



Public Safety Tax Oversight Committee Minutes

July 23, 2026 4:00 PM

17221 E. 23rd St. S., Conference Room 117, Independence, MO 64057

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Co-Chair Bruce Frakes.

Roll Call

Members Present: Co-Chair, Bruce Frakes, Patrick Casey, Erin Boatright, Charline Gray, and newly appointed member, Robin Baker - Bokarge.

Also Present: Deputy Fire Chief Kirk Stobart, Deputy Fire Chief Anthony Champagne, Interim Police Chief, Doug Brinkley, Dennea Leap and transcriber Jennifer Schatz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 16TH, 2026 MEETING

A motion was made to approve minutes from the April 16th, 2026 meeting by Charline Gray, which was seconded by Robin Baker-Bokarge. All members in favor, no opposition.

UPDATE FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT

The updates below were presented by Deputy Fire Chief Stobart and Deputy Fire Chief Champagne.

On the hiring side for Fire, we have sixty applicants and roughly twenty-four qualify. We are hoping to hire twelve in September. By the end of the year, we could use eight more with retirements and resignations. We recently promoted ten captains and nine new drivers are starting next week.

Open/Unpaid Encumbrances:

1 Pumper Ordered – October 2026 delivery

2 Pumps Ordered – Fall 2027 delivery

- All 15 frontline apparatus' are 2021 or newer models.

Station Design process:

Station #8 on schedule. This station is on Powell Rd.

Training building delayed due to foundation issues

Fire Truck storage facility acquired

- There was a snag at the Training & Storage facility due to trash being found in the final footing. This added cost to construction, but we had contingency money set aside and we are still within the perimeter. We also lost about two and a half months of construction time.

Station #5 will shut down August 1, 2026, to begin demo. The crews from Station #5 will run out of Station #1 during the shutdown. The demo is scheduled for September 1st, 2026.

Station #11 update — we are working with Centerpoint to acquire more land. Currently, the rock is at three feet, but if we can move to the West, the rock is at twelve feet.

Completed Major Projects:

- Station 1 west side parking lot nearly complete

Projects in Process:

- Station 1 roof replacement
- 1 Pumper Ordered – Fall 2027 delivery
- 1 additional Pumper Ordered- Fall 2027 delivery (\$80,000 savings)

Questions:

Robin Baker-Bokarge: When Station #5 is shutdown, will PD train there also?

DC Champagne: We haven't talked about that.

Pat Casey: What does fire storage look like for Station #5?

DC Champagne: We have a proposed lease with Geospace for the equipment. We have this budgeted in Station #5 funds and there is a no-fee early termination clause.

DC Stobart: We needed a controlled space where we wouldn't need to winterize the trucks.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Who does the maintenance for Fire?

DC Champagne: Central Garage works on the trucks, there is an EVT (Emergency Vehicle Tech.) that falls under Central Garage. The sales tax pays for half of the EVT training. For facility maintenance, this is handled by Parks & Rec.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Do we have personnel qualified to work on the new pumpers?

DC Champagne: The EVT mechanic has quite a bit of ability to work on those. There are some outside vendors that we have to use.

1. Acceptance of Quarterly Report from Fire Department

The members had no further questions for the Fire Department. A motion was made by Patrick Casey and seconded by Erin Boatright. All in favor. The IFD report was approved by all

committee members

UPDATE FROM POLICE DEPARTMENT

The updates below were presented by Interim Police Chief, Doug Brinkley.

We have twenty-four vacancies right now, but we will continue to fill them when we are able to. The permanent chief posting just went out with a deadline of mid-August for applicants. I'm thinking it may be mid-September to have a finalist and a potential start date of late September, early October.

Question:

Bruce Frakes: Are there people qualified internally?

Chief: There are requirements that need to be met with education and executive development experience. These factors may hinder people in the department.

Both Deputy Chiefs have retired, and currently the city is not looking to fill those spots.

Questions:

Bruce Frakes: Did they retire or were they fired?

Chief: That is above my pay grade.

Charline Gray: Will the Deputy Chiefs be replaced?

Chief: Not immediately, the new Chief can make recommendations.

Bruce Frakes: With the turnovers and media, this is not a good public look with those that had a long tenure. I am trying to clarify if for sure they were asked to retire. We get addressed on these things.

Chief: This is a decision the City Manager makes. I want to be careful how I respond. They are both in the retirement process.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: What do we say when we get asked? Ask or call the City Manager's office?

Chief: Yes

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Do we have current personnel who could promote to Deputy Chief?

Chief: Yes

Bruce Frakes: Is Dispatch still hurting?

Chief: Yes, but it's been low for a while.

Charline Gray: How are you recruiting?

Chief: The staff have really pulled together, doing more social media postings, and attending more college events. I'd like more money in the budget for a recruitment plan and more social media.

Bruce Frakes: With Dispatch, is it low because of the hours or the job?

Chief: The job, but a work agreement just passed with a three-year increase.

Charline Gray: Do Officers get OT?

Chief: Yes, we have gone over in OT expenses by over \$1 million dollars due to vacancies. We have some that are out on Admin Leave, PTSD, or at Special Events. We then have to hire OT to stay at minimum staffing.

Bruce Frakes: You can't put a price on safety and the budget needs to meet the needs.

Charline Gray: Would it make better sense to hire instead of OT?

Chief: Yes, however, there are challenges we are facing. The good news is call volume hasn't gone up, and crime hasn't increased.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Are you having to pull officers not in patrol to cover the streets?

Chief: Not yet, uniform patrol responds to calls for service and filling any vacancies in patrol is a priority.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Has Dispatch implemented part-time employees from another department?

Chief: We have a few.

Bruce Frakes: You took on Sugar Creek calls in dispatch, right?

Chief: Yes.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: How many are on light duty and working dispatch?

Chief: We have about seventeen on light duty. Some work in dispatch it just depends on the work status report.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Is there a Fire crossover in dispatch?

Chief: They would like a dedicated dispatcher just for Fire.

Patrick Casey: Do you have to go to the city manager to hire?

Chief: It's a finance question; the current vacancies come out of the general fund. All vacancies under the use tax are filled.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Can you tell me about the bearcat?

Chief: Yes, we took delivery of that and the big command post. The bearcat cost roughly \$500,000.00 dollars and the command post over \$1 million dollars. Both have been used and drones can be deployed from the mobile command post. I would like to use more technology. It would be a phenomenal asset. The drones were used during FIFA.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: What happened to the old bearcat?

Chief: We still have it.

Chief: If you look at page three on the Quarterly report under Facility 4563, we lost one of our Tech. Contractors. John retired and so there may be a backlog in the overall expense forecast.

Facility - 4563	Budget/Revised	YTD & Encumb.	Variance
Special Operation Facility Upgrades	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000
Electricity @ K9 Facility & ICC	\$ 30,000	\$ 28,626	\$ 1,374
Gas	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,221	\$ 1,779
Water	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,121	\$ 3,879
Sewer	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,378	\$ 622
Trash	\$ 1,000	\$ 600	\$ 400
Technology Contractor (D. Christianson)	\$ 57,000	\$ 57,000	\$ -
Technology Contractor (J. Lencioni)	\$ 22,000	\$ -	\$ 22,000
Other Technology Contractors	\$ 9,000	\$ 18,554	\$ (9,554)
		\$ -	\$ -
4563 Total:	\$ 135,000	\$ 109,499	\$ 25,501

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Tell me about Star Chase?

Chief: This gets mounted to the front of the car and has a GPS probe to track a car remotely. This has to be deployed within close proximity, maybe ten feet.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Is there new technology coming up to replace Star Chase?

Chief: There are LPR cameras.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Who writes the grants?

Chief: Dennea and her team write them for PD.

Chief: If you look at the Use Tax report, this is for salaries and benefits. On page three, it gives an illustration of where the money goes.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Do you have short-term or long-term disability?

Chief: We will have to get back to you on that.

Chief: On the Marijuana Sales Tax report, we came in under budget and balanced out.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Councilmember Stewart requested funds for cold cases. Where are we at with that?

Chief: I'll have to check and get an update for you at the next meeting.

Robin Baker-Bokarge: Is there one detective assigned?

Chief: We have others in homicide/investigations, a team approach.

Chief: On the Prop PD report on page four, it lists the five areas where the expenses are.

1. Overtime (5102)
2. Legal Services (5222)
3. Professional Services (5226)
4. Other Services (5240)
5. Equipment (5405)

1. Acceptance of Quarterly Report from Police Department

Members had no further questions for the Police Department. A motion was made by Charline Gray and seconded by Robin Baker - Bokarge. All in Favor. The IPD Quarterly Report was approved by all committee members.

2. Acceptance of Quarterly Use Tax Report from Police Department

Members had no further questions for the Police Department. A motion was made by Charline Gray and seconded by Robin Baker - Bokarge. All in Favor. The Quarterly Use Tax Report was approved by all committee members.

3. Acceptance of Quarterly Marijuana Tax Report from Police Department

Members had no further questions for the Police Department. A motion was made by Charline Gray and seconded by Robin Baker - Bokarge. All in Favor. The Marijuana Tax Report was approved by all committee members.

4. Acceptance of Quarterly Prop PD Tax Report from Police Department

Members had no further questions for the Police Department. A motion was made by Charline Gray and seconded by Robin Baker - Bokarge. All in Favor. The Quarterly Prop PD Tax Report was approved by all committee members.

NEXT MEETING TBD

The next Quarterly Public Safety Tax (PST) Oversight Committee meeting date is tentatively scheduled for October 22nd, 2026 at 4:00 pm at the Independence Justice Center.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Charline Gray and seconded by Robin Baker - Bokarge. All in Favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm.