



City Council Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2020
7:15 p.m.

Mayor: John McTaggart
Councilmember Chuck Adams Carolyn Caiharr Garrett Mellott
Margaret Shriver Chuck Stites

This meeting was held virtually using the GoToMeeting online and call-in software. Residents were provided instructions on how to participate in the meeting. A roll call was conducted at the beginning of the meeting and all elected officials were present for the entirety of the meeting. Mayor McTaggart also provided details on how comments from the Council would be heard after items were presented.

1. Approve minutes of the following City Council meetings:

a. Edwardsville City Council Meeting held on March 9, 2020

b. Edwardsville City Council Emergency Meeting held on March 18, 2020

- **Motion:** Councilmember Adams made the motion to approve the minutes for both meetings as presented
- **Second:** Councilmember Stites seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Passes 5-0

2. Statement of Bills paid \$417,606.31

- **Motion:** Councilmember Stites made the motion to approve the statement of bills paid.
- **Second:** Councilmember Shriver seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Passes 5-0

3. Requests or Comments from the public

Note: No public comments were taken at the Council meeting. However, staff solicited comments from residents online. These comments were read verbatim at the Council meeting and are provided below in their entirety for the record. Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel noted that many of these residents have already received a response to their questions or comments:

- William Schulenburg, 10141 Steele Rd.: How aggressive is the City being on making Edwardsville a Quiet Zone for the railroad?
- Linda Goodman, 273 Williamson: How can we better prepare our City for a medical emergency (note: additional details were discussed regarding Ms. Goodman's comments, referencing Civil Defense groups from years ago).
- Jeff Boddy, 1205 S. 103rd St.: My concern is that with my evaluation increasing 12% and COVID-19 and the resulting loss of income such as sales tax and casino funds (if much at all), how much can I expect my City tax to go up? 20, 30, or 40%? I know that City management and elected officials always want to increase services. This would be the perfect excuse to go amok, raise taxes, and spend. I also had to chuckle at the comment in the Edwardsville Hotshot that "ciizen input is a critical part of every City Council meeting." I consider it to be a false statement.
- Erin Shelving, 17 took the podiu1 S. 102nd St.: Hi. I'm wondering if there it's any plan for expanding internet? I currently only have access to satellite internet, as is the case for many on South 102nd St. and perhaps elsewhere. During this pandemic crisis, satellite internet cannot provide adequate service for those who need to

work or learn from home. In fact, even outside the circumstances of a pandemic, it's not adequate as its reliability during a slight rain is dismal. While I realize this is mostly a vendor issue, I feel the lack of stable internet access disadvantages the entire community. People pay extra for hotspots to be able to work from home or they simply purchase homes elsewhere where internet access isn't an issue. Adults and children can't use the internet to its fullest for educational and training opportunities because of it's slow speeds and/or data limitations. Perhaps a concerted effort by the City to address the needs of its more rural citizens would encourage more vendors to make services available to all.

- Lane Cooper, 1535 S. 104th Ter.: In referencing Inter Fund Transfers (Note E) from the last state audit, how did we justify transferring \$93,000 out of the sewer maintenance fund to other funds having their own specific revenue streams? (line items 2,3, and 4). Related to note E is Note F, indicating the city is in violation of KSA 10-1113 as well as KSA 10-1121. Again for COUNCIL:What actions did we take to avoid the same violation during the 2019 audit?
- Joe Caiharr, 10550 Riverview Ave.: I wanted to address the proposed ordinance 1029. I believe that this ordinance is reckless and has no boundaries. I do not wish to see this council put our city under the health officers or board of health orders. This idea makes no sense whatsoever. These should be recommendations not orders. I am a citizen of Edwardsville and the United States of America which means I still have constitutional rights. This ordinance may very well violate some of those rights which I believe in and many have died for. During this current epidemic I believe that we as a people are making decisions to help protect those who are vulnerable and do not need to be threatened with fines and/or jail if we do not obey the commands of one person or a board. This ordinance is more of a knee jerk reaction to something we as a nation have never dealt with before. In this current time many people are filled with fear and searching for answers, but unlimited control is not something we should be quick to give to anyone. I understand that the state and the county have already taken measures to make people do what they say or they may arrested or fined, but that is them not us. If the sheriff decides to send deputies to our city and enforce these rules let that be on them, but our Officers should not be doing the dirty work of the county. In closing I wish for the council to consider not giving unlimited power to make whatever the health officer says an Edwardsville ordinance. As Ben Franklin said "Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." Thank you for your time. Please do not cast a vote in fear.
- Fred Brant, 1449 S. 98th St.: When will something get done about the terrible road conditions of 98th St., especially between K-32 and Kansas Avenue?

4. Hear presentation regarding the City's response and actions to the public health emergency due to COVID-19

- City Manager Michael Webb provided a summary of the actions the City has taken in response to the public health emergency as well as a recap of the county and state actions to date.
- Mayor McTaggart provided additional details on MARC's involvement in response efforts
- Councilmember Adams commended staff on the online resource page on the City's website.
- Councilmember Caiharr asked that information about unemployment hotlines be included in resources pages. She also asked that that recovery rates from the illness be reported from the County sources.

- Councilmember Mellott thanked the City staff for their efforts. He also asked if there was an indication that property tax deadlines would be extended. Mr. Webb noted that there has been discussion on this item, but nothing has been decided at the state level. There are questions on how much of a relief this measure would offer to residents. Mellott also asked if there has been any difficulty enforcing stay-at-home orders, which Mr. Webb noted there has not been any significant events related to enforcement of those measures.
 - Councilmember Shriver thanked staff for their efforts and asked that this information be shared in utility bills and with the mobile home community via hard copy inserts.
- 5. Consider Ordinance No. 1029 relating to the violation of an order by the local health officer or board of health**
- The discussion above led to discussion of the proposed Ordinance.
 - Mr. Webb noted that this ordinance would not give local law enforcement additional authority; rather it would allow violation of public health orders to be prosecuted in municipal court rather than district court. This would keep enforcement within the City of Edwardsville rather than at the County level.
 - Councilmember Adams voiced his concerns with this effort, citing concerns about government overreach and that the ordinance solves for a problem that does not exist. He states he does not believe it is needed at this time and that there may be unintended consequences in the future.
 - Councilmember Caiharr also stated her concerns about the proposed ordinance, noting that it should be the responsibility of County officials to enforce County orders, not Edwardsville police. She states she is uncomfortable giving County health officials a “blank check” for enforcing their orders in the City of Edwardsville. She closed by stating she did not want to operate from a position of fear.
 - Councilmembers Mellott and Shriver both stated they are torn on the issue, citing concerns about overreach but also see the value in uniformity with the County and state.
 - City Manager Michael Webb restated some of the statutory authority granted to County Health officials, which this ordinance does not alter or expand.
 - No councilmember made a motion to vote on this item and the action died for lack of a motion.
- 6. Hear a presentation regarding utility bill calculation and payment procedures**
- City Manager guided the Council through a presentation breaking down utility bill charges.
 - The presentation provided the factors that go into the sewer bill calculation, breaking down the formula of water usage times the variable rate, adding in the base rate to determine charges. Residential customers are charged based on an average of their winter water usage in the months of December, January, and February.
 - Trash bills are a fixed monthly rate, which are also part of utility bills
 - Mr. Webb noted that septic customers would not receive a sewer bill and also provided comparisons to other rates in the area.
 - Councilmember Adams asked that the presentation be shared widely with the public.
- 7. Hear a presentation on Capital Planning**
- City Manager Michael Webb provided a presentation related to long-term capital planning.
 - Mr. Webb provided several scenarios in which the City would take on more debt, and the different ways it could impact the mill levy.

- Mr. Webb provided growth scenarios going out a number of years, utilizing three different strategies for paying down additional debt required for the various projects.
- Mr. Webb closed by saying the tax base remains strong and that the mill levy should be able to be maintained or lowered from 2022 onward.

8. Advisory Reports

City Manager: City Manager Michael Webb provided thanked the Assistant City Manager for his work getting the virtual meeting put together.

Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel thanked the participants of the meeting for finding a way to attend.

Chiefs: Police Chief Mathies noted that the department has taken an education-first approach to public health enforcement. He also summarized recent activity.

Fire Chief Whitham added to earlier comments from the City Manager and noted that Deputy Chief Morrow acted proactively to secure personal protective equipment. He also provided an update on a new hire for the department.

9. Council and Mayor Comments

Adams: Councilmember Adams asked for an update on the Public Works Director, which Mr. Webb responded the search has been temporarily paused, but that there is a final list of finalists for the position. Mr. Webb also updated the Council on current Public Works staffing. Councilmember Adams also commented that residents seem to be pleased with the property acquisition process in the Riverview area.

Caiharr: Councilmember Caiharr noted she'd like to have a review done on use taxes to verify that revenue is going to Edwardsville rather than Kansas City. Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel noted that the Finance Director Sean Milleson has been able to access detail reports from the state and that they will review this item. Caiharr also emphasized that internet connections are an issue that the City should perhaps consider incentivizing as the Towne Center project continues to take shape. She closed with concerns regarding Edwardsville Police officers enforcing County orders, which she believes should be left to the Wyandotte County Sheriff Department.

Mellott: Councilmember thanked staff for getting the virtual meeting put together. He also offered gratitude regarding the USD 204 lunch program at the Community Center. Mellott also thanked the public safety departments for their efforts. He closed by noting longtime Edwardsville resident Connie Hadley recently passed away, reminding the group of her contributions to the community.

Shriver: Councilmember thanked all the staff for working through this crisis. She asked Fire Chief Whitham about the number of Bonner Springs mutual aid calls per month. Chief Whitham did not have the exact number, but he estimates the EFD goes to Bonner Springs 4-5 times per month with no noticeable increases in the last few weeks.

Stites: Councilmember asked if the Council could observe a moment of silence for first responders and medical staff for this period. (*note: Mayor McTaggart lead the group in a moment of silence at the conclusion of his final comments*).

McTaggart: Mayor McTaggart thanked staff for putting the meeting together and summarized his daily conference calls with community partners.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.n.

Zachary Daniel

City Clerk