



City Commission Meeting Highlights

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

New Executive Director of Paducah Renaissance Alliance

The Mayor and Commissioners approved the hiring of Lisa Thompson as the Executive Director of Paducah Renaissance Alliance. Thompson is an Ohio native currently living in Washington, D.C. Her work history is diverse with experience working at the Department of State. She also has experience as a business owner and most recently as the administrator of a museum in Washington, D.C. City Manager Jeff Pederson says Thompson has a great deal of enthusiasm and experience in the public and private sector. Pederson says, "Lisa has a lot of bases covered. I could speak volumes about her interpersonal skills." A committee including the City's Human Resources Department and three members of Paducah Renaissance Alliance (PRA) interviewed candidates for the Executive Director position. Referring to Thompson, PRA Vice Chairman John Campbell says, "She should be able to work within the framework well. She's really quite remarkable." Mayor Bill Paxton says, "We all feel this is an exciting time for our community. We all want a strong downtown. We all want a strong art district." Thompson is expected to begin her role as PRA Executive Director at the beginning of December.

Future Ordinance for Homeless Shelter Accommodations

Planning Director Steve Ervin briefed the Mayor and Commission on the draft of an ordinance that would allow homeless shelters within the Paducah city limits. Ervin started the presentation by outlining national homeless statistics and by listing the various organizations in McCracken County that offer housing and/or services for homeless people. The local organizations include River City Mission, Paducah Cooperative Ministry, Salvation Army, Family Service Society, Martha's Vineyard, Community Kitchen, and CenterPoint Recovery. The decision to review Paducah's ordinances and consider allowing homeless shelters within the city limits is due to a request by Devien Burnett and Jeff Golightly to rehabilitate the structure at 1227 Tennessee Street into a homeless shelter. This structure is very close to the area within Paducah known as "tent city". The draft ordinance creates Section 126-72 within the zoning code of ordinances. The draft ordinance outlines requirements for a homeless shelter including location constraints, permit requirements, and shelter standards. Among other items, for a shelter to be approved it must have a continuous, on-site operator, an approved code of conduct for its residents, adequate external lighting, laundry facilities, and a written management plan. Staff and services shall be available to assist the residents in obtaining permanent shelter and income. The Mayor and Commissioners voiced their support for allowing homeless shelters within the Paducah city limits. Commissioner Gerald Watkins says, "What we can do in Paducah, Kentucky is a wonderful thing to help those who find themselves in an unfortunate condition." A public hearing with the Paducah Planning Commission regarding the draft ordinance is scheduled for November 21. The final draft of the ordinance would be introduced by the City Commission in December.

Convention Center Corporation Meeting

City Manager Jeff Pederson quickly briefed the Mayor and Commission regarding today's meeting of the Convention Center Corporation (CCC). The CCC has approved letting the Carson Center manage the operations and marketing for the Julian Carroll Convention Center and the Expo Center. Looking ahead, Pederson says the financial struggles for the convention centers will continue.

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