

**MINUTES**  
**SMITHS GROVE CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**  
**SMITHS GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 2023 7:00PM**

Mayor Stiffey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

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

Members Absent: None

Invocation was given by Gregg Farrell, Senior Pastor-Crossland Community Church  
All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mayor Stiffey recognized the following guests: Warren County Sheriff Brett Hightower, Sherry Murphy, Executive Director-Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Melanie Lawrence, Executive Director-Operation Pride, Gregg Farrell, Debbie Richey, Smiths Grove Representative-City-County Planning Commission, Donnell Franklin, Velta Rose Smith, and Gerry Brown

**READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Stiffey asked the Commissioners if there were any corrections or additions to the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 24, 2023. With no changes, the minutes were approved unanimously.

**REPORTS**

**Treasurers Report – July 2023**

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

**Administration Report**

Mayor Stiffey stated he would like to thank City Clerk Nancy Howard for the report she provided him with income information. Approximately \$437,300 in revenue was received in fiscal year 2023. Mayor Stiffey also reported that the 2023 property tax bills will be distributed in the beginning of October. Mayor Stiffey brought up one item of new business which is the purchase of one additional Christmas light fixture for a street light pole. Commissioner Cartwright made a motion to purchase one additional Christmas light at a cost of approximately \$1,000 and Commissioner Schroader seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 5 -0 vote. Mayor Stiffey reminded everyone that the Smiths Grove Christmas Parade will be on Friday, December 1, 2023 and there will be discussion about the parade in the upcoming Commission meetings.

**Public Works Report**

Commissioner Marr reported that the City will cut back on paving projects due to funds that had to be spent on cleanup of storm damage. He stated portions of Lawson Street and Wayne Street will be paved. Commissioner Marr reported that the portion of Kentucky Street that dead ends at the railroad tracks will be covered with gravel instead of paved. He reported he has been in contact with a concrete vendor regarding sidewalk repairs and should have bids for the project soon.

**Police, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Report**

Commissioner Schroader asked everyone to be cognizant of school buses and students as schools started back this month. Commissioner Schroader also asked attendees to direct folks to city officials when they have questions. This will minimize incorrect information being distributed on social media platforms. Chief Franks recognized Sheriff Hightower and thanked him for his department's help. Sheriff Hightower stated that Chief Franks and Assistant Chief Bessette makes it easy for the two departments to work together. Chief Franks stated that he had presented a Good Neighbor Award to Bridgette Nunn who is the manager of the Smiths Grove Wendy's. In June, a bus from Arkansas broke down in Smiths Grove and Ms. Nunn opened the dining room (drive through only was open due to shortage of workers) and fed the young passengers on the bus. Commissioner Marr stated he appreciates the cooperation between the police agencies and stated the Smiths Grove Fire Department is also appreciative of the Sheriff's Department. Mayor Stiffey asked Sheriff Hightower to convey his appreciation to his dispatchers and thanked them for the job they do.

### **Cemetery Report**

Commissioner Buehl reported that the cemetery looks good and his personal headstone has been repaired from storm damage. He stated he has one infant headstone at his home that he is working on and hopes to have it restored soon.

### **Code Enforcement Report**

Commissioner Cartwright reported storm damage cleanup is ongoing and some folks may be waiting on insurance reimbursement before work on cleanup of their property can begin. Chief Franks reported that progress is being made across the City as far as cleanup efforts are concerned. Chief Franks reported he met with Patsy Pillow regarding her rental properties and she is obtaining estimates for cleanup of those properties. He also stated property at 476 Cave Street has been mowed twice this month by the City. Mayor Stiffey mentioned junk cars on property in Smiths Grove and deferred to Attorney Moore for comments. Attorney Moore stated James Heady of the City County Planning Commission has looked at property on Main Street with inoperable vehicles and has determined a notice of violation is warranted. Commissioner Cartwright stated she is glad we are moving forward on the issue. Attorney Moore reported the August Code Enforcement Board hearing on property located at 5<sup>th</sup> & Main Streets was cancelled due to illness in the property owner's family and it is now scheduled to be addressed at the September meeting. Attorney Moore stated that the property owner has paid \$16,000 in fines and Commissioner Cartwright asked if fines continue to accrue and Attorney Moore stated yes.

Sherry Murphy introduced Melanie Lawrence of Operation Pride. Ms. Lawrence gave a brief overview of beautification projects being done by Operation Pride and details on how those projects are funded. She stated that Operation Pride is not only beautification oriented but economic development, as well.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Approval of invoices from Tree KO-BG (\$3,000) and Anthony Willis (\$1,375) for tree removal. Commissioner Buehl made a motion to approve the purchase and Commissioner Schroader seconded. The purchase was approved by 5 -0 vote. Mayor Stiffey stated that the next area to be worked on is Hedge Street by the U.S. Post Office and Commissioner Marr stated this is a safety hazard.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Approve purchase of \$5,000 for a used dump trailer and a \$2,000 grapple arm that can be attached to Raymond Wurst's excavator - City Clean-up Equipment. Mayor Stiffey made a motion to purchase the following equipment: a used 12 ft., 6,000 lb. axle dump trailer from Shawn Smith. Assistant Chief

Bessette reported this is the same trailer that Mr. Smith allowed the City to use during storm cleanup. Mayor Stiffey stated that Assistant Chief Bessette has agreed to keep the trailer in his barn. Mayor Stiffey stated the grapple arm will be paid for by Raymond (Fred) Wurst, Jr. and the City will reimburse him for the purchase. Both pieces of equipment will be used for future storm cleanup. Commissioner Schroader seconded the motion. Commissioner Cartwright asked if the purchases would be charged to the Code Enforcement budget and Mayor Stiffey responded that the Code Enforcement budget has already taken a hit from storm damage expenses and this purchase would be charged half to Police Expense and half to Street Maintenance. The purchase was approved by 5-0 vote.

Approve estimated cost per month for the Buc-ee's Way (7) street lights paid by City of Smiths Grove. Mayor Stiffey stated the 7 lights would be Mongoose which the City has three of that type at the Cemetery. Mayor Stiffey reported the approximate cost of the lights to the City will be \$360 per month (\$4,320 per year). The motion was made by Commissioner Cartwright to approve the cost and Commissioner Schroader seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 5-0 vote.

First reading of Ordinance 2023-002 Annual Assessing and Levying the 2023 Annual Property Tax on Real Property and Tangible Personal Property within the City of Smiths Grove, KY. The motion was made by Commissioner Marr to approve and Commissioner Buehl seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 5-0 vote. Second reading of the ordinance will be at the September 25, 2023 Commission meeting.

First reading of Ordinance 2023-003 Annual Assessing and Levying the 2023-2024 Annual Property Tax on Motor Vehicles and Watercraft having a Situs in the City of Smiths Grove, KY. The motion was made by Commissioner Schroader to approve and Commissioner Cartwright seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 5-0 vote. Second reading of the ordinance will be at the September 25, 2023 Commission meeting.

Ordinance 2023 -004 Closing Right-of-Way off Laurel Street. Attorney Moore stated that Bill Miller LLC owns the property at Laurel & Floral Streets and has requested closing of the right-of-way in order to build on the property. Attorney Moore reported that the City-County Planning Commission approved closure of the right-of-way on August 4, 2023 and there were no formal objections from citizens of Smiths Grove. Commissioner Schroader made a motion to approve the closing and Commissioner Buehl seconded the motion. Mayor Stiffey thanked City Clerk Nancy Howard for reminding him that an ordinance was necessary for this action. The motion passed by 5-0 vote.

Smiths Grove citizen Gerry Brown stated that he would like for the City Commission to stand against the KY Department of Transportation's preliminary improvement concept which includes a roundabout at Brown Street. He stated there would be a noise issue especially with the use of Jake Brakes by large trucks. He also stated that there is an issue with being able to see when exiting I-65 at the northbound ramp. Commissioners agreed that is a problem and Mayor Stiffey stated that traffic lights will be installed at the north and south bound ramps which should alleviate the problem. Mayor Stiffey also reported that the City Commission had addressed the issue of Jake Brakes before and because the State considers them to be a safety feature for trucks, the issue was dropped. Commissioner Marr reminded everyone that there will be a second meeting at the Fire Department hosted by the KY Department of Transportation to discuss the final design concept. He stated that will be a good time for everyone to voice their concerns. Debbie Richey stated that changes will have to be made as the project progresses.

Attorney Moore mentioned the former City-County Planning Commission representatives Herb Leopold, Gerald Brown, and Albert Rich and the legacy they left for us. He also mentioned our current representative, Debbie Richey, and the legacy she will leave behind.

Mayor Stiffey stated that the motel property (Bryce Inn) has been sold and will probably not remain a motel.

With there being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. by Mayor Stiffey.

APPROVED David L. Stiffey  
DAVID L. STIFFEY, MAYOR

ATTEST Debbie Joyner  
DEBBIE JOYNER, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

DATE September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Minutes were prepared by Debbie Joyner, Assistant City Clerk