



City Council Study Session Minutes

April 14, 2025 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - 111 E. Maple Ave.

COUNCIL SPONSORED ITEMS

1. A Resolution authorizing reward money for the information leading to the resolution of specific unsolved cases and funding DNA testing for cases as determined by the City Manager. *(Requested by Councilmember Brice Stewart)*

Chief Adam Dustman gave an introduction for this item. This is sponsored by Councilmember Stewart. The City has allocated \$100,000 from the Marijuana Sales Tax Fund for this initiative. Up to \$10,000 will be for tips that lead to an arrest and conviction of a suspect.

Major Mike Onka, Investigations Unit Commander for IPD, gave a presentation for this item.

The City has allocated \$100,000 from the Marijuana Sales Tax Fund for this initiative. Up to \$10,000 will be for tips that lead to an arrest and conviction of a suspect.

The funding will allow for both a reward for information leading to the successful conviction/solving of one of the identified cases AND/OR testing of evidence with updated technology/methodologies (DNA, etc.)

Each case will have an assigned detective. Should any tips surface, the case detective may be assisted by additional detectives or CIU supervisors as well as additional units such as the Crime Analyst Unit or Crime Scene Unit.

Some of the cold cases they are currently reviewing are the deaths of Diana Ault in 1994, Lakota Renville in 2005, Jevon Basley in 2008, Carlos "Aerriion" Burnett in 2020 and Kentral Gray in 2021.

Councilmember Fears asked for a follow-up report to the Council so they can see if the program

is working.

The money allocated for this will be in the fund balance unless or until it is reappropriated.

The Council agreed to suspend the rules so this resolution can be placed on the agenda for April 21st.

2. A Resolution directing the City Manager to commit the City of Independence to participation in "Legacy Project: TC3" as part of the 2026 Parade of Hearts Program. *(Requested by Councilmember Heather Wiley).*

Stacey Short, Volunteer Chair for the Arts Council and Jennifer Nesbeck, CEO of Clutch KC and Director for Parade of Hearts spoke on this item. To date, they have covered eight counties and 305 hearts. They have designated beneficiaries such as Visit KC, the hospitality industry, Mid America Regional Council, just to name a few. The 2026 beneficiary will be the entire greater KC region which is seven counties. Newly renamed TC3. Opt in cost Lisa one-time fee of \$10,000 per municipality or County. This opportunity closes on June 1st. Independence will get possibly three hearts without the City participating. There will be a web-based app that will be used as a communication tool. The app will be used for business and tourism promotion. The money would come from the general revenue or tourism fund from the City.

Councilmember Fears is not opposed to this if the money comes from the Tourism Fund. There are too many needs for the general fund.

Councilmember McCandless is not opposed to this coming from the Tourism Fund as long as we aren't giving up something to pay for this.

Analytics will be available from this app

Council agreed to move this item to the next agenda.

CITIZEN REQUESTS

1. Citizen Requests - Per Council Rules, Sec. 6.4 only "Council Sponsored Items" are eligible

No one signed up to speak on either Councilmember-sponsored topic.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Criteria-Based Dispatch - Independence Fire Department

Fire Chief Jimmy Walker and Battalion Chief John Burrell gave a presentation on this topic. The call volume for the fire department has dramatically increased over the last decade. Going from approximately 18,000 calls a year to about 29,000 calls a year. This increase in calls causes an increase in the wear and tear on their fire apparatuses, equipment and an increase in cost of supplies. They are implementing a criteria-based dispatching or keyword dispatching to increase their efficiency with dispatching. Before the beginning of the year, the fire department responded to every single medical request. While there are calls that require the assistance of fire such as cardiac events, other calls such as back pain do not require the assistance of additional personnel.

IFD considered EMD as a way to become more efficient with calls but the upfront cost was \$4M which is not a viable expense. Criteria-based dispatching is less cost. They worked with IPD dispatchers, came up with a policy and instituted it on January 1. They expected to have a 25% decrease in call volume. As of yesterday, they have a 23% decrease.

The way it works is that when a call comes into dispatch, the dispatcher will listen for a keyword that will trigger a fire department dispatch. For example, if someone says they have arm pain but then says they have chest pain, that would be a cardiac event that would require fire to respond.

Arm pain alone would require an AMR dispatch only.

AMR has EMD so there is no point in doing EMD twice which would double the time in getting someone dispatched.

This also keeps fire trucks in service for calls where they are actually needed.

2. Emergency Preparedness

Samantha Morris, Chief of Emergency Operations, gave a presentation on this topic. Emergency Preparedness currently has two employees and two open positions they are looking to fill. Staff has completed over 3000 hours of training, leadership has completed over 900 hours, plus 1300 hours of exercises and events. Fifteen of which were local, 18 were regional, state, and federal, with 18 participants.

They have been awarded \$250,000 in grants and are awaiting \$6.2M for COVID reimbursement.

Type of emergencies they respond to:

Thunderstorms, tornadoes, winter weather/ice storms, energy/utility outages, hazardous material releases, terrorism, and cyber threats.

A reminder that sirens are to warn those that are outside to seek shelter.

Spring weather has already been very active with 55 tornadoes confirmed in Missouri, 3200 damaging wind reports, and 1000 damaging hail reports. Our storm season does not end until June. In 2011, there were 75 confirmed tornadoes for Missouri. We will be closer to the 2006 record of 110 tornadoes.

Three easy steps to be prepared at home.

Make a Plan:

Plan escape routes

- Locate the best shelter-in-place rooms in your home
- Develop a family communications plan
- Decide on meet up locations
- Write down post-emergency contact numbers
- Know how to administer basic first aid, fire extinguisher usage and turning off utilities in your home.
- Write down medications
- Get involved in community preparedness efforts

Build a kit

- A gallon of water, per person for at least three days
- 3-day supply of non-perishable food
- Flashlight and Batteries (battery packs)
- Battery powered radio
- Whistle
- Mask
- Copies of Important Documents
- Over the counter medication (aspirin, Tylenol, antacid, Benadryl etc)
- First-aid kits
- *Prescription medication (rotate to account for expiration dates)

Stay informed & get involved

What do I need?

- NOAA Weather Radio
- RAVE/Smart911
- Sign up on our website: www.independencemo.gov/emergency-management
- Outdoor Warning System
- “Adopt-a-Siren” Program (816-365-7170)

How do I get Involved?

- Become a volunteer in EP
- Become a member of CERT
- 36 different programs

INFORMATION ONLY

1. Boards and Commissions Report
2. ***Please Note:*** In accordance with RSMo. 610.021, the City Council may convene in an Executive Session during or after the meeting, in the Council Chambers and move to Conference Room D for the closed meeting, on matters of litigation, legal action, and/or attorney client communications, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(1), on matters of personnel, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(3) and personnel records, as permitted by 610.021(13), on matters of contracts, as permitted by 610.021(12), on matters of real estate, as permitted by 610.021(2) and/or matters of labor negotiations, as permitted by 610.021(9).