



WINCHESTER CITY COMMISSION WRAP-UP

Information from the Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024, 4:30 p.m. special meeting and 5:30 p.m. regular meeting

Commissioner asks to rescind, reconsider compensation study

A Winchester City Commissioner has asked to reconsider a previously approved compensation study plan, but the motion was denied during the Nov. 19, 2024, meeting of the Winchester Board of Commissioners.

At the Oct. 15, 2024, meeting the commission approved, with a unanimous vote, a compensation study aimed to bring pay up to market value for city employees.

Commissioner Hannah Toole asked the city commission to rescind and reconsider this compensation plan during the final minutes of Tuesday's meeting.

Toole noted that all 150 employees of the City of Winchester were to have received a 4% cost-of-living pay adjustment, and no employee was to have received a less-than-1% adjustment through the compensation study, for a total of 5% for each employee. The average was 6.7%.

Toole specifically cited concerns about raises given to

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DON'T MISS THE NEXT MEETING!

The next meeting of the Winchester City Commission will be Tuesday, Dec. 17. There will be a 4:30 p.m. special meeting and a 5:30 p.m. regular meeting.

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MAYOR: JoEllen Reed

COMMISSIONERS: Kenny Book, Shannon Cox, Kitty Strode, Hannah Toole

CITY MANAGER: Bruce Manley

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Community meets new police K9



Winchester Police Chief James Hall introduced one of the department's newest officers during Tuesday's meeting.

Jensik, a 1-year-old Belgian Malinois, just started as the Winchester Police Department's new K9 officer this fall, and has already proven to be an asset.

Hall said Jensik is a "true multipurpose K9," trained in drug detection and article/personnel searches.

WPD Officer Blake Gabbard is Jensik's handler. Jensik not only works with Gabbard, he lives with him.

Gabbard works a special shift that allows him to "touch" every other shift of the officers within the city. He also played a significant role in bringing Jensik to the department after the previous K9 officer retired.

Gabbard worked with the East Hill Foundation to secure a grant that supported Jensik's purchase, training and equipment.

Even though Jensik just hit the streets on the job, Hall shared that he has already helped seize significant amounts of methamphetamine and fentanyl, making Winchester's streets safer.

New grant aims to help businesses during High Side Project

During the Nov. 19 meeting, the Winchester City Commission adopted the Main Street High Side Project 2025 Business Support Grant, which will offer up to \$750 quarterly to qualifying businesses negatively impacted by the Main Street High Side Project.

According to the grant guidelines, eligible businesses include:

- Retail, restaurant or commercial businesses with at least 50% of revenue from

walk-in traffic

- Businesses open a minimum of 20 hours per week

- Businesses open at least one year prior to the application date

- Businesses located within the Historic District Overlay

- Businesses in good standing with the City of Winchester in regards to business licenses, code enforcement, property taxes, etc.

Prior to each payment,

approved businesses must submit a profit-loss statement showing a quarterly loss of at least 25% and a narrative on the impact the project has had on their business.

Grant applications will be open from April 1, 2025, to Feb. 28, 2026.

Funds will be dispersed based on a percentage of the score of the application from the Downtown Development Investment Fund Committee. Maximum eligible funds are \$3,000 per business.

Winchester teen gets key to the city



Mallory Jones, a Winchester resident and 2024 Miss Kentucky Teen Winner, was recognized during the meeting. Jones will compete in the Miss America's Teen competition later this year, and has spent the last few months traveling the state spreading her love for Winchester and promoting her platform: "Be smart. Love your heart." Jones shared that she collapsed during a volleyball game and later discovered she has a congenital heart condition. With surgery and living a heart-healthy lifestyle, she is able to manage her condition, but is passionate about sharing the importance of heart health. During the meeting Jones received a certificate of recognition and a key to the city.

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individuals who had been employed by the city for less than a year.

Toole asked to revisit the study and modify the approval to state that any individual employed for less than a year would receive only the 1% guaranteed increase.

City Attorney William Dykeman told the commissioners the motion would need a second and then a two-thirds majority vote, meaning it would have required four votes of "yes" to pass.

Initially, City Commissioner Shannon Cox provided a second for the motion, citing some of the same concerns with the study

as Toole. He later rescinded his second.

Winchester Mayor JoEllen Reed noted that city employees have already received two paychecks with their adjusted rates and are set to receive a third at the end of this week.

Reed also said that all departments were able to absorb the increases in pay into their pre-existing budgets, so the increases are not adding any dollars to the overall budget.

The City of Winchester approved and entered into an agreement with Evergreen Solutions, LLC, in the summer of 2023 to conduct a classification and compensation study.

According to a statement from City Manager Bruce Manley, "Contracting with an external firm provides an impartial evaluation, minimizing internal bias and lending credibility to the results."

After Cox rescinded his second for the motion, Reed provided a second and the commissioners were asked to vote on the issue with a roll call. Commissioner Kenny Book, Commissioner Kitty Strode, Cox and Reed each voted against rescinding the pay study and Toole voted in favor rescinding the study.

The full meeting can be watched via a recording available on the City of Winchester, KY Community Information Facebook page.

ASAP asks for support of Recovery Ready designation

Dickie Everman, a local recovery minister and chairman of the Clark County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy (ASAP), was at the meeting to ask the commission for their support for a Recovery Ready Communities Certification.

According to a document shared during the meeting, "The Recovery Ready Communities Certification Program is designed to provide a quality measure of a

city or county's substance use disorder recovery efforts."

The program measures a community's recovery efforts in the areas of prevention, treatment and recovery support.

"There are 18 counties certified, and I believe Clark County needs to be next," Everman said.

Clark County ASAP is in the process of meeting with community members and completing the application to

become a Certified Recovery Ready Community.

Everman asked the commission for their support of the certification by writing a letter of support, completing a 30-minute anti-stigma training and participating in a site visit to the community.

Mayor JoEllen Reed expressed her support and agreed to write a letter of support of the certification.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

The Commission:

- approved and entered into an agreement with S&K Industrial and the Winchester-Clark County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) for a Community Development Block Grant of \$1 million. Through the agreement, S&K will create at least 50 full-time jobs and invest an additional more than \$5 million into start-up costs in exchange for the grant funds up front. The grant funds will be paid back by S&K to the Winchester-Clark County IDA to support future economic growth initiatives in the community.
- approved various resolutions related to accepting a Community Development Block Grant for a partnership with S&K Industrial.
- approved a request from Ken Howard and Doug Ashcraft to close Depot Street from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Dec. 7 for a Christmas Farmers Market.
- approved requests for out-of-state travel for fire and police training.
- approved a request from Reena Whelan to close Depot Street from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sept. 13, 2025, for a Summer Vendor Market.
- approved an ordinance to establish a Downtown Development Investment Fund Board to research, review and approve the DDIF grants.
- approved a request to close Depot Street from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14, for Pet Pictures with Santa.
- approved and authorized the issuance of up to

\$115 million in bonds for the purpose of financing an industrial building project for Washington Penn Plastic Company.

— approved a zoning change request for land at 175 Chatham Place from highway business (B-3) to residential townhome (R-6).

— approved funding from the Downtown Development Investment Fund (DDIF) for an upper-story residential grant at 113 S. Main St. for units 1, 2 and 3 and roof stabilization.

— approved funding from the DDIF for a roof stabilization grant for 115 S. Main St.

— awarded a bid for Christmas breakfast catering.

— approved funding for a retail kickstarter grant from DDIF for 17 S. Main St.

— approved the purchase of two 2025 Chevy Tahoes.

— approved a proposal from Palmer Engineering for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Shoppers Drive intersection for \$27,500. A roundabout will be installed in the intersection.

— approved engineering services from Palmer Engineering for the Jackson Street Bridge removal and water line relocation.

— approved a contract with GRW Engineering to prepare scope of services for Phase A of the fire department renovations and new construction for \$118,515.