



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Monday, November 20, 2017
5:00 PM

Work Session

Conference Room
1A/1B
Columbia City Hall
701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:06 pm.

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

Absent: 1 - Ruffin

This item is open to the public: Weed Ordinance Revision Update.

Attachments: [Weeds Ordinance Review Presentation](#)

Leigh Kottwitz, Neighborhood Services Manager, stated that the weeds ordinance in found in Chapter 11 which is the health code, but it is enforced by the Office of Neighborhood Services. In FY 2017 there were about 1,520 weed cases, of which one-third are complaint based. Many of these complaints are on properties that have native plantings in their yard. Some of these native plants are a violation of the current ordinance, so at the request of Council, we have done a review of the code to consider potential revisions.

Danielle Fox, Community Conservationist in the Department of Sustainability, reviewed the history of the American lawn which is rooted in Europe. In the 1950's the manicured lawn became quite prevalent in the United States. She explained that native plants are indigenous to our environment. They have extensive root systems that reach more nutrients and water therefore saving us money, time and resources. Native plants have also co-evolved with our wildlife, so they have built in defense mechanisms against insects which require less pesticides. She explained that the review process looked at other ordinances from other communities and looked at a nuisance ordinance scale from most prohibitive to least prohibitive landscapes. The current ordinance states that weeds must meet any one of the following tests: 1) Vegetation which may exhale unpleasant or noxious odors. 2) Vegetation which could conceal deposits on trash or other material or which does or could afford food or harbor age for rats, mice, and snakes. 3) Vegetation which is commonly known and recognized as weeds and grasses. 4) Vegetation which causes a safety hazard by obstructing the line of sight for a driver, pedestrian or cyclist. 5) Vegetation which could interfere with the passage of motor vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians on any right of way.

Ms. Fox reviewed the research they conducted which included looking at other communities, literature reviews and talking with local vegetation management professionals. The group determined that if the focus of the ordinance was changed from weeds to land management, it would have the desired effect. She reviewed potential amendments to include definitions for "landscape" and "managed". A landscape management ordinance would not allow unmanaged turf, nuisance plants, 50% invasive plants, noxious weeds, and vermin harborage. This would allow vegetable gardens, native

landscape and non-native landscape. She provided some examples of compliant and non-compliant landscapes and briefly reviewed current and past projects and collaborations through the City of Columbia Office of Sustainability, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Columbia Public Schools, Columbia Audubon Society and the Native Plant Society. Implications of a landscape management ordinance include the empowerment to citizens to be more environmentally friendly, support of our ecosystem and declining pollinator populations, mitigation of stormwater run-off issues, use of fewer chemicals, and a reduction on carbon emissions and increase of carbon sequestration.

Councilmember Thomas asked how many homes have native landscaping. Ms. Fox was not certain, but stated that she visited 22 homes that have established landscapes. Ms. Kottwitz added that less than 20 have been a conflict. Mr. Thomas added for full disclosure, that his home has native landscaping and he has had complaints filed. Ms. Fox added that there are some homes where it's hard to tell if it meets code or not. Ms. Kottwitz stated that another issue is that there are no references or resources to help with interpretation. Councilmember Skala added that he had also been cited for weed violations some time ago. He would like the ordinance improved to allow some of these types of planting and that rules and definitions are needed that will allow for both approaches. Councilmember Trapp asked if inspectors look for poison ivy. Ms. Kottwitz stated they do and that is mostly complaint based. Councilmember Pitzer asked if there will be additional training for staff on this. Ms. Fox stated that she could put together training for staff on what's native versus weeds, etc. There was a general consensus from Council to move forward with this.

This item is open to the public: Inclusive Excellence Framework Presentation - Dr. Kevin McDonald, UM System Chief Diversity Officer/ MU Vice Chancellor Inclusion & Diversity.

Attachments: [Inclusive Excellence Framework Presentation](#)

City Manager Matthes introduced Dr. Kevin McDonald, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer with the University of Missouri System and Vice-Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity for the University of Missouri. Dr. McDonald stated that differences includes those with inherent traits as well as those acquired through lived experiences and can be visible and invisible. Inclusion is leveraging and optimizing those differences to move the organization forward. He referenced Metzler's organizational environment chart where the desired inclusive environment is at the end of the spectrum which ranges from monocultural to compliant, to multicultural and ultimately inclusive.

Dr. McDonald stated that diversity needs to be engrained in an organization. In the diversity sphere, you must look around every corner to see how diversity can play a role in order to meaningfully connect an organization with individual interests. In order to meaningfully connect, you must develop a roadmap or framework to move organizations forward. He developed one for the university that encompasses four areas: access and success; campus climate and intergroup relations; education and scholarship; and institutional infrastructure. Each area includes a goal. He stated that he went to lunch last fall with local business and community leaders and he presented this concept to them. They wanted to be more helpful and more involved, so he suggested recreating the framework he had created for the university and applying it to other organizations. That was the starting point for this conversation. He reviewed a list of organization that have been collaborative partners and have adopted and adapted the framework within their own organizations. He overviewed each area and how its been adapted for organizations. Access and success includes a goal to achieve more diverse and inclusive employees. Organizational environment and intergroup relations has a goal to create and sustain an

organizational environment that acknowledged and celebrates diversity and employs inclusive practices. Training and education includes multicultural learning opportunities and competencies. Organizational infrastructure includes a goal for organizational learning, strategic planning, accountability and stakeholder engagement. He added that diversity has its challenges such as resistance to change and that it is a community effort, he is seeking to collaborate with organizations that are interested are taking their first steps in this process.

Mayor Treece thanked him for attending and he supports taking a step forward on this initiative and feels that this framework is a great way to advance our community toward being a welcoming community. Councilmember Skala also supports this initiative and added that the "REAL" initiative is an NLC sponsored initiative he will send more information to the Council on that and will include Dr. McDonald as well. Councilmember Thomas understood that organizations are creating their own customized framework and metrics. Dr. McDonald stated that is correct and Tara Warne-Griggs has been assisting with that process. He added that integrating an inclusion framework into an organizational strategic plan is a great way to integrate and move forward as well. There was a council consensus to proceed with this approach.

This item is open to the public: Motion for the City Council of the City of Columbia, Missouri, to meet on Monday, November 20, 2017 pursuant to the Work Session meeting agenda, in Conference Room 1A and 1B of City Hall, 701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri, for a Closed Meeting to discuss legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys, as authorized by Section 610.021 (1) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri.

At approximately 6:18 p.m., Mayor Treece made a motion for the City Council of the City of Columbia, Missouri, to immediately go into a closed meeting in the Council Conference of City Hall, 701 E. Broadway, Columbia, Missouri, to discuss legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys, as authorized by Section 610.021 (1) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. The motion was seconded by Mr. Skala.

Yes: 6 - Trapp, Thomas, Peters, Treece, Skala, and Pltzer

Absent: 1 - Ruffin

This item is closed to the public: See attached Notice of Closed Meeting.

Attachments: [Notice of Closed Meeting](#)

At approximately 6:13 p.m., the City Council went into closed session pursuant to RSMo Section 610.021 (1).

II. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45 pm.