

**MINUTES OF A MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF COUNCIL AND THE  
FORT THOMAS SCHOOL BOARD OF THE  
CITY OF FORT THOMAS,  
CAMPBELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY, ON  
MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2020**

A meeting of the Board of Council and the Fort Thomas School Board was called to order at the Fort Thomas Independent Schools Professional Studies Center, 20 N. Grand Avenue. The following individuals were present:

Eric Haas, Mayor  
Jann Seidenfaden, City Attorney  
Roger Peterman, Councilmember  
Jamee Flaherty, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services  
Ken Bowman, Councilmember  
Bill Bradford, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning  
Lisa Duckworth, School Board  
Brad Fennell, School Board  
Karen Allen, School Board Chair  
Anne Meyer, School Board  
Adam Blau, Councilmember  
Joe Ewald, Director of Finance  
Karen Cheser, Superintendent  
Jeff Beach, School Board  
Mark Collier, Councilmember  
Ron Dill, City Administrator

**Review of City's Community Plan:** Ron Dill presented a power point to the school board regarding the City's Community Plan. Ron reviewed how the plan came to fruition through public comments and committee meetings. Ron also reviewed projects the city is looking at in the future as a part of this plan. Project updates for Tower Park and the Midway areas include: the placement of the General Thomas statue in Tower Park and surrounding roadway improvements and landscape, the Cochran Avenue safety enhancements to the roadway, the Mess Hall area and roadway improvements, the Tower Park softball field enhancements, the completion of the Alexander Circle rehabilitation, Tower Park Recreation improvements to Shelter #3, and possible acquisition of the stables building. Ron then reviewed updates to the Towne Center and CBD Districts, these updates include: the project currently underway at One Highland, the city building remodel, and the Towne Center parking study. Next, Ron reviewed projects related to Highland Park. These projects include improvements to the trail system through the park, dog park area improvements, installation of artificial turf on the baseball field and improvement to lower Highland Park fill project to include, parking, trailhead, and a possible splash park. Ron then discussed major corridors as they relate to the Community Plan. These include the U.S. 27 Smart Corridor plan that currently has an interlocal agreement between Fort Thomas, Southgate, Newport, Highland Heights and Campbell County.

Supporting partners for this project include St. Elizabeth, NKU, Southbank Partners, Energy Alliance and more are pending. Project updates for Rt. 8 were reviewed. The proposed concept from the Community Plan shows slower, park like road with stops/crossings for parking and trailheads, with linkages up and down from community assets and canoe/kayak launches for a river trail. The city has had multiple meeting with the KY Department of Transportation and will report back on this matter. Project updates for the Grand Avenue road diet and roundabout include, potential state funding for the roundabout, CT Consultants are investigating potential costs and KY Transportation Cabinet are proceeding with a traffic impact study. Project updates for the James and Highland Intersection include, regarding the roadway for better visibility, improving the crosswalk to match the school's crossing, adding retaining walls to minimize impacts to adjacent properties. The last project, update for roadways include the intersection of Waterworks Road and Memorial Parkway. Bollards have been installed to slow down drivers when turning from Memorial onto the upper section of Waterworks.

Ron then reviewed other projects including adding exercise equipment to Rossford Park and updating the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Code. Next steps include, budgeting, parking studies, zoning code updates and establishing a parks advisory council.

**Review of Fort Thomas Independent School District “Portrait of a Graduate”:** Karen Cheser updated on Portrait of a Graduate. This is a vision and plan for students in this changing world to ensure they are ready for graduation and to be successful later in life. This includes studying past graduates and seeing where they are currently in life and what the school could have done better. This is the third year of this plan; all information is on the school's website regarding this plan. Discussion continued regarding the many student programs and ideas related to Portrait of a Graduate.

**School Budget Forecasts:** Karen Cheser reviewed the school's budget. The school is looking to save money on every level. Seek (state) funding is at 32% of their funding and 68% is locally funded. She reviewed retirement payments and payroll. The budget is approximately 23.5 million. The schools cut \$700K from the expenses last year and are hoping to get more funding from the state this year. Discussion continued regarding property values and state funding and the problems the school are facing with the higher property values. Also discussed was the school resource officer and Senate Bill 1 that will require a safety officer in each school.

**City Budget Forecasts:** Joe Ewald reviewed the city's budget. The city has some of the same issues as the school, such as retirement contributions. The city's general fund is approximately 13.5 million. The city recently went with a self funded health insurance plan that has shown only a 7.1% increase as apposed to a 20% increase with private insurance.

**Shared Facilities:** Ron Dill noted that the city is very lucky to have the relationship with the schools and how easily we work together. Ron expanded on the shared facilities in the parks and what first class facilities they are. The city will continue to upgrade the fields. The tennis courts have been completed and turned out well. The armory floor has been refinished and looks much better. The Mess Hall and Armory building were tuck pointed, new gutters installed, and new roofs last year. Overall the city and school has a great partnership.

The pedestrian safety initiative was discussed between the city and the school district. Each year the school and city discuss all of the aspects of city and school safety.

**Other Issues of the School District and City:** Ron mentioned the acquisition of the stables building. There is a small patch of land (South Park) that is owned by the school that may have to be swapped with city owned land to provide a storage facility for the Army Reserve.

Jamee Flaherty would like to see collaboration between the school and city for a welcoming committee for people who move into the community to help them feel more at home and give them more information and who to ask when they have questions.

The city and school are planning to meet each January.