

**CITY OF LAWRENCE**  
**Common Council**  
**January 3, 2023**  
**Regular Meeting**

MEMBERS PRESENT: William Tyrrell Giles, Rick Wells, Shawn Denney, Tom Shevlot, Sherron Freeman, Lauren Russel, and Deborah Whitfield

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Lisa Chavis, and Maria Rusomaroff

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Attorney Kristina Wheeler (Bose McKinney & Evans LLP)

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Kathleen Walton

STAFF PRESENT: Chief of Staff Hofmann

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

Council President Lisa Chavis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and announced a quorum was present.

The election of President of the Lawrence Common Council was opened for nominations. Councilor Chavis nominated William Tyrrell Giles. Councilor Russel nominated Tom Shevlot. Councilor Chavis announced that, there being no further nominations, nominations were closed. By a roll call vote, Nine votes were cast, 7 votes for William Tyrrell Giles (Councilors Chavis, Giles, Freeman, Denney, Wells, Rusomaroff, and Whitfield) and 2 votes for Tom Shevlot (Councilors Shevlot and Russel). Clerk Walton announced that William Tyrrell Giles was elected President of the Common Council.

The election of Vice President of the Lawrence Common Council was opened for nominations. Councilor Denney nominated Rick Wells. Councilor Shevlot nominated Lauren Russel. Councilor Chavis announced that, there being no further nominations, nominations were closed. By a roll call vote, Nine votes were cast, 7 votes for Rick Wells (Councilors Chavis, Giles, Freeman, Denney, Wells, Rusomaroff, and Whitfield) and 2 votes for Lauren Russel (Councilors Shevlot and Russel). Clerk Walton announced that Rick Wells was elected Vice President of the Common Council.

At the conclusion of the vote, Councilor Chavis offered to vacate the chair, allowing Councilor Giles to assume his new position. Councilor Giles accepted and conducted the remainder of the meeting. Councilor Giles thanked everyone for the vote of confidence.

COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: Councilor Whitfield congratulated Councilor Giles on becoming council president. She recognized Councilor Chavis for her past years of service as council president. Councilor Russel congratulated the Street Department for their great job keeping the city streets open during the mini blizzard of recent days. She went on to recognize the outstanding work of public safety first responders under difficult circumstances. Councilor Denney recognized the Firefighters Assistance Fund for the resources provided to those in need within the City of Lawrence. That program provides a great service to the community.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilor Freeman moved to approve the minutes of the regular meetings on December 5, 2022, December 21, 2022, and special meetings on December 1, 2022, December 12, 2022, and December 16, 2022. Councilor Wells seconded the motion. By a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS 1-3-23: None

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Councilor Giles said nominations for members of the Redevelopment Commission were open for consideration. Councilor Freeman nominated Melissa Howard. Councilor Shevlot nominated Pam Anderson. Councilor Whitfield nominated Cheryl Sullivan. Councilor Giles announced that, there being no further nominations, nominations were closed. By a roll call vote, Seventeen votes were cast, 7 votes for Cheryl Sullivan, 7 votes for Melissa Howard, and 3 votes for Pam Anderson. Clerk Walton announced that Cheryl Sullivan and Melissa Howard were elected to the Redevelopment Commission.

Councilor Giles said nominations for members of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) were open for consideration. Councilor Denney nominated James Masur, Faith Alvarez, and Trace Yates. Councilor Russel nominated Aaron Short. Councilor Giles announced that, there being no further nominations, nominations were closed. By a roll call vote, Twenty-three votes were cast, 7 votes for James Masur, 7 votes for Trace Yates, 7 votes for Faith Alvarez, and 2 votes for Aaron Short. Clerk Walton announced that James Masur, Trace Yates, and Faith Alvarez were elected to the BZA.

Councilor Giles said nominations for a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) as an alternate were open for consideration. Councilor Denney nominated Jennifer Tursi. Councilor Freeman nominated Betty Robinson. Councilor Russel nominated Aaron Short. Councilor Rusomaroff nominated Rochelle Carey. Councilor Giles announced that, there being no further nominations, nominations were closed. By a roll call vote, Nine votes were cast, 2 votes for Jennifer Tursi (Councilors Denney and Wells), 2 votes for Betty Robinson (Councilors Freeman and Giles), 2 votes for Aaron Short (Councilors Russel and Shevlot) and 3 votes for Rochelle Carey (Councilors Chavis, Rusomaroff, and Whitfield). Clerk Walton announced that Rochelle Carey was elected as the alternate to the BZA.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS: Dave Hofmann, former Deputy Mayor, thanked the members of the council for allowing him to speak on behalf of the administration. He made the following points:

- Expressed the intention to continue to serve the citizens of Lawrence during 2023
- Noted that steps had been taken in 2022 to improve communications between the administration and the council
- Recognized that the 2023 budget process provided an opportunity for such cooperation. He specifically identified the 11 public budget workshops conducted during the summer as examples of what is possible through cooperation.

- He reminded everyone that projects in the city parks and other areas have yet to be approved.
- He emphasized that he now spoke as “former deputy mayor” and that final clarification of his status is undergoing review by HR.
- He recognized that the city has again received recognition from the Government Finance Officers Association award for distinguished budget presentation. This is the sixth consecutive year for this award.
- He noted that the city enters 2023 maintaining a 20% operating reserve.
- Upcoming events include – ribbon-cutting of Heartland Film later this month. The opening of the Lawrence Library. The successful completion this summer of our new Fire Station 38. The groundbreaking this summer of the Keystone Project. The initiation of a massive INDOT project on Pendleton Pike intended to make our city a much safer place in which to travel.

CITIZENS COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m., by the unanimous vote of the Council.

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William Tyrrell Giles, President

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Kathleen A. Walton, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions. An audiotape is made which provides a detailed record.