the City does not have to pay for publishing an Ordinance. Mr. Peterson reported that Warren County's estimated population will increase by 75,000 by 2050. He also stated Smiths Grove's population is expected to grow due to the planned construction of Bu-cee's and Envision Battery. He would like to see a more focused plan in place for this area. Mr. Peterson stated the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has done another traffic study in Smiths Grove. He reported Joe Plunk, PE, is the Chief District Engineer for

District 3. Mr. Peterson reported that Bu-cee's has been given plan approval from City-County Planning Commission.

Mayor Stiffey recognized Eric Sexton of BRADD. Mr. Sexton stated BRADD is here to help and support Smiths Grove in any way possible. He stated BRADD received funding to do a transit feasibility study which will include Smiths Grove and the study should be completed in August, 2023. Mr. Sexton reported the Bowling Green MPO will be doing a federal lands study for a trail system from Bowling Green to Mammoth Cave. He also reminded everyone of the Aging Services provided by BRADD and the quarterly steering committee meetings that are open to the public. Mr. Sexton stated it is good to see Chief Franks attending various meetings and trainings at BRADD.

Public Works Report

Commissioner Marr stated that he had nothing to report at this time but bids will be going out soon for paving. Commissioner Marr reported he had ridden with Chief Franks last week to review Code Enforcement issues and he had gone to the State Crime Lab with him last Friday. Commissioner Marr introduced Derrick and Ally Lorenz who are new staff members at Smiths Grove Baptist Church. The Lorenz's introduced themselves and stated they will be happy to assist in any way in the community.

Police, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Report

Commissioner Schroader stated that he had attended training at BRADD and will attend two more days in March. Commissioner Schroader showed all an emergency care bag available from the American Red Cross. Chief Franks reported the Police Department has been very busy. Chief Franks met with leaders in Warren County last Friday due to the recent fentanyl overdoses. Chief Franks stated the fentanyl problem is serious and increasing in our area. In 2022, there were 24-27 fatalities in Warren County associated with fentanyl. There have been 12 fatalities in the first two months of 2023. The group discussed PSA's and distributing them on all media platforms. Chief Franks stated that everyone should inform themselves on this crisis.

Cemetery Report

Commissioner Buehl stated the Cemetery camera computer hard drive was repaired. He also stated grass is growing and mowing will begin soon. Commissioner Buehl stated when warm weather arrives he will begin working on tombstones that have issues. Commissioner Schroader has volunteered to help with this project.

Code Enforcement Report

Commissioner Cartwright stated she had met with Chief Franks to familiarize herself with code enforcement ordinances. She also reported that they received positive interactions with citizens who had received citations. Chief Franks reported the shed on the property next to Bank of Edmonson County had been taken down and most of debris has been removed. Chief Franks reported the burned house on Witherspoon is being cleaned up. Please contact Chief Franks or Commissioner Cartwright to report code enforcement issues.

Mayor Stiffey asked City Attorney Hamp Moore to give an update on the status of the property at 5th and Main Street. Attorney Moore stated that there had been construction of a car port on this property over a year ago that was constructed in the right-of-way. Attorney Moore continued to explain that this property had been issued a notice of violation, a citation, and ultimately the violation and citation were affirmed at a hearing and a fine was imposed at that time. The residents

continue to ignore the violation and refuse to pay the accruing fines and consequently a lien was filed on the property for non-payment of the fines. The structure remains at this time and there is updated construction being performed on the structure to enclose it. Attorney Moore stated foreclosure action on the property is in order to collect fines. Approval is needed from Warren County Code Enforcement to proceed with foreclosure action and he should have answers by the 2nd week of March. Attorney Moore stated this is not an easy process. The property owner(s) are not interested in reconciling the issue and have been given every opportunity to bring the property into compliance.

Old Business

Commissioner Buehl opened the two mowing bids received and reported that bids are close. Bids were received from Brian Gaul and Baxter's Cemetery Services (Jim Baxter). Mayor Stiffey stated that Brian Gaul had recently sold his chicken barns and mowing of the Smiths Grove Cemetery would be his priority. Mr. Gaul has mowed the cemetery in the past for approximately 5 – 10 years and always did a good job. Mayor Stiffey reported that Mr. Baxter also did a good job but he is very busy with other demands. Brian Gaul's bid for each mowing of the cemetery is \$1,000.00 and Baxter's Cemetery Services bid is \$900.00 per mowing. Commissioner Buehl made a motion to accept Brian Gaul's bid and Commissioner Schroader seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 5-0 vote.

New Business

Resolution No. 2023-002 Adopting the Warren County Area Solid Waste Management Plan 2023-2027 Update – Attorney Moore stated he had spoken with Stan Reagan to get clarification on the resolution. He reported adoption of the resolution would not change the City of Smiths Grove's solid waste franchise with Republic Services or the ability in the future to contract with another solid waste provider. A motion was made by Mayor Stiffey to adopt resolution no. 2023-002 with additional wording that the resolution does not affect the City's choice of a solid waste provider. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Buehl and the motion was approved by 5-0 vote.

Approve new rate of City paid Health Insurance coverage for Police Dept. - \$1,615.00
Mayor Stiffey stated the previous rate the City paid was approximately \$1,300 per month. Commissioner Schroader made a motion to approve and Commissioner Buehl seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 5-0 vote.

Municipal Order 2023-001 Transfer American Rescue Plan Funds bank balance to General Fund bank account. Mayor Stiffey stated there is approximately \$172,000 in ARP funds in a separate bank account that the City would like use for two projects or expenditures. The first is a donation in the amount of \$85,000.00 to the Smiths Grove Fire Department for the purchase of 20 air packs. Commissioner Marr stated the air packs are vital to the safety of the firefighters and are used to enter structure fires. Commissioner Marr also stated the Smiths Grove Fire Department is not under the City of Smiths Grove, they are under Warren County Fiscal Court. Commissioner Cartwright stated that this donation would be an important show of support for our Fire Department and the work they do. Mayor Stiffey stated the remaining ARP funds (approximately \$87,000) would be used to hire a new police officer. He stated with the impending growth in Smiths Grove, it is important that our Police Department increase in order to protect our citizens. Mayor Stiffey also stated if we wait until Bu-cee's is open to hire a new officer, we will be behind the eight ball.

Attorney Moore reported that he had spoken to Ms. Morgan Patterson who is a KLC attorney. She said the funds can be spent but will require an interlocal agreement between the City of Smiths Grove and the Smiths Grove Fire Department and the agreement must be approved by the State Department of Local Government (DLG). Mayor Stiffey asked Attorney Moore if he would draw up the interlocal agreement and he said yes. Attorney Moore also stated that Ms. Patterson said the expenditure of funds in the Police Department is appropriate. She did question if funds would be available in future budget years to sustain the hiring of the new officer and the Commissioners agreed that funds would be available due to business growth in Smiths Grove. Mayor Stiffey made a motion to approve Municipal Order 2023-001 and Commissioner Schroader seconded the motion. The motion passed by 5-0 vote.

Commissioner Marr reported that former Commissioner Steve Roney's mother is ill and asked everyone for their thoughts and prayers. Mayor Stiffey reported that Assistant Clerk Paula Sleeman is expecting her first grandchild (granddaughter) any day!

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

APPROVED David L. Stiffey
DAVID L. STIFFEY, MAYOR

ATTEST Debbie Joyner
DEBBIE JOYNER, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

DATE 3-27-23
Minutes were prepared by Debbie Joyner, Assistant City Clerk