

**Special Council Meeting #753 Minutes
February 19, 2025**

Mayor Harper Riffle called the February 19, 2025, Special Council Meeting of City of Villa Hills Council (Meeting #753) to order at 6:30 p.m at the Villa Madonna Auditorium, 2500 Amsterdam Road, Villa Hills, Kentucky. Mayor Riffle led Council in prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Carr called the roll. Those in attendance:

Mayor H. Jansen
C. Bilz
P. Kennedy
S. Ringo
C. Stover
S. Thompson
S. Wadsworth

Craig T. Bohman, City Administrator
Jennifer Lipson, City Clerk
Matt Hall, Police Chief
Derick Yelton, Public Works Director
Mary Ann Stewart, City Attorney
Talha Adnan, City Engineer

Also in attendance were students from local 5th grade classes from River Ridge Elementary, Villa Madonna Academy, and St. Joseph Elementary who were shadowing elected officials and staff. The following students conducted the meeting with the advice and guidance of their respective sponsors:

Harper Riffle, Mayor (Mayor Jansen)
Kyle Crockett, Finance Committee Chair (Mr. Bilz)
Matthew Clark, Public Works Committee Chair (Mr. Thompson)
Wyatt Swaim, Events and Recreation Committee Chair (Mr. Kennedy)
Charlie Eby, Fire Authority Committee Chair (Mr. Ringo)
Royce Eubanks, Administration Committee Chair (Ms. Stover)
Teagan Carr, City Administrator (Mr. Bohman)
Cathryn Cunningham, Police Chief (Chief Hall)
Abigail Ginter, Public Works Director (Mr. Yelton)
Meriem Timezguida, City Attorney (Ms. Stewart)
Aquinas Amann, City Engineer (Mr. Adnan)
Marcy Becker, Safety Committee Chair (Ms. Wadsworth)

A quorum was present.

Mr. Ringo explained what Shadow Night is about. Children are at the age where they start thinking about what to do when they grow up. Council is looking to next generation for involvement in public service. For those who would like to view the meeting after it is over, it can be viewed on TBNK.org. Mr. Ringo formally introduced each student, and which staff or elected official the student is shadowing.

The first order of business was approval of the minutes of the January 15, 2025, Council meeting.

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Eby. A vote was taken. All voting in favor. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Police:

- Chief Cunningham presented the January 2025 Police report; the department had 1,176 calls for service. There were 3 reported crimes, 27 traffic collisions, 53 citations, 6 incident reports, 9 domestic calls, and 5 emotional crisis calls.
- Chief Cunningham reported that the top intersection for traffic collisions was Buttermilk Pike and Anderson Road
- Detective Sergeant Lucas continued to investigate several crimes. He closed a death investigation charging a person with importing and trafficking Fentanyl.
- Department training for January includes Response to Resistance incidents for all officers. Officer Dooley and K-9 Onexx had 5 deployments and is credited with 7 arrests and 11 charges.
- Chief Cunningham reported 29 hours of overtime for the month, which included 6 hours for court, 7 hours for shift coverage, 13 hours for criminal investigations, and 3 hours due to a snowstorm.

Safety Committee:

- Ms. Becker advised that the committee met, and Chief Hall presented his Police and K-9 report to them.
- Ms. Becker reported that there was a discussion about the placement of the Villa Madonna Academy Boy's Cross Country State Champions sign. The sign will be placed on Villa Madonna property until the road work at the corner of Amsterdam and Collins is finished in 2026.
- Ms. Becker advised that the next meeting will be March 11 at 3:30 pm.

City Engineer:

- Mr. Amann reported that the Collins and Amsterdam intersection project will help cars move through the area faster by reducing wait times. The city and project designers are working to get approval from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet before finishing the plans.
- Mr. Amann advised that the Valley Trails Reconstruction Project will make the road smoother and improve drainage to prevent flooding. Construction will begin as soon as the weather gets warmer.
- Villa Hills is building a pedestrian bridge on Rogers Road to connect the sidewalk and make walking safer. Design for this project will begin in July.

Public Works Committee:

- Mr. Clark reported that the committee discussed the intersection at Collins and Amsterdam. The committee is going to meet with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet about several issues in getting the project moving forward.
- Mr. Clark advised that they have heard back from the Kentucky Department of Water, and the Franzen dam is no longer classified as a dam by their official definition. This means that in the future, if we need to do any work there will not be as much red tape as there

would be. The City Engineer will inquire about having inspections done. One recommendation is to let the grass grow to at least 6 inches to help stabilize the dirt.

- Mr. Clark reported that the committee discussed a sinkhole that has opened on a property located in Crescent Springs. They are talking with the Crescent Springs City staff about it because the cause may be an old, abandoned pipe located in Villa Hills.
- The city is finishing cleaning up the old salt garage storage. The city is working with the city attorney on a release agreement with the landlord.

Public Works Director

- Ms. Ginter reported that the Public Works department has worked several hours on snowstorms and has used roughly 400 tons of salt to treat the city streets and parking lots and have spent an estimated \$50,000 (Fifty thousand) dollars on material.
- Ms. Ginter advised that the department has been patching several potholes, cleaning storm drains and picking up trash throughout the city for safe travel and good appearance to the public. They also drive the streets daily in case something failed overnight, like a sinkhole or fallen tree across the roadway.
- Ms. Ginter reported that Mr. Yelton has been busy with meetings, talking with the residents and updating the 2025 Road project list.
- Ms. Ginter advised that Mr. Yelton wished to thank the Fire department and Chief Wendt for offering our crew a warm place to rest and eat during the 2 large snowstorms. He also wished to thank the Police Department and citizens for organizing and moving vehicles off the streets, so the crew could operate and do the best snow removal for the community.

Recreation Committee:

- Mr. Swaim reported that they met February 7th and reviewed the ballfield leases with the Sisters of Saint Walburg and the Villa Hills Civic Club. Each was discussed in detail to understand the annual requirements of the City in both agreements.
- They also discussed the various field conditions that will dictate the ability to open the fields for spring baseball practices for Villa Madonna and the Longhorns. The anticipated opening date for both fields will be mid-March.
- Mr. Swaim advised that they agreed to contact Wayne Slusher to assess his desire to maintain the ball fields this year. Wayne has agreed to provide his services once again this year.
- Mr. Swaim reported that the committee discussed final plans for the completion of the second batting cage at Franzen fields. The support structure has arrived, and Public Works crew will be assembling the batting cage as soon as weather permits. There was also a meeting at Franzen to plan out the new blacktop walkway to be installed this spring between the ballfields. The Longhorns are paying for this project.
- Mr. Swaim advised that the construction of the new ballfields at Franzen has slowed with winter, but Mr. Yelton is working to secure additional fill dirt to raise the field to achieve its final form. The plan is to complete the work on the field itself by mid-summer. Grass and fencing will proceed from there.
- Mr. Swaim reported that after several discussions with Villa Madonna Academy, they will be painting their school colors only on the inside of the dugouts at the sports complex.

Finance Committee:

- Mr. Crockett advised that the committee met on Tuesday night in a special meeting due to the regular meeting date falling on a holiday.

- Mr. Crockett reported that the committee reviewed the financials and recommended approval of the January Financials
 - Mr. Crockett made a motion to approve January Financials, and to post the financials to the website, seconded by Mr. Eubanks. All voted in favor, Motion passed.
- The committee discussed the results of the joint Crescent Springs/Villa Hills finance meeting held on Tuesday.
 - The firehouse account still has a \$400,000 balance. The project has not been closed out yet.
 - The actual expenses for 2024/2025 will be less than budgeted. The CVFA intends to use the remaining funds to purchase air packs for \$220,000 and replace a vehicle for \$65,000
 - A replacement ambulance has been ordered with an estimated cost of \$400,000. The CVFA will ask both Councils for permission to restrict the remaining funds from the firehouse as a down payment for the ambulance, which would reduce the amount each city would need when it comes time to pay for the replacement.
 - The 2025/2026 budget shows a zero increase in costs to the cities.
 - The cost split between Villa Hills and Crescent Springs will remain 60%/40%.
 - The police cost will change from 58.14%/41.87% to 59.37%/40.64%.
- The Finance Committee recommends to Council that the 2025/2026 budget for CVFA be approved and included in the city's budget. The committee also recommended that the CVFA proposal that the estimated \$200,000 remaining in the firehouse budget be restricted as a down payment on the ambulance due to arrive in the 2026/2027 fiscal year.
- Mr. Crockett advised that the next regular meeting for Finance Committee will be on Monday, March 17th at 7:00 p.m.

Administration Committee:

- Mr. Eubanks advised that the City has a self-insured medical plan and not a fully insured plan. In a fully insured plan, the city would pay someone else, like Humana or Anthem to pay employees' medical bills. Using this type of plan, the city would pay more because the companies charge a fee to pay the medical bills. With self-insured, the city pays into an interlocal plan called MedBen, and this company pays the medical bills for city employees. The current monthly cost for the self-insured plan is \$30,200 as compared to the \$41,670, if the city was in a fully insured plan. This is a savings of 27.5%. The city's agreement with the Interlocal Health Pool plan began in 2014 and expires June 30, 2025. Within the next few months, the City Council will need to pass an Ordinance to approve extending enrollment in this plan.

Fire Authority:

- Mr. Eby reported that they welcomed Lamar Burton as the elected member of the committee from the Fire Department.
- Mr. Eby reported that Mr. Cahill asked that the board consider approving the banking positive pay program. This would protect the bank account for both hard copy checks and virtual transactions from any fraudulent activity, which is on the rise. The cost would be about \$250 per month. The board approved the motion.

- The joint finance meeting took place on February 18th, to discuss the proposed fire budget. The results of that meeting will be used to formulate the department's final budget for the next fiscal year.
- Mr. Eby advised that Chief Wendt reported 115 EMS calls in January and 58 Fire calls. The department will go through another ISO rating on March 4th. Some minor purchases were made for compliance. The radios were upgraded so the department is able to communicate with Cincinnati Fire Departments. This is important for river calls. Chief Wendt also stated that vehicle maintenance is high in January because the trucks needed very expensive new tires.
- The fire authority is waiting for a number of electrical issues to be addressed in the firehouse. There will be new concrete poured in the spring to address driveway heaving issues.
- Mr. Eby reported that the chairman advised that the Stryker equipment quote will be discussed at the March meeting when more data is available.
- Next meeting will be March 17, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Firehouse.

City Attorney:

- Ms. Timezguida advised that as the City Attorney she is responsible for providing all legal services for the City of Villa Hills. She provides advice and guidance to the Mayor, City Council, and to all of the employees of the City. She represents the City in all types of litigation, and drafts contracts and ordinances for the City.
- Ms. Timezguida reported that as city attorney, she assisted the City with preparations for tonight's agenda and some legislation, which will be addressed in more detail.

City Administrator:

- Ms. Carr reported that revenue growth at the end of December was strong with Insurance Premium Tax projected to be up 11% and Payroll tax up 9% for the fiscal year. These numbers fell slightly in January to 5% for Insurance Premium tax, while Payroll tax was projected to be down 5% for the year. This decrease was reviewed and it was determined that the winter storm delayed reporting for January and projections made after the February returns are received will provide a more accurate picture of revenue growth for the year. Overall revenue is over budget by \$229,000 or up 4.4% year to date.
- Ms. Carr advised expenses are below budget by \$300,000, with half of that being unspent designated payroll tax, due to using ARPA funds to pay for the fall road work. Vacant positions in the Police Department make up nearly all the rest. Current expenses are below budget by 8%.
- Ethics forms will be mailed out at the end of the month.
- Ms. Carr reported that Mr. Bohman was elected Vice President of the Kentucky Public Human Resources Association for 2025.

Mayor's Report:

- Mayor Riffle advised that the City has been working with the City of Crescent Springs to plan several joint events that should be a fun opportunity for everyone.
- Mayor Riffle advised of the following events being planned:
 - Easter Egg Hunt will be on April 12th at noon at Lou Hartfiel (Crescent Springs) Park. There will be three different age groups. There will also be an opportunity to take a picture with the Easter Bunny.

- There will be two Citywide Yard Sales this year. The Spring sale is scheduled to occur on May 30th & 31st, and the Fall sale on September 5th & 6th from 8 am until 1 pm.
- Fall Fest will be held on Saturday, September 20th from 5 – 9 pm. There will be a band and a variety of food trucks.
- December 6th may have 2 events:
 - Christmas in the Park from 5:30 pm until 8:30 pm at Lou Hartfiel Park.
 - They are also looking to introduce a Santa Run that will benefit Shop with a Cop or Firefighter. Details are still being worked out.
- Mayor Riffle also reported that they are looking into having another shred event sometime during the year.

Legislation:

Ms. Timezguida presented the following Legislation:

Discussion and approval of draft Resolution 2025-A

A Resolution of the City of Villa Hills, in Kenton County Kentucky declaring surplus property.

This resolution is to declare an old truck toolbox and an old stage, which were stored in the old salt garage as surplus property. Once these items are declared surplus, the City can either sell or dispose of them.

Ms. Becker made a motion to approve draft Resolution 2025-A, seconded by Mr. Swaim. A voice vote was taken, all voted in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

This will become Resolution 2025-1

Discussion and approval of draft Resolution 2025-B

A Resolution of the City of Villa Hills, in Kenton County Kentucky declaring surplus property. This resolution is opposing Centralized Collection of Occupational License Fees.

This resolution was recommended by the Kentucky League of Cities and which other cities in our area have adopted.

Mr. Eubanks made a motion to approve draft Resolution 2025-B, seconded by Mr. Clark. A voice vote was taken, all voted in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

This will become Resolution 2025-2

Discussion and approval of draft Resolution 2025-C

A Resolution of the City of Villa Hills, in Kenton County Kentucky thanking River Ridge Elementary, St. Joseph School, and Villa Madonna Academy for participating in the 2025 Government Shadow Program with the City of Villa Hills.

Mr. Eby made a motion to approve draft Resolution 2025-C, seconded by Mr. Crockett. A voice vote was taken, all voted in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

This will become Resolution 2025-3

Old Business

Mr. Ringo thanked Villa Madonna Academy for hosting the City Council Meeting and for having a student available to assist with the sound for the auditorium. He thanked River Ridge Elementary, St. Joseph School, and Villa Madonna Academy for their participation and for meeting the City's deadline to have essays submitted by the students.

Mr. Ringo requested that students remain after the close of the meeting for pictures.

New Business

Ms. Wadsworth made a motion to ratify all decisions taken at the meeting by the students. Second by Mr. Thompson. Voice vote taken, All were in favor, Motion passed.

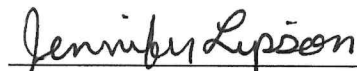
General Comments

NONE


At 7:04 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Swaim, seconded by Ms. Becker to adjourn. A voice vote was taken, all in favor. Motion passed.

Time of adjournment was 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Lipson, City Clerk


Heather Jansen, Mayor


Harper Riffle, MAYOR-FOR-A-DAY
Student, St. Joseph School