

**MERRIAM CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
CITY HALL  
9001 WEST 62<sup>ND</sup> STREET  
NOVEMBER 25, 2019  
7:00 P.M.  
WORK SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Ken Sissom called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Scott Diebold  
Al Frisby  
Chris Evans Hands  
Nancy Hupp  
Brian Knaff  
David Neal  
Bob Pape  
Jason Silvers

Staff present: Chris Engel, City Administrator; Ryan Denk, City Attorney; Meredith Hauck, Assistant City Administrator; Bryan Dehner, Fire Chief; Jim MacDonald, Public Works Director; Jenna Gant, Communication and Public Engagement Manager; Darren McLaughlin, Police Chief; Anna Slocum, Parks and Recreation Director; Donna Oliver, Finance Director; Bryan Dyer, Community Development Director and Juli Pinnick, City Clerk.

**III. PUBLIC ITEMS**

Members of the public are encouraged to use this time to make comments about matters that do not appear on the agenda. Comments about items on the regular agenda will be taken as each item is considered. ***Please note: individuals making Public Comments will be limited to 5 minutes.***

Sam Matier, 8515 W. 57<sup>th</sup> St., commented that he recently made an inquiry to Site Centers that owns and leases Merriam Town Center. Mr. Matier spoke with Austin Tullick who is the leasing agent. He had heard rumors that a mattress store was going into the center, so he wanted to confirm that with the leasing company. Mr. Tullick confirmed that there was not a mattress store going in the center. Mr. Tullick also stated that the Hen House grocery store vacated due to poor performance.

Mr. Matier asked Mr. Tullick if the city has made any inquiries about getting a grocery store back in Merriam Town Center. Mr. Tullick indicated that he was unaware of any attempts by the city to get a grocery store back in the center. Mr. Matier feels that the city could use the marketing staff to try to get a grocery store back in Merriam. He feels that the city should do their own market research and hire a commercial real estate broker to find out the marketing parameters that a grocery store looks for when selecting a location.

City Administrator commented that he has not been in contact with Mr. Tullick yet, as he has only been working for Site Centers for about three weeks, prior to that, the leasing agent was Grace Devarnack. The City, Chamber of Commerce and a couple of residents had been working with Grace, she has come into town and met with the Chamber on several occasions regarding a grocery tenant in Merriam Town Center.

Christopher Leitch, 8600 W. 60<sup>th</sup> St. commented that he wanted to commend the Merriam Police Department for the courteous and professional manner they handled themselves during a recent incident.

#### **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

All items listed under the heading are considered to be routine by the City Council and may be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember or citizen so requests, in which case that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

1. Consider approval of the minutes of the City Council Meeting held November 11, 2019.
2. Consider approval of the 2020 Schedule of Fees.
3. Consider approval of the 2020 CMB (Cereal Malt Beverage) licenses.
4. Consider confirmation of the Drug and Alcoholism Council of Johnson County funding recommendations for 2020.
5. Confirm the reappointment of Judy Devere, Bill Bailey and Ruben Cozmyer to the Planning Commission for the terms expiring December 31, 2022.
6. Confirm the reappointment of Shawn McConnell and Bill Bailey to the Board of Zoning Appeals for the term expiring December 31, 2022.

7. Confirm the reappointment of Brian Dailey and Bill Bailey to the Board of Structure Appeals for the terms expiring December 31, 2022.
8. Confirm the reappointment of Kyle Cooper and Kathy Stull to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the terms expiring December 31, 2021.

**COUNCILMEMBER FRISBY MOVED THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 1-8. COUNCILMEMBER HANDS SECONDED AND THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **V. MAYOR'S REPORT**

1. Confirm the appointment of Staci Chivetta to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the term expiring December 31, 2021.

**COUNCILMEMBER HANDS MOVED THAT THE COUNCIL CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF STACI CHIVETTA TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2021. COUNCILMEMBER HUPP SECONDED AND THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

2. Confirm the appointment of Todd Boyer to the Board of Zoning Appeals for the term expiring December 31, 2020.

**COUNCILMEMBER PAPE MOVED THAT THE COUNCIL CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF TODD BOYER TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS FOR THE TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2020. COUNCILMEMBER DIEBOLD SECONDED AND THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **VI. COUNCIL ITEMS**

### **A. Finance and Administration**

1. Discussion regarding the 2020 Superpass program. (Work Session)

LaVera Howard, 10024 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St., commented that she was disappointed that the city council did not agree with the Park Board recommendation regarding the Superpass for 2020. She indicated that the Park Board deliberated over this issue and reviewed the pros and cons of participation and it was not an easy or quick decision. The decision was made due to all the unknowns with the new community center. The vote from the Park Board was to table the Superpass for next year and revisit it after the first

year of operation at the new center. The Park Board vote was 4-2 to table participation in Superpass for the first year of the new community center operating.

Kathy Stull, 10208 W. 54<sup>th</sup> St., echoed Ms. Howard's comments and commented that a number of Park Board members felt that the Superpass program was a complication that could be set aside for one year and felt as though it was an opportunity to get the nuances of the new community center worked out during the first year of operation. After the first year of operation, the Park Board would then figure out how the program could work at the new center.

Billy Crook, 6633 Wedd St., commented that he feels that if the Superpass is not part of the center next year, a lot of residents who planned to use it next year might not be happy. He further commented that Merriam would be the first city involved in the Superpass to take a break from it. He feels it is a good opportunity to bring in more non-resident memberships.

Christopher Leitch, 8600 W. 60<sup>th</sup> St., commented that he was unaware of the Superpass program until he was appointed to the Park Board. He personally does not use the city pool, nor does he know anyone on his street that uses the Superpass program. He serves on the Park Board not to represent his own personal interests, but to represent the interests of all residents and to advise the City Council on what the Park Board feels are good ideas.

He agrees with the other Park Board members who spoke in regard to this issue, however during the first year of opening the center staff will be tasked with managing a facility that will be approximately six times larger than the current community center, adding new staff, new programs, and new fees and services. He feels this is a lot to get a handle on during the first year of operation. Tackling all these additional tasks with philosophy of how can we best serve our residents in this new facility and be best prepared operationally, adding the Superpass program to all of this will be a disservice to our residents and staff. He has personally experienced opening new library facilities over the past few years and the first year of operation is always a challenge.

Brian Shapley, 8904 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Ter., commented that his position on the Superpass is that he does not agree with the decision of the Park Board but, he understands that they diligently explored the issue. His concern is that there needs to be a plan in place in the event that the facility does not open by the beginning of the outdoor pool season. Discussions regarding non-residents paying less to use the pool than residents when utilizing the Superpass is a problem for him. He also is concerned with not having a Superpass program if the facility does not open on time, would require

Merriam residents to go to other outdoor pools and pay a higher non-resident rate.

Mary Cashman, 10025 W. 55<sup>th</sup> St., commented that as long time resident of the area at 95 years old, she would like to have transportation for seniors. The City of Shawnee provides vouchers for transportation for their residents. She asked if Merriam could do anything to get transportation for seniors.

Councilmember Brian Knaff commented that the county has a micro transit program that he recently utilized. The service will send a van to pick you up for a \$3 fee. However, their coverage map ends at Shawnee Mission Parkway, so a request has been sent to them to extend their northern boundary to Johnson Dr.

## **B. Community Development/Public Works/CIP**

### **1. Grant programs Update.**

Community Development Director Bryan Dyer reviewed the Residential Exterior Grant Program, Neighborhood Block Party Grant Program and the Neighborhood Island Grant Programs utilized in 2019.

The Residential Exterior Grant Program had \$50,000 budgeted for the program in 2019. There were 25 recipients of the grant funds totaling \$47,500. Through the program, the city realized \$335,000 of residential exterior improvements and the average improvement project for each residence was approximately \$12,000.

Proposed changes to the 2020 program include reducing the minimum investment required to \$2,500. Based on feedback from past participants in the program, the city will increase their marketing of the program and provide additional information about required documentation for participation and reimbursement. Foundation repairs will not be included in the 2020 program.

Councilmember Silvers asked about adding a program to assist older folks with interior improvements such as grab bars and other improvements to assist in keeping them at their residence.

Mayor Sissom commented that the county agency on aging is able to assist folks with these types of improvements.

The 2019 Neighborhood Block Party Grant Program reimbursed 11 block parties at \$200 each. Changes for 2020 include not funding gift cards, however, door prizes will be funded. Additionally, due to liability reasons

play equipment which includes inflatables, bounce houses etc. will not be funded.

The 2019 Neighborhood Island Grant Program funded two islands in West Vernon Place in the amount of \$700. There are no anticipated changes to that program for 2020.

## 2. Community Development Update.

Community Development Director Bryan Dyer provided the following development updates:

Reed Automotive has received a grading permit and are working on grading their lot.

Switzer Senior Villas also received a grading permit; they have submitted the information for building construction today. It typically takes about a year to complete construction.

Freddy's Steakburgers is nearing completion and would like to be open before the end of the year. They are currently working on their driveway entrances to the building and it has caused some traffic issues on Shawnee Mission Parkway due to lane closures. Staff has addressed the issue with them and with KDOT. KDOT is the administrator of that Right of Way permit, and KDOT is requiring Freddy's to close out two entrances. Hopefully, they will get finished quickly.

Mr. Dyer reminded the council that at the next meeting, Johnson County Stormwater will be making a presentation on the county's new watershed maps and will be requesting city participation in the program.

## VII. STAFF ITEMS

City administrator Chris Engel commented that the new edition of the Highlights is out to the residents.

Councilmember Pape asked about the new street lights on 67<sup>th</sup> St. that were recently installed and appear to be leaning.

Public Works Director Jim MacDonald responded that our light poles may not be leaning, as it may be the other poles next to them are not straight, making it appear that our light poles are leaning. He indicated that he would check to ensure our poles are straight.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COUNCIL, COUNCILMEMBER HANDS MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:50 PM. COUNCILMEMBER HUPP SECONDED AND THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

APPROVED: December 9, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

*Juliana Pinnick*

Juliana Pinnick

City Clerk