

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY HALL, Fifth Floor
6801 Delmar Blvd.
University City, Missouri 63130
Monday, June 20, 2022
6:30 p.m.

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At the Special Session of the City Council of University City held on Monday, June 20, 2022, Mayor Terry Crow called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

In addition to the Mayor, the following members of Council were present:

Councilmember Stacy Clay; (*excused*)
Councilmember Aleta Klein
Councilmember Steven McMahon
Councilmember Jeffrey Hales
Councilmember Tim Cusick
Councilmember Bwayne Smotherson

Also in attendance were City Manager, Gregory Rose; City Attorney, John F. Mulligan, Jr.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember McMahon moved to approve the Agenda as presented, it was seconded by Councilmember Hales, and the motion carried unanimously.

D. PROCLAMATION

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

F. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

1. Sandra Jacobson is nominated to the Board of Adjustment replacing Brain Burkett's vacated seat by Councilmember Jeff Hales, it was seconded by Councilmember McMahon and the motion carried unanimously.

G. SWEARING IN TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

H. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (Total of 15 minutes allowed)

Request Forms to Address Council are located on the ledge just inside the entrance. Please complete and place the form in the basket at the front of the room.

*Citizens may also provide written comments ahead of the meeting, which must be received **no later than 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting**. Comments may be sent via email to: councilcomments@ucitymo.org, or mailed to City Hall at 6801 Delmar Blvd.; Attention City Clerk. **Please note that to be recorded in the official record, a name and address must be provided**, as well as whether your comment is related to an agenda or non-agenda item.*

Comments adhering to the aforementioned guidelines will be provided to City Council prior to the meeting and made a part of the official record. Public access will be made available online following the meeting.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

J. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Lighting Proposal – 6323 Delmar

Councilmember Cusick moved to approve the Consent Agenda, it was seconded by Councilmember Klein, and the motion carried unanimously.

K. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

L. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1. Bill 9467 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 120.940 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY, MISSOURI, RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY CITY LOOP SPECIAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMISSION, BY AMENDING SECTION 120.940 SO AS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS FROM NINE TO SEVEN.** Bill Number 9467 was read for the second and third time.

Councilmember Cusick moved to approve, it was seconded by Councilmember Smotherson.

Roll Call Vote Was:

Ayes: Councilmember McMahon, Councilmember Hales, Councilmember Cusick, Councilmember Klein, Councilmember Smotherson, and Mayor Crow.

Nays: None.

Mayor Crow announced that Council would be moving back into the Q & A Session initiated during the Study Session.

Councilmember Smotherson posed the following questions to Mr. Dunkle:

Q. Where will the new lighting for the ball fields be located?

A. Staff has been working with Ameren to expand the security lighting within Heman Park; especially the area where you come off of Midland by the ball fields and where concerts are held. There will also be a computerized control box on the south side athletic fields.

Q. Will the lights remain on every day until the park closes?

A. Staff has already added a pole and light near the first parking lot and this budget item will provide for the remaining upgrades that are needed.

Councilmember Smotherson asked Chief Hampton if the use of electric vehicles was a feasible option for his department? Mr. Rose stated the City's Code Compliance Officers are using electric vehicles and staff will continue to explore the expansion of these vehicles throughout the organization where their performance meets the needs of a department.

Chief Hampton stated although staff has studied other areas opting to use electric vehicles, his department's current 24/7 use of vehicles prohibits the use of this alternative which requires a significant amount of downtime to recharge.

He stated they recently received the prisoner conveyor van purchased a year and a half ago and are still waiting for the four vehicles purchased this year. In the interim, they will be working to acquire some used vehicles.

Councilmember Smotherson asked if the line item for parts and labor included within the budget was strictly to service the department's current fleet? Chief Hampton stated that is correct.

Councilmember Smotherson posed the following questions to Mr. Rose:

Q. Is \$300,000 from the American Rescue Fund being added to the \$200,000 allocated towards debt service for renovation projects?

A. A total of \$900,000; \$200,000 from the General Fund, \$300,000 from the Capital Fund, and \$400,000 from the Public Safety Fund are being allocated for Certificates of Participation to renovate the Annex and Trinity Building.

Q. Is the 3.5 million dollars from the American Rescue Fund going to be used for salaries?

A. A vast majority of the ARPA funds will be used for salaries and benefits. The remainder will be used to repair the elevator and increase the street maintenance and curb/sidewalk projects.

Councilmember McMahon stated it appears as though the budget fairly represents the areas identified in the Citizens' Satisfaction Survey that they would like to see improvements in; with parks & recreation ranking number three, after police and fire.

So, if the focus is now shifting towards recreational programs as opposed to the facility's infrastructure, could you explain the trajectory staff has in mind to increase residents' confidence in the stability of these programs? Because post-COVID, these programs either did not exist or have the capacity to be totally functional.

Mr. Rose stated he believes the City is pretty close to accomplishing Council's priority to improve the infrastructure in its parks and is now ready to make the shift to improving its recreational programs. So, based on the understanding that the pre-COVID climate is very different than it is today, there is a need to identify programs people will feel comfortable participating in, and perhaps, look at developing partnerships with the School District or other jurisdictions to fulfill those needs. Each program will be examined on an individual basis to determine its anticipated participation level and then brought before Council for consideration.

Councilmember Klein asked if there would be an opportunity for Council to amend any partnerships with the School District if it determines that City staff should be involved in some of these programs? Mr. Rose stated if Council agrees that a partnership with the School District is worth exploring, then the intent is for the two entities to work together to develop a program, and that outline will be brought back to Council for consideration prior to its implementation. He stated Council should also keep in mind that the City's reserves can be used to fund recreational programs.

Mayor Crow encouraged Council to be cognizant of the City Manager's challenges associated with direct reports and to look for opportunities where they can assist whenever possible.

Mayor Crow posed the following questions to Mr. Rose:

Q. Have any initial conversations about summer camp been conducted with the School District?

A. No. The first step was to ascertain whether Council was comfortable with pursuing this option.

Q. Will the new Finance employee help cure the deficiencies identified in the Audit regarding the need to separate accounting functions in this department?

A. With the filling of this position the Finance Department will be fully staffed and posed to address the need for a greater separation of responsibilities.

Q. Can we get a printed update on the CALOP Fund?

A. Certainly.

Councilmember Cusick posed the following questions to Mr. Rose:

Q. What were the determining factors that led staff to its recommendation to outsource the dispatching operations for the Fire Department? My concern is that the City could lose its ability to control the type of service now being provided by making such a big change?

A. While it certainly sounds good to say you have a combined police and fire dispatching operation, the truth is, separating the two is not that unusual; especially when you have very active departments. And what convinced me to make this recommendation were discussions with both Chiefs who revealed the ever-changing and demanding role of a dispatcher; their challenge to hire and retain dispatchers in today's environment, and the significant investment that would be needed to make necessary changes to the infrastructure. Both Chiefs explored ways to reduce costs while maintaining the accuracy required and minimizing the likelihood of serious incidents occurring, and that culminated in a report that Chief Hinson will provide to Council. The report recommended that the best option for the City would be to moderately outsource this department to a company that provided all the necessary equipment for a specific dollar amount.

Q. Does that report include statistical information that ensures residents will be receiving the same quality of service?

A. While the initial report may not include response times, Chief Hinson has conducted additional studies along those lines with the organization being proposed, and that statistical information can be provided. However, what I can tell you today is that the City's dispatching response times will improve.

Councilmember Cusick stated he was a little troubled by the fact that Council had not been given the opportunity to discuss this matter before its introduction during the budgeting process. Mr. Rose stated what Council should keep in mind is that the budget merely represents concepts staff believes should be funded. It just puts the money in place. But it's up to Council to make the final decisions about how that money should be spent, based on what they believe will be in the best interest of the organization and its residents; and that includes the execution of any proposed contracts.

Councilmember Hales questioned whether any contract associated with this issue would be brought back to Council as an agenda item requiring public notice? Mr. Rose stated that it would.

M. NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions

1. RESOLUTION 2022-6 - Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (FY23) Annual Operating Budget

Mayor Crow noted that Council had received a presentation on the Annual Operating Budget during the Study Session and was allowed to ask questions or express any concerns during both of tonight's meetings.

Councilmember McMahon moved to approve, it was seconded by Councilmember Cusick, and the motion carried unanimously.

Bills

Introduced by Councilmember Hales

- 1. Bill 9468 – AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE COMPENSATION TO BE PAID TO CITY OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES AS ENUMERATED HEREIN FROM AND AFTER JULY 3, 2022, AND REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 7182. Bill Number 9468 was read for the first time.**

N. COUNCIL REPORTS/BUSINESS

- Boards and Commission appointments needed
- Council liaison reports on Boards, and Commissions
- Boards, Commissions, and Task Force minutes
- Other Discussions/Business

Councilmember Smotherson stated he is glad the Mayor inquired about CALOP because this Commission has been rather inactive for some time.

O. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (continue if needed)

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Cusick thanked Mr. Rose and his staff for presenting another comprehensive Annual Operating Budget.

Councilmember Hales stated as far back as he can recall there have always been ongoing discussions by residents about the need for more collaboration between the City and the School District. In fact, it was a topic of conversation in the recent visioning community meeting. So, this is a wonderful opportunity, and he appreciates the City Manager's vision and aspiration to explore new and improved possibilities for the kids in this community.

Councilmember Klein thanked U City in Bloom and all of the volunteers working on Ruth Park Woods. They have done an absolutely stunning job, so she would invite the community to come out and enjoy this beautiful park.

Mr. Rose stated he is just the leader of the band, and therefore, he would like to recognize and thank all of his directors for the hard work they put in, in preparing this budget. He stated a special recognition goes out to Mr. Cole, who never failed to answer his recurrent calls.

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to go into a Closed Session according to Missouri Revised Statutes 610.021 (1) Legal actions, causes of action, or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives or attorneys and (13) Individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records pertaining to employees.

Councilmember Hales moved to close the Regular Session and go into a Closed Session, it was seconded by Councilmember Cusick.

Roll Call Vote Was:

Ayes: Councilmember Hales, Councilmember Cusick, Councilmember Smotherson, Councilmember Klein, Councilmember McMahon, and Mayor Crow.

Nays: None.

R. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Crow thanked everyone for their participation and closed the Regular Session at 7:06 p.m. to go into a Closed Session on the second floor. The Closed Session reconvened in an open session at 7:48 p.m.

LaRette Reese,
City Clerk, MRCC

