

BELLA VISTA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

July 28, 2025 6:00 PM

Bella Vista District Court 2483 Forest Hills Boulevard

MINUTES

Call to Order by Mayor Flynn at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Roll Call called by Clerk Krug. Council Members Harp, Hughes, Newport, Wilms, Isbell, Honchell were present. Mayor Flynn was present.

Citizen Input Linda Lloyd, 102 Fairway. Linda came to thank the City staff and the Freese and Nichols consultants for their hard work on reviewing Sections 107 and 109 of our Ordinance. She thinks it will be a breath of fresh air to have an Ordinance that is written specifically for Bella Vista. She believes it would be of benefit to our residents, contractors, and staff if this were enacted sooner rather than later.

Melissa Thomas, 11460 Northridge Rd, Pea Ridge. Melissa came to voice her opinion as a builder/owner in Bella Vista about some of the new changes proposed in the updated Zoning Ordinances. Two things they noticed as builders were the proposed changes: "no electrical pedestals in the front," and "the preservation of natural, existing vegetation and tree canopy." She suggests a coordinated effort with Carroll Electric. Sometimes Carroll Electric's need to cut down trees will take out the trees builders leave. The new language of "leaving 10% natural" even in septic lots, is not easy due to the root systems of trees that will be cut due to septic.

Council Member Reply

Mayor Flynn reported that City staff would be meeting with Carroll Electric to go over these changes. Council Member Harp thanked Linda and Melissa for coming to speak. He appreciates Linda's desire to move forward quickly to approve the Zoning Ordinance changes, but feels three readings are necessary for residents to respond. He shares Melissa's frustration with the tree issue, as builders left trees in his yard that are now dead. Council Member Wilms thanked Linda for her compliments to the staff and consultants, and he also thinks they did a good job. He also believes that 2 readings may be sufficient in order to pass this zoning ordinance.

Mayor Flynn made a special presentation to Julie and Tim Hull, in recognition of their efforts to produce the 4th of July Parade each year. He also read the names of the 4th of July Committee members. Additionally, he noted that **Crazy Willy's Ice Cream**, created by Michael and Andrew Hall, sons of Julie and Tim, celebrated their 5th year of successful business in Bella Vista. It is exceptional that they started the business as minors.

Reports

Monthly Financial Report: May 31, 2025

Mayor Flynn summarized the monthly report which is in the Agenda Packet. It has been consistent with past reports. City sales tax was up 13.8% compared to one year ago and county sales tax was up 4.7%. Total operating revenue was up 11.3%. Operating expenses were 5% under budget, which is \$464,000, after five months. He is encouraged by the financial reports so far this year.

Items Related to Proposed Sales Tax Bond Extension: Mayor John Flynn
Mayor Flynn invited Chief James Graves to speak about the three radio towers. Since the towers affect the communication systems of fire, police, and streets, all these departments are invested. Chief Graves described the current situation of the city being on POA water towers. The fact that the city does not own its own towers is a problem moving forward as a professional, forward-thinking city. Sharing communication towers with another entity may not work well in the future. Due to the dome's shape, a good, proper signal does not go out over Bella Vista. This is known as a dome deflection problem. The city's frequencies are digital, and are affected by dome deflection with a mechanical sound. These are unlike analog frequencies. The towers are also shorter than they should be, and that limits coverage. Each frequency needs one antenna and the current towers don't have room for all the frequencies the city has access to. As the city grows and gets busier, it will need additional frequencies.

The tower height should be taller at 199 feet. The city does not own the towers, the property, the chain-link fence, or the radio shed. Sometimes, when the city does maintenance on the towers, they are accidentally locked out by the POA. This simply delays city workers dealing with issues needing resolution. Sometimes the POA paints and maintains the water towers, but the city radio equipment may be damaged by accident. These occurrences would be eliminated if the city owns its own equipment. Backup generators at each of the radio towers are a requirement, and currently one of the POA sites doesn't have a generator available, so a heavy-duty extension cord provides backup. Many of these small problems can add up to increased failures. He advised making an investment in our own radio towers, which will last long into the future. Several Council members asked detailed questions, answered by Chief Graves.

(The Chair will entertain a motion to suspend the rules of order and procedure to allow all ordinances on the agenda to be read by title only.) Council Member Larry Wilms made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Member Isbell. **Roll Call Vote: (Ayes: 6/Nays: 0) Passed 6-0.**

Consent Agenda

Mayor Flynn asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Council

Member Hughes made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Member Newport. **Roll Call Vote: (Ayes: 6/Nays: 0) Passed 6-0.**

Approval of Minutes: Monday, June 23, 2025, City Council Regular Meeting

RESOLUTION: APPROVING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF ERIC BARTELS TO THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD POSITION 1 TO COMPLETE AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING MARCH 1, 2027, DUE TO A VACANCY

RESOLUTION: AMENDING THE RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE OF THE BELLA VISTA CITY COUNCIL TO COMPLY WITH RECENT AMENDMENTS TO THE ARKANSAS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Unfinished Business

New Business

ORDINANCE: ADOPTING A NEW ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAP FOR THE CITY OF BELLA VISTA (CHAPTER 109), REPEALING PRIOR ZONING ORDINANCES AND MAPS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES Mayor Flynn read the ordinance for the first time. Council Member Harp requested a staff report from the meeting with Carroll Electric at the next Council Meeting, to which Mayor Flynn agreed. Council Member Hughes asked clarifying questions, answered by Staff Attorney Kelley and Planning Director Robertson. A short discussion followed, with input from Planning Director Robertson. She noted that proposed amendments would be coming next month. The ordinance moves to a second reading in August.

ORDINANCE: ADOPTING A NEW SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF BELLA VISTA (CHAPTER 107), REPEALING THE PRIOR SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES Mayor Flynn read the ordinance for the first time. Council Member Wilms said it is short, it is streamlined, and it is effective. Mayor Flynn thanked Planning Director Robertson. The ordinance moves to second reading in August.

RESOLUTION: EXPRESSING AN INTENT TO PLACE AN EMERGENCY SIREN SYSTEM IN THE PLANNED 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOND ORDINANCE Mayor Flynn read the resolution. Council Member Newport presented her reasons for proposing this resolution, and stated that she had been working on it prior to the Bond ordinance and resolution. She would like to see tornado sirens added to the list of bond projects. The estimated cost is around \$630,000, or rounded up to \$700,000. She thinks that residents should have the right to vote on acquiring emergency tornado sirens. Council Member Hughes asked if this request was intended to be added as an amendment at the next Council Meeting. Staff Attorney Kelly explained the complexities involved with amending a bond ordinance. A long discussion followed between Council members, filled with comments and questions. Mayor Flynn presented his thoughts on this proposed resolution,

citing the fact that both Fire Chief Sims and Police Chief Graves are against it. He feels it is imprudent to have sirens. Mayor Flynn presented historical data on tornado impact in Bella Vista, and passed out handouts. Council Member Honchell said that he thinks the cost of maintenance must be explored, and Council Member Wilms agreed. Council Member Isbell thinks a weather or emergency alert system would be a better description than a tornado siren. Deputy Chief Wolfgang addressed the Council on behalf of Chief Sims, explaining why the Chief is against a tornado siren. He said it creates a false sense of security among the public, and experience with sirens has proven that to be true. Tornado sirens are effective 1-2 square miles, and Bella Vista totals 45 square miles. He agreed with Mayor Flynn that cell phones are the most effective way to stay informed of weather emergencies. He feels it would take an extensive study to understand how many towers would be necessary to alert everybody in Bella Vista. Council Member Newport made several points of clarification in favor of the sirens, and more discussion followed. Council Member Newport made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Member Isbell. **Roll Call Vote: (Ayes: 2/Nays: 4 Harp, Hughes, Wilms, Honchell) Failed: 2-4.**

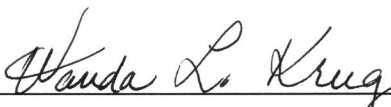
Announcements

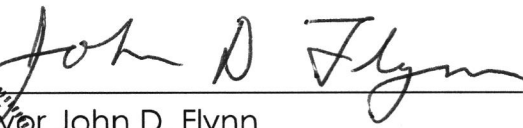
Mayor Flynn announced a City Council Special Meeting on August 4, 2025, at 6:00 pm on the bond issue.

- Next City Council Work Session: 5:30 pm Monday, August 18, at Bella Vista Police Training Room
- Next City Council Regular Meeting: 6:00 pm Monday, August 25, at Bella Vista District Court
- Planning Commission Work Session: 4:30 pm Thursday, July 31, at Bella Vista District Court
- Planning Commission Regular Meeting: 4:30 pm, or immediately following BZA, Monday, August 11, at Bella Vista District Court
- Board of Construction Appeals: 3:00 pm Tuesday, August 12, if necessary, at Fire Station #4 Conference Rm, 1639 Forest Hills Blvd.

Adjournment

Mayor Flynn adjourned the meeting at 7:12 pm. Council Member Wilms made an announcement regarding a fundraiser at BV65 to support non-profits in Bella Vista.


City Clerk Wanda Lepillez Krug


Mayor John D. Flynn

