



City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2025 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - 111 E. Maple Ave.

INVOCATION

1. The Invocation will be given by Stephen Ballentyne, Assistant Pastor at the Mount Zion Restoration Branch

The invocation was given by Laurie Dean-Wiley.

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: Rory Rowland, Jared Fears via teams, Brice Stewart via teams, Bridget McCandless, Jennie Vaught, and Heather Wiley Absent – John Perkins.

CITIZEN REQUESTS

Valerie Byrne, new Director of the Independence Chamber of Commerce, introduced herself to the Council.

Leigh Phillips spoke about Resolution 7002 and broadcasting committee meetings.

PRESENTATION RESOLUTIONS

1. 25-773 A resolution recognizing Madeline Rincon, Social Media Manager for the Communications Department, as the ISTAR Award recipient for August 2025. **Item passes 6-0 Res. No. 7152**

PROCLAMATIONS

There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

Reports and Recommendations of the City Manager

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

Items pulled for special consideration:

Resolution 25-774 pulled by Councilmember McCandless

Resolution 25-776 pulled by Councilmember Stewart and

Resolutions 25-775 and 25-777 pulled by Mayor Rowland

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

NAYS (0): None

ABSENT (1): Councilmember Perkins

All other items passed 6-0

1. Approval of minutes for the Regular Meetings on July 7 and July 21, 2025. **Approved**
2. Council action is requested to expend \$321,268.65 in purchase orders for fiscal year 2025-2026 to C1, for continued software, licensing and support for the City's data center. **Approved**
3. Council action is requested to issue a \$1,300,000.00 purchase order for fiscal year 2025-2026 to John Moore Oil Company for periodic fuel oil purchases for the Power & Light Department. **Approved**
4. Council action is requested to expend \$909,001.37 in purchase orders to Logicalis for fiscal years 25/26–30/31, to continue the use of cybersecurity services. **Approved**
5. Council action is requested to authorize the expenditure of \$664,000 in Fiscal Year 2025–2026 to USIC Locating Services, Inc. for utility locating services provided to the Municipal Services and Power & Light Departments. **Approved**
6. Council action is requested to authorize the issuance of a purchase order to Logic, Inc. in the amount of \$248,775.39 for the purchase of three Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) for the Rock Creek Pump Station, as part of Project No. 302605. **Approved**
7. Council action is requested to issue a purchase order for \$602,000 to Enterprise FM Trust for 73 Vehicle Leases for the Fleet Division of the Municipal Services Department. **Approved**

RESOLUTIONS

1. 25-774 A resolution amending Articles IV and V as they pertain to Holidays of the City of Independence Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual **Item passes 6-0 Res. No.7153**

This item was pulled by Councilmember McCandless. This is a clarification of the language for this policy regarding city holidays, more specifically floating holidays and President's Day.

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

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. 25-775 A resolution amending Article IV as it pertains to Leave of Absence of the City of Independence Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual **Item passes 6-0 Res. No. 7154**

This item was pulled by Mayor Rowland. This clarifies the leave of absence process and the steps that must be taken to apply and have it approved.

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

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

3. 25-776 A resolution amending Article IV as it pertains to Sick Leave of the City of Independence Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual **Item passes 6-0 Res. No. 7155**

This item was pulled by Councilmember Stewart. This states that new employees will get 48 hours at the start of their employment. If they end their employment prior to that, the balance would fall off and they would not get paid out.

Councilmember Stewart moved to the item as presented. 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

Item passes 6-0

4. 25-777 A resolution amending Article VI as it pertains to Separation and Disciplinary Action of the City of Independence Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
Approved Res. No. 7156

This item was pulled by Mayor Rowland.

This clarifies the separation and disciplinary actions or recommendations for termination of employment. It also ensures multiple levels of review and signature.

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

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

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

1. A public hearing for the application to rezone the property at 19300 E. 37th Terrace from C-2, General Commercial, to R-30/PUD, High Density Residential/Planned Unit Development and approval of a Preliminary Development Plan. ***New Information Only.***

Rick Arroyo, Assistant Community Development Director, presented this item. The Planning Commission reviewed this item on June 24, 2025. They did vote in favor of this rezoning. This is to rezone property that is C-2 General Commercial to R-30/PUD, High Density Residential for the Infinity Apartments located at 19300 E. 37th Terrace South. Currently, it is an undeveloped and unplatted piece of property. No further information to provide. This is an area where other apartment complexes already exist. This is near the AMC Theatre.

25-061 **2R** An ordinance approving a rezoning from District C-2 (General Commercial) to District R-30/PUD (High Density Residential/Planned Unit Development) and approving a Preliminary Development Plan for the property located at 19300 East 37th Terrace South. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No.**

19705

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

ORDINANCES

1. 25-062 **2R** An ordinance vacating a portion of an existing Right-of-Way and accepting new Right-of-Way of all that part of 2020 Quail Drive lying in, on, and across replat of Lot 1 of ISD East Elementary Center, a subdivision of Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No. 19706**

This land is around the Little Blue Elementary School. The City had a right-of-way in case we needed to use it for anything. We don't so this is giving the land back to the school.

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. 25-063 **2R** An ordinance authorizing the City Manager to appropriate \$250,000 from the City of Independence Opioid Settlement Funds for the City's Alternative Response to Community Health program for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. **2R Item passes 6-0 Ord. No. 19707**

This is to use the funds for opioid use disorders.

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. 25-064 **1R** An ordinance authorizing the issuance of not to exceed \$32,000,000 principal amount of general obligation bonds, series 2025 of the City of Independence, Missouri, and certain other documents and actions by the City. **1R**

Read

2. 25-065 **1R** An Ordinance amending Ordinance No.19425 and the HOME-ARP 2021-22 Annual Action Plan; and making the necessary appropriations **1R Read**
3. 25-066 **1R** An ordinance authorizing the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Independence, Missouri, to amend its articles of incorporation. **1R Read**
4. 25-067 **1R** An ordinance authorizing the acceptance of funding from Jackson County, Missouri, through a recipient award from COMBAT, which allocates \$90,000.00 to the City of Independence, Missouri, for a substance use and prevention program and adopting amendments to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget, which was approved by Ordinance No. 19682. **1R Read**
5. 25-068 **1R** An ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute a grant agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for the realignment of the East US-24 Highway and South Ash Avenue intersection, in connection with the 24 Highway Complete Streets Phase 3 Project (City Project No. 112212 / Federal Project No. CMAQ-3379(443)). **1R Read**

INFORMATION ONLY

1. **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 Vaught talked about the Wally's Travel Center. This project is scheduled to go before the Planning Commission on August 26th and then before the City Council next month.

Wally's team hosted a well-attended public meeting to address many questions and concerns from the community, especially concerning the traffic. Michael Rubenstein, President and CEO of Wally's, Nathan Haile, Director of Construction and Facilities, their Traffic Engineer and other team members answered questions on light pollution and noise. They gave a thorough explanation of expected impacts including turning improvements, signal timing, and ramp improvements to help with congestion. They will also construct a 6 ft masonry wall along the north side of the property as a noise buffer for those residents. They also intend to invest \$5-7 million dollars of their own funds for the traffic-related improvements, which demonstrates a pretty strong commitment to being a good community partner. The overall tone was positive and the project will bring nearly 200 jobs to the area. This project will also attract travelers and spur additional investment. Anyone who is interested is welcome to speak at the Planning

Commission on August 26th. Your input is valuable.

Councilmember Wiley stated that Legal Aid of Western Missouri recently opened a new office at 304 W. Walnut in Independence. The office is open Monday - Thursday from 8:30-5:00 p.m.

They offer a variety of legal services, including domestic violence protection, public benefits, social security and disability benefits, debt services, home ownership services like foreclosures, title issues, etc., eviction defense and adult and child guardianship issues. This is a fantastic legal resource for those who need legal help but cannot afford it. You can get more information at lawmo.org.

Last week she had a great visit with Tina Bartley of the Independence Housing Authority. Tina walked her through the important work her team does everyday for those who need safe, affordable housing. They toured several public housing properties. She was able to see some of the units they offer as well as some of the renovations that are happening. Tina spoke about the funding needs they are facing especially for the elderly and families with young children. Tina will be coming to speak at a study session on August 25th.

Councilmember McCandless stated she attended the Dragonfly Festival which was wonderful.

It is the 60th anniversary for the signing medicare and medicaid into law. That was done in 1965 by President Johnson but because President Truman had such a big part of it, President Johnson came to Independence to sign it into law. They had a very large celebration for this event that included special pens and famous people. However, they forgot the bills on the plane so the motorcycle squad had to bring them so they could be signed. This is to show our police have many roles.

Councilmember McCandless also spoke to the earlier comments about transparency regarding the general obligation bond. The Council made sure this went to two different committees so they made sure it had additional scrutiny. It went to Audit and Finance and to the Street Improvement Oversight Committee. The comment was not wrong in that people cannot stop what they are doing to come to the meetings held during the day. But it takes a lot of dedication to cue up a committee meeting and listen to it. She has challenged the Communications Dept. to think about the ways we communicate with the citizens and find ways we can be better and better ways for people to receive this information.

Mayor Rowland was also in attendance at the Wally's presentation and thought it was well-attended. The discussion was positive and he looks forward to moving forward with them. On July 27th, Corey's Network put 60 fewer flyers out in front of Speaks Chapel this year because those cases were solved. He gave a shout-out to Michelle and her husband Bob, Corey's parents, for the work they do and the people they help. She has turned her tragedy into something positive for this community.

City Manager Zach Walker talked about updating the Parks Master Plan, which is about 15 years old now. He thanked the community members that completed the survey that helped drive recommendations for improvements to the parks. They have now received enough responses that the firm driving the survey can declare it statistically significant. The City is still on track to have recommendations made to the Council either by the end of this calendar year or early 2026.

He also discussed the first reading for the first sale of general obligation bonds that will move forward the \$55 million issue that was past in April. Part of having bonds issued requires the City to get a credit rating with an independent firm. The city was given a credit rating of A. He quoted some of their comments. "Positive operations due to healthy sales tax gains and

budgeting, as well as management policies that are detailed and forward-looking." Overall, the firm noted, "we could raise the rating if Independence were to sustain strong fiscal operations coupled with ongoing stability associated with revenue supporting its debt." We have worked hard to right-size many operations to build the city's fiscal health. He complimented the Council for their leadership because ratings like this are not easily gained, and rating agencies do not just hand out compliments. This is a strong indication of their credit outlook and our worthiness of a municipality that should not be taken for granted.

Meeting adjourned

ADJOURNMENT

Presiding Officer of the City Council
of the City of Independence, Missouri

ATTEST:

City Clerk