

REGULAR MEETING

December 4, 2023

The Independence City Council met for a Regular Meeting, December 4, 2023, at 6:03 p.m., in the Council Chambers, 111 E. Maple Street, Independence, Missouri.

Shirley Murdock, Member, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, provided the invocation. Pastor Douglas Galvin from Generation Church also provided the invocation in Spanish.

Mayor Rory Rowland, Presiding Officer of the City Council, called the meeting to order. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Jared Fears, John Perkins, Brice Stewart, Bridge McCandless, Dan Hobart appeared via Teams, and Mayor Rory Rowland. Absent – None.

Mayor Rowland asked the Council for a suspension of the rules for two things.

- 1) Recognize Councilmember Hobart for a moment of personal privilege.
- 2) Presentation of the I-STAR Award

Motion by Perkins, Second by McCandless

Motion was passed 6-0

Hobart spoke about the nominations to fill the vacancy of the 3rd District person's Council seat. Both candidates have withdrawn their candidacy. Therefore, the seat will remain vacant. Fears and McCandless both reside in 3rd District and will serve the needs of the citizens until a new Councilmember is elected.

Fears withdrew his nomination for Scott Roberson.

Stewart withdrew his nomination for Paula Martin.

PRESENTATION RESOLUTION FOR I-STAR AWARD

Carlos Padilla, System Administrator I, with the Independence Technology Department was awarded the I-STAR Award for December 2023.

Motion to pass McCandless, Seconded by Fears

Resolution passed 6-0

Introduction of New City Clerk, Susanne Holland.

CITIZENS REQUEST TO SPEAK

Chris Becker spoke about the Santa Fe Terrace Speed Bumps project.

Jackie Davis spoke about Independence then and now.

Kenneth Love praised the Independence Police Department's response to a child in a diaper being found along 40 Highway. He also spoke out against Scott Roberson being appointed for the vacant seat on the council.

Lynne Baker spoke about the destruction of property without consulting Heritage Commons.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Hobart moved to approve the reports and recommendation of the City Manager. Seconded by Stewart. Items pulled for special consideration:

#23-797 by Stewart

Item #2 by Fears

Approved 6-0

#23-797 - Stewart asked for City Manager Zach Walker to explain this resolution, why it needs to be resolved and how it will be effective moving forward. Walker stated that there is a State statute that requires any municipality that is going to be contemplating TIF, to form an oversight committee for review. Independence chose to try a similar committee, for all economic incentives being considered by the City. However, it is creating an impediment and not being utilized the way it should. This will remove that impediment and make it easier to develop and do business within the City of Independence. The incentives require a public hearing and that will still take place.

McCandless asked: Independence is the only city that has this particular mechanism and other cities use public comment for input?

City Manager Walker confirmed this as well as City Attorney, Jeremy Cover.

Motion for approval by Stewart

Seconded by Perkins

Approved 6-0

Item #2 Councilmember Fears motioned to postpone for two weeks. Seconded by McCandless. Reason for postponement is that it needs to be fine-tuned and additional information obtained. Approved 6-0

REGULAR AGENDA

Public Hearings:

23-111 – 2R Rick Aroya spoke about the rezoning of the property at 420 S. M-291 Highway from General Commercial to Industrial. The change would allow a truck driving school to utilize the property for training. Discussion was had for the concerns of noise and trucks entering and leaving this area and the effect it would have to the residents around the area. Motion fails 2 in favor, 4 opposed.

23-112 – 2R Rick Aroya spoke about rezoning from R-4 Family Residential – Low Density to R-6 Single Family Residential for five properties along Old Mill Road. There was no discussion for this item. Passes 6-0.

23-110 – 2R Rick Aroya spoke about an ordinance amending the Unified Development Ordinance, Chapter 14, pertaining to conservation, Historic District and Historic Landmark Overlay. There was no discussion for this item. Clarification from Councilmember Fears that this takes the Planning Commission out of the process, which City Manager Walker confirmed. This is seeking to streamline the historic designation for historic buildings waiting for approvals from the city to acknowledge the building and to do work on the building. Passes 5 in favor, 1 opposed.

23-105 – 2R An ordinance adopting amendments to the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget, which was approved by Ordinance No. 19340. Passes, 6-0

23-106 – 2R An ordinance authorizing an amendment to the contract with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to provide financial assistance for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Enhancing Detection Expansion Grant Program for the period of July 1, 2021 through July 31, 2024; amending the 2023-24 budget, accepting additional funds for the period in the amount of \$370,128; authorizing future change orders for additional funding and/or time extensions for the same project; and authorizing certain future appropriations. Passes 6-0

23-107 – 2R An ordinance amending Section 4.01.003 of the City Code pertaining to dangerous buildings. McCandless asked for an overview of the intent of this ordinance. It is to speed up the process of a city-initiated demolition of a city owned building. Passes 6-0

23-108 – 2R An ordinance amending Article 15 of Chapter 4 Rental Ready Program to be effective January 1, 2024. Fears made a motion to postpone for further discussion. Seconded by McCandless. Motion passed for this to be moved to the January 8th Study Session and then to the January 16th Council meeting for second reading.

23-109 – 2R An ordinance amending Article 1 of Chapter 5 of the City Code, Business and Occupation Licenses to be effective January 1, 2024. McCandless asked for clarification that the purpose of this ordinance is to require any business that asks for utilities is required to have an active business license. Passes 6-0

23-113 – 2R An ordinance approving a Final Plat for Regency Heights – 11th Plat in Independence, Missouri. Passes. 6-0

FIRST READINGS

23-114 1R An ordinance amending Independence City Code Section 5.01.018 “License Denial, Suspension, or Revocation”.

23-115 1R An ordinance authorizing the execution of a contract to Black and McDonald, in the amount of \$880,886.55, for 24 Highway Improvement Steel Pole Installation and making necessary appropriations.

23-116 1R An ordinance adopting amendments to the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget, which was approved by Ordinance No. 19453.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS:

Councilmember Stewart did not have anything to comment on.

Councilmember Perkins discussed going to Living Windows and how fun it was.

Councilmember Fears stated he enjoyed Living Windows as well. Shoutout to 4th graders who sang at the Christmas Concert.

Councilmember McCandless encouraged citizens to fill out the citizens satisfaction survey if they receive it. It is a random survey and not everyone will get it. Shoutout to Truman High School Band who performed at the Thanksgiving Day Parade in Philadelphia. Shoutout to Municipal Services for filling 7500 potholes throughout the city this year.

Councilmember Hobart stated he was away from the meeting due to having COVID. In the last couple of weeks, the city did a joint clean out of a homeless village behind the Sand Bar on 40 Highway. Departments that were involved were Community Development and Police Department, which will hopefully lead to a good relationship with Kansas City Police Department. It has led to an MOU with KCPD for an increase effort to deter homelessness.

Mayor Rowland also discussed Living Windows and stated Chief Dustman did an excellent job with playing the Grinch. Shout to shelter folks. Brought Scooter and Candy to the Living Windows event and they have now been adopted. Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast is tomorrow. Fourth Graders did an outstanding job at the Christmas concert.

City Manager Zach Walker stated the Parks Department will be doing some work at the Transit Center, taking soil samples, so we may see some fencing in that area while this is being done. This is in preparation for building the new Truman Visitor’s Center. Also, the former Frontier Trails Museum will now be the home of the Model Railroad Museum starting next spring. Work is beginning at that building. Also wanted to make sure the Council is aware that a new time-keeping system is being implemented as a way to track the accuracy of over-time for our officers and other employees. This will go live December 17th. And, we have closed the request for qualifications to select a firm that will do the master planning for the Justice Center as well as a firm to perform the Rec Center feasibility study.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:32 p.m.

Presiding Officer of the City Council of the City
of Independence, Missouri

ATTEST:

City Clerk