

City Council Meeting Minutes

**July 16, 2024
City Hall, Council Chambers
749 Main Street
6:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Leh called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **Roll Call** was taken and the following members were present:

City Council: ***Mayor Chris Leh
Councilmember Tim Bierman
Councilmember Deborah Fahey
Councilmember Barbara Hamlington
Councilmember Dietrich Hoefner
Councilmember Judi Kern***

Absent: ***Mayor Pro Tem Caleb Dickinson***

Staff Present: ***Samma Fox, Acting City Manager
Kathleen Kelly, City Attorney
Rob Zuccaro, Community Development Director
Amelia Brackett Hogstad, Senior Planner
Rafael Gutierrez, Police Chief
Meredyth Muth, City Clerk***

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Leh called for changes to the agenda and hearing none asked for a motion.

Motion: Councilmember Fahey moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Kern. **Vote:** All in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA AND ON THE CONSENT AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Leh asked for changes to the consent agenda; hearing none he asked for a motion. **Motion:** Councilmember Fahey moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Councilmember Kern. **Vote:** All in favor.

- A. *Approval of Bills***
- B. *Award Contract for 2024 Crack Seal Project***
- C. *Approval of Pollinator Mural at the Intersection of Main and Spruce Streets***
- D. *Approval of Resolution No. 29, Series 2024 – A Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement By and Between the City of Louisville and Boulder County for the Conduct and Administration of the 2024 Coordinated Election to be held November 5, 2024***

COUNCIL INFORMATIONAL COMMENTS ON PERTINENT ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Leh stated staff recently had an unveiling of the Resilience Sculpture in front of City Hall. He suggested people check out the work and to look at the tiles people created.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Acting City Manager noted the upcoming senior services ice cream social.

REGULAR BUSINESS

ORDINANCE NO. 1878, SERIES 2024 – AN ORDINANCE EXEMPTING CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS FROM THE CITY'S USE TAX FOR BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED FOR REPAIR AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FENCES, WALLS, AND ACCESSORY STRUCTURES THAT SUSTAINED FIRE, SMOKE, HEAT, WATER, ASH OR OTHER DAMAGE AS A RESULT OF THE MARSHALL FIRE – 1ST READING – SET PUBLIC HEARING 8/6/24

Mayor Leh introduced the ordinance by title.

MOTION: Councilmember Kern moved to approve the ordinance on first reading and set the public hearing for August 6, 2024; seconded by Councilmember Fahey.

VOTE: Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 1879, SERIES 2024 – AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE VACATION OF AN EXISTING DRAINAGE EASEMENT ON LOTS 3 AND 4, BLOCK 1 OF THE ENCLAVE REPLAT – 1ST READING – SET PUBLIC HEARING 8/6/24

Mayor Leh introduced the ordinance by title.

MOTION: Councilmember Fahey moved to approve the ordinance on first reading and set the public hearing for August 6, 2024; seconded by Councilmember Kern.

VOTE: Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 1880, SERIES 2024 – AN ORDINANCE REPEALING SECTION 13.12.105 TO ELIMINATE A WATER USE REBATE PROGRAM – 1ST READING – SET PUBLIC HEARING 8/6/24

Mayor Leh introduced the ordinance by title.

MOTION: Councilmember Fahey moved to approve the ordinance on first reading and set the public hearing for August 6, 2024; seconded by Councilmember Kern.

VOTE: Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 30, SERIES 2024 – A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION GRANT FOR THE COLACCI HOUSE AT 1209 MAIN STREET

Mayor Leh introduced the item and opened the public hearing.

Planner Brackett Hogstad stated the applicant is requesting approval of a Preservation and Restoration Grant for preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration work at 1209 Main Street. The total grant request is \$40,000, which is the maximum grant allowance.

Staff finds all of the proposed work falls under either preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation as required and all of the work is recommended in the Historic Structure Assessment.

The Historic Preservation Commission voted to recommend approval of the request after determining the preservation work did not affect the architectural integrity and all the work qualifies for matching grant funds. Staff also recommends approval.

Public Comments – None.

Councilmember Kern thanked the applicant for saving this historical home.

Mayor Leh was also pleased this home was being saved. It is great to save a home on Main Street.

Mayor Leh closed the public hearing.

MOTION: Councilmember Fahey moved to approve Resolution No. 30. Seconded by Councilmember Kern

VOTE: Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (Mayor Pro Tem Dickinson absent).

COMMUNITY SURVEY PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Acting City Manager Samma Fox introduced Brandon Barnett if PolCo who administered the survey. Brandon Barnett stated this is the sixth time PolCo/NRC has done Louisville's survey. He reviewed the process for the statistically valid, random survey and noted there was also an option for anyone to complete a voluntary survey online. Those results were kept separated.

He reviewed the key findings of the survey noting residents continue to feel Louisville has a high quality of life and is a great place to live. The Library, Museum, and Recreation Center all get high rankings for customer service, quality, and performance.

Barnett stated there are mixed opinions from residents on redevelopment and mixed-use development but strong support for affordable housing initiatives. He reviewed the data on top priorities and high priorities noting Utilities, Economic Prosperity, and Public Safety rank the highest in both.

He reviewed the data of how the Marshall Fire impacted residents noting those impacted by the fire were more likely to rate services lower than those not impacted.

Mayor Leh asked how the 17% response rate compared to other communities. Barnett said it is a bit higher than other communities and above the industry standard.

Councilmember Hoefner asked how to think about the difference between high priority vs top priority. Barnett stated it is a way to get people to better identify items that are a top priority if there is a limited amount of resources. Many items may be high priority but only a few can be top priority when only so many things can get done.

Councilmember Hamlington asked why the randomly selected responses and self-selecting answers are not combined. Barnett stated it is about having a control group. The randomly selected responses are a controlled group while the self-selected responses can be influenced by factors beyond our control such as a special interest group getting all of their members to take it to sway the vote on a particular item.

Councilmember Hamlington asked if the randomly selected residents had to complete each question or if they could complete the survey without answering every question. Barnett stated not all questions were required to complete the survey but those questions that are not answered are not factored into the results.

Public Comments – None.

Mayor Leh called out the Cultural Services and the Recreation/Senior Center staff for their very high scores. He noted some of the numbers show a decline in ratings, so these are opportunities to improve. He noted it has been a hard four years since the last survey with COVID and the Marshall Fire. He stated the priorities identified in the report are very consistent with what he hears in the community.

Councilmember Hoefner stated he is troubled by the decreases in scores in some areas. The report does give us good direction on what our priorities should be. Economic Vitality and commercial vacancies continue to be a core concern for many, and we need to find ways to address that issue.

Councilmember Hamlington wants to ensure this information is threaded through the work we are doing and that the data is used to make future decisions.

Councilmember Kern agreed the Recreation, Cultural Services, and museum are highly valued and appreciated. She would like to see the areas where there are declining ratings made a priority and to address economic vitality specifically. It is clear the empty buildings need to be addressed and the website needs to be easier to use. We will take this information seriously.

Councilmember Bierman stated the message is loud and clear for economic vitality. He found it interesting that there is low support for mixed-use development yet residents want the buildings filled. There are some dichotomies in this report. We will need to improve the score for City government.

Mayor Leh stated we want to live up to the expectations of the community. We will use this information to make sure we work better and set priorities.

Acting City Manager Fox stated staff does anticipate diving into this and using the information as we come to Council with future work to support where the community wants to go. She noted this was a very good survey result compared to national averages. It is a testament to current and past councils and staff that the ratings are very high after a very tough four years with COVID and the Marshall Fire.

Councilmember Fahey agreed the ratings are still very high after COVID and the Marshall Fire and that is a testament to staff.

Mayor Leh noted the citizens have very high expectations and those did not flag during our recent crises. We have to look at those expectations as we move into budget discussions and we are going to have to make hard choices regarding where we put funding.

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION/ACTION – INTERIM CITY MANAGER

Mayor Leh stated the Council currently needs to select an Interim City Manager. The Council can look for an outside person, perhaps using a recruiting firm, or appoint someone from within.

Councilmember Hoefner stated time is of the essence to find a permanent City Manager and he feels it would not be a good use of time to get a search firm for an interim when we could use the current Deputy City Manager as the interim. He would rather start work quickly to fill the City Manager position and focus on that.

Councilmember Fahey agreed with Councilmember Hoefner. The Acting City Manager can handle this job and is familiar with the City. Handling this appointment expeditiously would hasten hiring a permanent City Manager.

Councilmember Hamlington agreed and stated staff needs stability and guidance and she sees no need for an outside search. We should focus on finding a new City Manager.

Councilmember Kern supports this choice for efficiency purposes, to get a new City Manager on board quickly, and for continuity of government.

Councilmember Bierman agreed with everyone; it makes no sense to delay.

Mayor Leh stated it is clear we don't need to look outside for an interim candidate and Deputy City Manager Fox has the support of the Council. He agreed there is a need to provide stability for staff. He added he has a lot of confidence in the staff we have.

Mayor Leh asked if the Council was comfortable making the appointment this evening and making it conditional on negotiating a contract that could come back at a later meeting on a consent agenda. He suggested appointing two councilmembers to work with the City Attorney in contract negotiations. There was consensus to move forward in this manner.

Mayor Leh and Councilmember Kern agreed to be the two members to help negotiate the contract.

Public Comments – None.

MOTION: Mayor Leh moved to appoint Acting City Manager Fox as Interim City Manager subject to successful negotiation of the terms of an employment contract. Councilmember Hoefner seconded the motion.

VOTE: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (Mayor Pro Tem Dickinson absent).

Acting City Manager Fox thanked everyone for their confidence in her and stated she looks forward to taking on the role.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

None.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS, COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND IDENTIFICATION OF
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

ADJOURN

Members adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Christopher M. Leh, Mayor

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk