

Board of Alderman Minutes
81 S. Orchard Blvd.
March 3, 2026
Page 1 of 14

OPEN MEETING

Roll Call taken by Mayor Pro Tem Petty
Mark Stewart PRESENT, Tim Cooke PRESENT, Eric Boncuk PRESENT, Kelly Petty
PRESENT, Franklin Hodges PRESENT

Call to order at: 5:00 p.m.

Approve Agenda.

Motion by Boncuk to approve the agenda. Seconded by Cooke
Stewart AYE, Cooke AYE, Boncuk AYE, Petty AYE, Hodges AYE

New Business

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE SECONDARY BUILDING INSPECTOR

Petty – The City would like to hire or contract with Chris Straw. He is currently the building inspector for Strafford. He was also recommended by Greene County by the Greene County Inspectors, I don't know what that organization's called. They sometimes contract with him when they need additional inspections. His contract rate is \$60 per hour. That's all of the information I have. We have to contract with him before he can perform any inspections for us.

Cooke – But we have no resume, no nothing on him?

Petty – Nope. He unfortunately had a health issue. He was planning to be here tonight but he was not able to make it.

Hodges – Do what now?

Petty – He had a health issue and was not able to make it tonight to meet with us.

Hodges – Right.

Boncuk – Do we have any feedback from anybody besides Greene County that has worked with him before?

Petty – We had a recommendation from our previous inspector...

Davis – Carey.

Petty – Carey, who knew of and had worked with Chris and had tried to get him into Fair Grove but I think that kind of ended at a dead end with him. The first that I think the City had officially reached out to him was whenever I called him yesterday.

Hodges – I brought him up about 2 months ago with you guys and you didn't want to hear it.

Stewart – Is this the older guy that you were talking about or is this...

Hodges – The younger guy and the older guy. Like I said, I got to talk to this guy. I don't know him but I got to talk to him almost an hour on the phone about what's going on here with our inspector we got now and I liked what he had to say. Cause this is what he told me and I'll tell you guys once again. The man told me when he's doing an inspection on the place, he says I've been a builder, I've been on both sides of the road. I've built houses and I've inspected them and he said my job ain't here to shut these people down that's building houses. He said when I'm walking through a place doing an inspection on one thing, he said if I see something else on another deal in there he says I bring it up to the contract, hey you need to fix this or change this or whatever. And I said, I like your attitude. He's not trying to kill our contractors like the one guy we got now. And like I said, before I didn't vote for the guy we got now. I voted no because he wasn't here, you know. I didn't get to talk to him.

Cooke – I understand the need and I can't wait to hear feedback, I just question how we hire someone without a resume, job history or an interview.

Hodges – Well that's what you guys did on this last guy. And I questioned it, I asked, I said, I asked Sara the other day, I said did he fill out, all my jobs for years, I had to go back 10 years showing where I worked. You wasn't allowed a gap and like I said, you guys didn't do it on this guy. I've got so many negative things on him. The last thing I seen on a piece of paper, he worked for Greene County is what I heard.

Cooke – This is about this guy.

Hodges – And like I said, I don't know if that's true or not.

Petty – So for our current building inspector, he filled out an application, he did turn in a resume, there were no gaps.

Hodges – Well that ain't what I was told a few nights ago.

Petty – And we did interview him.

Hodges – Right.

Petty – For this one, we don't have that information. What this does allow us to do is it's still on us to call this person to have them come and do the jobs, so this gives us the flexibility to have a second person available to perform them. If we do not like the work that we receive from him, we don't have to call him back. There's no guarantee of work, it's just when we do use you, this is the rate that we have agreed to pay, these are the services that you have agreed to provide for us upon request.

Cooke – How do this rate compare to the current inspector we're using?

Petty – It's different.

Cooke – In what way?

Petty- The current inspector fee schedule is a per permit versus this one being hourly.

Hodges – I've been told from 2 different places today that you fired him last Friday and it came from City Hall.

Davis – No it did not!

Hodges – Somebody from that office in there.

Davis – No it did not!

Scott – No it didn't, Franklin!

Hodges – They said do not call him again.

Davis – No!

Hodges – Cause he's fired.

Davis – No!

Hodges – Well how did they know all of this information.

Davis – There was a conversation had with a contractor that knew that we were looking at getting something else going for the City but NEVER was the word fired used.

Hodges – That's what they told me.

Petty – Things get changed sometimes from mouth to mouth.

Hodges – And I said well, I said, like this deal here, bringing this guy in, I'm tickled to death to get another guy but, why wasn't I ever informed about what you guys are doing? Not a word.

Petty – For this special meeting?

Hodges – Yeah, yeah.

Davis – I called you yesterday.

Hodges – No you did not.

Davis – Yes I most certainly did.

Hodges – I can go back on my phone. I can show you.

Petty – Stop, stop, stop. It's fine.

Hodges – I have no call on my phone.

Davis – No, I'm not going to sit here and be called a liar.

Hodges – No, no. I didn't call you a liar. I said there wasn't one call on my phone.

Davis – Franklin Hodges at 4:02 yesterday!

Hodges – I can show you on my phone too. Not one call.

Petty – Okay.

Hodges – You called me this morning.

Davis – Yeah, I did. A second time.

Hodges – But like I said, you guys have been doing this a while going to try to do this and you never put me in the loop at all. You guys always like to leave me out of the loop and like I said, I was the one that brought this guy up two months ago trying to get a better inspector in here. It needs to change for good.

Cooke – I mean, I'm just now getting this information or lack thereof too. So I don't think anyone's gearing anything towards you on this deal. I'm in the same boat you are.

Hodges – Well, I was told we had a meeting this morning at 8:00. Was there supposed to be a meeting this morning at 8:00?

Petty – I had hoped to meet with him this morning but he was not able to meet.

Hodges – Okay. Did anybody call me? Nope.

Petty – We can't have more than 3 of us in a room at a time.

Hodges – I know. But whatever we do right now with this next inspector, it needs to be on the money. We need somebody that's a good person. From what little bit I've talked to this man, he sounds good to me. The question is, does any of the contractors here know this guy out of Strafford?

Cooke – That would be my question too.

Hodges – Have you had a response with him before, you know, good or bad?

Mason Hartley – I mean, I've been told by two different people that he's good but I have not built anything in Strafford to deal with him. But I have had two different recommendations

where people have called me and said Fair Grove needs to try to hire him. I think he is retired from inspecting through the City of Springfield, which the city and the county, I think, are somewhat similar. I think the city might be a little more advanced than Greene County at this point but like I said, he retired from there. I've never met him though but that's what I know of him. Anybody else?

Hodges – I wished he could be here to share with us.

Cooke – Yeah, 100%.

Hodges – Just like I said over the last guy. That's the reason I voted no on him.

Karla Lampe – So he's our, you're going to have two options then for us? So do we get to pick or do we just get whoever comes out? How does all of that work? I mean, if he's contracted at \$60 an hour? That kind of changes...

Davis – So, in the past, it would depend on when you wanted the inspection done and who we could get scheduled for that time.

Petty – Availability.

Lampe – Do what?

Petty – Availability of the inspector themselves.

Lampe – Ok. Is that going to change with us, if, like you said, he's at \$60 an hour for you guys, you guys can't get burned on the inspections, will that increase our inspection rate?

Petty – No, the...

Lampe – For additional inspections and stuff.

Petty – The inspection rates themselves, we are still in the process of comparing to surrounding municipalities because we've gotten information from you guys that our rates are vastly different. So we are still doing market research to see where we align with others and the goal is not to let the inspector fee drive the cost of the permits. So I don't have a formal anything to give you. The intent though is not to increase rates.

Hartley – I would say he's done it long enough that his hourly fee probably wouldn't scare me if I was in your guys position cause of what he's done and I mean, I think he would be pretty cut and dry.

Petty – He shared on the phone, all of this is just conversation, he said that he estimates that finals take less than an hour. He shared that on lesser inspections that he could even just have pictures sent to him and he could sign off on it that way.

Lampe – So will everything still be going through your program?

Davis – Mmhhh.

Cooke – In the event Inspector A comes out to review a project and the contractor feels it was not a valid inspection, will they then have the right to request Inspector B come do a re-inspection on the same property?

Petty – To get a second opinion?

Cooke – Yes.

Petty – Yes.

Lampe – And so then....

Dale Whiteside – At this point, what you guys are saying is you're continuing with the inspector you have now, you're just adding an additional inspector?

Stewart – That's what we're looking at doing, yeah.

Lampe – Where does that leave past inspections then, right now?

Whiteside – That want a second opinion?

Laura Cunningham – And if they don't align? That's the question. Who passes it and who fails it and whose recommendation do you take?

Cooke – Right.

Lampe – Or do you guys just want time to think about it and let us know?

Cunningham – I mean, from a banking point, that's a really good question for us. I mean, I want to know what to tell my builders when they come in and request a loan. Are they going to have a good experience with an inspector here in Fair Grove or are they going to have a really bad one?

Petty – So that's the first step is to see how those findings align across the two.

Hodges – The hardest I've had with this new inspector where the old inspector passed them and he wants to come back now and fail it and my opinion as a country boy, you get one bite at the apple. You don't get to come back and fail something cause I've been told by contractors, you can have one inspector come in and pass something, have another follow right behind and they'll fail it then you can have another come in and pass it. It's just an ongoing deal.

Whiteside – And if I may speak freely, let's just cut the cake here and be upfront. Obviously, the inspector currently, there's many, multiple people having issues.

Board of Alderman Minutes
81 S. Orchard Blvd.
March 3, 2026
Page 7 of 14

Hodges – Right.

Whiteside – Without doubt, okay. So we all just want, we've all been building a long time, we've all been building quality. Nobody's trying to cut corners, nobody's trying to get by with anything. Everybody wants to build a quality home and we just want a fair inspection.

Hodges – Amen.

Whiteside – So for me to sit here, you know, I appreciate you guys want to bring in somebody with a second opinion and, and my opinion is this gentleman here, I can't say I'm familiar with him, but here you've got a builder that's been in Fair Grove, reputable with uh, you know, telling his opinion. You've got Greene County or Springfield referring him, what more do you need for this gentleman to come in? He's got great references, he's encouraged. That's way more than the last inspector had. Maybe he had a resume, maybe it was right, maybe it was not right, maybe it was true, maybe it wasn't true, we don't even discuss that. What we discuss is you've got somebody here you've got interest in that you guys are talking about hiring that has lost of people supporting it. You're supporting it, he's supporting it, from what I've heard about him I support it. You've got a lot of support for this gentleman to come in and we're all open to saying hey, let's get him in here and get a fair inspection and if there's something wrong and we get a second opinion that voices with the first opinion, look, we'll swallow the pill and do what we have to but if there's a discrepancy, we would appreciate that we are noted for that and corrections are made in that sense and for me as a builder, that's all I'm asking for is just to be fair. I'm not asking for someone to come in and cut corners. I'm still curious what happened to Carey. Carey was a great inspector. He was very thorough, he was very strict, you know.

Lampe – He was sick.

Whiteside – He made sure you dot your "I's" and crossed your "T's". There was no mistake about that, you know. I know he went through some health issues and things like that but he was a pretty strict inspector overall. So um, for me, I think I support the decision to hire this gentleman and I think as long as you guys are fair that we get a second opinion and that this gentlemen, who's highly qualified, won't go back on the first one and what I heard, just like you, that's not what this is about but if he's qualified and he is recommended, I think let's give all of us to have a fair chance to have someone else come in and said yeah, this is good or it's not good and let's take the value of what this gentleman's going to say, who has reputation by very highly respected people.

Hodges – Right. Like I said, I talked to him two months ago cause I brought him to the Board and...

Whiteside – Yeah.

Lampe – *inaudible*

Hodges – I was happy with what he said but the only thing I'm worried about now I didn't hear about that he was gonna charge per hour. And that concerns me a little bit. Cause if you got a, I've looked at some of the inspectors

Whiteside – Hey, listen, I appreciate that but you have no idea the cost that has been inflicted by the situations going on now, so...

Hodges – Oh yeah, no I do.

Whiteside - \$60 an hour...

Hodges – I've heard, I've heard.

Whiteside – That's nothing in comparison.

Hodges and Whiteside speaking over each other, inaudible

Hodges – Is some of the permits like \$20 or something?

Hodges and Whiteside speaking over each other, inaudible

Whiteside - \$60 or \$100 to get a fair inspection and get due process...

Hodges and Whiteside speaking over each other, inaudible

Hodges – I know, but it's \$60 an hour, you know, we're already in the whole \$40. You know what I'm saying?

Whiteside – Yeah.

Hodges – And like I'm saying, sooner or later it's going to fall back onto the contractors.

Lampe – Well, and as a property owner, you got builders in here, as a property owner, I tell the inspectors when I meet them I need them because they are my boots on the ground to let me know is the electrical crew doing their job, are the plumbers doing their job. We have fired electrical crews because of what inspectors have found. I need that as a property owner. Also as a property owner, I need to know this guy is safe to go into my buildings. I need to trust them. That's what I need.

Hartley – And I will say that the current one that we have now, I mean I don't feel safe with him in my houses.

Lampe – The last inspection he did with me was...

Hartley and Lampe talking over each other, inaudible

Hartley – That’s a lot of why we’re here too. That’s a whole nother thing, we don’t have to go down that road but I’m hoping us hiring him as the secondary one is a step in, you know, replacing the first. I have a feeling that’s a question that can’t be answered right now and I just hope that’s what’s taking place.

Whiteside – I don’t know, not to cut you off Mason, I don’t know if they heard what you just said, Karla, but I think it’s important for them to know what you just said. When you were there getting an inspection.

Lampe – I was there by myself with him.

Hodges – Yeah, that’s one of my complaints about the old one, the one we got now.

Lampe – He had a gun, Kelly. I went outside.

Whiteside – Because I think he thought I was going to show up, whatever, it doesn’t matter and I’ve never been aggressive with the guy, ever. That is bad.

Lampe – Irregardless, you guys have to do your due diligence. This man, I don’t know this other man you’re talking about, but I think the applications, everything you guys have to do to ensure to us that he’s a safe person, do your job, you know, let you guys do your job.

Hartley – And they, I feel like, answer to you guys so I hope you guys are able to educate yourself with what needs to happen and you guys are who has to keep them in line. I mean, and we haven’t had that before because, I’m not saying it’s because of you guys or the old Board, it’s just none of you are familiar with the process, you know. I’m not saying it badly or anything, it’s just, hopefully you guys can educate yourself on that and know how to keep them in check because that’s what they need.

Hodges – I mean, to the builders that’s here, the builders, if we start going in the hole with this \$60 an hour and we have to change it, we’d have to charge you guys for every deal we do at \$60 an hour.

Lampe – We would have a sit down conversation before we get to that. You guys would see us.

Hodges – That’s what I’m saying, right now.

Hartley – If it’s a true, fair inspection and we all know what’s going on day in and day out and we get rid of the guessing games we’ve been playing the last 2 ½ years, we’ll probably all be okay with it.

Hodges – To go to an hourly rate then instead of...

Hartley – Yeah. I mean, I hope that it doesn’t go up but like I said before you guys are higher than Greene County but if we actually can understand what the heck’s going on, we’re gonna probably shy away from worrying about that too much.

Hodges – Okay. Like I said, it just worries me what time his, you know what time the inspector starts charging or would it be like Christopher does, when he leaves his place, he's on the clock until he gets back.

Lampe – Make a list of questions. That's all you can do.

Hartley – I think you guys have a little bit of time to figure that out.

Stewart – We would have to specify that in the contract.

Hodges- Cause I mean \$60 an hour, like I said, a lot of stuff, Christopher gets \$250 an hour. The guy could be at Joplin. He's on the clock to get out of here in Fair Grove and get back. May cost a lot of money is all I'm saying.

Brandon Wolf – If we were to slim down the number of inspections comparable to Greene County, then we wouldn't have all of these extra inspections.

Inaudible

Whiteside – Look, there's nothing wrong with doing, it's very common to do framing, electrical, HVAC and plumbing all in one inspection.

Hartley – And see Greene County actually charges you to do a separate framing inspection, like right now when Carey was doing it, I think we had 3 framing inspections and then we did our rough-in. Well Greene County does the framing and like he said, all of the mechanicals at one time. That's called your rough-in inspection, that's one inspection and if you would like to request a framing inspection then you can but it's \$100. They will charge you for that.

Lampe – Would you guys be willing to sit down with like these guys, cause I know half the terms they're saying are right over, so would you guys be comfortable sitting down with these guys and making a list like that of what all inspections can be done at the same time, you know, things they are very, very familiar with.

Hartley – I mean, we don't even really have to sit down. You can just go to Greene County's website and hit print.

Whiteside – You need 3 inspections is what you need. You need your footings and your...

Lampe – They don't understand all of this.

Whiteside – Well, that's okay. You need 3 inspections, you need 3 inspections from start to finish. That's what you can narrow down to that's very common. You need 3 inspections. There's only more if you fail one of them.

Lampe – Right.

Lampe and Whiteside talking over each other, inaudible

Whiteside – So that’s expected. If you fail an inspection.

Hartley – You have one time to make it up, then they charge.

Whiteside – Yeah, yeah.

Hodges – So you get the second one for free I think right now.

Hartley – Yeah.

Hodges – So if we go to this deal, it might be \$60 an hour.

Hartley – If you fail once, they come and reinspect it and if you fail after that, then it’s charged and that’s plenty fair enough. But your inspector can’t, when you fail and there’s a list, let’s say of 10 items, you come back and they don’t get to add.

Cooke – Leon.

Leon Burrell – As the water department, the last big hoofra was over a house on Timberline, okay. Your new inspector was telling ‘em all that they had to put in a double check valve for the houses. He’s also told Karla that on all of her houses. He’s told Brandon Wolf that he may have to put sprinkler systems in, fire suppression in his, in their houses. I’m telling you guys, we do not require it. Right here’s one of the Board members. We do not require it. DNR does not require it unless it is for a sprinkler system in your yard or if you have fire suppression. If you go down that road, you’re gonna make a lot more work for us over at the water district because all of those things have to be inspected every year. He was wanting to put ‘em in every house in this town. We don’t require ‘em so we, we had to have a special meeting and we come up with a plan saying that you don’t have to have those because we talked to DNR and said they don’t require ‘em. So we have now a form that we have typed out so for you guys to get a copy of it. It’s in DNR right now letting ‘em read over it and everything to make sure it’s legal, but he threw up a deal wanting a double check valve in that house up there. It’s not required.

Whiteside – And I’ll adlib to that just a little bit and that’s as far as I’m gonna go with the things I have to say in regards but I have text messages from him after he reneged on wanting to force Karla that and he turned around and pushed it on everybody else. So there you go.

Lampe – Alright. Well I don’t want to talk about it.

Hartley – The last thing I’ll say is I feel if you guys are not bound to him like financially if he gets over here if he’s just contract labor and you’re gonna use him and then in 2 months you realize he sucks just like the last one or costing us way too much money then what did it hurt trying it? You know, you’re not bound to him, you don’t have to keep him around for 12 months, if there’s nothing like that then I hope you guys give it a go.

Boncuk – That will be in his contract, won't it? This is at will, by the hour and we have the right to terminate the contract at any time.

Cooke – So what I would suggest too is if we have 2 at our disposal and Mason's uncomfortable with Inspector A, he can request Inspector B. If we have 2 of them and he's had previous issues then by all means, if we're paying for 2 let him choose the one he's comfortable with doing cause there's already a track record here and if we've got 2 of 'em, why are we saying it's just at scheduling. If Mason wants to wait a week to get to get Inspector B, then let him wait a week. That's his decision.

Boncuk – And the thing I'll say on it is that, I can't remember who brought it up, but if a contractor comes out on the final and he's already told you that you need this and he comes out again and says now you need this and this also, I don't, I don't understand how that works. How you come and say, here's your final inspection and then comes back later and says well no, you didn't pass your final inspection, I've added another 6 items on the final inspection. I don't see how that is right. Again, this is from a layman who the only knowledge I have is having bought houses and saw them inspected and seen some stupid things. We had a house in Vegas, KD Home built it, they put 2 GFI's in one bathroom and when the inspector came for the people that were buying the house, they said well you need to remove one of those.

Lampe – What?

Boncuk – Yeah, I know. That was done according, okay, yeah sure, we'll remove that for you.

Hodges – The house that he's talking, Leon was talking about, I called the contractor today. I asked him, have you had any problems with the inspector. Bout a list this long and one of the dumbest things that he told me was, he had some machine, he went in and checked the cement floor in the garage, they're going to have to tear all this up again. It's not right. How would you tell a contractor, no cracks, no nothing, you're gonna dig up and break apart all that up. Just stuff like that. He said he did catch him on one thing. On them GFI deals, he said he didn't have one in the bathroom but he said that was the only thing that was legit.

Petty – Are we ready to make a decision?

Boncuk – That goes along with the gentleman back there that said this has gone on about, not what the current person is doing, this is more about what we are doing with the situation we're looking at. *inaudible*

Hodges – I felt good with this guy from Strafford when I talked to him.

Stewart – So the other option that we explored was actually hiring Greene County to come do subcontracting. That fell through.

Petty – It's a little bit more complicated than that. It's not something that they would have been able to come this week to do. It's not an option that's off the table, it would just require a lot

more change at the City level, like they would ultimately take over all building codes and all Planning and Zoning decisions that currently Fair Grove holds the authority to set.

Stewart – We'd have to give up some of our abilities to shape our town how we want to shape it?

Petty – Yes. It would fall completely under Greene County and then...

Boncuk – We lose autonomy by doing that?

Petty – Yep.

Boncuk – Okay. My thoughts are that is something that we could still discuss at a later time. I think right now, we just need to address this. I am comfortable, I haven't met the person from Strafford but I'm comfortable with on an hourly rate and as need basis. Again, if it's I prefer Inspector B over Inspector A, okay well he can't get out here til next week, well I'm willing to wait the week for him to get out here, I would feel comfortable with contracting with this person to do this.

Hodges – Is it gonna change if we go with this guy per hour and the other guy that we got now? He's per, what it says, \$20 for this and \$40 for that. He won't be changed to a hourly rate.

Stewart – No.

Boncuk – He's already a contractor, he's under the contract we hired him under.

Hodges – And do we have enough work for 2?

inaudible

Hartley – Well, they're not employees, what's the difference?

Hodges – Right. So it's be okay with this new guy if we say you go do your house and when you get done with his, go over and do her house.

Lampe – He might work once this month and 10 times next month.

Hodges – Right, you know what I'm saying?

Lampe – So where does that leave the current inspections?

Whiteside – Particularly the ones that need second opinions?

Petty – We can't do anything with this inspector until we approve to work with him.

Whiteside – Understand.

Board of Alderman Minutes
81 S. Orchard Blvd.
March 3, 2026
Page 14 of 14

Lampe – Okay. She needs a motion.

Hodges – Well, somebody make a motion. I'm anxious to do a second. Give him a try.

Motion by Boncuk to approve contract with Chris Straw at a rate of \$60 per hour and appoint him as Secondary Building Inspector. Seconded by Hodges
Stewart AYE, Cooke AYE, Boncuk AYE, Petty AYE, Hodges AYE

Adjournment

Motion by Boncuk to Adjourn at 5:30 p.m. Seconded by Stewart
Stewart AYE, Cooke AYE, Boncuk AYE, Petty AYE, Hodges AYE

Adjourned at 5:30 p.m.


Sara Davis, City Clerk