

**CITY OF BEL-RIDGE
BOARD OF ALDERMAN TOWN HALL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 2021
6:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER- The City of Bel-Ridge Board of Aldermen Town Hall meeting was called to order by Mayor Willie Fair on Tuesday, June 10, 2021, at 6:05 PM.

Roll Call

Board of Aldermen Present

Board of Aldermen Absent

Alderman Watts
Alderwoman Davis
Alderwoman Abernathy (by Zoom)
Alderman Tope
Alderman Whitaker (by Zoom)
Alderman Robinson

Following roll call, the City Clerk reported a quorum was present.

Motion to approve the agenda for June 10, 2021, made by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderman Watts, an all-in favor vote received.

Motion to go into Closed Session by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderman Whitaker, an all-in favor vote received.

ROLL CALL

Alderwoman Davis- Yes
Alderman Watts - Yes
Alderman Tope- Yes
Alderman Whitaker- Yes
Alderman Robinson- Yes
Alderwoman Abernathy – Yes

Motion passed, Closed Session Held.

Board Town Hall Meeting Resumes.

CALL TO ORDER- The City of Bel-Ridge Board of Aldermen Town Hall meeting was called to order by Mayor Willie Fair.

ROLL CALL

Alderwoman Davis- Yes
Alderman Watts - Yes
Alderman Tope- Yes
Alderman Whitaker- Yes
Alderman Robinson- Yes
Alderwoman Abernathy – Yes

Motion to approve the agenda for June 10, 2021 Town Hall Meeting, made by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderwoman Davis, an all-in favor vote received.

TOWN HALL MEETING

Mayor welcomes residents. He states that the City has financial difficulties. Mayor also states he's gonna do whatever it takes to save the city. Alderman Watts will now make a power point presentation.

Alderman Watts distributes handouts of a power point presentation and begins the session.

Mike Ruff – 4313 Rickey Drive

Q. There was a resolution to give you all a raise?

A. No sir.

Q. I have that resolution.

A. We asked for a number of how much you're going to spend on the police force versus how much you're going to spend to outsource the police? How much you saving and was it worth it? Also, how much did Bel-Ridge receive for COVID relief and was that money moved from one spot to another and why and how much was it and how was it spent? And, if there is more coming? How much has this administration actually spent on the City as far as fixing things, buying things, whatever, we asked for numbers? How much does it cost to dismantle a police force that's been here for years? We were told before they even got on the Board what their intentions was. We want some numbers, we want the numbers to make yall want to dismantle the police department. Bel-Ridge has had problems with some of the members on the Board now, money problems. Are you familiar with Snowhill Court?

A. Alderman Watts – I can't address it, maybe another Board member can.

Q. Bel-Ridge won't see a nickel of that money for 20 years. The Parking Spot. They were used to paying \$1,000.00 a year. When I was on the

Board, I said a gradual increase. They went from \$1,000.00 a year to \$20,000.00. Where's that money? We want some answers and numbers.

A. That was actually on the ballot and was voted on. It was not a Board decision. The answers to most of your questions are located in the power point handout. We looked across the board at all the departments in Bel-Ridge.

Rebecca Cogshell – 3015 Wheaton

I know all cities go through financial problems. My biggest issue is – yall went back six years – how were they paying for the police department back then? Don't look like we went without. Streets weren't getting fixed, lights weren't getting put in, but people were getting paid. When we had nine people instead of the six or seven we have now, people were getting paid. You know what the nine people got then? Twenty-five dollars a month because they were trying to take care of this community. It hurts me to see Bel-Ridge go down like this, and it's not just five, six years. This has been happening a long time. We have a whole bunch of renters who don't care what happens to Bel-Ridge. There are a lot of people here who don't want to change what's wrong. They talk it, but they don't want to change what's wrong. This hasn't just started. Board members are getting paid two, three hundred dollars a month and some of them don't even come to the meetings. Give us some figures. They just want us to go along with them. Back in the day, the budget showed exactly every dime, and where it went. All we go by now is what people say and only a little bit is written up. People are really fed up, tired of promises. Cause that's all we've been getting is promises. We were doing good for a while; from what I could see, not what somebody was telling me. I think this should have been talked about a couple of years ago. People need to come to these meetings and seeing what's happening, don't take nobody's word for it. I'm through.

Tammy Love – 8916 Somerset Lane -- First of all, I don't think this is the proper format for a town hall meeting. We listened to Henry Watts talk about what's brewing up here and that's irrelevant. The Board talks about being transparent and you're not. What you've presented to us is a tenth of what we need to make a decision. Is that what a town hall is? You have not stated the issue. No one can read this one page of financials given to us. We don't have proposed contracts. Normandy had a meeting yesterday talking about taking over our police department. How can Normandy have a meeting about our police before we, the citizens have an opportunity to talk about it? You've been having meetings for months and this is the first time you've openly talked about it. If you've been meeting, you should have all the numbers – we should have all the numbers so we can make decisions and say what's going to work. This is not a town hall meeting.

Deborah Carter – As a member of staff, I have to agree with some of the residents. Also, as a member of staff, I'm a little embarrassed to say I have no idea what to expect. We have no idea how it's going to impact our safety. We don't even understand the numbers. It's a five year contract – we're the staff and we don't understand it. That's not a good position for us to be in, and we would like answers as well as to what we can expect because there are certain things we need to be able to function, but we have no idea, we're like sitting ducks. We would like the figures too cause we've never seen them.

Q. The other question was why was a reduction in our police force not acceptable?

A. Alderman Watts – It was --- it was reviewed an the numbers dictated.

David Reagan – Field Representative, Local 42 – We represent the police department. Obviously, I'm going to come up and talk about keeping your police here; that's what I'm here for. I agree with everything the residents have already said. I would like to ask all of you, since you said you've been planning this for a year, in any of these proposals you sent out to other departments, did you put a stipulation that you will hire any Bel-Ridge officers? They are experienced and they know what they're doing. I have seen three of your proposals and I have not seen that anywhere. I'm just asking questions to see what type of coverage these people are going to get. I'm also asking questions cause these guys need a fair shake and I don't think they got it from this Board. That's all. Thank you.

Major Hunter – I came here for a specific reason, for our community. This community and the Mayor has done a lot of things for our community. I see him endlessly taking care of old folks and young folks. I see the police department doing their job, what they are trained to do. My overall projection is that we have to set precedent on change whatever is broke to fix it. We have to make changes to fix whatever is wrong. I believe this administration will get the job done. When the next administration proceeds, they're gonna get the job done.

Elvis K. Fantoy – 3344 Werder Dr. – I'm a former police officer. My biggest issue is our neighborhoods are turning into Beirut. Grass is a foot high; abandoned houses; a lot of rental properties; Section 8 and these people just don't care because they don't own anything and they just let these houses go. I have called Neighborhood Preservation and St. Louis County about some of these issues, they say it's a Bel-Ridge issue. I have talked to everybody I can; aldermen, mayor – and it's disappointing when you walk out your front door and see grass and trees overgrown. You can't even see the front of a house. Abandoned cars, people working on cars in the streets with no license plates. And I couldn't sell my house if I wanted

to, don't want to, but I couldn't. And nobody's doing anything about it. It kills me that the people I talked to in the administration part isn't doing anything about it and they're not living like that. Something has got to be done.

Lonnie Trammell – 8907 Natural Bridge Road -- I'm one of the new business owners over there and I've been observing the police department since I came over there cause I used to be a police officer, I carried a badge for thirty-one years. I had a problem at first cause they weren't patrolling and I said something one time. I don't have a problem with the police department but I don't want this to be like St. Louis City where you ain't got no police because they don't got enough people cause I know what's gonna happen. You don't got no police, you got crime. But if we don't have police, we're gonna have problems, I can guarantee you that. I don't think we need to get rid of the police department if we don't have police to put there. Should try to find a way to keep them. Cause if you've got police on the scene, no crime. If no police, you got crime.

Mary Mans – 3225 Welsberg -- I've lived in Bel-Ridge over thirty-five years and I'd like to commend our present police department. You've done an excellent job. You're very community friendly; you always take the time to engage with the residents. My concern is having the police department that is not centrally located around us. The response time coming down Natural Bridge is terrible. It's two lanes – one lane each way and how do they make it in cases of emergency? I would like to keep our police department going and also I'd like to know what is the racial makeup of the Normandy Police Department? Also, the residents have not been kept informed. We've not had newsletters, notified that you guys were zooming during the pandemic – not at first. It took quite awhile to get that up and I don't think that's fair. The community needs to be aware of everything that's going on. Thank you.

Chief of Police for Normandy Police Department – Chief Mark Hall – I have a wonderful Sargent, Tameka Sanders, here that's going to be able to give you numbers, information and anything you need as far as that's concerned. What I want to assure you is that one, we know and respect the law enforcement officers you have here in Bel-Ridge. A lot of my officers interact with them. I personally know a couple of them and I know them to be fine people and professionals. What we want to do, what we were reached out to, along with a couple of other police departments, was to come and see if we could be in a position to help. And what we bring is a partnership, we're not trying to take over or anything like that. We want to bring a partnership, we want to bring our experience and we want to envelope the officers you have here now. We have a fervent desire to hire as many police officers that exist in Bel-Ridge right now because we are

going to expand and get bigger in your community. We are very big on community engagement. We already do contract policing in six different municipalities around us. We believe we can have a fine partnership and help you out financially without losing one ounce of your police presence in your city.

Sargent Tameka Sanders, Normandy Police Department – I'm contract liaison most importantly, which is why I'm up here. The Normandy Police Department has been providing contracting services for other municipalities for over forty years. One thing we've learned is the essence of partnership. One thing we offer is the ability for all these cities to come together, to bring together the police officers of all the cities and to provide stellar service where you will actually get more police officers than you have currently. You're actually get better response time than you have currently. Unlike St Louis County or some other partner services in this area, when they take your City, they liquidate all your assets. The cities are left with no guns, no police cars, no personnel, and no ability to restart your police department should you choose to five years from now. Normandy Police Department does not do that. We engage in partnership and everything we purchase through partnership is retained by Bel-Ridge. **(Demonstration shown of police cars with Normandy and the contracting city's name.)**

There is a 60 day notice requirement for cities to withdraw out of the contracting services contract. You will have twelve additional officers to your avail.

Question: Will there be a desk officer?

Sgt Tameka Sanders: There will not be a desk officer. We don't do the desk officer thing at Normandy. We believe it's not resourceful for a city to pay an officer to sit in an office when the officers have this thing on their hip called a radio.

The Normandy Police Department pays more than the Bel-Ridge Police Department. We're hiring eight officers with the Council having the option of hiring a traffic officer. You need one because you have the interstate running through your town. You will get your own detective assigned to the criminal investigation division.

Question: When we have tow releases, bonds, warrants, complaints, etc., are you saying we need to call for someone to come take care of these things?

Sgt Tameka Sanders: What I'm saying is there's officers in this building 24/7. Hopefully I'll be in this building.

Reyna Spencer: I work with mayors in the 24:1. I understand municipal operations in dollars and cents. That's why you see cities merger. Tameka does great work and people know Tameka and her team.

The Normandy Police Department is about twenty-five percent minority makeup. We hope to expound upon our diversity.

Question: Can you or the Captain actually explain to all of us the contract? What is it we're paying for with respect to insurance, with respect to the cars; we're giving up the cars. We're keeping them, we're paying for the maintenance on them. Can you explain exactly what it is Bel-Ridge is going to be doing to ascertain this wonderful service?

Sgt. Tameka Sanders: That's not my perview to discuss numbers. Police Departments costs a lot to maintain.

Rob Clark – Special Counsel – I'm an attorney that's been engaged as the special counsel for the City of Bel-Ridge in connection with working on a police services agreement. The City of Bel-Ridge issued a request for proposals for police services back in March and received proposals in April from the North County Police Coop, the City of St. John, St. Louis County and the City of Normandy. Thereafter the Board indicated a preference to try and negotiate an agreement with Normandy. Our firm was engaged to help in that process. We have been working with Normandy's special counsel to come to terms on a contract that's on the agenda for the Board to consider later this evening and was approved and submitted by the Normandy City Council Tuesday night. I will summarize some of the specific terms of the contract and answer questions. In connection with the agreement, Normandy will provide dispatch services, 24 hour police patrol, including traffic enforcement; serving all summons including attending court proceedings as needed; including providing a police report to the Bel-Ridge Board of Alderman. The Chief will attend Bel-Ridge meetings on a monthly basis, with advance notice to provide an update on police services within the community; provide security services during the meetings of the Board of Aldermen; provide a liaison that will be available for the city; and interview and hire one or more qualified applicants from the Bel-Ridge police force to increase staffing needs to provide the services within Bel-Ridge. The agreement provides for a start date of July 1. The City of Bel-Ridge is obligated to provide Normandy with five service vehicles and one administrative vehicle. This may be satisfied out of the existing fleet, Normandy will inspect those vehicles to determine which, if any, they can use. With respect to the cost, the annual amount is five hundred and

ninety-two thousand six hundred and sixty-one dollars (\$592,661.00), which comes to roughly Forty-nine thousand, three hundred and eighty-eight dollars and forty-two per month (\$49,388.42); that is the monthly rate that is for the rest of this year and all of next year. After that, there is a three percent increase per year during the term through 2026. There is an additional one-time start-up fee of \$30,000 that would be paid this year for uniforms, equipment, striping, and other costs in terms of ramping up start-up services.

Obligations of the Normandy Police Department – Normandy must, at all times during the terms of this agreement remain state certified. If they were to fail to comply with those requirements, the agreement could be terminated by Bel-Ridge.

Based on what Alderman Watts said, this is about forty percent savings on a monthly basis of what Bel-Ridge is currently paying for police services.

Question: Are we going to keep our current office personnel?

Attorney: This only relates to police services. Any other city staff will remain where they are.

NEW BUSINESS

BILLS

Bill 1422- authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with the City of Normandy, Missouri to provide police services to the City of Bel-Ridge.

Motion for 1st reading of Bill 1422 by caption only authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with the City of Normandy, Missouri to provide police services to the City of Bel-Ridge made by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderman Robinson, all in favor vote received. 1st reading done by City Attorney.

Motion for 2nd reading of Bill 1422 by caption only by Alderman Watts and seconded by Alderwoman Davis, all in favor vote received. 2nd reading done by City Attorney.

Motion to adopt for Bill 1422 to become Ordinance.

ROLL CALL

Alderwoman Davis- Yes
Alderman Watts - Yes
Alderman Tope- Yes
Alderman Whitaker- Yes
Alderman Robinson- Yes
Alderwoman Abernathy – Yes

Motion passed for Bill 1422, now Ordinance 2021-10.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderman Watts, all-in favor vote received.

Meeting adjourned.

The meeting minutes were taken and transcribed by City Clerk, Andrea Jones.

June 10, 2021, Board Meeting minutes were approved by the Board this
7th day of December 2021.


City Clerk

City of Bel-Ridge
Townhall Meeting
City Hall



June 10, 2021
6:00 PM



Agenda

Opening Address

- Outline the Agenda

State Audit

- Auditor's Findings

City Financial Status

- 2020-2021 City Budget
- TIF Impact (Tax Increment Financing)

Re-Structuring

- Current City Departments
 - City Office Staff
 - Street Department
 - Police Department



Transparency

-
- Challenges facing the City of Bel-Ridge
 - The future existence of the City





Opening Address

A few words from Bel-Ridge Mayor Willie Fair





State Audit

The State Auditor was petitioned under Section 29.230, RSMo, to audit the City of Bel-Ridge.

We have audited certain operations of the city in fulfillment of our duties.

The scope of our audit included, but was not necessarily limited to, the year ended December 31, 2018. The objectives of our audit were to:

- Evaluate the city's internal controls over significant management and financial functions.
- Evaluate the city's compliance with certain legal provisions.
- Evaluate the economy and efficiency of certain management practices and procedures, including certain financial transactions.



Audit Findings

- Expenditures exceeded budgeted amounts
- Budget Deficit
- Relocation of restricted revenue (TIF Funds)
- Failure to adequately monitor budget-to-actual revenue





City Financial Status

City of Bel-Ridge, Missouri Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget Combining Statements of Revenue, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance All Funds

	General Fund	Capital Improvement/ Senior Lateral Fund	Park Fund	TIF Fund	Storm Water Fund	Public Safety Fund	Officer Training Fund	Total
REVENUES								
Taxes	\$ 812,500	\$ 198,000	\$ 183,000	\$ 335,000	\$ 75,500	\$ 142,000	\$ -	\$ 1,745,000
Charges for services	15,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,200
Fees and court costs	135,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	135,200
Grants	332,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	332,800
Investment income	147,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	147,200
Miscellaneous	2,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,400
TOTAL REVENUES	1,492,400	198,000	466,000	335,000	75,500	142,000	10,000	2,770,900
EXPENDITURES								
Current:								
Boards and commissions	20,695	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,695
Administration	270,965	-	-	-	-	-	-	270,965
Municipal court	121,084	-	-	70,800	-	-	-	191,884
Parks	927,500	-	107,279	-	-	-	-	1,034,779
Police	213,879	-	-	-	-	-	-	213,879
Public works	135,150	-	-	-	-	-	-	135,150
Storm water	-	-	-	-	55,015	-	-	55,015
Nondepartmental	-	-	-	264,200	-	-	-	264,200
Capital Outlay	-	119,500	337,000	-	-	-	-	456,500
Debt Service	124,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	124,200
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,689,363	119,500	444,279	335,000	55,015	142,000	10,000	2,790,357
REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	(196,963)	23,800	53,721	-	20,485	-	-	63,043
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)								
Transfers in	198,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	198,200
Sale of assets	2,500	-	(36,200)	-	-	(142,000)	-	(175,700)
TOTAL OTHER SOURCES (USES)	200,700	-	(36,200)	-	-	(142,000)	-	22,500
NET CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	3,737	23,800	17,521	-	20,485	-	-	65,543
FUND BALANCE (DEFICIT) - BEGINNING OF YEAR	(5,180,292)	-	721,548	3,555,767	206,380	-	(30,468)	1,356,268
FUND BALANCE (DEFICIT) - END OF YEAR	(1,176,555)	23,800	739,069	3,555,767	226,865	-	-	1,356,268
FUND BALANCE (DEFICIT) - per 2018 Audited FS	(728,389)	83,333	520,330	1,037,202	331,251	-	(30,468)	1,356,268
Revenue over expenses - 2019	200,284	-	80,748	214,252	32,799	-	-	528,083
Assume transfer of public safety fund to GP	(383,586)	-	(114,710)	404,313	41,830	(130,785)	(373)	(373)
TOTAL END OF 2020	(1,180,292)	83,333	721,548	3,555,767	206,380	-	(30,468)	1,356,268



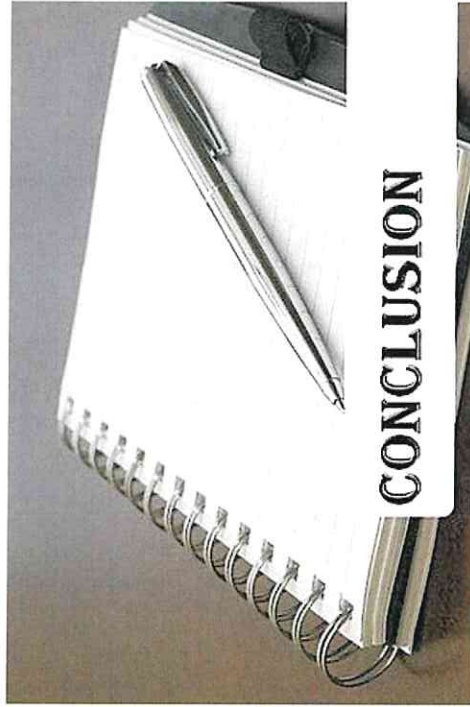
Restructuring

Current City Departments

- City Office Staff
- Street Department
- Police Department

Restructuring Proposals

- Outsourcing Services
- Removed/Replace accounting firm





Questions and Answers



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