

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY
CITY HALL, Fifth Floor
6801 Delmar Blvd., University City, Missouri 63130
Monday, March 27, 2023
6:30 p.m.

AGENDA

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At the Regular Session of the City Council of University City held on Monday, March 27, 2023, 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
Councilmember Aleta Klein
Councilmember Steven McMahon
Councilmember Jeffrey Hales
Councilmember Bwayne Smotherson
Councilmember Dennis Fuller

Also in attendance were City Manager, Gregory Rose; Police Chief, Larry Hampton; Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, Darren Dunkle, and Director of Finance, Keith Cole.

Mayor Crow welcomed Councilmember Fuller to Council and thanked him for his years of dedication and service to the community.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Crow stated there have been several requests to move Item K (1); Gun Shot Detection Devices and Surveillance Equipment, to the City Manager's Report.

Councilmember Clay moved to approve the amendment, it was seconded by Councilmember Smotherson, and the motion carried unanimously.

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

D. PROCLAMATIONS (Acknowledgement)

None

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. February 27, 2023 - Regular Meeting Minutes

Mayor Crow requested that page E (1) (13) of the minutes which reads, "*Voice vote on Councilmember Clay's motion carried unanimously,*" be amended to read, "*Voice vote on Councilmember Clay's motion carried unanimously, with the exception of Councilmember Klein*".

Councilmember Clay moved to approve the minutes as amended, it was seconded by Councilmember Hales, and the motion carried unanimously.

F. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

1. Peter Holness is nominated to the Historic Preservation Commission as a fill-in by Councilmember Steve McMahon, it was seconded by Councilmember Hales and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Mary Dorothy Schmidt is nominated to the Senior Commission as a fill-in by Mayor Terry Crow, it was seconded by Councilmember Klein and the motion carried unanimously.

G. SWEARING IN TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

1. Dennis Fuller, Ward Two Council Appointee (3/13/2023 – April 2024) was sworn in on March 20, 2023, in the City Clerk's office.

H. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (Total of 15 minutes allowed)

Procedures for submitting comments for Citizen Participation and Public Hearings:

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

Written comments 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 the City Hall – 6801 Delmar Blvd. – Attention City Clerk. Such comments will be provided to City Council prior to the meeting. Comments will be made a part of the official record and made accessible to the public online following the meeting.

Please note, when submitting your comments, a **name and address must be provided.** Please also note whether your comment is on an agenda or a non-agenda item. If a name and address are not provided, the comment will not be recorded in the official record.

Cirri Moran, 6652 Kingsbury, U City, MO

Ms. Moran stated for the second time in two weeks the Ames Place streets were used as overflow parking for the Emanuel Ax concert sponsored by Washington University at the 560 Music building. The performance was scheduled to start at 7 p.m., and at approximately 6:50 p.m. cars started flowing south onto Kingsbury seeking parking spaces. So, she would surmise that the Wash U garage was full, and these were the unlucky late comers. Ms. Moran stated that she shoed away multiple drivers from parking in front of her home and neighboring properties, and had she not played parking monitor there would have been no available parking for Ames Place residents or their guests.

In 2012 U City approved a Site Plan for the construction of the Washington Avenue Parking Garage to accommodate parking for events held at the Music Center. The garage consists of 204 parking spaces, while the total seating capacity for the Music Center is 1,092 seats, so the math simply does not add up. The garage was built in 2018, however, numerous meetings conducted in 2017 pointed out that the capacity of this garage was insufficient to meet the anticipated or future needs of Wash U and COCA. They also pointed out that the traffic studies being presented at the time were skewed in favor of day-to-day usage and did not provide any consideration for extraordinary events. Ms. Moran stated it is simply unfair for residents to bear the burden of the City's irresponsible planning decisions now that these "extraordinary events" have started to occur every week.

She stated as a Trustee of Ames Place, she is asking that the City work with residents to help solve the current overflow traffic affecting the quality of their lives and give serious consideration on how to prevent these same planning missteps from occurring again, as Wash U purchases evermore properties. Thank you for your time.

I. COUNCIL COMMENTS

J. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

K. CONSENT AGENDA - (1 voice vote required)

1. Gun Shot Detection Devices and Surveillance Equipment; (*moved*)
2. Centennial Commons Monthly Membership Fees

Councilmember Hales moved to approve Item 2 of the Consent Agenda, it was seconded by Councilmember Clay.

Councilmember McMahon stated it looks like the City is creating pricing for new memberships, but what are we doing with our existing memberships? Mr. Rose stated the intent of this pricing structure is for it to apply to new and existing memberships since the facility is not fully operational. So, anyone with an existing membership would only be charged half-price.

Mr. Dunkle stated even though this proposal only references half-price fees for new members, the policy they've implemented; which is similar to what occurred during COVID, is to roll active memberships over until the facility is completely up and running.

Councilmember McMahon questioned whether existing memberships would continue to roll over? Mr. Dunkle stated the recommendation is for that to continue.

Mr. Rose stated prior to any actions taken by the Parks Commission, existing members were using the facility for free since it was not fully functional, and their memberships were simply rolled over. However, in all fairness, staff should probably look at charging them the same rate as everyone else.

Mayor Crow stated while he certainly agrees that would be the fair thing to do, he is uncertain whether that is what this recommendation is asserting.

Councilmember Hales stated he assumes that more analysis needs to be done on those existing members whose memberships have expired. So, he would suggest dealing with the specific issue that is before Council today, and giving staff and the Commission some time to sort through what the best course of action would be for existing membership renewals.

Mr. Rose stated until they have a better understanding of the broader impacts this structure might have, they would certainly be willing to continue allowing the same usage and only apply this proposal to new members.

Mayor Crow asked if the Parks Commission had discussed existing members? Councilmember McMahon stated their discussion was premised on trying to decide on a fee structure that would bring new members in the door. And he does not recall the topic of existing members coming up.

Mr. Rose stated his interpretation of this recommendation is that under the new half-pricing structure everyone would be a new member since currently, no such structure exists. But, if his interpretation is different than what was intended by the Commission he is willing to take a step back, conduct a reevaluation, and return to Council with a recommendation that reflects their true intent.

Mayor Crow stated he does not think anyone has a strong position one way or the other and is simply seeking a decision that can be easily explained to citizens. However, to ensure that the City does not put itself in a box, he would suggest that any recommendation be brought forward as soon as possible.

Voice vote on Councilmember Hales' motion to approve a 50 percent reduction for new members, carried unanimously.

L. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT– (voice vote on each item as needed)

1. Transfer from General Fund to Solid Waste Fund \$1 million

Mr. Rose stated staff is recommending that Council consider a 1-million-dollar transfer from the General Fund to the Solid Waste Fund, and forgiveness of the remaining loan amount provided to the Solid Waste Fund; effective the date of passage.

Mr. Cole stated at the March 28, 2022, Council meeting, Council approved the inter-fund borrowing of 1 million dollars from the General Fund to the Solid Waste Fund, setting the terms at the Solid Waste Fund paying back the General Fund at an interest rate of 1.25% interest rate over 10-years.

As of the end of February 2023, the Solid Waste Fund expenditures exceeded revenues by \$630,000, partially due to the necessity of purchasing two (2) refuse trucks and normal day-to-day operations. One truck was lost to the flood, and the other was an FY23 budgeted item. The current Solid Waste cash balance is approximately \$375,000 and the outstanding balance of the loan is \$881,686. Therefore, to make this fund sustainable there is a need to transfer 1 million dollars.

Councilmember Clay moved to approve, it was seconded by Councilmember McMahon.

Councilmember Smotherson questioned whether any outstanding or delinquent bills in the Solid Waste Fund were attributing to why the Fund has been deemed unsustainable or able to pay back the loan? Mr. Cole stated the Fund's current delinquent balance is 1.2 million dollars.

Mayor Crow questioned whether those 1.2 million dollars represented money owed to the City by residents for trash service? Mr. Cole stated that it did.

Mr. Cole stated that he would like to address several questions he received related to this topic.

Q. What are the Fund's annual expenses versus its annual revenue?

A. *In FY22 the Fund's revenue was \$3,092,444.22; expenditures were \$4,098,716. So, at the end of FY22, there was a deficit of over 1 million dollars. The anticipated revenue for FY23 is \$3.172 million and the actual revenue received year-to-date is \$1.8 million. Here is an additional comparison of the City's challenges with outstanding and/or delinquent trash bills:*

| | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| <i>FY18</i> | <i>\$1,088,000</i> |
| <i>FY19</i> | <i>\$1,082,000</i> |
| <i>FY20</i> | <i>\$1,000,000</i> |
| <i>FY21</i> | <i>\$995,000</i> |
| <i>FY22</i> | <i>\$948,000</i> |

Q. What is the City's policy regarding liens for delinquent bills?

A. *The City bills residents every six months. So, the current policy is if the resident has not made a payment within three (3) billing cycles; eighteen (18) months, their service is discontinued, all trash cans are removed, a lien is placed on their property, and the account is sent to collections. Thereafter, a minimum \$40 monthly payment arrangement is offered and once they start making payments on a regular basis their service can be restored for a fee of \$41.*

Q. What happens if someone with a lien or delinquent bills sells their house?

A. *The vast majority of delinquencies that fall in this category are recovered when a title company contacts the Finance Department to determine if there are any outstanding bills before the property is sold.*

Q. What collection agency is the City using to assist with these delinquencies?

A. *Currently the City is using Valley Collection Agency whose success rate has been less than 1%. Over the last two years, the City has received slightly over \$3,000.*

Councilmember Clay posed the following questions to Mr. Cole:

Q. I know it's naive to believe we could get to a point where everyone is paying on time, but it might help us understand and perhaps, learn, if we could see how the City's program compares with some of its municipal peers. It is possible to do that?

A. *I can reach out to several municipalities with Solid Waste programs.*

Q. I know the numbers are skewed towards residential, but do you have a sense of how business delinquencies compare to these residential delinquencies?

A. *Bills for the business sector are larger, but it is something he could provide a breakdown on.*

Q. Is the collection company's compensation purely based on a percentage of what they collect?

A. *The only fee they receive is 15% of what they can collect.*

Voice vote on Councilmember Clay's motion carried unanimously.

2. Gun Shot Detection Devices and Surveillance Equipment

Mr. Rose stated staff is recommending that Council consider authorizing a purchase or lease agreement for gunshot detection devices.

Chief Hampton stated this is an approved Capital Improvement project for FY23. The request is to lease additional FLOCK gunshot detection and surveillance equipment for a 2-year pilot period to combat gunshot-reported incidents. FLOCK is original in its approach which integrates surveillance cameras that activate automatically when shots are detected. This equipment will take the department from its pilot program radius of 1/4 of a square mile to a full mile and will be strategically placed in areas that statistics dictate have the most calls for service or incidents.

Chief Hampton stated the original company, V5, was acquired by another company and since FLOCK is now being utilized by the State, St. Louis County, Ameren, and many neighboring municipalities, staff decided to resolve its partnership with V5, and enhance its mobile devices designed by FLOCK.

Councilmember Clay posed the following questions to Chief Hampton:

Q. Was the V5 equipment different in that it did not have surveillance cameras?

A. *That is correct*

Q. In my non-law enforcement mind, when I think of public safety and some of the technology Council has been asked to approve, it's either been for prevention or solving crimes. V5's technology would have fallen in the category of solving crime, although he never really understood how it was effective in doing that. So, is this how the FLOCK technology works in solving crimes; a gunshot is detected somewhere within a mile radius, and the surveillance camera; which is activated automatically, now gives you the bonus of potentially detecting that activity?

A. *Yes, technology is always a force multiplier in law enforcement. The most common detection technology is Shot Spotter, but FLOCK is a fraction of the cost and has more integrated elements. Shot Spotter requires a power source and does not have a surveillance camera. V5 and FLOCK are both solar powered with smaller dimensions that make them less visible. Florissant utilizes over 30 cameras mainly because of the number of dealerships they have, and this proposal is for 15 cameras to work in conjunction with the department's gunshot detection devices.*

Councilmember Smotherson stated he appreciates the decision to add cameras because he believes they will enhance the system. He stated he thinks the primary streets for this type of activity are Sutter, Kingsland, Ferguson, and Pennsylvania. So, he was curious to know if the activation of one camera would cause all of the cameras to activate? Chief Hampton stated every camera located within a specific zone will activate when it hears anything that sounds like a gunshot. And one reason FLOCK's gunshot detection and surveillance equipment can only be leased is that they don't want their clients to experience any downtime. The input data is processed in seconds so that they can receive feedback and respond immediately.

Councilmember Hales questioned whether the batteries in these solar paneled units had enough capacity to keep them operational 24 hours a day? Chief Hampton stated that they did. And since all of this equipment will be monitored remotely, FLOCK assists its clients in maximizing their power source. He stated the department's speed radar trailers are solar powered, so they've already had some experience in this area.

Councilmember McMahon asked Chief Hampton how his department would measure the success of this two-year pilot program? Chief Hampton stated he believes the measures will be determined by several factors, the practicality of their use; their accuracy; their effectiveness in quickly directing officers to the right location, and their ability to assist in solving crimes.

Councilmember Fuller asked if the cameras would be monitored at a central location? Chief Hampton stated this is license plate technology that will be monitored in real-time by the department's mobile data terminals located in vehicles and cell phones.

Councilmember Clay stated his understanding is that when these incidents occur offenders often head either north or east to leave the scene, and there are only a few streets where you can do that. So, will these surveillance cameras integrate with the department's other stationary equipment or be useful in addressing these points of egress and ingress? Chief Hampton stated the cameras cannot be combined with any of their other systems because FLOCK's objective is for clients to expand their radius by purchasing more equipment, but that can become costly. He stated while they are concerned about egress and ingress, statistical data, along with FLOCK's professional expertise is what will be used to determine where the cameras should be located. But of course, they can always be adjusted.

Mayor Crow asked if the \$140,000 being requested was within or over the budgeted amount? Chief Hampton stated only \$100,000 was budgeted. However, FLOCK was willing to offer them \$70,000 for the first year and \$65,000 for the second year, if they acted now because the price per device is scheduled to increase in April.

Mr. Rose stated the \$40,000 overage is being absorbed by an excess in the department's budget resulting from salaries, and the Public Safety Fund reserves.

He stated the rationale behind the two-year pilot program is to determine the equipment's effectiveness, how well it can be tailored to correspond with the department's current system, and whether it should be expanded into other areas of the City.

Councilmember Clay moved to approve, it was seconded by Councilmember Smotherson and the motion carried unanimously.

M. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - (roll call vote required on 2nd and 3rd readings)

1. **Bill 9510**—AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR LOT 5 OF MARKET AT OLIVE PLAT 3. Bill Number 9510 was read for the second and third time.

Councilmember Hales moved to approve, it was seconded by Councilmember McMahon.

Roll Call Vote Was:

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

Nays: None.

N. NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions - (voice vote required)

None

Bills - (no vote required on introductions and 1st readings)

None

O. COUNCIL REPORTS/BUSINESS

1. Boards and Commission appointments needed
2. Council liaison reports on Boards and Commissions
3. Boards, Commissions, and Task Force minutes
4. Other Discussions/Business

Councilmember Hales stated a review of the minutes from a September 2008 Council meeting, where Mr. Hoelscher; currently the CEO of MSD, stated, "*MSD is responsible for cleaning out the debris and overgrowth of River des Peres,*" raised several questions. As a result, he would like to get a consensus from Council to ask the City Manager and his staff to arrange for MSD to provide an update, specifically related to the following questions:

- What is MSD's policy and maintenance schedule for cleaning the River des Peres?
- What is the status of their storage tanks?

Councilmember Smotherson stated gravel was added to portions of Mona Drive, and he would like an update on the condition of that street.

Mayor Crow stated he would like to request that staff review Council's rule which prohibits folks from serving on more than one Board or Commission and come up with an amendment that gives Council more discretion by fine-tuning the language to say, "*may serve on more than one Board or Commission*". He stated there are a number of commissions, like the IDA for the Markets at Olive that only require two meetings every four years. So, it would be great to have a little more leeway and allow some of these folks to serve in other areas. Mayor Crow stated his hope is that this could be completed by May.

P. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (continued if needed)

Q. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Crow made the following acknowledgments:

- A shout-out to the Fire Department who participated in the American Lung Association's Fight for Air Climb; 40 floors and 856 stairs, in full gear
- Congratulations to Dr. Sharonica Hardin-Bartley on receiving the Pierce Award from the Missouri Association of School Administrators for Excellence in School Leadership
- A reminder to voters that Proposition M and Director of the School Board will be on the April 4th ballot

Councilmember Hales moved to adjourn the Regular Session, it was seconded by Councilmember McMahon, and the motion carried unanimously.

R. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Crow thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

LaRette Reese
City Clerk, MRCC