



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Monday, April 5, 2021

6:00 PM

Pre-Council

Council Chamber

Columbia City Hall

701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

The City Council met on April 5, 2021 at approximately 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 701 E. Broadway, Columbia, Missouri.

Mayor Treece called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 p.m. Council Member Pat Fowler, and Council Member Mike Trapp, Council Member Karl Skala, Council Member Ian Thomas, Council Member Matt Pitzer, Council Member Betsy Peters (arrived at approximately 6:06 p.m.), and Mayor Brian Treece were present.

This item is open to the public: Discussions with Rodney Gray, City Lobbyist

Rodney Gray, the City's Lobbyist, gave a legislative update. They have represented the City for 5-6 years at this point.

The first issue they spoke on was in regards to local health orders. This topic has been a huge issue, House Bill 75 is most likely to pass as it has gone through the House, and a committee. The dispute is on the timeframe of how much the local governing bodies will have for their executive orders. Mayor Treece added an update that 9 Republican senators and 10 democratic Senators met last week late one night and discussed these local health issues. Treece was proud of the fact that there was defense of local health orders. They reminded the Council that they had passed the City of Columbia's own checks and balance system of the local health director passing something and the council approving/adopting it. Gray said that most of the issues of local health orders faced St. Louis County, not Columbia.

The second issue was Wayfair tax. Gray said that they are confident this will be passing, as the Governor asked this to be passed. Missouri is one of two states that have not passed it. The Senate version has model language that the City of Columbia helped draft. The House version would require those who have already approved a wayfair tax to go through the process again. Treece asked if the Senate's version would be more likely to prevail? Gray said that is correct.

Council Member Fowler stated that they have been following this bill and there are some offsetting provisions that would impact funding. Gray stated that it would be a stair step in of gradually reducing fees. On the State side it would be more impacting the state income tax revenue. Fowler asked if there would be a sunset on the bill that would require the legislature to extend the wayfair funding. Gray clarified that the Department of Revenue (DoR) has said they would not be able to get it done. That is why there are varying dates of effects for this bill. Fowler reiterated their point that the City of Columbia is going to be

disappointed with what is attached to this bill? Or will they be given what they have been promised? Gray said there would be no reductions of local sales tax in the bill. There is no sales tax lid for municipalities and counties.

Treece stated that the Senate version would be a cut that was previously approved if there was more revenue? Gray said that if there were additional triggers and in years to come there could be more cuts made.

Fowler said that they would prefer to talk about gun control and rights that have been going on. Representatives from Moms demand Action are in attendance to hear and ensure things are taken care of. Gray said that HB52 is the furthest along. The Senate has not talked about this much at all this year. HB52 is in favor of guns allowed on public transit.

Fowler said there is a bill that is a gun everywhere law, this would be HB86? This would allow people to bring guns into churches, onto college campuses, they could bring guns into City Hall, anywhere. Gray said that the Missouri legislature likes to take up gun control every few years. They think that this bill (HB52) is likely to pass and happen. Fowler then asked about the gun nullification bill. Fowler asked what Gray has done to communicate on the behalf of the City in regards to gun laws? Gray said nothing would help because these bills are being pulled from partisan politics. Fowler said that the City of Columbia is facing a huge gun control problem, and it's affected by poverty. Fowler said that there are

Fowler said there is also a militia bill getting traction? Gray said the bill had a hearing but that was about it. It is an interesting concept that everyone who owns a firearm in Missouri is able to join a militia. Gray said there is not much traction or potential for it to pass.

Fowler also brought up a bill that is not an absolute ban, but a ban on chokeholds. It would be HB53. Gray said this bill has a strong sponsor so it may pass. Treece said it will probably get traction and has a chance for passing.

Fowler brought up peaceful protests and a bill that would address the lack of ability to prosecute someone who provides injury for someone protesting peacefully. Gray said it's passed in the House, and that it has to do with the Police Bill of Rights.

Gray mentioned that one other item of discussion they wanted to talk about, and that was moving municipal elections to November. This would make the bond issues, and any other municipal election to be partisan.

Treece reminded the priority areas of the Council to be wayfair tax, health order, and broadly what could erode local power. They added a fourth thing could be medicaid expansion.

Gray gave a brief recap that in August there was an initiative petition to expand medicaid and it passed with 53%. Fast Forward to the February budget process in the House where the budget chairman said they didn't think they were responsible for funding the medicaid expansion. The Governor put it in his statement on the State of the State and said he would fund it. It has moved over to the Senate for further action. It could be sent back to the House for negotiations. It could also occur that the Senate could take a similar action to the House and wait for someone to litigate the position.

Gray mentioned that there was a potential for \$4 million to be dispersed to the City from the state and there would be far less limitations on how to spend it. Council Member Pitzer asked if there was any insight on how the \$4 million would be distributed. Gray said not much discussion has been had on what to do with it or what the restrictions would be.

Pitzer brought up the issue of the gas tax. Gray said that Missouri has been trying to enact a fuel increase for at least the past 20 years. This year, they modeled legislation off the state of South Carolina which has a refund provision in it. This would allow any citizen up to a large truck to apply for a refund. The Missouri legislature can do this without a citizen vote. It has gone far in the Senate, and it has a good sponsor. The House has not done anything for it.

Treece said going back to the American Recovery Act money if there are any views on how to spend the money? Gray said that the City should be receiving the first half of it. The Senators will want to weigh in on it before the Governor's office does anything.

Council Member Skala brought up preemption of local enforcement and asked if Gray had any information on that? Gray said they believe it is constitutional law, ironclad, regardless of what the Missouri Legislators actions are, the City is not going to be impacted by it.

Fowler asked to clarify that the State of Missouri is sitting on a substantial surplus of money for medicaid funding of \$100 Million, and they are in line to get \$4 billion, the City will get another \$24 million.

Treece said that if they were to encourage anything else onto Grays plate that they would recommend it be Medicaid expansion.

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

- Leasing, purchase or sale of real estate by a public governmental body where public knowledge of the transaction might adversely affect the legal consideration therefore pursuant to Section 610.021(2) RSMo
- Preparation, including any discussions or work product, on behalf of a public governmental body or its representatives for negotiations with employee groups pursuant to Section 610.021(9) RSMo
- Sealed bids and related documents, until the bids are opened; and sealed proposals and related documents or any documents related to a negotiated contract until a contract is executed, or all proposals are rejected pursuant to Section 610.021(12) RSMo

At approximately 6:39 p.m., 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 leasing, purchase or sale of real estate by a public governmental body where public knowledge of the transaction might adversely affect the legal consideration therefore pursuant to Section 610.021(2) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, the preparation, including any discussions or work product, on behalf of a public governmental body or its representatives for negotiations with employee groups pursuant to Section 610.021(9) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, and sealed bids and related documents, until the bids are opened; and sealed

proposals and related documents or any documents related to a negotiated contract until a contract is executed, or all proposals are rejected pursuant to Section 610.021(12) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. The motion was seconded by Mr. Skala.

Yes: 7 - Trapp, Thomas, Peters, Treece, Skala, Pltzer, and Fowler

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

At approximately 6:42 p.m., the City Council went into closed session in Conference Room 1A/1B pursuant to RSMo Sections 610.021(2), (9), and (12).

II. ALL OTHER ITEMS COUNCIL MAY WISH TO DISCUSS

III. ADJOURNMENT

The closed meeting adjourned at approximately 7:08 p.m.

Tentative Future Item Topics:

April 19: Swear in Meeting

May 3: Review of Council Rules, Ethics, and Conflicts of Interest

May 17: Budget Changes Road Map

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