

City of Bloomfield City Council Meeting Minutes  
May 20, 2024  
6:30 p.m.

A regular scheduled City of Bloomfield City Council meeting was held Monday, May 20, 2024 at the Bloomfield City Council at the Northeast Nelson County Fire department, 130 Perry St., Bloomfield, Kentucky.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mayor Dudgeon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Call to Order:**

Mayor Dudgeon called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Presiding Officer:	Christopher Dudgeon, Mayor
Council Members:	Laura Barnett Scott Stevenson Judy Wilson Tina Long John Hammond Todd Sweazy
City Clerk:	Toni Burton
Maintenace Supervisor:	Derrick Hagan

**Approval of the April 15, 2024, meeting minutes:**

Laura Barnett made the motion to approve the April 15, 2024, meeting minutes.  
Second by Tina Long. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

**Approval of the April 2024 Financial Statements:**

Tina Long made the motion to approve the April 2024 Financial Statements.  
Second by Judy Wilson. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**Water Co. Update- Derrick Hagan:**

Mayor Dudgeon shared that Scott Stevenson had reached out to both Toni and him about something he saw on Facebook about high water bills. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say that Scott sent us a couple of names. We got with Karen Douglas to discuss the issues. Mayor Dudgeon shared he is not going to talk about anybody's water bills but wanted to provide the circumstances. One person that complained came in and paid their water bill but never mentioned anything about it. Then they go Facebook and make comments. The other person was set up on auto bank draft. Karen realized the reading was wrong and corrected it. That person got a utility bill with the wrong amount, but what they were charged was the correct amount. Scott Stevenson said that he invited the people to the meeting.

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**Water Co. Update - Derrick Hagan Continued:**

Mayor Dudgeon shared information about turning over to cellular meters and how people can set up alerts. See if they could possibly have leaks. Mayor Dudgeon said he is going to get some numbers together and cost and will present that at the budget workshop.

Maintenance Supervisor Derrick Hagan shared information about cellular meters. How the meter functions, the accuracy of reading the water flow, and details about the battery. Derrick went on to say there is an app people could download and get daily readings. Derrick said that he has been in contact with several municipalities that are switching over to these meters.

John Hammond asked how people could request to get one of those meters. Derrick replied, to contact Karen Douglas at city hall.

Mayor Dudgeon said that we already have people requesting these meters. So, we ordered 50 to test with. We are looking to possibly add a cost to cover the software and have funds to replace in the future.

Derrick said the new meters 99.9% accurate the old meters are functioning at about 40 percent. Mayor Dudgeon said over the life of the meter it starts slowing down. When a new meter goes in you may see an increase in bills of 3, 4, 5 dollars; not 50 or a hundred dollars. Little increments, so if people ask you can tell them.

**Medical Cannabis:**

Prior to the meeting the mayor sent information about medical cannabis. Mayor Dudgeon said Nelson County, City of Bardstown, has not decided yet. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say the state has legalized the sale and use of medical cannabis. The state is allowing certain number of permits to set up dispensaries, and growth of the cannabis. Communities must set regulations and guidelines if allowed. Communities can prohibit it by an ordinance, or you can put it to a vote to the people. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say he found a draft ordinance from the City of Covington, Kenton County.

Laura Barnett said that she thought it was interesting, it required you either permit all or none. There is nothing in between. Laura said she thought it would be good to let the people vote.

Tina Long said she thought it would be good to see what the county was going to do.

Mayor Dudgeon said that if the county prohibited the city would not have to do anything we would fall under the county. However, if the city wanted to allow the dispensary and the county does not want to allow it; then the city could allow it. Mayor Dudgeon said no decision has to be made tonight but wanted the council to have the information just in case they wanted to decide tonight or get public input.

John Hammond said, there is a measure in there that says if the council was to deny it. Then somebody could go through the appeals process and have it reheard or put to a ballot.

Tina Long said she believed we had to act by January. John Hammond said if it was ballot it would be in November.

Tina Long made the motion to table it and to get public comment and see what the county is going to do. Second by Judy Wilson. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

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### **Park Grant:**

Mayor Dudgeon shared that Toni has discussed applying for a park grant. Mayor Dudgeon shared that a member from Lincoln Trail, Derrick, John Hammond, Toni, and himself met to discuss what all could be covered in the grant. After that meeting, we contacted Josh Wagner with Miracle Playground Equipment. We showed him our park and right off the bat he says our park is not ADA compliant. People in a wheelchair cannot access the park. We do not have the surfaces to allow it. Mayor Dudgeon provided information of the ADA compliance guidelines and drawings from Josh Wagner on what Bloomfield Park could look like. Mayor Dudgeon shared information about kids with disabilities and undiagnosed disabilities; like high functioning kids. They get over stimulated and there are sensory panels, and they could use these. Mayor Dudgeon said that we could possibly look at getting donations to help pay for this. John Hamond asked what other components this grant help could pay for. Mayor Dudgeon said the bathrooms and the concession stand need updating. Mayor Dudgeon said that Scott also brought up the bathrooms at the park being locked. We have talked in several meetings about why we keep the bathrooms locked and only open them up for events. Mayor Dudgeon went on to say that Derrick informed us last year about locks that could be put on the doors, and he could unlock and lock them from his phone. We would get rid paper towel dispensers and got hand dryers. Thomas went to the park Monday, and somebody had unrolled a whole roll of paper towels and clogged the toilet up. We would install commercial toilets. Mayor Dudgeon asked was it the kitchen or the metal building that did not qualify. Toni replied, the old metal building. With this grant qualifying items must be open doors; it cannot be closed in. Laura Barnett asked Toni to clarify what that means. Toni said our pavilion is wide open; it is not enclosed with walls or doors. So, if we wanted to do updates to the pavilion; it would qualify. Laura said, okay. John Hammond said these updates are things we could budget for. Mayor Dudgeon agreed. John Hammond said I am looking at immediate needs and I'm thinking we could start talking about sooner rather than later. Tina Long asked the time frame for this grant. Mayor Dudgeon said we submit by the end of the month. Mayor Dudgeon had Toni share the grant must be submitted by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Then in November we would have a virtual meeting to present our plans. About March or April, we should hear if we were awarded and how much. Mayor Dudgeon said we need to have a Special Called meeting next Monday. He realizes it's Memorial Day, but there are some forms we need the public to fill out and we must submit those with the grant. The meeting will be at 6:30 pm at the park and is going to try and have Josh at the meeting.

Mayor Dudgeon said Vector Engineering is going to do our Geo testing. The cost is \$4800 dollars. That cost gets lumped into the overall project. John Hammond shared that once we get the results from the GEO testing, we share those results with Paul Maron. Paul asks us what other items needs to be written up in the bid proposal. From there we would put it out for bids. John said his understanding from what we talked about is that we would need to adjust the pickle ball and multipurpose courts area to add a basketball court to either side. That would be the adjustment to be made. John with the anticipation that this playground equipment project would happen. Mayor Dudgeon replied, okay.

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### **Mayor's Report:**

JD Shelburne is on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> on Depot Street. Mayor Dudgeon said he wanted to make everybody aware that the concert is not put on by the city. Blenpac and Bloomfield Farms are sponsors of the concert. The last couple of years the city has provided port a potty, so local business did not get flooded out. We provided a generator. One year the local boy scouts handled the garbage. Mayor Dudgeon continues to say last year he handled the trash. This year he will work with a couple of maintenance guys to handle the cleanup. Both Ashley and I help get food trucks. We do not pay them anything. We try to get local food trucks vendors.

Every year for the last 4 years we have had First Responders Appreciation Day. There is a family with a young daughter who started this. She wants to do it again this year. It will be June 21<sup>st</sup> from 11 to 1. All local first responders and their families will be invited. The little girl and her family provide all the food and drinks. The city does not pay for anything.

Talk to the fire chief and they are collecting for Crusade for Children. They are going to set up Friday night, Saturday morning and Sunday morning (May 31<sup>st</sup> thru June 2<sup>nd</sup>). They will set up at the JD Shelburne concert to collect also. They have requested to set up a fire truck and hang a large American Flag above the stage. Mayor Dudgeon said he checked with JD and everybody is on board.

Budget Workshop is going to be June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. It's going to be an open meeting. Mayor Dudgeon encouraged city council members that have any project ideas to come to city hall prior to the meeting and share that information. So that council will have several options to review.

### **Council Member's Report:**

Council Member's Todd Sweazy, John Hammond, Tina Long and Judy Wilson had nothing to share.

Scott Stevenson shared it's been a year since we have had a police chief. Mayor Dudgeon agreed. Scott said, just to let everybody know I asked this to be added to the agenda and for whatever reason it was not. Scott asked the mayor how much active advertising have you done and at what cost? Scott said he asked Toni in April about the ad on Indeed. She said you paused it due to cost. Mayor agreed. Scott said according to things handed to us, money is in the bank. Cost should not be an objective. We have enough money to advertise constantly on Indeed, newspapers, and wherever else. We have had in the budget a chief's salary for a year that has not been paid out. We could use that for advertising. Our police cruiser is sitting over there in that garage. It's been sitting over there for a year. When was the last time they got started? I can pretty much assure you they will not start now, because the batteries are dead. Why are we paying personal property taxes on insurance for equipment we are not using? Mayor Dudgeon asked is there anything else? Scott said answer those and I will continue. Mayor Dudgeon said why it was not put on the agenda was your first question, right? Scott replied that's one of them, yes. Mayor Dudgeon said in your email you said you would like to see a timeline and how to go about enticing somebody. Scott agreed. Mayor

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### **Council Member's Report- Continued:**

Dudgeon said we have brought that up several times. Mayor Dudgeon continued to say that if you want to entice somebody by purchasing a new vehicle that falls on city council. That has not been done. We ran ads and spent nearly a thousand dollars that has produced zero applicants. None. Scott said, according to Toni there have been 50 applicants and only 2 of them were certified. So don't say there were not any applicants. Mayor Dudgeon said let me clarify. We have applicants from McDonald Managers, Amazon workers and 2 certified officers that are not retired. Mayor Dudgeon continued to say as for the financial part we do have the money. We ran the Indeed for 2 1/2 months for a thousand dollars that produced zero qualifying candidates, so I paused it. We still have it on KLC's website. Mayor Dudgeon said he has reached out to other cities to see what pay rates they have, and to see if they knew of anybody. It's not that we aren't searching other avenues, I just don't see the point to continue to spend the money on Indeed that is not producing. Scott replied, "You don't see these people speeding down the road. Mayor Dudgeon said that is not what I said. You are putting words in my mouth. That's not what I said. Mayor Dudgeon said from a taxpayer I don't see any reason to keep spending that money on Indeed all the time. Let's pause it for a little while and reach out to some other things. Eventually we will start it back up. Scott asked the mayor what have you reached out to? Mayor Dudgeon replied I have reached out to other cities, counties, and people. Scott asked about advertising. Mayor Dudgeon said no, about officers. If they know retired officers. Scott said, now days when police officers retire, their done. You are not going to get a retired police officer to come in here and do this. Mayor Dudgeon thanked Scott for saying that. Scott said you mentioned a couple of times that you looked into getting 2 part time workers. Mayor Dudgeon said, "I had one that was going to come, but with all the ruckus going on; they said they did not want to come back. Leslie said, "what ruckus? There has not been any ruckus since last fall. That is not an excuse". Scott said, you don't hear the loud noise at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning or see the people speeding up Taylorsville Road like they are trying to qualify for a position at Daytona. If somebody was to turn off Decater or the church parking lot they are going to get t-boned. It's not going to be pretty. Or people popping the hills turning off Perry Street they are going to get hit. It's going to happen sooner or later. But because you don't see it or you don't hear it; I don't think you care one way or another rather or not you have a police officer. Mayor Dudgeon asked Scott how long he has been on the council? Scott said long enough to know you don't care about the police department. Mayor Dudgeon replied three years. Scott said you want to have the sheriff come in and do it and piggyback off him and pay his officer an extra amount of money that they are already getting paid to do. They are never here in the first place. Allen Chesser started to speak and Mayor Dudgeon stopped him. Scott addressed Allen Chesser and said according to the mayor and Tina we are under Roberts Rules of Orders. Mayor Dudgeon said you have been on the council for 3 years. Laura, John, and Judy have been here for that time. Tina has been here for most of it. You have complained about speeders on Taylorsville Road by your house for years and that somebody is going to get t-boned. Scott asked if he heard them on Depot Street? Mayor Dudgeon said what I want the public to know, the city had to use taxpayer dollars to purchase a radar sign and set it up right by your house. Because that's where you were complaining. When Jodi (former police chief) was working here, you would complain about speeding. Jodi would set up at the church time and time again. For 3 to 4 hours at a time and did not catch anybody speeding.

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### **Council Member's Report- Continued:**

We have spent money for what you say is speeding by your house that has not produced anything. Scott cut the mayor off and said you come up here and set. Mayor Dudgeon said I am not coming to your house and setting. You come here to talk about the officer. Just because we don't have it on Indeed does not mean we are not still looking. Scott accused the mayor of dragging his feet and trying to do everything he can to not have a police officer here. Mayor Dudgeon said that is totally false, not true. It's been a year time frame and I have not seen you actively looking. Mayor Dudgeon told Scott I haven't seen you do much of anything in the 3 years you been on the council. Scott said you didn't put it on the agenda; I think that answers a lot of questions. Mayor Dudgeon said It's not an actionable item; that's another reason we didn't put it on the agenda. It's already been on the agenda. Laura reached out 2 months ago, and you had the chance to talk about this then. Scott said just admit you want to go along with the sheriff's department and not have a police department here. Just admit it. Mayor Dudgeon said, "It's not true. Never said that. Everybody on this council knows that too. I have supported the police department this whole time and said it over and over again. Scott said, okay Chris. Mayor Dudgeon asked Scott if had anything else. Scott said no.

Laura Barnett said going back to we need to incorporate any ideas we have for the upcoming budget. Could we look at the numbers if we were to hire an officer that is not retired. I realize it's going to be highly expensive. Mayor Dudgeon said yes, we can do that.

Laura said she has seen a lot of people walking around carrying black back packs. I really don't understand why adults or young adults walk around with big black backpacks. I saw a guy walking around with a backpack knocking on people's doors and the people are not home. I don't know what this is; back before COVID I never saw this. I don't know if they are homeless. I don't want to really ask them. Laura said it looked peculiar to her. By the time we get a sheriff in here they are gone. Mayor Dudgeon asked if she contacted the sheriff's department. Laura replied, no. He was gone in 5 minutes. She said she didn't know where he went. Tina Long said there is a guy that walks through her neighborhood with a backpack. It's part of his training. Laura asked training for what. Tina replied he is training for hike or something. Laura asked if he knocks on people's doors? Tina said he just walks through the neighborhood. Laura said then this is a different situation. Tina said she was coming down 48 going to Fairfield. There was an impaired driver in front of her. Tina said she does not know if that person was impaired due to a medical emergency or under the influence of some type of substance. Tina went on to say that she contacted dispatch and that within 4 minutes and 30 seconds there were 2 deputies right there on them.

Tina shared the other day there was an accident in front of Big 3 Tractor. The response time was less than 15 minutes. Tina said I don't know if this makes you feel any better or not; but if there is a shady person walking around it would be worth making a call.

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**Public Comments:**

Betty Elliott asked the mayor if he would look into having another street light put up on Springfield Road. Mayor Dudgeon asked Derrick to check into this.

Betty asked who is responsible for cutting the grass near creeks.

Mayor Dudgeon replied that there are restrictions on disturbing the natural habitat. The city is researching ways to clean up without disturbing the natural habitat.

Betty asked if the city could place garbage cans near the lake. There is a lot of trash on the ground.

Mayor Dudgeon said we would look into it.

Betty asked if people would need a fishing license at the lake. Mayor Dudgeon said yes. Betty asked if they have special licenses for senior citizens. Judy Wilson replied yes. Betty then asked where she could obtain a fishing license. Judy Wilson said Walmart, online, and the bait shop up the road.

Joe Goodlett addressed all council members about a police department budget and find ways to entice somebody and purchase equipment. Joe went on to say don't wait to do something. Joe accused the council members for not being proactive and said they push everything off to the last minute or until you have to do it. In stead of waiting to last minute maybe you can be a little more proactive and set down have these things added to budget when it comes to the police department stuff.

Leslie Calvert asked what happens to the money in the police budget that is not used and how does the budget run, June to June? Mayor Dudgeon replied the budget runs July 1 to June 30<sup>th</sup>. If the money is not spent it just sets there. Leslie asked if it rolls over to the next budget. Mayor Dudgeon said the council can allow it to roll over. What is the budget's police budget total from July last year to June of this year. Mayor Dudgeon said some where around \$80 thousand. Leslie said so that budget can be rolled over. Laura said the money just sets in the bank. Leslie said with Tina's response time, I said this once before; I think if we can't find somebody, I think we should just do away with it. I don't think we should pay somebody \$32 dollars an hour for something we already get through the county. I would be interested in seeing the fulltime price. We are already paying the fulltime price, so what is the benefits if we don't pay that full time price? Because we are going to match their fee, right? Like if we go through the county. Mayor Dudgeon said with retired officers we do not have to pay into the retirement system and we do not have to pay any health benefits. Currently the city pays about \$800 dollars a month per employee.

Leslie then asked where she could find the information about dispensaries. Mayor Dudgeon said she could go on the state's website.

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### **Public Comments - Continue:**

Leslie asked Derrick the battery life on the water meters. Derrick replied like the others. Some are 10 years and some are 15. Leslie said when you go to replace it is that part of the maintenance when you talk about the dollar or two fee? Derrick replied, yes.

Angie Keeling said she wanted to talk about the bathrooms at the park because she saw the post. Angie said she agrees with John that addressing the bathrooms is urgent.

Angie said she is seeing a lot of post about all the storms and storm shelters. There has not been much of a response, other than Chaplin Baptist Church. For elderly people here in town, that maybe don't drive; that's not feasible. Do we have a storm shelter here in town or an emergency plan for storms or earth quake anything catastrophic. If that's something we need to start looking into. Angie said she would help with that, and volunteer her time.

Angie then asked about the cannabis. If it does go to a vote, would it be for everybody in the county or just city. Mayor Dudgeon replied, just city.

Leslie Calvert then said signatures would not matter then if you are not in the city. Joe said is that the same thing for park grant. Mayor Dudgeon said the language was kind of vague. Mayor Dudgeon continued to say he thought we should get as many signatures as possible and let them determine if it's useful or not.

Angie said on the police issue; I just want to let y'all know; about two weeks ago on a Wednesday night. Her cleaning lady was at her shop. Some lady knocked on her door and the cleaning lady opened the door. The lady tried to get in the building and use the restroom, but her cleaning lady would not allow her in. She did give a first name and Angie said she started asking around. Angie said the girl has several mug shots, and is on meth. Angie said you all probably know who I am talking about. That is why I think it is so important to have some type of police presents. Angie said her husband's cousin is getting ready to do 10 years in the federal pen for selling meth in Chaplain for 2 decades. He once told me the reason he sales in Chaplain is because there is no police presence. That is why we need somebody locally and not just day shift.

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**Adjourn:**

Judy Wilson made the motion to adjourn. Second by John Hammond. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

Meeting minutes approved on May 27, 2024



Christopher Dudgeon, Mayor



Toni Burton City Clerk