

MINUTES OF 07/14/2025 REGULAR MEETING

Irvine City Council met in a regular meeting on July 14, 2025.

Mayor James E. Gross called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Councilman Raider led the prayer and the City Clerk led the pledge.

PRESENT: Mayor James Gross, Councilman Tim Burkhart, Councilwoman Margaret Lisle, Councilman Aaron Raider, Councilwoman Donna Whorley, and Councilman James Woolery. Councilwoman Sharma Daniels was absent.

Also present: Brian Brooks, Police Chief; Felicia Campbell, City Clerk, and Carter Skipworth, Assistant City Attorney. City Attorney, Rodney Davis was absent.

VISITORS PRESENT: Cathy Dawes, Joe Crawford, Steve Garrett, Pat Garrett, Tracy Snowden, and Bryan Whorley.

GUEST(S) ADDRESSING COUNCIL:

Tracy Snowden, resident of Geneva Avenue, addressed the Council. Mr. Snowden said the demographics of Geneva Avenue have changed. There are several homes now with children. The children are playing, chasing balls, and doing normal children's activities. Mr. Snowden stated there is a 15mph speed limit sign as well as a "children at play" sign. Both are old and rusted. He said drivers are not adhering to the speed limit and he is concerned for the children's safety. Mr. Snowden said he had seen patrol cars and said that would help, but he asked about possibly getting new signage. Mayor Gross said he would need permission to put the sign in a private yard. Mr. Snowden said he had spoken to Bee Williams and he was agreeable to having the sign placed on his property. Police Chief Brooks suggested the sign have an odd speed limit, making people read it twice. Mayor Gross said he would check on getting a new sign. Mr. Snowden thanked the Mayor and Council for their time.

Steve Garrett, another resident of Geneva Avenue, echoed Mr. Snowden's concerns. Mr. Garrett agreed that updated signage as well as increased patrolling would improve awareness.

Joe Crawford, Estill Development Alliance Director, presented contract for renewal between E.D.A. and the City. The contract was a renewal, with only the dates being changed. The contract term is 07/14/2025 – 06/30/2026, with a cost of \$10,000. The contract states payments are to be paid quarterly.

Estill Development Alliance Contract Renewed

Councilman Burkhart made a motion to renew the E.D.A. contract for the 2025-2026 year. Councilman Raider seconded the motion and all present members voted yes.

Mr. Crawford also shared the following:

1. “Chalk the Walk” event was a huge success. Sponsors hope to repeat the event in the fall.
2. Estill County Chamber of Commerce has purchased a “Locable” software program. The program is a database generated community calendar. The software should be user friendly. Each community partner will have their own login access and will be able to share any event they are sponsoring. There will be a separate calendar page dedicated to children’s activities.
3. Steam Heritage hopes to get grant funds in the near future to start another phase of their project.
4. Downtown store fronts were discussed. Mr. Crawford said recent owners had focused on the residential aspect of the buildings and not the store fronts. Mayor Gross suggested Mr. Crawford check on Rural Development funding.

OLD BUSINESS:

June 23, 2025 Minutes Approved

Minutes from the June 23, 2025 regular meeting were presented for review. Councilwoman Lisle made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Councilwoman Whorley seconded the motion. All present members voted yes, with the exception of Councilman Raider who abstained due to absence.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bills Approved

City bills dated June 19, 2025 – July 10, 2025, were presented for review. Councilman Burkhart made a motion, which Councilman Woolery seconded, to approve the bills as presented. All present members voted yes.

Audit Schedule Approved

Mayor Gross shared an update to KRS 91A.040-Audit Requirements with Populations of 3,000 or less. The statutory change impacts the City's audit requirements. As part of the update, the City is considered to have a population under 3,000. The new classification qualifies the City to opt into a biennial (every-other-year) audit schedule. A full audit will be required in odd-numbered fiscal years. Councilman Burkhart made a motion to opt into the biennial audit schedule. Councilman Woolery seconded the motion, with all present members voting yes.

Executive Session

Mr. Burkhart made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to KRS 61.810, Paragraph (1) (c), discussions of proposed or pending litigation on behalf of a public agency. Councilman Raider seconded the motion and all present members voted yes.

Meeting was called back in open session at 7:39 P.M., with no action taken.

REPORTS:

1. Mayor Gross

- a. Sherman Collins property on Stevens Avenue will not be on the court docket until August 7th.
- b. Asked Hinkle Construction to look at Grindstone Road when they return to complete their blacktop contract.

2. Assistant City Attorney Carter Skipworth

- a. Agreed the Stevens Avenue motion for judgement should get on the 08/07 docket.

3. City Clerk/Treasurer Felicia Campbell

- a. Reported \$5,227 in delinquent property taxes had been collected since letters had been mailed in June.

4. Police Chief Brian Brooks

- a. Shared a four-page list of properties within city limits that are violating ordinances. Intends to speak to Rodney Davis, City Attorney, about next steps. Which might mean going before the Board of Adjustments. The Chief said he would then start by sending letters, with seven (7) day time frames.
- b. Has prepared a new administration manual for the Irvine Police Department which follows Kentucky League of Cities guidelines.
- c. Estill County is the only county in the surrounding area that is not a HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) county. Chief Brooks said he has been working with all local law enforcement heads to request Estill County be identified as a HIDTA county. If the request is approved it would mean the City could attach an officer to the HIDTA task force. The task force would in turn pay up to \$19,500 toward overtime costs. The City would also receive proceeds from drug busts conducted by the task force. Councilman Raider asked why

Estill County had been omitted as a HIDTA county. Chief Brooks said it required all local law enforcement agencies work together. He said he had been assisted this week by State Police and he and the sheriff's office have been working together.

- d. Tentatively scheduled town hall meeting called Chat with Chief for August 1, 2025.

5. Councilman Burkhart

- a. Nothing.

6. Councilwoman Daniels

- a. Absent.

7. Councilwoman Lisle

- a. Asked if the fee charged during the Mountain Mushroom Festival was only good during the two-day event. Mayor Gross explained the festival is a completely separate entity from the City and is now under the E.D.A. umbrella. No proceeds from the festival funnel back to the City. Councilman Burkhart said the charge is comparable to other festivals. The Mayor did state that the festival reimbursed the City for Police and Street Departments' overtime costs.
- b. Had reviewed the first sections of the Mobile Food Truck ordinance. Would like to see Irvine's ordinance be less restrictive. Feels it is a missed opportunity to have businesses in town while allowing residents dining options.

8. Councilman Raider

- a. Is in favor of simplifying the mobile food truck ordinance.

9. Councilwoman Whorley

- a. Asked if the tower firetruck had been repaired. Mayor Gross said no, it would have to be scheduled with the company in Shelbyville.

10. Councilman Woolery

- a. Jenny Jo Niece, Director for Community Engagement for Hospice Care Plus is requesting to host a benefit called "Rock the Block Music Event" for September 20, 2025. He had emailed everyone regarding the benefit and had talked to Chief Brooks prior to the meeting.
- b. Showed a picture of the war memorial located in front of the Courthouse. The memorial was black. Mayor Gross said that would be up to the County Judge and Fiscal Court.
- c. Asked if anyone knew why the jail was in such dire need of upkeep. Chief Brooks said the material of the jail was hard to maintain. Mayor Gross said that was also up to the Judge and Fiscal Court.

Adjournment

Councilman Burkhart moved and Councilman Raider seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 P.M. All present members voted yes.

Mayor, James E. Gross

City Clerk/Treasurer, Felicia F. Campbell

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