

**Aurora City Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Aurora City Hall**  
**City Council Chambers**  
**2 W. Pleasant**  
**Aurora, Missouri**  
**Tuesday, April 14, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Ferguson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE:** Mayor Ferguson led the Council in prayer and the pledge of allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Doyle Ferguson - present  
Chairman Pro Tem Stephen Wiles - present  
Councilman Larry David Marks - present  
Councilwoman Dawn Oplinger - present  
Councilman Don McWade – present

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*A citizen desiring to speak on an item not on the agenda may do so at this time. Each citizen is limited to three minutes and the Council will not take action or discuss items at this time. Discussion should be limited to matters of City business and public comment is not permitted in regard to personnel matters or on pending legal matters. Items introduced under "Public Comment" may become agenda items at a later date.*

Due to COVID-19, council meeting was held via Zoom and no public comment was taken.

**5. COUNCIL FORUM**

*Council Forum provides an opportunity for Council Members to share information with the rest of the Council regarding communications with constituents, meetings attended, request items to be put on the agenda, make requests of staff, or direct questions to staff regarding issues that are not on the agenda.*

Councilman McWade broached the subject of not allowing candidates to go from door to door campaigning since the election has been delayed to June due to COVID-19. Mayor Ferguson agreed and it was decided that the City Manager would check in to it and get back with council.

Councilwoman Oplinger received a call from a citizen regarding the city's fence code. Planning and Zoning Director, Carrie Howlett, advised Councilwoman Oplinger on what the code states. Councilwoman Oplinger relayed code information to the citizen.

## **9.I. Staff Report/Organizational Business**

### *2. City Manager Report*

City Manager Report was moved up in the agenda due to information in the report being pertinent to the approval of the Consent Agenda and the approvals under New Business. City Manager Holmes covered budget expenditures, revenues, seasonal operations, operation issues, staff issues, staffing, and department items. City Manager Holmes explained that he has directed his department heads to hold back on expenditures that are not mission critical at this time. However, there were already contractual obligations that must be met. City Manager Holmes discussed economic expectations for 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the remaining fiscal year will be dedicated to getting our local economy back on track. There will be a delay on certain projects for the remainder of the year so that ample cash reserves can be maintained. Full report is attached.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

*Items listed on the 'Consent Agenda' are considered routine and shall be enacted by one motion of the City Council with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is desired by a member of the Council, that item will be removed from the 'Consent Agenda' and placed on the regular agenda as a final item under 'New Business'.*

*6.I. Approval Of Minutes: Regular Session Held On March 10, 2020*

*6.II. Approval of Appropriations: March 2020 Appropriations*

*6.III Approval of Appropriations: March/April 2020 Appropriations*

Mayor Ferguson advised that there was a \$50.00 invoice to the Aurora Greenhouse in the appropriations for approval and that he would be abstaining from the vote.

Councilwoman Oplinger made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Chairman Pro Tem Wiles seconded the motion. Motion passed with the following council members voting aye:

AYES: Wiles, Marks, Oplinger, McWade

NAYES: 0

ABSTAIN: Ferguson

## **7. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business for this council meeting

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

*8.I. Locust Street Lift Station Renovation – Resolution 2020-1730: Motion to approve the City Manager to execute an agreement for the Locust Street Lift Station Renovation*

Discussion was held regarding recommendations for the Locust Street Lift Station Renovation Project. City Manager Holmes explained that this project was not sales tax driven and needed to move forward as planned.

Motion was made by Chairman Pro Tem Wiles to approve Resolution 2020-1730. Councilwoman Oplinger seconded the motion. Motion passed with the following council members voting aye:

AYES: Ferguson, Wiles, Oplinger, Marks, McWade

NAYES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

*8.II. Aurora Municipal Airport – Fixed Base Operator Agreement - Resolution 2020-1731: Motion to approve the City Manager to execute an agreement with Aurora Aviation to provide professional full service fixed base operations at the Aurora Municipal Airport*

Discussion was held regarding contract with Aurora Aviation. Councilman McWade voiced concerns with the way the contract was written. Councilwoman Oplinger made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-1731 but there was no second. City Manager Holmes will address contract concerns and bring back to council.

*8.III. Mowing Contract Award – Resolution 2020-1732: Motion to approve the contract for mowing and/or clean-up of properties within the city for Planning and Zoning*

Discussion was held regarding contract with C-Moon's Lawn Service, LLC and possible contract extension.

Motion was made by Chairman Pro Tem Wiles to approve Resolution 2020-1732. Councilman McWade seconded the motion. Motion passed with the following council members voting aye:

AYES: Ferguson, Wiles, Oplinger, Marks, McWade

NAYES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

*8.IV. 2020 Asphalt Milling and Pavement Project Bid – Resolution 2020-1733: Motion to approve the authorization of the City Manager to execute a contract with Blevins Asphalt for the pavement milling and asphalt overlay of designated city streets*

Discussion was held regarding the need for improvements to city streets Lincoln and Elm. City Manager Holmes explained the deterioration of Lincoln street and the long term effects if the problems were not addressed.

Motion was made by Councilman McWade to approve Resolution 2020-1733. Chairman Pro Tem Wiles seconded the motion. Motion passed with the following council members voting aye:

AYES: Ferguson, Wiles, Oplinger, Marks, McWade

NAYES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

## **9. STAFF REPORT/ORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS**

1. Board Liaison Report
2. City Manager Report

*9.I. Staff Report/Organizational Business*

Councilwoman Oplinger reported that the Hospital Board had met via conference call. Councilwoman Oplinger reported that Nicki Gamet, Mercy Hospital Board Administrator, had a great handle on activities and issues related to COVID-19. Councilwoman Oplinger also discussed the visit of the Easter Bunny with the Chamber of Commerce and Shannon Walker and the positive effect it had on the children in the community. Mayor Ferguson reported he had heard positive feedback on it as well.

*9.II. City Manager Report*

Moved up in the agenda. See above and attached.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Ferguson asked if there was anything further that needed to be discussed. City Manager Holmes reported that he had received feedback already regarding the Zoom meeting and issues that had occurred. He advised that he would continue to research and work on specific problems that arose.

City Manager Holmes also addressed the council about the new format of the agenda packet and asked if there were problems, concerns or anything the council would like to see different regarding the new format. Council was in agreement that there were no problems or concerns with the new format.

Councilwoman Oplinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Mayor Ferguson seconded the motion. Motion passed with the following council members voting aye:

AYES: Ferguson, Wiles, Oplinger, Marks, McWade

NAYES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

**To:** Mayor Ferguson & Aurora City Council  
**From:** Jon Holmes, City Manager, City of Aurora  
**Re:** City Manager Report  
**Date:** 04/14/2020

---

**Report Items:**

**COVID19 Organizational Update**

**Financial Conditions:**

As you know, the shutdown of several businesses in our community will likely have a serious impact on our finances and sales tax revenues.

**2020 Budget Expenditures**

At this time, I have directed all Dept. Heads that we need to hold back on expenditures that are not mission critical. Meaning, if it is not an expenditure that absolutely has to be made in order for the dept. to complete core responsibilities and duties, then it needs to

wait. This would include any capital expenditures that we are not already contractually obligated to. The City Hall, windows for example, is already under contract. The only exception to that is probably the paving for this year. We really need to complete Lincoln Street. Other extra paving projects may need to wait till we see what happens with the economy.

All the dept. heads have been watching what is happening and are being careful with their dept. expenditures and understand the importance of this request. Also, this really is not a factor for the sewer system, primarily the departments that operate off sales tax revenue. But Orvil is also still being cautious with his expenditures.

### **2020 Revenues**

Our March receipts came in only about \$10,000 under our projections for the month. With reduced travel and gas consumption, we can expect lower than expected gas tax receipts which impacts our transportation fund.

Forecasts that I am reading says that the expectation is that while there may be a challenging 2020, we just need to get through it and the economy should bounce back in 2021 if there are no surprises. So, we just need to be patient and hope that is the case. I will keep you informed and let you know what I am seeing on our monthly sales tax receipts when they come in. We still are in good shape on our cash reserves, so I am concerned but not worried; we just need to be cautious and prudent with what we our resources.

My overall assessment is that the remaining fiscal year (till December 31<sup>st</sup>) will be dedicated to getting our local economy back on track and rebounding. Discretionary projects will be delayed for the remainder of the year so that we can maintain ample cash reserves

### **Seasonal Operations:**

Currently, we are taking a very conservative approach to many of the normal seasonal City operations:

- City Pool – We expect a delayed opening due to COVID-19 precautions. No time frame at this time.
- Youth Sports Programs – Spring youth soccer and flag football will not occur. Depending on what happens regarding COVID19 restrictions being lifted, it is expected that fall youth sports will occur.
- Adult softball does not start until June, so barring extended COVID19 restrictions, that program will occur. Staff are working on having all fields ready.
- Little League is reviewing their options
- Special Events

- The Historical Society concert waiting for information from the Governor's office and the County Health Dept. before making any decisions regarding this event
- Light the Night - waiting for information from the Governor's office and the County Health Dept. before making any decisions regarding this event.

## **Operational Issues**

The City Treasurer and I have responded to Federal requests regarding getting registered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Dept. of Homeland Security to submit reimbursement requests for COVID19 expenditures – Personal Protective Equipment, overtime, pandemic/quarantine leave, overtime, and other expenditures related to preparation and response to COVID19 can be reimbursed back to the City from the Federal government. We are tracking these expenses in order to submit them; a special line item has been opened in our accounting software to track these expenditures.

## **Staff Issues**

Pandemic Response Staff Issues - The Federal legislation that was passed by the U.S. Congress and became effective April 2, 2020. This federal legislation provides for guaranteed leave for our employees as it relates to COVID19. This legislation also provides for reimbursement from the federal government for any time off for our employees when leave is used by our employees for COVID19 related issues. The City Treasurer, Betty Baum, is the timekeeper and processes time sheets for our employees; she and the City Manager have been keeping track of this information and the leave that is used by our employees under this legislation for future reimbursement

We have kept our employees informed of this information and have been working with the Dept. Heads on this issue as it has come up with some of our employees over the last several weeks.

**Staffing** – One of the biggest concerns that has been expressed by the employees has been that of possible staff reductions or furloughs. Overall this is not a consideration and in many cases, it is not a possibility.

Staff Reduction - In most every dept. the City operates at minimum staff level, and a reduction in the amount of people would directly correlate to a reduction of services to the public. The City cannot reduce staff without substantially reducing the services that is provided to the citizens and guarantee the current level of safety, responsiveness and overall welfare of the community.

Reduction of Hours – we face much of the same dilemma in this proposal. Reducing hours of staff can reduce the level of services that the community receives. It is also can

be very detrimental to the workforce, morale within the organization and employee welfare. At this time, I do not believe things to be so dire that this should be a consideration. I firmly believe that this only be a last resort consideration after fully exhausting all other alternatives. However, I would say that I have been calculating the cost-benefits that we could expect if this option needed to be considered.

## **Discussion, Questions or Concerns?**

### **Dept. Items**

- **Police**
  - No
  
- **Street & Cemetery**
  - Right of Way Maintenance – mowing, street edge repair being conducted. Mowing has started early due to the wet weather.
  - Paving prep work for Lincoln Street
  - Working on catching up with street cut repairs
  
- **Park**
  - Fencing installed at Crosby Park finished
  - Bids advertised – at this time due to the uncertainty of the economy, projects are not moving forward at this time.
  
- **Stormwater**
  - Nothing to report currently
  
- **Wastewater**
  - Work for the U.V. project at the sewer plant has began – no updates at this time; it has been to wet to work on this project.
  - Began work on initial Wastewater Treatment plant improvements
    - Filter Replacement Project – engineering moving forward
    - Submittal of application for State Revolving Fund completed
  - TREKK is beginning work on this year's round of I & I sewer line rehab.
  
- **Admin. & Finance**
  - Sales Tax Renewal Information Meetings TBD – All meetings at City hall, Council Chambers
  - Laptops for Council have been ordered for paperless agendas – Update: On back order at this time

- Planning a meeting for Historical Preservation discussion for Downtown – Meeting with State Historical Preservation Office UPDATE: Will be rescheduled
  - Expected auditor report will be presented at the next Council meeting
  - Employee Health Insurance – Special enrollment period opened for our employees to add spouse or children
  - Cleaning old files
  - Cleaning the basement storage areas
- **Planning & Code Enforcement**
    - P&Z Meetings – there are 3 P&Z public hearings that are currently pending
    - Cleaning old files
  - **Fire**
    - Chief Ward and Staff have been sitting in on MO Emergency Management Agency teleconferences regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. The FD has been following the recommended preparation and planning activities from the MO-EMA

**Meetings/Events Attended:**

- NONE

**Upcoming Meetings and Events Attending:**

- All TBD

**Follow-Up Items/Misc. Items**

- None

**APPROVED:**

---

Doyle Ferguson, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

---

Kimberly Breedlove, City Clerk