



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Tuesday, December 29, 2020
9:00 AM

Work Session

Council Chamber
Columbia City Hall
701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

The City Council met on December 29, 2020 at approximately 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 701 E. Broadway, Columbia, Missouri.

Council Members Fowler, Trapp, Skala, Thomas (left the meeting at approximately 10:32 a.m.), Peters, and Treece were present. Council Member Pitzer was absent.

Present: 6 - Trapp, Thomas, Peters, Treece, Skala, and Fowler

Absent: 1 - Pitzer

CARES Act Funding

Attachments: [CARES Act Funding](#)

City Manager, John Glascock, introduced the topic of CARES Act Funding. He said that the city has received funding, and there will be some emergency acts that will be brought to the Council for approval. He introduced Matthew Lue, Director of Finance, to present more information on the CARES Act Funding.

Mr. Lue overviewed the City of Columbia reimbursement requests, which totaled over \$16 million. Federal guidelines for the CARES Act funding states the Public Health and Safety expenses are reimbursable.

Council Member Peters she understood that the CARES funding needs to be distributed or identified by the end of the year. She asked if the county reimbursed the city yet. Mr. Lue responded that the county has not, but there will be an invoice sent. He was not sure how the reimbursement would work. Mr. Glascock said there are contracts that Mr. Lue will overview later in the presentation.

Mr. Lue presented the city wide funding expenses that were accepted by the county. The City is eligible for a little over \$5 million from the county, which includes the Health Department and Public Safety personnel expenses. The county wide funding covered the PHHS contract tracing and small business grants have been received. The small business grants are given out as applications are received.

Ms. Peters asked if the money has been distributed since there were many applications. Mr. Lue believed the majority of the funding had been distributed, but not all of it. Mr. Glascock added that the funding for the small business loans was from the county wide funding. Mayor Treece asked if they were discussing the small business grants. Ms. Peters said yes. Mayor Treece responded that Randy Cole, Housing Programs Manager, was administering it on behalf of the county. Mr. Lue stated that there are two programs that are going on currently. The CDBG received federal funding as well as county CARES

Act funding. Ms. Peters asked if the money has been distributed since the city is administering the programs. Mr. Lue said not completely. Ms. Peters asked if there is an idea of when that would happen and if there is an indication that the county will distribute the funding. City Counselor, Nancy Thompson, clarified that there is a requirement for expenses be incurred prior December 30th. The city must submit the paperwork, but it does not need to be distributed by December 30th. She thought there was a supplemental request for an additional \$300,000 coming through CDBG for the small business grant program.

Mr. Lue stated that all of the 16 million expenses have been expensed except for the Health Department expenses from 11/20 through 12/20. The rest of the reimbursement requests have been verified. He reviewed immediate and future funding needs for 2021. Mr. Glascock said that money would need to go towards the co-responder unit and community policing.

Mr. Lue reviewed the other CARES Act funding that the city had been awarded from the Federal Aviation Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Mr. Glascock added that they are operating funds that carry over 2-4 years. Mr. Lue believes that both are for 4 years of funding.

Mayor Treece asked the difference between the city wide funding and the county wide funding for PHHS. Mr. Lue explained that the Health Department city wide funding was for personnel and PPE. Mayor Treece asked if there was no pandemic, would the city wide funding include the county's share of the health department. Mr. Lue said that it is the city wide funding number, the county paid their share for the first quarter. Mayor Treece asked if they were using federal funding for what they would have used county funding for. Mr. Lue and Mr. Glascock said they do not know. Mayor Treece asked if the 1.79 million was the extra funding for contact tracing and case investigator, and the 1.9 million was for the general operating costs. Mr. Lue said that was correct and the money has already been expensed for both. He explained that the money reimbursed past expenses. Mayor Treece asked if the \$5 million would come back to Council for a reappropriation or budget amendment. Mr. Lue said that is correct. Mr. Glascock would like to know the Council's priorities for this funding.

Council Member Fowler asked if the reimbursement requests would have been our normal expenses for personnel, but the CARES Act guidelines allow us to calculate them for potential reimbursements. She asked if this money would have been spent regardless of COVID-19. Mr. Lue responded that there is some money that is specifically for COVID that would have been mixed into those personnel costs. Mayor Treece said that some of the funding went to cover overtime for employees and City COVID leave. Mr. Glascock said the City COVID leave funding would not have been originally in the budget last year. Ms. Fowler asked if the City COVID leave costs came from a new category so employees did not have to use their own accruals. Mr. Glascock responded yes for up to 80 hours.

Mayor Treece asked the CPD experience with COVID-19 leave for officers. He asked how many have been off and the current policy going into 2021. Chief Jones introduced Lisa Roland, Assistant to the Police Chief, to respond. Ms. Roland has been tracking this data since July 2020. Since July, 50 officers have been off for COVID-19 reasons. They are reaching a point where the COVID-19 leave has been exhausted, and they are dipping into the federal leave that expires on the 31st. Moving forward next year, some officers will have to use their personal accruals. CPD is following the policy of 10 days off for exposure. If an officer was exposed to COVID-19 at work, the department can use workers compensation to pay for two-thirds of their salary. Mayor Treece asked how the

officers make up for the other one third. Ms. Roland responded it is made up by using their sick leave accruals. Mayor Treece asked what happens when the accruals are exhausted. Ms. Roland explained the emergency sick leave policy which allows employees to receive up to 80 hours of sick leave in advance.

Council Member Skala asked if there have been any trends in terms of the numbers of staff COVID absences. Chief Jones said he does not track those trends, but CPD responds to events with the Health Department. It normally coincides with a peak, since CPD is exposed to the public regularly.

Ms. Fowler asked how many CPD Officers are in the department. Ms. Roland responded that there are 173 sworn positions with 10 vacancies. There were 150 instances of CPD staff needing to quarantine, which included civilian officers. She said some of these were multiple instances of the same person. Chief Jones said that there has to be a balance between responding to emergencies and PPE. He does not want officers who are driving in an emergency fashion to wear a mask since there is the possibility of vision impairment. Officers should be putting on a N-95 mask as soon as there is a chance. CPD is trying to slow the spread, but there are instances where they have to get out of the vehicle quickly. Mayor Treece asked if other cities have used hazard pay for public safety. Chief Jones responded that another department had looked into it, but it seemed like municipalities were split on offering hazard pay. Mayor Treece was not sure if it was allowed constitutionally in MO. He thought there might be other ways to categorize some type of gap coverage for the third not covered by workers compensation.

Ms. Peters asked if the officers wore masks in the car. Chief Jones responded that some officers wear glasses and their glasses can fog up with a mask. He does not want their vision to be obstructed in any way when driving in an emergency fashion. There are times when officers drive around with a mask on like when they are training an officer or a car is doubled up. Ms. Peters asked if it would be the same with it being cold outside, since the glasses can fog up. Chief Jones said that officers have the discretion, but the officers should be wearing a N-95 mask. He mentioned an instance where some officers were wearing cloth masks, and he had a conversation with the supervisor about the importance of wearing a N-95 mask to reduce their exposure.

Mr. Lue confirmed that the county paid all 4 quarters of their share of the Health Department. Mayor Treece asked if it was their regular amount or the 1.9 million. Jim McDonald, Assistant Director of Finance, responded it was their regular share of a million dollars.

Margrace Buckler, HR Director, reviewed the city's COVID-19 Leave policy and the Federal COVID-19 Leave policy. She mentioned that the federal leave expires on the 31st. Mayor Treece asked if that had been renewed. Ms. Buckler responded that the mandate is gone, the 80 hour cap and extra hours of FMLA did not change. There's a tax credit for private businesses to continue the leave, but public organizations are not addressed in the policy. As of the 31st, the leave will expire. The FMLA plus was for school closures, which is dependent on what happens in January. The city's COVID-19 Leave policy will not expire until the end of the declared emergency. Mayor Treece said the longer this goes the more likely the leave will be used. Ms. Buckler said that HR runs reports for every pay period to track the use of COVID leave, she could provide that to the City Council. Mayor Treece said if a police officer has been out twice for COVID leave, they would have to use workers compensation. He asked if they could use the leave to supplement the third of workers compensation that is not covered. Ms. Buckler said yes, if the COVID leave is exhausted they can use their accruals or sick leave advance which is up to 20 working days. Mayor Treece said it doesn't seem fair to use comp time to be

off when they must quarantine with no symptoms. He asked if there was a fiscal note for how much it would be to recharge the 80 hours. Ms. Buckler said that some employees have not used it all. Mayor Treece asked if there is a way to pool or share the COVID leave. Ms. Buckler said yes there would be a way for that to happen.

Mayor Treece asked how detailed the city manager would like to be with the 5 million dollars of CARES funding. Mr. Glascock asked for Stephanie Browning, Director of Public Health, to discuss what she anticipates needing moving forward. He does not anticipate any more funding. Ms. Browning reviewed the 1.79 million funding from the county. This has funded the hiring of case investigators, contact tracers, health educators, and coverage of testing for people who are uninsured. The testing for the uninsured will end, she hoped there will be another resource for that. The 1.9 million is for the department working on COVID-19. Mayor Treece asked how much of that has been used. Ms. Browning responded that it is the cost. Going forward, there is money appropriated in the budget. She needs case investigators and contact tracers to continue. When there are vaccinations, the department will need temporary nurses. Her best estimate is needing 1.6 million, which includes funding for a vaccination education campaign. Ms. Browning believes the department will receive 3 grants from the state.

Ms. Fowler asked how the citizens of Columbia will pay for the vaccines. Ms. Browning responded that the vaccines will be free to citizens, they will be paid by federal and state government. There will be some materials that they will need to purchase, but the vaccine will come with a kit. Ms. Fowler asked if the costs associated would be the nurses and staff administration of the vaccinations. Ms. Browning stated that everything has to be entered into the state's immunization record within 24 hours, and that it will take a considerable amount of staff time to meet that deadline. Ms. Fowler asked who currently is paying for COVID testing. Ms. Browning said that insurance is paying. Some of it is funded by the federal government, and the free testing sites are covered by the state. The city has paid for the uninsured through the 1.79 million funding from the county.

Mayor Treece asked if Ms. Browning anticipated any additional CARES Act funding in 2021. Ms. Browning said she wouldn't be surprised if they allow further expenditure into 2021.

Mr. Lue stated that the CARES Act funding has been extended to December 2021, so he believes the state would do the same. Mayor Treece asked if there was new money added. Mr. Lue responded that there has not been any additional funding added, but he could see that happening. The county currently still has CARES Act funding, so the city could apply for some of that funding if the deadline was extended.

Ms. Peters asked when the Boone County Health Department would start vaccinations. Ms. Browning answered not before the end of January. The department put in a request, but currently they are firmly in healthcare providers and nursing homes.

Mayor Treece suggested that half of the 5 million dollar funding should be set aside for emergency use. He would like the other half to be pandemic related since it generated the additional funding. He would like some of it to help essential employees that have been hit by the pandemic. He mentioned hazard pay or recharging the City COVID leave, especially for the public safety and health departments. Mr. Glascock agreed, he thought that the funding should concentrate in the public safety and public health areas. He liked the idea of pooling the city covid leave.

Mr. Glascock presented the needs moving forward. Public safety overtime is due to staff being out and someone having to cover the shift. The pay correlation is not COVID-19

related. The Molly Bowden Policing Center needs furniture, and the renovation funding was cut due to COVID-19. He presented the future needs of the city. One is modifying how the city operates in a COVID environment. Another need is examining how Council Members sit at the dais, there are potential reconsiderations due to social distancing. He said that the future needs are big picture items. After the vaccination the city can examine what needs to be done to move forward. These are placeholders for future planning. The last consideration is a potential Utility billing abatement program, that would need to become an established program to determine the needs.

Ms. Fowler commented that the utility billing abatement sounds the most interesting to her. She wondered if the health department has the capacity to screen more people for assistance. Mr. Glascock responded that the health department deals with a lot of private information to remain compliant with HIPAA. A potential issue is that some of those requirements are based on your income, and sometimes people won't share that information. It might not measure the current need of help due to the pandemic, since most of the need is coming from job layoffs. Ms. Fowler said she thinks that it would be an important use of the money. Mr. Glascock said the city has to be careful with how that looks to the public, since the city owns the utilities. He brought up the example that the county has not stopped collecting property taxes. Mayor Treece commented he is sensitive to the perception, but that keeps the rates lower for everyone else.

Mr. Skala liked the allocations, and thought that the funding should all be related to COVID. The utility billing abatement would help respond to the individuals who are getting hit the hardest by the pandemic. He liked the idea of splitting the funding half and half.

Mr. Glascock explained that the health department has to spend funding on an education campaign for the public. There will be an emergency funding request for 200,000 so the department can educate the public on the vaccine. Mr. Skala stated that people do not understand that the disease is decimating the solid waste divisions. He said that the city should relay the message out that recycling was stopped due to a staffing shortage. Mr. Glascock responded that there will be a report on recycling for the next agenda. Mayor Treece said that there needs to be a short term push to meet the demands and expectations of the public for recycling. He appreciated the report, but would also like to see some action on what it would include.

Councilman Thomas supported the idea of a means tested utility billing abatement program. He doesn't believe that it will appear that the city will look like it's paying itself since there will be proper documentation.

Performance Audit

Attachments: [Finance & Utilities Performance Audit - Final Report](#)

Matthew Lue, Director of Finance, stated that finance staff and RubinBrown presented the draft audit to the Water and Light Board and the Finance and Audit Advisory Committee. The Water and Light Advisory Board wanted to see some changes to the CIP process. The Finance Advisory and Audit Committee did not see any immediate changes to the original report. Both boards shared their concerns for not coming to them first to review the draft report. He stated that the change in processes and procedures was the number 3 recommendation, and they wanted to have a hard target date.

Mayor Treece said it seemed like most staff were in agreement with the recommendations. He asked who would be responsible for monitoring these recommendations. Mr. Glascock responded that he will be responsible for monitoring

these changes. There is now a monthly report monthly to be more transparent. He is hoping there will be a monthly report from HR regarding personnel. Historically, these kinds of reports aren't provided, so the council is unaware of problems until there is a problem. This happened with solid waste, which resulted in the council becoming aware of the issue when it was too late. Recommendations from these reports will help the city be more transparent.

Mr. Glascock said that staff agreed with a lot of the recommendations. He mentioned some instances where they did not agree completely with the recommendation. For the recommendation that said the ordinances were burdensome, he stated that there are times when ordinances are needed. For the capital projects recommendations, most of them are maintenance projects. Council should be involved since it takes up a lot of your time to approve an upgrade in a stormwater pipe when it's already there. He used the example of the Sinclair stormwater pipe. Mayor Treece responded that it only matters when using maintenance and operations dollars versus capital improvement dollars. He asked if the difference cost is calculated. Mr. Glascock answered that the material cost is the difference.

Mr. Skala appreciated the emphasis on transparency. He emphasized the need of an executive summary of the changes. Writing shorter is difficult, but it is important to the conversation to the public. It is essential to explain why these changes are occurring. Mr. Glascock responded that these meetings like the worksession should help that go a long way.

Mr. Glascock mentioned the eighth recommendation of an internal auditor. The Council needs to decide how to move forward with internal auditing. The internal auditor will answer to the City Manager, which may result in the audit being on things that Council isn't interested in looking at. He would like direction on if the Council would like to hire RubinBrown or a similar agency to give reports.

Mayor Treece said the audit was not the deep dive that he expected to receive and believed RubinBrown would say that it wasn't a deep dive. He said that the audit may be what we paid for, but not what we asked for. He clarified that it was nothing against the firm since they accomplished what the proposal said at the proposed price, but it's one of those things where you get what you pay for. He said that it is \$21,000 worth of information, but does not look and feel like a performance audit that the state auditor would do. He asked the Council if they wanted to do this again with the firm or try another firm to see what their format is like. He liked the process of having an outside entity looking at not just processes but also performance. He would like to know the measurables that we are delivering. He said there is value in having consistency since it takes some time to understand the City of Columbia.

Ms. Peters said that she was pleased with the audit for the amount of money that was paid. Her perception was that it would be a three year audit, so she would like to continue to use RubinBrown. She thought it was valuable, it might not be a deep dive like the state auditor would do, but it is in small enough bites where the staff can respond to the recommendations. The staff was able to take the draft audit to the different commissions for review. She thought it was a step forward and found it helpful. She advised that next time RubinBrown should talk to the Water and Light Advisory Board and Finance Advisory and Audit Committee before the audit starts. She would find it helpful to have it on a yearly basis for the next three years. She was impressed that staff came back with a management response and timeframe. She felt like they could address the report's recommendations.

Mayor Treece clarified what the three year audit would look like. The current audit looked at the Water & Light and Finance departments. He asked if there were other specific areas they should focus on. Ms. Peters responded that she would like to hear what the council thinks, but she thinks smaller audits in different departments is helpful so there can be something constructive.

Mr. Skala mentioned incremental audits through various departments. It was his understanding that Water & Light and Finance would be addressed first since that was the main concern. He shared the enthusiasm for the work product and interaction with staff. He mentioned there was the struggle with the internal auditor, which was why they went external so they could answer to the Council. He was amazed with the work product for \$20,000. He had questions on the internal auditing and this firm. He thought that the contract could be extended, and expand the scope. Mr. Skala said that the city got what it paid for, and the city can expand the responsibilities. Mayor Treece asked if there are specific areas that they should look at next. Mr. Skala thought that Water & Light should be addressed first, and it ended up being combined with Finance. He thought that Public Safety should be looked at. He clarified that he was not suggesting that anyone is doing an improper job. He believed that the departments that interface with the public directly need to be looked at next.

Ms. Fowler stated that she viewed this process as a challenge to manage expectations from the public and Council. She mentioned that after the initial teleconference with RubinBrown she did not know what they would actually audit. She asked specific questions about a performance audit and was confused by the end. Moving forward for the next sections, she thought it would be helpful to sit down at a work session to discuss Council's concerns so the response from them meets the expectations.

Mayor Treece recalled the conference call, he gave them a 6 page memo of concerns in Water & Light. They picked a 12 month period, and his concerns were not addressed. He said the audit looked at the processes that may have contributed to the problems he addressed. He was disappointed in the report since the problems he reported were not addressed in the report, however they may have addressed it in a way to prevent those problems from occurring in the future. He said that there are 7 of them and his opinion doesn't weigh more than the others. He thought it may take more responsibility on their part to make it clear for what issues they would like the firm to look into next time.

Ms. Fowler said that next time they should have a conversation with RubinBrown as a group rather than individually. She wanted to know exactly what they were doing. She was concerned with recommendation 2, which talked about the city being tied too much to ordinances rather than policies and procedures. She said as the City moves forward in transforming government and aligning with the strategic plan, she thought that this deserves conversation with the council with city staff. She commented on how the Community Development Department handles decisions that they have discretion for, she would like to see drafts when those policies and procedures are updated.

Mr. Trapp was pleased with the audit, it seemed like a manageable chunk. He believed that the changes that staff has endorsed looked significant and would likely increase transparency and efficiency. In a more comprehensive audit, he was not sure they could do more than what was recommended. He mentioned that the city can't do everything at once even though it would be appealing. An incremental process guided by the strategic plan and the processes should be harmonized with the auditing function. He thought that the audit function should be contracted out so Council can have direct management. He was pleased with RubinBrown, he thought they were straightforward with what they promised. He would like to see what would come out of the strategic plan as the most

important goals, and how the performance could be enhanced. He mentioned that there were concerns from the Missouri Quality Awards about contracting. He thought concerns were justified by the performance audit of contracting and management. He said that the last piece of what needs to be codified in law versus administrative processes. Government and COVID have revealed all kinds of things, to be frank we are dumb and we are slow. He said the city had to change the law to change the processes, which did not serve our people well. The manualization is an excellent idea so there is more organizational accountability through traditional management structures that are backboned by as minimal law as possible. He provided an example of the Unified Development Code and the downtown area. He thought the more that could be pulled out of the law and manualized would be better. He stated that Council hires the executive and manages the executive.

Mayor Treece suggested having a work session in the first week of February with RubinBrown and the chair of the Finance Audit and Advisory Committee. Council Members should come with their concerns, he agreed that the contract process needs to be better understood. He asked if the current agreement with RubinBrown could be extended. Mr. Lue explained that it is currently a 5 year contract that could be executed or dismissed at any moment. Mayor Treece asked if they could solicit what an internal audit could look like. He believed that a contract allows Council to have a greater relationship with the auditor, and agreed with Ms. Fowler's point about reaching a consensus to more narrowly focus the next steps.

Ms. Peters suggested inviting the chair of the Water and Light Advisory Board for their suggestions. Mayor Treece responded that the Water and Light Advisory Board primarily focuses on the electric and water financials, and they do not focus on wastewater or solid waste. They have 6-8 hour meetings once a month, look at financial reports, CIP, and policies. He didn't believe that there was the same citizen advisory board for the other half of the department. Ms. Peters agreed. Mayor Treece thought that more oversight might have yielded better results during the issue with solid waste. Mr. Glascock said that he would like to see the Water and Light Advisory Board to look at all of the utilities. Mr. Skala agreed there should be some citizen feedback for that side of the utilities department.

Mr. Glascock asked if the Council would like a similar set up for the work session to discuss the performance audit. Mayor Treece thought it would be fine for a Pre-Council on the first month of February so the Council could be prepared.

Stakeholder Process

Attachments: [Stakeholder Process Presentation](#)

De'Carlton Seewood, Deputy City Manager, gave an update on the Stakeholder process.

Mr. Seewood detailed why the Stakeholder Process was created. This was brought in after protest following the death of George Floyd. The goal was to engage community members through facilitated interviews to discuss policing in Columbia. There were a total of 72 individuals involved. From these interviews, the hope was to develop a larger engagement plan created by the community groups in their interviews. Community groups would be able to share and help prioritize performance measures and action steps to increase social and racial equity throughout Columbia.

Mr. Seewood continued to share a slide with all of the groups from the Community Stakeholder process, which highlighted groups that were new to this process, compared

to groups who have been in City processes before. The point was to get a perspective from Mizzou students and other new voices in the community. As these Mizzou students gave us the perspective and stories from black students were vastly different than white students. Most students shared they personally had a negative experience with the police, or knew someone who had a negative experience with the police.

The one group that Mr. Seewood mentioned he wished they interviewed were actual community members who are troubled with the police. He mentioned due to COVID this was going to be harder to achieve.

The themes of the 2020 stakeholder process are very similar to themes from past processes. Mr. Seewood went over themes from the 2020 process. Some of the themes were: (1) increase opportunities for authentic connections between the Black and Brown communities, police officers, and city leadership, (2) generate a community vision for safety that is inclusive to all residents, (3) transparency and accountability are critical in building trust and producing change, (4) there is a strong support for Community Policing and bringing in social workers and mental health experts to align with community needs, (5) increase and broaden representation of underrepresented populations in City and Police department staffing.

From there, he went over past initiatives that targeted racial equity. In 1998 the Mayors Columbia Race Relation Task Force was created, in 2008 First Ward City Council Member Almeta Crayton held a series of town halls, in 2014 The Mayors Taskforce on Community Violence was created, from 2016-2017 the City Manager held community oriented policing listening tours, and in 2018 there was a Community Oriented Policing Report.

Mr. Seewood from there showcased how the themes from the 2020 stakeholder process are shared with previous processes. A lack of trust between the Black and Brown community and the Police, having a need to increase transparency and accountability, training and accountability for implicit biases, and a lack of representation in the police department and city leadership. He emphasized that from the most recent process, citizens want the City to act on something.

Mr. Seewood proposed next steps for the City to act. One of the biggest complaints heard from the last process was that it was city led, and not community oriented. He recommended that the City create a task force that would revolve around Equity and Inclusion. Some of the things that the task force could do is work on utilizing GIS story mapping to highlight equity and inclusive processes and policies, creating a dashboard to help the community hold the City accountable when working toward being equitable and inclusive, and helping with enhanced communication. The taskforce could also review policies and procedures and look at them through an equitable lens and suggest changes as needed, work through historical trauma of the City's racism (including CPD) and strive to heal trauma, restructure the CPD to include social workers, and implement and collect data on implicit bias training. Some of these things are already in the work that the City and CPD have been working on.

Mr. Seewood presented a potential dashboard from the Mayors Taskforce on Violence. He also shared an example that is being utilized from Austin, Texas to showcase their reforms. Mr. Seewood noted that one thing Columbia has not been the best at is communicating and showing positive things they are doing. Utilizing a dashboard to utilize their activities would help tell the City's story but also help citizens hold us accountable.

In his final slide, Mr. Seewood shared some of the things that the City could do currently. For one, the City should declare racism a public health emergency, similar to the Health Department. Another thing is creating and funding an Office of Equity and Inclusion, similar to the Office of Sustainability and Office of Cultural Affairs. This would help hold us accountable for equity across the City. Other suggestions he mentioned was implementing anti-bias training for interviewing and hiring supervisors, institutionalize exit interviews and stay interviews to understand why we are not retaining a diverse workforce, include equity and inclusion in the strategic plan to correlate with the budget, collect more demographics on employees to see where gaps are in hiring diverse teams, creating a process to hold employees accountable when equity is side-stepped, form and support employee resource groups or affinity groups, implement equity curriculum in the New Employee onboarding process.

Mr. Skala pointed out that one thing he saw that was not included was a \$50,000 and an additional \$20,000 that was added later on to look at a racial equity lens to our ordinances. There was an RFP put out for this but nothing happened. Mr. Skala said he has been insistent on giving some of that money back to the local community. He wanted to know where that money went, to which Mr. Seewood said the money is still there. Mr. Skala went on to ask how we can engage our community without a struggle for power, even if there is the adding of Council members to the process.

Mr. Seewood said it is a tough question, because you're not going to be able to do this process without hurt feelings. The one good benefit about Columbia is there are a lot of people who want to be involved. Everyone wants to take a leadership role with it. When looking at policies and procedures that is such a large process, from looking at the police departments, to our hiring and firing policies, to our general ordinances.

Mr. Seewood added that the City has joined GARE (Government Alliance on Race and Equity). They have a training module where they will train the City's employees on how to look at the policies with an equitable lens.

Ms. Fowler wanted to take a longer look at this. She pointed out how the City has hired consultant after consultant, mostly white males, to make decisions about the Black and Brown communities. When are we going to use members of the community who have the knowledge and expertise to work on these issues? However we move forward, she thinks a power sharing ability to have a taskforce on inclusion and equity sounds good, but if the city wants to sincerely move forward we have to give the community a say in how the money is spent. We have to be aware of the history of consultants after consultants whose recommendations are not implemented.

Mr. Seewood agreed, that was one of the biggest complaints in the most recent stakeholder process. That the City has been talking for a long time but not showing their actions. The city has been doing a lot, they just have not done a good job bragging about the policies and processes that have been written.

Ms. Fowler added that when people are still living here with effects of trauma, it is hard for people to continue on. She brought up a black student athlete from the most recent stakeholder process who went right to the trauma in his meeting. If we can start with the idea that we have to be a better informed, trauma informed community when talking about race, then we can maybe hear the progress we have been making.

Mr. Seewood said that was the one thing that was seen when they talked to the Mizzou students. You heard the pain in their voices when they were detailing their instances and experiences.

Mr. Trapp added that he appreciated the recommendations and summary that Mr. Seewood brought forward. He shared that this is a time to give direction on moving forward. Mr. Trapp said that declaring racism a public health emergency seems like an actionable thing that the Council can do moving forward. If anything else, it needs to be matched with strong action. He thinks that having a taskforce to have the community lead how we address these issues, or having an Office of Equity and Inclusion, would all be ideal to change these structures. We may want to take on something larger to get past Columbia's terrible history of slavery and injustice. He mentioned South Africa had a lot of healing success with their truth and reconciliation that they went through.

What Mr. Trapp learned from his experience co-chairing the Mayors Taskforce on community Violence is that they had the right community members involved with it, they did what they could to get those that they missed, and they brought in people to talk to them. A task force could help the city develop institutional processes to look into the community. He agreed that we do need to go through our policies with an equity lens, and while he does not want to have another citizen group we need a diverse community body to be empowered to direct and guide our actions as we work to heal the community.

Mayor Treece thanked Mr. Seewood for all of his work and encapsulating how the city has gotten to this point. He said that another Mayors task force or Council led process would lead to other allegations that we are kicking the can down the road some more. The Mayor also added that the increased activity from the Citizens Police Review board could potentially confuse people. While there are concrete actions on the list, there are other policy and operational issues that he would hate to pull the Chief of Police into. Other police departments have created Chiefs advisory boards to be populated with a diverse mix of people in the community to give him the opportunity to engage.

Mr. Skala added that there is plenty of diverse talent in the community and he is disappointed that money has not been spent in respect to them. He mentioned that in 2015 post-Ferguson there is a group with the National League of Cities that put out at least a dozen policies on how they approach racial issue policies and we as the City of Columbia have not taken advantage of it. We need to take advantage of the people who are a part of the process rather than create a new group. He urged the Council and City Manager to look at some of the resources so that we don't continue on reinventing the wheel.

Mr. Seewood said that the Office of Equity and Inclusion is one of the things that the National League of Cities references. Mr. Skala added or adding Equity and Inclusion Officers that would be helpful in information.

Mayor Treece said that Chief Jones has appointed a Diversity Officer within his department. There are increased training opportunities, so we can differ over creating a new task force but there are real improvements that our own Police Department is already doing.

Mr. Skala reiterated that there is information out there that the Council and City needs to take advantage of.

Ms. Peters thanked Mr. Seewood for all of the work he has done and providing Council a list on how to move forward.

Legislative Priorities

Mayor Treece went into Legislative Priorities and listed off some items. He mentioned that there is a general assembly meeting at the Capitol next week. The Mayor mentioned that wayfair is a priority that he would like to see continued as the top priority. He mentioned that would help move the needle of general revenue and general safety for the City. The Mayor emphasized that online sales tax should be treated the same and equally as sales tax. Department of revenue keeps 3% to collect and remit it, it should not be more than that.

The second issue of priority the Mayor discussed was the slue of bills that would preempt local health orders. The public wants local control of these issues, the City of Columbia has owned the decisions that they have made absent state and federal control of the issues. The Mayor emphasized that we need to keep local control, as it is so important in public health emergencies such as COVID-19.

The City Manager, John Glascock, said on the health side, working regionally is with those around us to help our hospitals to maintain capacity would be key. We as a city were on our own, and the regions around us were not helping us.

Mayor Treece mentioned one of the bills stating that local public health director cannot issue a public health order for more than two weeks beyond approval of the General Assembly. He mentioned that the General Assembly adjourns May 15, getting them to agree on anything would be relatively impossible. The City of Columbia has been a leader in the state in response to COVID so the Mayor expects whether it be Columbia Public Schools or the City to get pulled into that discussion.

Council Member Skala mentioned that he recently met with all three candidates going for the 45th District. Their most important discussion item was about preemption and local controls. He reminded us that preemption is normally a Republican principal.

Council Member Trapp said he agrees on the priorities and appreciates the Mayor's work that he has been doing in the Capitol and managing the COVID-19 crisis.

Strategic Plan Update

Attachments: [Strategic Plan Priority Area Update](#)

Carol Rhodes, Assistant City Manager presented to the Council updates on the Strategic Plans priority areas. At the December 7, 2020 pre-council she had presented the strategic priorities but Council had given her some areas to work on. There had previously been 6 priority areas, and she was presenting 5 today: inclusive communities, safe neighborhoods, modern infrastructure, resilient economy, and organizational excellence. If Council approved these priority areas staff would begin developing outcomes for each area. Ms. Rhodes shared that the Building INclusive Community (BIC) team looked over and helped create the inclusive community priority area.

Ms. Peters stated that it looked good to her, but she was wanting more time to look over the priority areas.

Mr. Trapp said that it was getting better. Mr. Skala added that he enjoyed that it was going from simple early on, to complicated, to getting simpler with the priority areas.

Ms. Peters asked if there were modifiers for the priority areas as there were in December? Ms. Rhodes said that it was all that was on the slide. She explained that equity, inclusion, and social responsibility had been narrowed down to inclusive

community and explained other changes that had occurred in the names. Safe and prepared community was narrowed down to a safe community, a resilient economy had been changed from a resilient and growing economy and healthy neighborhoods had been combined with safe neighborhoods.

Ms. Fowler added that since there had just been a conversation about declaring racism a public health emergency, she thinks there has to be language that says racial and social equity as a priority area. She shared appreciation for trying to minimize the words but she does not want to stray away from racial and social equity as a priority area.

Ms. Rhodes asked if Ms. Fowler would be comfortable with it being racial and social equity as the priority instead of inclusive communities. Ms. Fowler said yes. Mr. Skala added in adding race, equity, and inclusion to keep the inclusiveness in it. Mayor Treece added that inclusive includes race, and if you include race then you are getting away from gender equity. As the City moves beyond Strategic priorities we could build on it more.

Ms. Rhodes reminded Ms. Fowler that the City has just added the core value of equity, and the statement ends with "leading with race". Ms. Fowler said she understands that but our Black and Brown community have incurred more wrath from COVID than our white community and affluent that there is no substitute for racial and social equity.

Mayor Treece said he prefers reliable infrastructure compared to modern infrastructure. Ms. Peters added that she also likes that too.

Mr. Skala added that infrastructure as a category is something that we can really expunge upon and he likes the ideas of having big categories.

Compensation Philosophy

Mr. Glascock shared that there has been a philosophy since 2014 that came from a study about moving to mid-pay and performance pay but it has never been implemented. He shared he understands the difficult time of talking about compensation when people are getting laid off and businesses are closing, but he has to take care of his staff. The City has fallen behind in pay, and how they administer pay. There are some ordinances that limit him from correcting some people's salaries, but allows him to correct others. He doesn't see that as being consistent across the board. The next pay study is set to be in 2023 and be implemented in 2024.

Mr. Glascock shared some inequities that he is referencing. For example there are inequities in the Fire Department that he cannot fix without Councils approval. He would also like to give a raise to a portion of the staff. Normally this happens in October, but this did not happen this year due to COVID-19. He would like to look at all hourly employees as well as employees below a threshold, for example \$60,000 or below. He asked if Council would support using about \$1 million in general reserves to be able to give raises. The City currently has about \$16 million in reserves.

Mr. Glascock said he understands how uncomfortable this topic is, as he is uncomfortable asking but he believes that staff deserves and needs it. He asked if Council was comfortable with him bringing forward something around March?

Mayor Treece stated that he was comfortable with it, if we can do it equitably helping the people at the bottom he would be appropriate for this.

Mr. Skala said he supports additional compensation. We've given a lot of people more responsibilities with no change in their pay. If we are going to commit this money to do

this, we need to consider cutting back on responsibilities as well. This would mean looking at some of the optional programs that we offer. When we are not raising taxes, and generally raising some fees, cutting out other programs of the City that are optional may be able to help with this. He agrees with the compensation philosophy but would like a review of optional programs as painful as it may be. Mr. Glascock said this may happen when we begin our 2022 budget process.

Mr. Glascock added that we are having a hard time finding a nurse for the health department to work with the Co-Responder Unit. One of the reasons they are thinking is the salary, so some of these issues may be coming back to Council.

Mayor Treece asked Mr. Glascock how many employees he eliminated with his budget address back in August. Mr. Glascock said that there was 80 positions, but 11 of them were currently filled by staff. The remaining were empty positions. The total was 67 with the employees that Mr. Glascock added. The total savings from this was over \$2 million.

To Mr. Skalas point, Mayor Treece said City employees are being asked to do more. We have to use that to compensate our employees.

Ms. Peters asked if Mr. Glascock would also be looking at the ordinances that are causing him difficulty in being fair across the board. He shared that he would be.

This item is open to the public: Motion for the City Council to go into closed session in Conference Room 1A/1B to discuss:

- Hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded pursuant to Section 610.021(3) RSMo.
- Individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records pertaining to employees or applicants for employment pursuant to Section 610.021(13) RSMo.

At approximately 11:17 a.m., Mayor Treece made a motion for the City Council of the City of Columbia, Missouri, to immediately go into a closed meeting in Conference Room 1A/1B of City Hall, 701 E. Broadway, Columbia, Missouri, to discuss the hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded as authorized by Section 610.021(3) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records pertaining to employees or applicants for employment as authorized by Section 610.021(13) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. The motion was seconded by Mr. Skala.

The vote was recorded as follows: VOTING YES: FOWLER, TRAPP, SKALA, PETERS, TREECE. VOTING NO: NO ONE. ABSENT: THOMAS, PITZER.

At approximately 11:20 a.m., the City Council went into closed session pursuant to RSMo Sections 610.021(3) and (13).

This item is closed to the public: Closed Meeting in Conference Room 1A/1B

II. ALL OTHER ITEMS COUNCIL MAY WISH TO DISCUSS

None.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The closed meeting adjourned at approximately 12:02 p.m.