



City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2025 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - 111 E. Maple Ave.

INVOCATION

1. Laurie Dean Wiley, Chair of God at Center Committee at Truman Heritage Habitat for Humanity, will give the invocation

Laurie Dean Wiley gave the invocation.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Mayor Rory Rowland, Presiding Officer of the City Council, called the meeting to order. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Jared Fears, Brice Stewart, Bridget McCandless, Jennie Vaught, Heather Wiley, and Mayor Rory Rowland. Absent – John Perkins.

CITIZEN REQUESTS

Jeff Rogers gave an update on the Independence Square, events, and visitors.

PRESENTATION RESOLUTIONS

1. 25-748 A Resolution recognizing Detective John Roach of the Independence Police Department as the I-STAR Award recipient for the month of June, 2025. **Item Passes 6-0 Res. No. 7128**

PROCLAMATIONS

Councilmember Fears moved to present the ISTAR Award out of order. Motion seconded by Councilmember Vaught.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley
NAYS (0): None
ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Motion passes 6-0

A Proclamation was also awarded to David Laber for his heroic action in alerting and rescuing a homeowner from a house fire.

PRESENTATION

1. Severe Weather Update

Chief of Emergency Operations, Samantha Morris, gave a presentation regarding severe weather response and how the City of Independence is prepared for severe weather.

CONSENT AGENDA

Item 2 was pulled for special consideration by Councilmember Fears.
Item 3 and resolution 25-749 was pulled for special consideration by Councilmember McCandless.

Councilmember Fears moved to Approve the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Councilmember McCandless. Motion Passed.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley
NAYS (0): None
ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Consent Agenda passes 6-0, minus the items pulled.

Reports and Recommendations of the City Manager

1. Approval of minutes for the Regular Meetings on May 5, 2025 and May 19, 2025.
Approved
2. Council approval is recommended to amend the Schedule of Fees for the City of Independence effective July 1, 2025. **Item passes 6-0**

This item was pulled by Councilmember Fears.
The schedule of fees excludes park fees. The reason for this is to allow the Parks and Recreation Director, to adjust fees accordingly to align more with peer cities and be more competitive.

Councilmember Fears moved to Approve the item. Motion seconded by Councilmember McCandless.

AYES (0): None

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

3. Council action is requested to authorize the City Manager to execute a construction contract with Linaweaver Construction, Inc. for the Vaile Sidewalks Phase 2 Project (No. 112210) and the 31st Street Sidewalk Project (No. 112202), as part of the Sidewalks to Schools & Parks Project (No. 110807). The total contract amount will not exceed \$490,694.50. This authorization also includes approval for future minor change orders, not to exceed \$49,069.45, and/or time extensions, as necessary, to complete the project. **Item passes 6-0**

This item was pulled for special consideration by Councilmember McCandless.

This project will start after the Strawberry Festival. The contractor will have 90 days to complete it once it is started. This is a project being completed aside from the General Obligation Bond.

Councilmember McCandless moved to Approve the item. Motion seconded by Councilmember Fears.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

4. Council action is requested to approve a contract with the Independence Chamber of Commerce for the license of the Independence Square public area for the Santa-Cali-Gon Festival. **Approved**

RESOLUTIONS

1. 25-749 A resolution approving an agreement between the City of Independence, Missouri, and the Independence Convention and Visitors Bureau, d/b/a Visit Independence, for the operation of the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Independence. **Item passes 6-0 Res. No. 7129**

This item was pulled for special consideration by Councilmember McCandless. There are certain competitive disadvantages to having a municipally owned and operated tourism function. We want to make sure we are marketing our tourism and historical sites in the most attractive way possible. This agreement would outline roles for both the City and an established Visitor's Bureau. Bylaws have been adopted for this new organization, and articles of incorporation are on file with the Secretary of State's Office, as well as other steps that have been taken toward the progression of this new bureau. The operating agreement between the City and the CVB would identify the amount of funding that would be allocated from the City's transient guest tax fund

for operations and maintenance. A portion would be allocated for marketing.

Councilmember McCandless moved to Approve the item as presented. Motion seconded by Councilmember Fears.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

2. 25-750 A resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit the Missouri Department of Transportation State Transit Assistance Program application for FY 2026 and to execute an agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for the Public Transit Operating Assistance Grant for the period July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. **Approved Res. No. 7130**

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

1. A public hearing for the amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance, Chapter 14, of the Independence City Code relating to motor vehicle repair. **Full Public Hearing.**

Rick Arroyo, Assistant Community Development Director. This item was presented to the Planning Commission on April 15th. They voted in favor of recommending this for the update. This expands the exemption of the exemption of the 750 foot separation requirement along Noland Road (the Miracle Mile) between 33rd Street and Aberdeen. This expansion includes properties that within 1320 feet east or west of Noland Road. It also creates a new automotive use group for accessory installations.

25-035 **2R** An ordinance amending the Unified Development Ordinance, Chapter 14, of the Independence City Code pertaining to auto repair and motor vehicle equipment installation. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No. 19680**

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

2. Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Budget Hearing. **Full Public Hearing.**

This is the annual public hearing regarding the budget, so the community has an opportunity to comment on it.

Laura Dominik spoke on this item.
Steve Urich also spoke on this item.
Leigh Williams spoke on this item.
Ben Neal spoke on this item.
Jason White spoke on this item.

25-037 **1R** An ordinance adopting the Annual Operating and Capital Budgets of the City of Independence, Missouri, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026; estimating the revenues for the fiscal year, appropriating sums for the purposes stated in said Budget, establishing Operating Transfers, designating Fund Balance Allocations, establishing the authorized Table of Organization, and designating those who may make a requisition for encumbrances against appropriations. **1R Read**

A proposed a motion to amend this ordinance. Councilmember Fears sent an amendment to the budget to the council members. The purpose of the amendment is to move dollars from a couple of areas of the budget to the internal services fund so it will bring together the risk management into one place within the entire city. Essentially, the Risk Manager at IPL would become the risk manager for the entire city.
This was seconded by Councilmember Stewart.

AYES (5): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley
NAYS (1): Councilmember Stewart
ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Amendment passes 5-1

ORDINANCES

1. 25-032 **2R** An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5, Article 10, of the Independence City Code, regarding private security guards. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No. 19678**

This includes loss prevention/asset protections officers. This updates the watch guard ordinance. Identification cards will still be issued. There is a qualification process they will need to go through for firearms, as part of the certification.
The item was presented, and discussion followed.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley
NAYS (0): None
ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

2. 25-033 **2R** An Ordinance Amending Chapter 8 Article 6 "PURCHASES AND SALES" Section 3 and Directing the City Manager to amend the Procurement Policy accordingly. *(Sponsored by Councilmember Stewart)* **2R Item fails 3-3**

The purpose of this is to make sure that projects that fall below the \$100,000 threshold move on unimpeded. This ordinance limits it to items such as study-type services, feasibility-type studies, etc.

Councilmember McCandless would like this item to be referred to the Audit and Finance Committee so they can recommend what they think the appropriate dollar amount would be.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Stewart, and Councilmember Vaught

NAYS (0): Councilmember Fears, Councilmember McCandless and Councilmember Wiley

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item fails 3-3

3. 25-034 **2R** An Ordinance Amending Chapter 13, Article 1, Section 13.01.005 of the Independence City Code to Prohibit Metal Detecting, Prospecting, and Treasure Hunting in City Parks and Public Spaces. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No. 19679**

The purpose of this ordinance is to keep individuals from digging up city parks and leaving holes, which becomes a safety issue.

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

4. 25-036 **2R** An Ordinance Repealing Chapter 1, Article 40 of the City Code which Outlines the Establishment, Purpose, and Responsibilities of the Tourism Commission of the City of Independence. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No. 19681**

AYES (6): Mayor Rowland, Councilmember Fears, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember McCandless, Councilmember Vaught, Councilmember Wiley

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

Item passes 6-0

FIRST READING(S)

1. 25-038 **1R** An ordinance terminating tax increment financing within the Santa Fe

Trail Redevelopment Area; and authorizing certain actions relating thereto. **1R Read**

2. 25-039 **1R** An ordinance amending Article 5 of Chapter 5 of the City Code related to solicitors and peddlers. **1R Read**
3. 25-040 **1R** An ordinance approving the 2025-26 Annual Action Plan for the CDBG and HOME programs, authorizing applications to the Department of Housing and Urban Development; authorizing execution of a written agreement and acceptance of CDBG and HOME program funds; and making the necessary appropriations. **1R Read**
4. 25-041 **1R** An ordinance approving a rezoning from District R-6 (Single-Family Residential) to District R-30/PUD (High Density Residential/Planned Unit Development) and approving a preliminary development plan for the property located at 11601 E. US 24 Highway. **1R Read**
5. 25-042 **1R** An ordinance approving a Special Use Permit to operate a body art establishment at 18801 East 39th Street, in Independence, Missouri. **1R Read**

INFORMATION ONLY

1. Trinity Woods CID Fiscal Year Budget Report
2. 23rd and Sterling CID Proposed Budget
3. Marketplace Shopping Center CID Proposed Budget
4. ***Please Note:*** *In accordance with RSMo. 610.021, the City Council may convene in an Executive Session during or after the 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).*

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Stewart requested that City Attorney, Jeremy Cover look into the Code of Ethics that is required by the City Charter under Section 5.4 and make sure that we are in compliance. We have a code of conduct, and he wants to make sure we also have a code of ethics.

Councilmember Vaught reminded everyone that tomorrow night is the first Popsicles in the Park that will be held at Benton Park, 707 S. Crane from 6:30-8 p.m.

Councilmember Wiley thanked the citizens who came to speak about the budget. She appreciates the questions and feedback. She attended the rededication ceremony of Rotary Park. The new play area has ADA pathways and an agility playground. She also attended Island Fest, which is one of her favorite events. They celebrate the Polynesian Community of Independence. Last week there was an IPD commissioning ceremony that welcomed six new police officers and two new civilians. This Saturday is the Fairmont Community Center Carnival Fundraiser. She will be there with some adoptable dogs from 12-3.

Councilmember McCandless explained that while she voted for the risk management approach, she wants to be sure that we don't short-change existing programs. She addressed accounting policies and GATSBY. Finance met with their auditors and was reassured that what they have planned is acceptable. Englewood had a great celebration that was fantastic. She attended the ceremony at the Truman Library, acknowledging the Truman Scholars. This is for young people that want to dedicate their life to service. She went to the KC Building Trades and Construction to learn about their apprenticeship. She encouraged anyone interested in this area of work to take a tour and learn more about it. She also reminded us that Scott Laken from Jackson County (tax collector) does not set tax policy, but it is his job to collect the bills. She also stated that there is a way to register your property for a property fraud alert.

Councilmember Fears said we have 3000 visitors in our city right now for the Community of Christ convention. He also thanked those who came and talked about the budget. The input is appreciated.

Mayor Rowland went to the 2025 EMS week at Station 1. He thanked Chief Walker and his people for grilling the hamburgers and hot dogs. It was a great time to recognize their work and honor them for their dedication and service to the City. He attended and presented a proclamation to the Polynesian Community during Island Fest. He also attended the Memorial day concert and stated what a wonderful job they did in their performance. He discussed the passing of Jody Krantz and her dedication and work to the Chamber of Commerce.

Zach Walker, City Manager, also thanked those citizens who spoke on the budget. He clarified the number of budgeted employees for the police department which is 331. 231 of those are sworn positions; the rest are civilian employees. 208 of those 231 positions are filled. Also, work has started on the general obligation bond funds. We are working toward having a portion of the money by late September,. The City is legally required to spend \$30M of the \$55M within three years of it being issued. There have been several requests for copies of the budget to be made in PDF form as well as others. The Department of Justice requires that it be in a flip-book form to meet ADA standards. He will try to do what he can to make it accessible to others who have asked. Lastly, the audio issue tonight has been identified and addressed.

ADJOURNMENT

of the City of Independence, Missouri

ATTEST:

City Clerk