

LUDLOW COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES

March 12, 2026

Mayor Sarah Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Laurie Sparks called the roll, which showed the following council members present: Steve Chapman, Meagan Guthrie, Julie Terry Navarre, Abigail Miller, and Paula Graszus. David Ziegler was absent.

ALSO ATTENDING: City Attorney Michelle Eviston, City Attorney Zach Smith, City Clerk Laurie Sparks, Fire Chief Mike Steward, Police Chief Bart Beck, Code Enforcement Officer Jamie West, Public Works Director Shane Hamant, City Treasurer Wayne Harris

Presentation of the Audit for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

John Chamberlin of Chamberlin Owen CPAs presented the audited financial statements for the Fiscal Year ending 2025. Mr. Chamberlin discussed the non-compliance issue of not having a balanced budget for the fifth year in a row. The City has approximately six months of operating expenses in reserves. Discussion on the status of revenues and expenses.

Presentation by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services on the Need for Foster Families

Shelly Phelps and Jennifer Wiehe, representatives from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services office in Latonia, distributed information and discussed the need for foster families in the area. Discussion on how their agency assists children in need and the types of certifications available for those who would be interested in becoming a foster or adoptive family.

Motion by Mr. Chapman to excuse Ms. Miller's absence from the council meeting on February 12, 2026. Motion died for lack of a second.

Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre to not excuse Ms. Miller's absence from the council meeting on February 12, 2026. Motion died for lack of a second.

Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, second by Ms. Guthrie, to approve the minutes from the council meeting on February 12, 2026. Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.

STAFF REPORTS

Fire Department

Chief Steward discussed recent fire department training and the increased calls for service in the Fischer development.

Police Department

Chief Beck discussed the number of calls, about half of which were self-initiated. All officers are up to date on their NCIC certification. Discussion on recent issues with the Buffalo Bar where officers are checking the bar four to six times a night.

Code Enforcement

Mr. West advised that there are 177 active cases, which include issues such as peeling paint, sidewalk disrepair, and drainage issues. Mr. West allows four to six months for owners to

complete the repairs after a notice of violation is sent. Rental license renewal letters were sent out along with letters to owners with delinquent property taxes. The Kenton County Clean Up will be on April 24, 2026, through April 26, 2026. The City Spring Clean Up will be on May 9, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Discussion on the availability of a rebate up to \$500.00 from the City for owners who make sidewalk repairs.

Public Works

Mr. Hamant received two estimates for a new dump truck, and both were around \$124,000.00. Discussion on the status of the amphitheater and the ADA ramp at Ludlow Memorial Park. Mr. Hamant advised that the restrooms at Ludlow Memorial Park are open for the season. Ms. Guthrie inquired about the possibility of installing changing tables in the restrooms. Discussion on the recent snow events.

City Treasurer

Mr. Harris presented council with a list of the current bank account balances. Mr. Harris is still working on cleaning up two of the accounts. Mr. Harris advised that there is a plan to get additional support and the City has hired a new employee to help. Ms. Guthrie advised that she would like to get a budget amendment on the agenda for next month.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Thompson advised that former City Administrator Scott Smith is no longer with the City. The City Administrator position has been advertised online as the recruitment process begins. Mayor Thompson has been working with Mr. Harris to bring the City's financial records fully current and the process should be completed by the end of April. To help improve communication with residents, a digital sign will be installed at the city building by the end of April. The amphitheater should be open by early May where community events and live performances will be held. Coffee and Cocktails with the Mayor at Second Sight Spirits is canceled for March but will resume in April.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance – The Committee met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, for the first time since September 2025. Mr. Chapman advised that they discussed and identified the overages from the last budget and are working on a complete budget. Mr. Guthrie thanked Mr. Harris for getting everything reconciled. The Finance Committee meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 4:00 p.m. in the council chambers.

Parks and Recreation – The Committee did not meet because Mr. Ziegler is out of town.

Public Works/Code Enforcement – The Committee met on Wednesday, March 11, 2026. Ms. Terry Navarre advised that they reviewed the many projects Public Works has planned, which they will spread out through spring. The Committee also reviewed open code enforcement cases and discussed revisiting the status of foreclosure on properties that were being reviewed by the previous attorneys.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Carrie Moore, owner of Escape Nail Spa, and Del Williams, owner of The Oak, discussed parking issues near their businesses caused by teachers parking there all day. Ms. Moore and Mr. Williams requested that council reserve ten parking spaces on Helen Street between Walnut Alley and Oak Street every day from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for business parking only. Greg Reeves,

owner of C.P. Reeves Market, advised that he would like additional reserved parking on Helen Street across from his business. Mayor Thompson requested that Ms. Moore and Mr. Williams send a copy of their proposal to the City for Council and the attorneys to review.

Brian Bumgarner inquired about the terms of the Industrial Revenue Bonds for the Fischer development and whether the City looked into the pitfalls of losing 25% of the revenue for the thirty-year term of the bonds. Mr. Chapman advised that the City would receive 75% of additional revenue that it never previously received. Discussion on how City revenues are collected and classified.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-2

Ms. Eviston completed the second reading of Ordinance 2026-2 *An Ordinance of the City of Ludlow, Kentucky, Repealing the Zoning Code and Adopting a New Zoning Code, Pursuant to the Z21 Committee, as Set Forth in File #PC-25-0005-TX of the Kenton County Planning Commission.* **Motion by Mr. Chapman, seconded by Ms. Guthrie, to adopt Ordinance 2026-2.** Discussion on the Z-21 zoning project, which the City has been working on with Planning and Development Services of Kenton County (PDS) for four years, to bring the City in line with other cities in Kenton County. **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.**

Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-3

At Ms. Eviston's request, motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, seconded by Ms. Graszus, to proceed with the second reading of Ordinance 2026-3 *An Ordinance Amending the City of Ludlow Code of Ordinances, Chapter 36, for the Purpose of Conforming the Urban Design Review Board Ordinance to the Recommendations of the Kentucky Heritage Council, in summary.* **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.** Following the second reading, motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, seconded by Ms. Guthrie, to adopt Ordinance 2026-3. Ms. Miller inquired whether the Urban Design Review Board (UDRB) is in favor of the ordinance. Ms. Terry Navarre advised that the UDRB requested the ordinance. **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.**

Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-4

At Mr. Smith's request, motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, seconded by Mr. Chapman, to proceed with the second reading of Ordinance 2026-4 *An Ordinance of the City of Ludlow, in Kenton County, Kentucky, Amending the Parking Schedule Contained in Chapter 75 of the Ludlow Code of Ordinances, in summary.* **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.** Following the second reading, motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, seconded by Ms. Guthrie, to adopt Ordinance 2026-4. Discussion on the purpose of the ordinance, which is to allow better access for trucks to enter and leave a business through the alley. Mr. Hamant advised that prohibiting parking in that section of the alley would make it easier for the snowplows and garbage trucks to enter, too. **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: four ayes, one abstention (Ms. Miller).**

NEW BUSINESS

First Reading of Ordinance 2026-5

At Mr. Smith's request, motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, seconded by Ms. Guthrie, to proceed with the first reading of Ordinance 2026-5 *An Ordinance Amending the City of Ludlow Zoning Code, Adopting the Recommendations of the Kenton County Planning Commission Regarding Compliance with KRS 100.348, in summary.* **Following a roll call vote, motion carried: all ayes.** Mr. Smith completed the first reading of Ordinance 2026-5.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Following up on a discussion at the caucus meeting, Mr. Chapman advised that he obtained a quote from Eggleston Maynard for a plaque to name the dugout at Lemker Field after someone. Following discussion, council will review the options outlined in the quote and discuss the plaque purchase at the April meeting. The plaque will take four weeks to make and the plan is to have the plaque presentation in May.
- Ms. Guthrie inquired about the status of the new City website. Mayor Thompson advised they are still tracking for the end of March. Ms. Guthrie inquired about the possibility of having the community center coordinator serve as the dedicated staff member to work with the Parks Committee. Mayor Thompson advised that she thought it was a great idea as long as Jenny McMillen is willing to serve on the Committee. Ms. Guthrie thanked all those who supported Cabin Fever; over 1,000 tickets were sold. Ms. Guthrie advised that the Secretary of State's office is still looking for poll workers for the upcoming primary election in May. Ms. Guthrie inquired why the City was not using the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) to conduct the search for the city administrator. Mayor Thompson advised that the City is not required to go through NKADD and that several qualified candidates have submitted resumes as a result of the online job posting. Mayor Thompson advised that if the City does not receive any qualified resumes through the online posting, she would go through the NKADD. Ms. Sparks advised that the position was advertised on the Kentucky League of Cities' website as well. NKADD charges approximately \$3,000.00 to conduct a job search.
- Ms. Terry Navarre announced that Walk 'n Talk 'n Trash will begin on April 8, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Plaza. The calendar will be posted on Facebook. Cars & Coffee will be held at the Plaza on April 12, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. The Ludlow Heritage Museum will also be open during the event.
- Ms. Graszus announced that Cabin Fever is always a fantastic event that brings old friends back to town. Ms. Graszus requested that the City place disposable trash cans around the downtown area for Cabin Fever next year. Ms. Graszus announced that the polling station for elections has been moved to the First Baptist Church at the corner of Kenner and Linden Streets.

Motion by Ms. Terry Navarre, seconded by Ms. Guthrie, to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m. Following a voice vote, motion carried: all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Sparks, City Clerk

Attest: _____
Sarah Thompson, Mayor