

**City of Taylor Mill  
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING  
Wednesday, September 28, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME:**

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. In attendance were Mayor Daniel L. Bell, Commissioner Caroline Braden, Commissioner Mark Kreimborg, Commissioner Rose Merritt, Commissioner Dan Murray, City Administrative Officer Brian Haney, and City Attorney Jack Gatlin.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Bell led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**LEGISLATION:** *Legislation was sent to and received by the commission prior to the meeting.*

**ORDINANCE 381 (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAYLOR MILL, IN KENTON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, PROVIDING FOR THE ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF ALL REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY, WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF TAYLOR MILL, AND THE AD VALOREM TAXATION THEREOF, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING ON JUNE 30, 2023 AND PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT AND COLLECTION OF SUCH TAXES, AND THE PENALTIES AND INTEREST THEREON; AND DESCRIBING THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE TAXES SO COLLECTED SHALL BE APPROPRIATED AND USED.

City Attorney Jack Gatlin provided the second reading of Ordinance 381. The ad valorem tax on real property rate is \$0.452 for each One Hundred (\$100.00) Dollars, and an ad valorem tax on all personal property at the rate of \$0.533 Dollars for each One Hundred (\$100.00) Dollars of the value thereof. Mayor Bell called for a motion to approve Ordinance 381. Commissioner Merritt made a motion with a second from Commissioner Murray. Commission approved by unanimous vote.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ORDINANCE 382 (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAYLOR MILL, IN KENTON COUNTY KENTUCKY, IMPOSING A SOLID WASTE COLLECTION FEE ON ALL SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LOTS AND STRUCTURES IN THE CITY AND THE OWNERS THEREOF

City Attorney Jack Gatlin provided the second reading of Ordinance 382. The annual solid waste collection fee for single-family residents will be \$179 for the fiscal year. Mayor Bell called for a motion to approve Ordinance 382. Commissioner Kreimborg made a motion with a second from Commissioner Braden. Commission approved by unanimous vote.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Mayor Bell opened a discussion on the firehouse.

Commissioner Merritt provided a history of repairs needed and the condition of the firehouse. Commissioner Merritt is concerned with the Budget Amendments and the that the City is spending more than the revenues coming in. Commissioner Merritt stated the City can not afford a \$7M to \$9M firehouse. The City can not afford a new building even if it is \$5M. Commissioner Merritt stated that something needs to be done and that the firehouse does need work but is not willing to put the City in debt by building a new firehouse. Commissioner Merritt stated that the City will not be able to afford on its own to support a fire department within the next 10 years. Commissioner Merritt suggested that a committee needs to be formed to address the possibility of a consolidation of a Fire District for the surrounding cities in the future. Commissioner Merritt stated that the firehouse does need to be fixed but can be fixed at a much more reasonable price.

Commissioner Kreimborg stated that he echoes everything that Commissioner Merritt stated. Commissioner Kreimborg stated that he thinks the firehouse can be repaired at a price of \$1M to \$1.5M. Commissioner Kreimborg stated that the fire department is in need of a new pumper and that should also be included. He stated that if the City has an excess in its budget that he would rather streets be fixed rather than go into debt for a \$7M firehouse. Commissioner Kreimborg is not supportive of the City going into debt. Commissioner Kreimborg stated that it fixing the firehouse, buying a new pumper, and fixing the streets is money better spent wisely for the taxpayers rather than building a new firehouse at the cost of \$7M.

Commissioner Murray stated that he has no problem fixing the firehouse, but while working on the firehouse the fire personnel will have to have a place to live. Commissioner Murray suggested utilizing the bays and converting them into living quarters while repairs are being done. Commissioner Murray said that the tower needs to come down, the foundation stabilized, and repairs be done. Commissioner Murray stated that the City missed the opportunity ten years ago to have a new building for Police and Fire. Commissioner Murray said that something has to be done and that the firefighters need a decent living quarter. Commissioner Murray stated that he too doesn't want to go into debt and thinks the City could afford \$4M to \$5M on a new firehouse. He stated that he is willing to agree to \$1 to \$1.5M in repairs if that is how the Commission wants to proceed.

Commissioner Braden stated that Budget Amendments have to be approved by the Commission. Commissioner Braden said that there were reasons for the need to amend the budget, such as the Commission approving the purchasing of additional police cruisers. Commissioner Braden stated when thinking of regionalizing the firehouse that it does not mean the City does not have to pay

for the service. Commissioner Braden stated that the solution is not as simple as it appears, and that consolidation is not the way to solve the problem. Commissioner Braden stated that residents and business owners expect service. Not having fire, police, and public works departments would cause current and future business owners to not be attracted to coming to Taylor Mill. Residents and businesses want service. Commissioner Braden stated that she felt strongly that the City needs to take care of the people who take care of us. Commissioner Braden stated that there are multiple options and there are not just two options. We can tear down the area that is bad, use the bays that are okay, and do a number of things in-between. Commissioner Braden expressed that it is not an all-or-nothing answer. Commissioner Braden suggested that the City look to doing bonds to help pay for the repair or building of the firehouse.

Mayor Bell stated that he looks to both the now and future of the City. The City is going to continue to grow, and the City needs to be able to provide professional fire and EMS services to the residents and businesses. Providing the medics and firefighters with a place to live and work is really important, and the living accommodations must be addressed. The current building is structurally not sound and has been pointed out in every report. Mayor Bell stated that he remembers the engineers stating that we really don't know the extent of the damage and what the ultimate repair cost will be until they get in there to fix it. Mayor Bell would like to see an additional \$2M to \$3M be added to the \$1.5 to \$2M that is being suggested and build a new building on the lot that was purchased ten years ago for that purpose. He stated he would like to use the money in the reserve and borrow to give the employees the accommodations that they need. Mayor Bell stated that he thinks the City should wait until the first of the year to see if interest rates.

Commissioner Merritt stated that it is a matter of semantics when discussing the budget. She stated that the City is over budget and that she is concerned with the spending and having to get into the reserves. Commissioner Merritt stated the firehouse needs to be fixed and that she does not want them living in that condition but cannot agree to go into further debt. Commissioner Merritt stated that the firehouse can be efficiently fixed and that the accommodations be acceptable without having to spend \$4M. She further stated that a decision needs to be made now and stop kicking this issue down the road.

Mayor Bell invited the residents to address the commission.

Mr. Tom Koehler of 664 Manor Drive addressed the Commission. Mr. Koehler stated that he is concerned that there are no real estimates and does not see how the Commission can really make a decision without them. He would like to see the Commission go back to the drawing board with a new facility for what the City can afford. Mr. Kohler stated that he would like to see the costs of tearing down and building a new part on the current firehouse facility.

Mr. Rich Meyer of 724 Vincent Drive addressed the Commission. Mr. Meyer stated that he is concerned with the current staffing issues at the Fire Department. He stated that two people on a shift can't service the city and suggested that there needs to be a minimal staffing number. Mr. Meyer stated that the Fire Department needs to be properly staffed and that the firefighters need a place to work and live while on duty.

Mr. Jeff Lawson of 5482 Taylor Mill Road addressed the Commission. Mr. Lawson stated that there is nothing that can't be fixed at the firehouse. He stated that he has fixed everything at his house and that the same can be done at the firehouse. He further stated that "there's nothing free."

Mr. Mike Busse, a resident at 715 Vincent Drive, addressed the Commission. Mr. Busse stated that he agrees with Mr. Rich Meyer and that two people working on a shift are not professional. He wondered if the City ever heard of the "Terrorist Act Funding" from the City of Independence. Mr. Busse expressed his concern about why the City continues to allow the Fire Chief to live in Ohio. Mr. Busse would like to see the Fire Chief live closer to the City.

Mr. Ed Kuehne of 5303 Old Taylor Mill Road addressed the Commission. Mr. Kuehne stated that the Fire Department needs a washer and dryer to wash their personal clothing and equipment properly. Mr. Kuehne suggested that the City look to the City of Independence Station 3 as a good example for a firehouse. Mr. Kuehne asked that a group of 10 or so people is put together so that input from the community can be provided. Mr. Kuehne is concerned that the Fire Department needs a new fire truck because the one that the City has now is outdated. Mr. Kuehne would like to see a decision be made, soft costs such as SD1 be factored in, and for this to be voted on in February 2023.

Mr. Steven Smiley of 803 Rockdale Court addressed the Commission. Mr. Smiley wondered if the City ever considered selling Pride Park to help raise the money to build a firehouse.

Mr. Mike Blackburn of 707 Forest Lane addressed the Commission. Mr. Blackburn stated that has been doing this kind of work for 27 years. Mr. Blackburn asked the Commission if there was some kind of structure that could be built on the backside with new quarters. He suggested that the City build enough to get by and that it is worth putting money into the old firehouse.

Jeff Groneck of 6566 Ridgeside Court addressed the Commission. Mr. Groneck stated that the City doesn't need to build a firehouse if we don't have good equipment. Mr. Groneck stated that the plans had a lot of wants, but not needs. He suggested that the City get an abatement company to give a real quote as to the condition of the asbestos. He stated that fixing the firehouse is necessary and that the Commission should start thinking about equipment and the firehouse as one unit. The pumper could take two years to get. Mr. Groneck further stated that the Fire Department doesn't have enough staff and that building a new firehouse will not draw new employees. Mr. Groneck stated that pay and benefits are what get firefighters to be employed.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Bell called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Merritt so moved, with a second from Commissioner Kreimborg to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with the unanimous approval of the Commission, the time being 8:47 p.m.

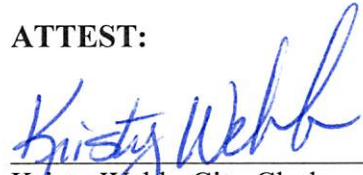
**MOTION CARRIED**

The next Commission Meeting will be Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVED:

  
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Daniel L. Bell, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Kristy Webb, City Clerk  
Date: 10/12/2022