

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF BRISTOL, TENNESSEE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

August 1, 2023

CALL TO ORDER:

The City of Bristol, Tennessee City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Vince Turner on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. in the Slater Center Auditorium.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Vince Turner, Vice Mayor Mark Hutton, Councilwoman Margaret Feierabend, Councilman Mahlon Luttrell, and Councilwoman Lea Powers.

Others Present: City Manager Kelli Bourgeois, City Recorder Mary Lee Williams, Director of Community Development and Planning Cherith Young, Fire Chief Mike Carrier, Police Officer Jimmy Dillard, Director of Community Relations Jon Luttrell, Director of Parks and Recreation Terry Napier, IT Manager Greg Cross, Director of Economic Development Tom Anderson, Director of Public Services Wes Ritchie, and other members of City staff.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice Mayor Mark Hutton gave the invocation and Councilwoman Lea Powers led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA ADDITIONS AND / OR CHANGES: None

PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS:

National Farmers Market Week – Councilwoman Margaret Feierabend read a proclamation designating August 6-12, 2023 as National Farmers Market Week. Terry Napier, Director of Parks and Recreation, was in attendance to accept the proclamation. Mr. Napier thanked the Council for the acknowledgement. He gave a brief overview of the Bristol Farmers Market including the days and times of operation, and encouraged everyone to support the Farmers Market which in turn supports the local farmers.

PRESENTATIONS: None

BOARD OF EDUCATION LIAISON REPORT:

Director of Schools Dr. Annette Tudor gave an update on back-to-school events. The teachers returned yesterday, and students will begin with an abbreviated day on August 4th. The abbreviated 2-hour day allows the opportunity for the students to begin adjusting from summer activities to the school environment and provides the opportunity for the school system to determine the actual number of students attending school and to hire additional staff if needed. The first full day for students is on Tuesday, August 8th. She highlighted the Family Resource Center and Kay Ward, the Center Coordinator, which offers lots of support and services to the community throughout the year, including some school supplies for those in need. Dr. Tudor also highlighted school safety which received an increased emphasis in Tennessee this year during the legislative session. Some laws changed with the most notable being all exterior doors must be locked at all times. In addition, there is a local policy that requires all interior doors to be locked at all times. There has never been an active shooter that has breached a locked door. All safety plans have

been updated and became effective July 1st. There is an anonymous reporting system in place for anyone to report bullying, discipline issues, safety, etc., and it is available locally as well as at the state level. The information on the system is available on the BTCS website. There is currently an alert system in 3 of the schools and is being added to the remaining schools which allows certified staff to send an alert if there is a medical or discipline situation or to put the school in lockdown if necessary. Dr. Tudor thanked the Fire and Police Departments for their collaboration with the school system to provide training and do a simulated active shooter drill at Tennessee High School.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS:

George Linke, 307 Rutledge Street, thanked the Council members that participated in the Tony Hawks Skate Park Heroes Challenge. The group did not make it past the quarter finals, but they did make it to the top 1% in the nation. Bristol was in competition with large metropolitan areas such as Denver and presented a unified show of force. The goal was to use any winnings toward the planned skate park, and they will continue the cooperative effort. They will continue to work with the Tony Hawk foundation for a grant. They are also working with the American Dermatological Association on the possibility of a shade grant maximum of \$8,000 to provide public park shade.

APPOINTMENTS:

Health and Educational Facilities Board – City Council addressed the vacancy of one seat. Councilwoman Powers and Councilwoman Feierabend spoke on behalf of the candidate. Dr. Barry Hopper was appointed by unanimous roll call vote to the Health and Educational Facilities Board to serve a term of office ending June 30, 2029.

Parks and Recreation Commission – City Council addressed the vacancy of one seat. Councilman Mahlon Luttrell and Councilwoman Feierabend spoke on behalf of the candidate. Mr. Curtis Rutherford was unanimously appointed by unanimous roll call vote to the Board of Code Appeals to serve a term of office ending June 30, 2026.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

A. First Reading of New Ordinances: None

B. Second Reading of New Ordinances: None

C. Resolutions:

Resolution 23-95 – A Resolution Authorizing the City to Enter a Lease Agreement with The Bristol Regional Tourism Marketing Corporation (“Explore Bristol”)

City Manager Kelli Bourgeois explained the Bristol Regional Tourism Marketing Corporation (Explore Bristol) is ready to move forward with building a visitor’s center and office space. In order to provide for the construction of that facility and the financing to go along with it, the City needs to enter into a lease agreement with Explore Bristol. The City owns two small parcels at the intersection of Volunteer Parkway and Anderson Street which are between the Volunteer Parkway and Wes Davis Greenway. The lease is for a forty-year period, the rent is ten dollars per year, and the City will continue to maintain the properties

except for the parking area and the property directly abutting the building which will be maintained by Explore Bristol. Explore Bristol will also be responsible for taxes and utilities as well as insurance. Once the lease expires after the forty years, the improvements that are made to the parcel would then come under ownership of the City.

Matt Bolas, Executive Director of Explore Bristol, expressed appreciation for this opportunity. Tourism has been extremely vibrant and impactful to our community. A visitor center is something that has been needed for a while where it can be open on weekends and for appropriate hours during the travel season to help visitors with information and encourage them to explore more and stay longer which helps our tax base. He gave some tourism statistics for Bristol from last fiscal year and talked about upcoming events and new construction projects. Mr. Bolas gave a brief description of the new visitor center and how it can impact the local business community as well as the region. Vice Mayor Mark Hutton motioned to approve, and Councilman Luttrell seconded.

Councilwoman Powers added that so many entities want to be showcased in the new visitor center, that at the last meeting of the Tourism Board there was discussion about opportunities to further expand the space. They also discussed the possibility of using the train cars near the Wes Davis Greenway. The level of professionalism associated with this tourism and marketing entity has earned six Pinnacle Awards for Northeast Tennessee and one for Best Overall Marketing Campaign. The current marketing area for Bristol, Tennessee and Bristol, Virginia is over 138,000. She thanked Council for their confidence in Explore Bristol and Matt Bolas for all his efforts. Councilman Luttrell added that Matt Bolas and John Scott are a two-person team that take their job seriously and work with a passion and he feels both Cities are honored to have this great team. Resolution 23-95 passed unanimously by roll call vote.

CONSENT AGENDA:

City Manager Bourgeois presented the Consent Agenda to Council. Councilwoman Feierabend motioned to approve, and Councilwoman Powers seconded. The following items were approved by unanimous Council roll call vote:

- Minutes July 11, 2023 City Council Called Work Session
- Minutes July 11, 2023 City Council Meeting
- Minutes July 25, 2023 City Council Work Session
- Resolution 23-96 A Resolution Authorizing the Temporary Use of Public Property and the Public Right-of-Way by the Birthplace of Country Music, Inc., for the Sale, Distribution, and Consumption of Beer
- Resolution 23-97 A Resolution Authorizing Payment to Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP for Legal Fees
- Resolution 23-98 A Resolution Authorizing Purchases Through Sourcewell, a Cooperative Purchasing Association
- Resolution 23-99 A Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Automated Side Loading Refuse Collection Vehicle through Sourcewell Cooperative

- Resolution 23-100 A Resolution Awarding Bid for the Purchase of Roll-Out Refuse Containers
- Resolution 23-101 A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Police Vehicle Equipment Under the State Contract
- Resolution 23-102 A Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Digital Forensic Extraction Devices / Recovery Software System for Criminal Investigation Division

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Bourgeois reminded everyone that on July 14th, we had a significant rain event receiving about four inches of rain in just a few hours. This required our Public Works Department to reply to over seventy phone calls for that one storm event. Office staff created a spreadsheet to report the damage and crews were dispatched from all areas of Public Works including the Solid Waste Division and Survey Crew. It was a very long day for them as they had an enormous amount of damage to deal with. We also received numerous calls and comments commending the work of the Public Works crews which was amazing. We cannot control the weather, but we can control how we as a City respond and our residents definitely took notice during that storm event, and she wanted to thank all the Public Works Department for the quick response as well as the professionalism and courtesy they provided to the residents during this stressful time. She mentioned the music downtown tonight and Thursday night. The City Manager and Director of Administration, Mary Lee Williams, were able to stop at National Night Out before the Council meeting tonight and it was very well attended. Our Police and Fire departments were both well represented, and it was a great event. There will be "Coffee with the Police Chief" next Tuesday, August 8th, 9-10 A.M. at the McDonalds on Volunteer Parkway and the Chamber State of the Cities event is next Wednesday, August 9th from 11:30 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. at the Train Station.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilwoman Powers mentioned September 9th-11th, is the Rhythm and Roots Festival. Ticket sales are ahead by 250-300 from this time last year. They are tracking to meet their goal of 7,000 weekend passes. There is a lot of good things happening with the Birthplace of Country Music where there is no state line. The Seamans announcement in July was great and there are other announcements forthcoming. There was a good work session to get the plat moving for The Overlook and to be proactive in addressing issues prior to construction of the units. We need to be sure to coordinate with the school system so they are aware of what is coming, and she would like to possibly invite someone from the BTSC to attend the Planning Commission meeting. All the departments and workers are drinking form a firehose and Explore Bristol is as well. She saw Public Works out constantly trying to address the needs from the wind damage and rain issues and she expressed her appreciation for all of their great service.

Councilwoman Feierabend said everyone needs to visit the Nature Center and see the sloth skeleton.

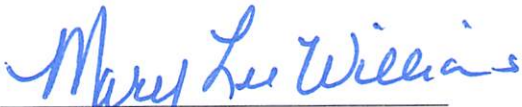
Councilman Luttrell appreciates the work of everyone every day. He witnessed firsthand how bad the storm event was in our area and said the Public Works group did a great job.


Vice Mayor Hutton is excited about the groundbreaking for the ball field. He is also excited about the fall events of the school system. We are in a great community with a great school system. He was recently in another 'tourist-y' city in East Tennessee, and he was appalled at how rough it was to be there. A few

days later he was on State Street and was thankful for how awesome and clean our City is kept. He is looking forward to seeing our community grow and tourism increase as the City works hard to keep everything looking top notch. He acknowledged Commissioner Akard being present. He thanked George Linke and the Bristol Skate Group for being an incredible example of a public-private partnership.

Councilwoman Feierabend commented she has visited several places this summer and agrees that there is a difference here in that our sidewalks are clean and trash is picked up which made her more appreciative of what we have here.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 P.M.


Mary Lee Williams, City Recorder


Vince Turner, Mayor