



WINCHESTER CITY COMMISSION WRAP-UP

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

Commission hears request to make Main Street a city street

The Winchester Board of Commissioners heard a request Tuesday night from a local business owner to make Main Street a city street.

Chad Walker, who owns The Engine House Pizza Pub in Downtown Winchester, had previously spoken to the commission about the proposed change in August 2021. Around that time, Walker said, two residents had circulated a petition around downtown businesses to gauge opinions about changing Main Street (US 60) from a state street to a city street. Walker said the petition was signed unanimously by active businesses at the time. However, nothing ever came of the request.

Walker came to the commission in December and asked during public comment to have the petition reconsidered. The commission asked him to come back with more information. Walker presented that information at Tuesday's meeting, where he told the commissioners the change would require a resolution from the commission and within approximately two months, the city could take ownership of the street. Transferring the deed for the property, however, could take two years.

"This would all be at no cost to the City of Winchester," Walker said. "The road must continue

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DON'T MISS THE NEXT MEETING!

The next meeting of the Winchester Board of Commissioners will be Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2025. There will be a special meeting at 6 p.m.

What's Inside?

In other business - page 2



MAYOR: JoEllen Reed

COMMISSIONERS: Joe Chenault, Shannon Cox, Kitty Strode & Hannah Toole

CITY MANAGER: Bruce Manley

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to be open to the public. It can't be sold to a private individual and if at any point the city no longer wants ownership, it would just revert back to the state."

Walker said city ownership of the street would allow improvements with things like crosswalks and other safety measures.

"We could finally have ownership of our Main Street," Walker told the commission.

Members of the commission said they were on the fence about the change and expressed concern about the cost of maintenance for the city. Mayor JoEllen Reed brought up the cost of maintaining the

roadway, the stoplights and snow removal, among other things.

Winchester Public Works Director Brian Sewell said the cost for maintenance of the proposed area to be taken in by the city, which would be from the Bluegrass Heritage Museum to Washington Street, could be approximately \$30,000 annually. The city would also have to adhere to state and federal standards for crosswalks, according to Sewell.

Walker reminded the commission that the downtown area is a TIF district, which could be used for public infrastructure and could cover the cost of maintenance of the street.

Commissioners Shannon Cox and

Hannah Toole brought up the High Side project, which is expected to take place this year, and expressed concern with losing funding if the roadway were no longer owned by the state.

"I don't want to jeopardize a cent of that state money," Cox said.

City Advisor Mike Flynn told the commission he would recommend a sample contract for the commissioners to have a better idea of what the process and repercussions would be. Walker agreed to reach out to state officials to request a sample contract and present it to the commission at a later date.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

In other business, the commission:

- approved a resolution entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet for the Main Street High Side project for \$4.44 million.

- approved the second reading of an ordinance amending licensing fees for insurance companies. According to the ordinance, the license fee imposed upon insurance companies issuing life insurance policies would be "12% of the first year's premiums actually collected within each calendar quarter." Additionally, the license fee for insurance companies issuing policies that are not life insurance policies, will be "12% of the premiums actually collected within each calendar quarter." Previously, the fees were each 10%.

- accepted Paula Thomas' resignation from the Winchester-Clark County Heritage Commission.

- accepted the design services modification for the Fulton Road extension project from Palmer Engineering.

- approved Downtown Development Investment Fund (DDIF) kickstart and new business stipend grants for a property at 2 S. Main St. Ste. 220.

- approved DDIF kickstart and new business stipend grants for a property at 23 S. Main St.

- approved a DDIF new business stipend grant for a property at 10 W. Broadway St.

- approved a DDIF new business stipend grant for a property at 24 N. Main St.

- approved DDIF kickstart and new business stipend grants for a property at 7 N. Main St.

- approved a DDIF upper story residential grant for units 4, 5 and 6 at 113 S. Main St.