

Special Meeting
Owenton City Council
September 4, 2025
5:30pm at City Hall

Council Member Jill Dunavent called the meeting to order at 5:30pm

Council members present: Larry Dale Perry, Jimmy Marston, Patty Sue Miller, Jill Dunavent, Leigh Hawkins, James Abner and City Attorney Mitzy Ford. Also present: Consultant/Interim Clerk Elishia Chamberlain, and Deputy Clerk Mallory McClure.

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation: Patty Sue Miller

Guests: Interested parties in filling Mayoral vacancy: Doug West & Dave "Milkweed" Wotier

August 19, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes James Abner motioned to approve August 19th Special Meeting Minutes. Larry Dale Perry seconded the motion and the motion carried with all in approval.

Old Business

The Meeting proceeded to Old Business with the 2nd Reading of Ordinance 803—An Ordinance Establishing the Tax Rate and levy for the Taxable Year 2025. There being no discussion, Larry Dale Perry motioned to adopt the rate, and James Abner seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

New Business

There being no further Old Business the meeting moved onto New Business. Jill Dunavent discussed the flower service provided to the city this spring and summer and alerted Council the same service is offered for the fall season. Brief discussion ensued with mention by Mr. Abner that having spent \$1000 on a stage it may not be prudent to move forward with this service. No motion was made.

The task of moving forward with the appointment of a mayor to fill the current vacancy was discussed with interested parties including James Abner, Dave "Milkweed" Wotier, Doug West, and Jeff Thomas all expressing interest. Each interested party was given five minutes to address Council and attendees to discuss why they feel they would be most suited to the role. In Mr. Thomas's absence, Jill Dunavent read from a Letter of Interest submitted ahead of time. Candidates were asked questions and given the opportunity to address each question.

Upon the conclusion of the review of interested candidates the Council began the process of selecting a candidate for appointment. Councilman Larry Dale Perry motioned to appoint Brother Dave "Milkweed Wotier, and Patty Sue Miller seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Council Members Larry Dale Perry, Jimmy Marston, and Patty Sue Miller each voting in favor of this appointment. Council Member Jill Dunavent, Leigh Hawkins, and James Abner each voted against this appointment. There being no majority, the nomination failed.

Jill Dunavent motioned to appoint Council Member James Abner to the role of Mayor, with a second from Leigh Hawkins. A roll call vote was had with Council Members Larry Dale Perry, Jimmy Marston, and Patty Sue Miller voting no. Council Members Jill Dunavent and Leigh Hawkins each voted yes. Councilman James Abner recused himself from the vote as he cannot vote for himself in this matter. There being no majority in favor of the appointment, the motion failed.

Discussion ensued with Council working towards determining how to best move forward. Interim Clerk, Elishia Chamberlain, reminded the Council they were down the last week they can make this appointment, or the Governor would appoint an individual to fill the vacancy. It was suggested compromise was in order. Questions by interested parties not currently serving on Council were answered and discussion was had regarding answers pertaining to concerns had by members of council. At this time James Abner motioned for Leigh Hawkins to be appointed to the role of Mayor. Ms. Hawkins had not expressed an interest and was asked if she was willing to accept the nomination. Upon acceptance, Jill Dunavent seconded the motion. The vote was had through roll call with Council Members Larry Dale Perry and Patty Sue Miller voting not. Council Members Jimmy Marston, Jill Dunavent, and James Abner voted in favor of the nomination. Council Woman Leigh Hawkins recused herself from the vote as she was unable to vote for her own nomination. A majority of votes in favor of Council Woman Leigh Hawkins passed and she is appointed to serve as the Mayor until the end of the current term in December 2026.

Having no further business, Jill Dunavent entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:06pm. James Abner made the motion to adjourn. Jimmy Marston seconded.

SIGNED:

, Mayor

ATTEST:

Elishia Chamberlain, Interim City Clerk