

October 16, 2020

Mayor Weir and Council Members  
City of Independence  
111 E Maple  
Independence, MO 64051

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

The Public Safety Sales Tax Oversight Committee has held regular quarterly meetings since our last presentation to the Council. At our meetings we have reviewed and accepted reports from both the Fire and Police departments detailing the revenues and expenses from the Public Safety Sales Tax. These reports include a detailed review of both completed and planned for uses of these funds. We have found that the use of these funds are in compliance with the purpose of this tax and have been used appropriately and in accordance with the intent of the Public Safety Sales Tax approved by the citizens of our fair city.

In addition, more recently we have begun to review the Local Use Tax approved by voters on August 6, 2019 under Proposition P. These reviews have resulted in significant conversation and some concern by committee members regarding a clear understanding of both the purposes for which these funds can be used as well as our committee's role in reviewing and approving the use of these funds. To date, this discussion has been more conceptual as funds have not been expended yet, but we recognize outlay of funds from this source will soon occur. Significant discussion was held at a Special Meeting where we discussed the use of these funds for "related equipment" as was requested by the City Council. During that meeting we obtained information from City Staff and recommended the use of these funds could be for equipment for new officers. The primary information we relied on for that decision was the opinion of the City Attorney's office. We now understand the City Council believes these funds should only be used for salary and benefits for new officers funded with this tax. We will monitor the use of these funds to insure they are used for this purpose alone. In the event the City Council determines these funds can be used for other purposes, we will monitor that as well.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to you and to our citizens through serving on this committee.

Respectfully, submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared A. Fears". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jared" being more prominent.

Jared A. Fears  
Chairperson  
Public Safety Sales Tax Committee