

MW Council looking to double down on moratorium

STEPHEN THOMAS
THE PIONEER NEWS

MOUNT WASHINGTON — The Mount Washington City Council is looking into a lengthier moratorium on data centers than Bullitt County and other surrounding cities.

City attorney Scott Wantland presented the first reading of a localized moratorium set at 24 months in length, while other areas, including Bullitt County, are passing 12-month moratoriums.

The moratorium means that data center would not be allowed to build within city limits during that time, giving city officials an opportunity to research and establish rules and regulations specifically pertaining to such facilities.

Resident Katharine Garza addressed the council to support the moratorium, listing a number of reasons in favor.

According to Garza, some data centers have attempted to implement eminent domain to take land. She said the centers decreased surrounding property values and quality of life.

Garza said data center could use as much power and water as cities, threatening nearby farmlands and overwhelming power grids, leading to higher customer bills and also water depletion.

Environmental concerns also

included long-term impacts including light pollution, noise pollution, and the possibility of “forever chemicals” entering into the area.

Garza also added traffic increases during construction and operational phases as a concern, along with a history of data center companies being dishonest with communities. She feared Mount Washington would lose its hometown feel.

The biggest concern Garza addressed was data centers attempting to enter into non-disclosure agreements with local officials, meaning the officials could not discuss communications with the companies.

Council member Layne Abell said he had no problem with the council not allowing non-disclosure agreements. He added that the city was interested in regulations being discussed by other governing agencies, saying it would be good for the city to create its own guidelines.

Wantland felt any non-disclosure agreement would violate the city’s ethics ordinance.

A second reading of the data center moratorium ordinance, along with a vote to approve or deny, will take place during the council’s next meeting.

In other business:

- City clerk Dawn Hardin was officially approved by the council to return to the position of city administrator.

Hardin has worked with the city for 26 years, at one point officially working city administrator duties. She returned to the city clerk position when mayor Stuart Owen hired former city administrator Harry Webster to the position in 2023.

Webster resigned after 16 months, with Hardin filling in those duties since. However, she was never officially reappointed to the administrator’s position.

Owen announced other recent changes at City Hall with employees resigning to take other positions, including tax clerk Emily Blackburn.

Hardin said executive assistant Emma Julien would take over as city clerk once official training was completed.

In other city position changes, Owen announced that assistant police chief Mike Huffman resigned from the position. Huffman was recently named chief of the newly-established Bullitt County Public Schools Police Department.

Meanwhile, resident Lynn Martin was approved to fill a vacancy in the city’s ethics board by a 4-0 council vote, with council member Sandra Hockenbury abstaining and council member Troy Barr absent.

“(Martin) is interested in it and I think he will do a great job,” Owen said.

Ethics board members Tammy Sapp and Brandon Meadows

recently resigned. Owen suggested that council members seek out further potential replacements,

Owen said ethics board members were currently unpaid, with past councils feeling it would be unethical. However, the mayor discussed the issue with the Kentucky League of Cities, who suggested that pay allotment should take place.

According to Owen, the city would pay each member \$50 per meeting, reminding that the board only met whenever necessary regarding ethics issues.

- Owen announced that the city was close to purchasing property located at the end of College Street. He reminded the council that funding was placed in the city’s budget for the property’s purchase, with the site totaling just under \$43,000.

Located next to the Public Works salt shed, director Mike Hightchew said a new garage was planned for the property to store equipment.

Hightchew said a garage on one of three former house properties along Flat Lick Road was currently used for storage. However, those properties were being torn down to add on to the city’s sports complex grounds.

- The council approved the renewal of the city’s motor vehicle tax rate, set at 15 per \$100 of motor vehicle assessed value.

The rate has not changed for many years, but the city is required

to renew it annually.

- The council approved two rezonings, including a request of 2.78 acres at 190 Delania Drive, owned by Oak and Anchor Enterprises, from B-2 to B-1 Business.

The other rezoning involved 2.4 acres owned by SPP LLC along Morning Glory Avenue from R-2 Residential to B-2 Business. The property included a detention basin.

- Owen mentioned that the city was in the process of adding new entrance signs.

One each will be placed along N. Bardstown and S. Bardstown Rd., as well as two along Highway 44 East.

- The city’s annual Fall Clean-Up was scheduled for Sep. 10-12, from 7 am-7 pm each day.

Hightchew said the event would coincide with the county’s annual Tire Amnesty event.

- The fourth annual police car show fundraiser was scheduled for Aug. 22, 4-8 pm, at the city’s sports complex.

- Council member Bruce Gooden suggested that the city locate a large tree to be placed in the vacant lot at the intersection of Bardstown Rd. and Highway 44 East and used as a Christmas Tree during the city’s Light-Up festivities.

- The next Mount Washington City Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, Aug. 24, 6:30 pm, at Fick Hall. The public is invited to attend.

Improving the city's looks causing legal headaches

STEPHEN THOMAS
THE PIONEER NEWS

MOUNT WASHINGTON — Improvements to the city of Mount Washington are causing a variety of detail issues for its governing body.

The city council was prepared to hear a first reading of a proposed ordinance to expand its business exterior improvement program from the downtown corridor to the entire city. The ordinance allows businesses to be reimbursed by the city for up to 40 percent of its improvement project costs.

Before presenting the ordinance, city attorney Scott Wantland addressed some questions and legal concerns involving the changes, the first being monies available on a first come-first serve basis.

According to Wantland, the city could leave that rule, or decide to evenly split allowed funding to all applicants, among other solutions.

Council member Greg Gentry preferred the first come-first serve idea, while council member Layne Abell feared a larger company could drain the available funding.

Another concern was allotted request time. Abell inquired about a business completing an improvement project after funding ran out and applying for reim-

bursement the next year. City clerk Dawn Hardin said the project and the reimbursement must take place within the same calendar year.

Hardin mentioned there had never been an issue with the ordinance since it was first approved. However, there was one year when two businesses applied and one of the businesses did not receive complete reimbursement as funding ran out.

“When businesses apply for reimbursement, it’s first come-first serve,” she said.

According to Wantland, the city allowed \$100,000 for the program and the maximum reimbursement allotment was set at 40 percent, or \$40,000, with a minimum of \$10,000. He reminded the council that they could always increase or decrease those numbers.

Wantland also addressed lien concerns, with Abell fearing a company would apply and receive city funding and then sell the building at a profit. Hardin reminded that the goal of the program was for city revitalization even if a building were to be sold.

In another issue, Wantland said terms were confusing regarding a business applying more than once per year, including if an owner had multiple properties. The council said just one request per individual per year would be allowed.

Hardin added that an owner receiving reimbursement could not apply for the program in consecutive years.

Gentry reminded that the council could set a smaller maximum amount, though Abell felt anything less may not assist as much due to current building materials costs.

The first reading of the ordinance was postponed as Wantland planned to rewrite various portions prior to presentation. The council will hear a first reading at its next business meeting, scheduled for Monday, Aug. 26, 6:30 pm, at Fick Hall. The public is invited to attend.

Buckler selected to National Society of High School Scholars

River Buckler, a senior at North Bullitt High, has recently been selected to become a member of the prestigious National Society of High School Scholars.

She is the daughter of Stephany and Bryan Buckler.

Her proud grandparents are Vivian and Bob Buckler and Joe and Tara Gonzales.

The society recognizes top scholars who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, scholarship and community commitment.

"On behalf of NSHAA and our co-founder Claes Nobel, a member of the family that established the Nobel Prize, I am honored to recognize the hard work, passion and commitment that River has demonstrated to achieve this exceptional level of academic excellence," said James W. Lewis, NSHSS co-founder and president. "River is now a member of a unique community of scholars – a community that represents our very best hope for the future."

"We are proud to provide lifetime membership to



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LEGAL NOTICE

The Auto Exchange LLC has been in possession since 02/04/2026 a 2022 FORD BRONCO
Vin: 1FMDE5CP9NLB82677. A Storage Fee totaling \$ 6,545.00 & Bill of Sale totaling \$10,000.00. The storage fee is \$35.00 a day until the vehicle is picked up. Constance M Short & Capital One Auto Finance. You have 10 days to notify me in writing about this legal notice. After 10 days, you have an additional 10 days to notify me about a 2022 FORD BRONCO Vin: 1FMDE5CP9NLB82677. The Auto Exchange LLC is seeking a free-and-clear title. The vehicle will be sold at the following address: 1170 North Bardstown Road, Mount Washington, KY 40047.

S&F Mechanical and Collision Center, INC has been in possession since 05/06/2026 of a 2018 DODGE DURANGO
VIN #1C4RDJDGXC279871. A Storage Fee totaling \$7,680.00 & Repair Bill \$4,909.30. The storage fee is \$80.00 a day until the vehicle is picked up. Yenla Machado Avalos & Exeter Finance LLC You have 14 days to notify me in writing about this legal notice. After the 14 days, you have 10 days to notify me about the 2018 DODGE DURANGO VIN #1C4RDJDGXC279871. S&F Mechanical and Collision Center, INC is seeking a free and clear title. At the following address, the vehicle will be sold. 4649 Astor Road, Louisville, Kentucky, 40218.

The Auto Exchange LLC has been in possession since 02/04/2026 a 2014 DODGE Challenger
Vin: 2C3CDYDJ0EH139197. A Storage Fee totaling \$ 6,545.00 & Bill of Sale totaling \$10,000.00. The storage fee is \$35.00 a day until the vehicle is picked up. KENNETH ROUSH You have 10 days to notify me in writing about this legal notice. After 10 days, you have an additional 10 days to notify me about a 2014 DODGE Challenger Vin: 2C3CDYDJ0EH139197. The Auto Exchange LLC is seeking a free-and-clear title. The vehicle will be sold at the following address: 1170 North Bardstown Road, Mount Washington, KY 40047.

The Auto Exchange LLC has been in possession since 02/04/2026 a 2022 TESLA MODEL Y TRUCK.
Vin: 7SAYGDEF6NF393386. A Storage Fee totaling \$ 6,545.00 & Bill of Sale totaling \$15,500.00. The storage fee is \$35.00 a day until the vehicle is picked up. SCOTT N ARMSTRONG & Georgia's Own Credit Union. You have 10 days to notify me in writing about this legal notice. After 10 days, you have an additional 10 days to notify me about a 2022 TESLA MODEL Y TRUCK, Vin: 7SAYGDEF6NF393386. The Auto Exchange LLC is seeking a free-and-clear title. The vehicle will be sold at the following address: 1170 North Bardstown Road, Mount Washington, KY 40047.