

**CITY OF FORT MITCHELL, KY**  
**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**August 18, 2009**

**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / ROLL CALL**

Mayor Holocher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENT:** Vicki Boerger, Mary Burns, Bill Reis, David Schrand, David Stoeckle, Will Terwort, Christopher Wiest and Dennis Zahler **Others Present:** Mayor Thomas Holocher, Police Chief/CAO Steve Hensley, Public Works Director Robert Zerhusen, Assistant Chief David Jansing, and City Clerk Amy Able.

**CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Mayor Holocher gave **second reading to Ordinance 2009-04** setting the real property tax rate. **Mr. Wiest made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2009-04; second to the motion was offered by Mr. Terwort.** Mayor Holocher called for any questions or comments and issued an invitation to anyone in the audience who wished to address Council on this ordinance.

**Mr. Ed Shannon** of Princeton Avenue asked to address Council and was recognized. He commented on utilization of curbside recycling and suggested reducing the frequency to save money.

In response to his comments it was noted we are under a contract which was recently renegotiated resulting in the rates being locked. Results of past surveys indicate the residents prefer twice a week trash and once a week recycling collection.

Mr. Shannon added with the recent media coverage of the KLC there should be oversight of how tax dollars are being spent.

**Mrs. Koren Schrand** of Highland Avenue addressed Council. She commented that it is a disservice to decrease taxes when it is not practical or responsible and the worst case scenario is a resulting deficit. She stated the decrease of \$6,000 in revenue could be a salary and retirement contributions for a part-time firefighter.

Mr. Reis stated he agreed with Mrs. Schrand's comments but he heard from some citizens who favored a reduction.

Mr. Zahler stated he was comfortable with holding at the same rate as last year until learning Beechwood School adopted their compensating rate which resulted in a reduction. He supports complimenting that.

**Mrs. Lois Shannon** of Princeton Avenue addressed Council. The Mayor confirmed for her that adopting a rate higher than the allowable rate (which is the rate which will produce 4% more revenue than the compensating rate) would be subject to voter recall. Mrs. Shannon said Council is to be commended for working to lower taxes.

**Mr. Oka** of Ross Avenue addressed Council. He stated this is the forum where elected representatives hear our voices. He said during the budget meeting it was stated there was room to make cuts but there have not been subsequent attempts to make cuts.

Mayor Holocher noted the City made cuts and took cost saving measures long before it came into fashion. For example, when the former City Administrator retired four years ago, we did not hire a new employee. The Mayor now spends up to 35 or 40 hours a week on city matters and Chief Hensley took the CAO position resulting in saving the salary and benefit costs. Chief Hensley noted this year there have been some salary freezes, and salary increases were minimal; this is an example of the tough decisions made.

There was a brief discussion of the assessment process, home values and the housing market as each relate to real estate taxes.

Mr. Terwort said the citizens need tax relief. He said with this tax cut there would be no impact on the strong services the City provides.

Mr. Stoeckle stated Fort Mitchell has been compared to other local taxing authorities (some of which have taken reductions) and even the state and federal government, but these may not be fair comparisons. In some cases their decisions may not have been the most fiscally responsible and they may provide different levels of service than we do and their infrastructure may not be in the same condition. He said Council is elected to protect, maintain and improve the City and what we have now is only because of prudent decisions and diligence of past officials. He said he votes for what he feels is the best decision, not necessarily what is popular.

Mr. Wiest stated adopting the compensating rate this year is the right thing to do. It will not put the City at risk, we have what we have in the bank for a rainy day and that rainy day is here. He said the present economy and its impact on our citizens dictates this is the time to take a reduction.

Mrs. Boerger stated she would prefer keeping the same rate as last year and not reducing the rate.

Mr. Schrand stated he would support holding the rate but going below that amount is concerning. He said we are frugal and it took years to build up a reserve that could be easily wiped out. He recalled in 1982 or 1983 when a bad storm hit the City, streets were reopened in a day because we had the resources to get it done because of having a reserve.

Ms. Burns noted utility costs are rising, the cost of living is going up, but incomes are declining so there must be some point where we reduce taxes. She said next year we will reevaluate and start looking to see what is really needed to operate the City at an excellent level.

Mayor Holocher called for any other questions or comments from Council and upon hearing that there were none, he called for a roll call vote.

<b>Mr. Terwort:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Reis:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Wiest:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Schrand:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mrs. Boerger:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Mr. Stoeckle:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Ms. Burns:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Zahler:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Yes:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>No:</b>	<b>3</b>
		<b>Absent:</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b>Motion carried.</b>

Mayor Holocher gave **second reading to Ordinance 2009-05** setting the park tax. **Mrs. Boerger made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2009-05; second to the motion was offered by Mr. Zahler.** Mrs. Boerger noted there has been no increase since this tax was originally adopted in 1975. Mayor Holocher called for any questions or comments from Council and upon hearing that there were none, he called for a roll call vote.

<b>Mrs. Boerger:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Schrand:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Zahler:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Stoeckle:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Burns:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Terwort:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Reis:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Wiest:</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Yes: 8      No: 0      Absent: 0      Motion carried.**

Mayor Holocher gave **second reading to Ordinance 2009-06** setting the waste collection fee. **Mr. Stoeckle made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2009-06; second to the motion was offered by Mr. Schrand.** The rates remain the same per unit for those in a single family or multi-family home up to four unit buildings and decreases by thirty cents per unit for those in condominiums, mobile homes or in buildings with between five and eight units. Mayor Holocher called for any questions or comments from Council and upon hearing that there were none, he called for a roll call vote.

<b>Mr. Stoeckle:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Reis:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Schrand:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Terwort:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mrs. Boerger:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Wiest:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Burns:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mr. Zahler:</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Yes: 8      No: 0      Absent: 0      Motion carried.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business on the agenda, **Mr. Stoeckle made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Schrand offered a second to the motion.** Motion carried by voice vote, **the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_, 2009

Respectfully submitted by:

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Amy B. Able, City Clerk

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Thomas E. Holocher, Mayor