

OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Called Meeting

March 19, 2024 - 4:00 PM

Owensboro City Hall

101 E. 4th Street

Owensboro, Kentucky

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Tom Watson

2. ROLL CALL – Beth Davis, City Clerk

Present:

Mayor Tom Watson

Mayor Pro Tem Mark Castlen

Commissioner Sharon NeSmith

Commissioner Bob Glenn

Commissioner Pam Smith-Wright

3. INVOCATION & PLEDGE – Commissioner Bob Glenn

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.A. Mark Marsh, President and CEO of Owensboro Health, presented their annual report (attached). Highlights of the report included: Owensboro Health (OH) is the largest private employer west of Louisville in Kentucky employing 5,816 team members with over fifty percent (50%) residing in Daviess County; \$8 Million was given in financial assistance and charity care, along with losses from treating Medicare patients; more than \$377 Million was spent in the local economy by employees and Owensboro Health; HealthForce One made its debut in October 2023; provided over \$1 Million in large and mini-grant investments in the OH footprint; and retained 91% of employed physicians and added 49 new providers.

4.B. Salvation Army's Divisional Resource Development Director Chris Head gave a presentation on the mission of The Salvation Army (attached). Their supportive services include providing rent, food, utility bills, clothing, furniture, food vouchers and fans. In 2023, The Salvation Army provided 466 families with 4,360 clothing items and 4,036 meals. They also operate an emergency assistance program, disaster relief services, ministry programs, teen and youth programs, Camp Paradise Valley, and Pathway of Hope (working to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty). Mr. Head introduced the local Corps officer, Lieutenant Victor Haworth.

4.C. Chief Art Ealum presented the annual report for the Police Department (attached). The highlight of 2023 was establishing the Owensboro Police Training Academy. Several community engagements returned in 2023 and new ones were added.

4.D. Human Resource Manager Josh Bachmeier gave a presentation on the City's hiring process and policies (attached). Mr. Bachmeier explained that an extra level of scrutiny is used when hiring for public safety positions and includes a significant amount of time and resources. There was brief discussion on medical marijuana and about the background check that was performed on the former officer that was recently terminated. Chief Ealum added that each employee is thoroughly vetted and in the last three (3) years only four percent (4%) of those that applied were able to make it through the background check to the next phase of the process.

4.E. The City Project List was included with the packet. City Engineer Kevin Collignon gave a brief update on the York Stormwater project (attached). The basin is completed, trees have been removed from the York ditch and park and the contractor is currently working on the storm sewer line on Griffith Avenue. The project is nearly twenty percent (20%) complete. The estimated completion date is January 2025.

5. BUSINESS

5.A. Minutes dated March 5, 2024 were unanimously approved by motion of Mayor Watson and a second by Commissioner Smith-Wright.

5.B. The following board appointments were unanimously approved by motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner NeSmith:

- **Owensboro Human Relations Commission** – Appoint Lee Nuckols to fill the remainder of an unexpired term which ends April 5, 2025 (replacing Nikie Walker). Appoint Kathryn Estes and Mary Anne Steele to a three-year term effective March 19, 2024.
- **Dogwood Azalea Neighborhood Alliance** – Appoint Francine Marseille and Mary Anne Steele to a two-year term effective March 19, 2024.

6. ORDINANCES - 2nd READING - None

7. ORDINANCES - 1st READING - None

8. MUNICIPAL ORDERS

8.A. Municipal Order 5-2024 entitled A MUNICIPAL ORDER AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN APPLICATION FOR THE 2024 CRUMB RUBBER/TIRE-DERIVED PRODUCTS GRANT THROUGH THE KENTUCKY DIVISION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE APPROXIMATE AMOUNT OF \$75,000.00, THE PROCEEDS OF WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED BY THE OWENBORO PARKS DEPARTMENT TO INSTALL POURED-IN-PLACE SURFACING AT TWO PLAYGROUNDS WITHIN MORELAND PARK; A 25% MATCH IS BEING REQUIRED BY THE CITY, was unanimously approved on one reading by motion of Mayor Watson and a second by Mayor Pro Tem Castlen.

The City of Owensboro seeks to file an application for the 2024 Crumb Rubber/Tire-Derived Products Grant through the Kentucky Division of Waste Management in the approximate amount of \$75,000.00, the proceeds of which will be utilized by the Owensboro Parks Department to install poured-in-place surfacing at both the large playground and toddler playground within Moreland Park. No match is required from the City. City Manager Pagan added that the playground is slated to be replaced soon and funds are available to satisfy the match if the grant application is approved.

8.B. Municipal Order 6-2024 entitled A MUNICIPAL ORDER AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN APPLICATION FOR THE KENTUCKY URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSISTANCE GRANT THROUGH THE KENTUCKY DIVISION OF FORESTRY IN THE APPROXIMATE AMOUNT OF \$97,950.00, THE PROCEEDS OF WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED BY THE OWENBORO PARKS DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH A STRONG URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM WITHIN THE CITY OF OWENSBORO; NO CASH MATCH IS REQUIRED BY THE CITY, was unanimously approved on one reading by motion of Mayor Watson and a second by Commissioner Glenn.

The City of Owensboro seeks to file an application for the Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant through the Kentucky Division of Forestry in the approximate amount of \$97,950.00, the proceeds of which will be utilized by the Owensboro Parks Department to establish a strong urban forestry program. The program will secure an ISA certified tree arborist to determine the best location for planting new trees and fund replacement trees. No match is required by the City. City Manager Pagan stated that the City has lost over 150 trees in the last three (3) years because of weather events. Pending approval of the application, the grant funds will be used to retain a certified arborist to evaluate the tree canopy, identify locations within each park that are ideal for tree plantings, and determine the correct tree [considering disease resistance and variety] for that location. The goal is to add over 100 trees through this program to improve the health and nature of city parks for the community to enjoy.

9. CITY MANAGER ITEMS

9.A. The financial report for the period ending February 29, 2024 was presented by Angela Waninger, Finance & Support Services Director (attached). Motion was made by Mayor Watson and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Castlen to file the report for audit; motion carried unanimously.

9.B. The following personnel appointments were unanimously approved by motion of Mayor Watson and second by Commissioner Smith-Wright:

NEW HIRE/PROBATIONARY STATUS:

- **Jameson B. Arnold** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***

- **Devin J. Dowdy** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Gary L. Johnson** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Joseph T. Keown** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Robert D. Luttrell** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Austin J. McDaniel** - Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Nicholas A. Thatcher** - Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective April 8, 2024, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***

City Manager Pagan added that the police officers listed will be the first group to attend the local police training academy.

9.C. City Manager Comments – Owensboro Fire Department has been working hard on recruitment and the latest process had 110 applicants compared to a typical recruitment of 35 applicants.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

Members of the Commission discussed the events they recently attended.

Commissioner NeSmith recognized all volunteers, including Kathy Estes in the audience, for serving on boards.

Mayor Watson said he will be testifying this week with the You Decide Kentucky (YDK!) Board of Directors in Frankfort regarding legislation.

11. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

Jennifer Young (712 W. 5th Street, Apt. 102) spoke in detail about the unfair treatment she has been receiving from the Green River Intra-county Transit System (GRITS) at the March 5 meeting. She reported that she has not been able to resolve anything with GRITS or City Attorney Mark Pfeifer.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m. by motion of Commissioner Smith-Wright and a second by Mayor Pro Tem Castlen.

Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Davis, City Clerk