

## **Columbia City Council Pre-Council Minutes**

Monday, May 4, 2015 6:00 p.m.

City Hall – Conference Room 1A/1B

701 East Broadway

**Council members present:** Mayor McDavid, Clyde Ruffin, Mike Trapp, Karl Skala, Ian Thomas, Laura Nauser, and Betsy Peters

**Absent:** None

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Group and individual council photos took place in the Council Chamber from 5:30-6:00. The meeting in Conference Room 1A/1B was called to order at 5:58 pm.

City Manager Mike Matthes noted that the demonstration of the citizen engagement tool [www.speakupcomo.com](http://www.speakupcomo.com) would be postponed and the topic on Park Sales Tax would be moved up to the first agenda item.

### **Parks Sales Tax Ballot Overview:**

Mr. Matthes explained that every five years we survey the public, today will provide an overview of those results and an overview of the ballot. Parks and Recreation Director, Mike Griggs provided a park sales tax ballot timeline and noted that today's goal is to get direction from Council on pursuing a renewal for 5,6 or 7 years. Mr. Griggs introduced Ron Vine with Leisure Vision a part of ETC Institute.

Mr. Vine overviewed the agenda for the presentation and reviewed the methodology for the survey which was 7 pages long taking 12-14 minutes to complete. He noted that there was a 95% confidence level with a margin of error at  $\pm 3.6\%$ . Results are broken down by age, gender, and households with or without children, support of existing 5 year sales tax and showed locations of respondents households. The bottom line of results indicates that users are have very high satisfaction with overall value received from parks and recreation facilities, programs and activities; usage of parks, trails and recreation areas is high; trails are extremely well used; and respondents feel a great number of projects developed with sales tax funding have been important. The overall conditions of parks are at 33%, with the national average being 34%. He reviewed the facilities used noting that most are outdoor areas. The top 3 most used are: Walking, hiking & biking trails; Nature trails; and playgrounds. Neglecting trails would likely result in lower scores. Most popular trails are: MKT, Stephens Lake Park, and neighborhood trails. In summary: Parks and Rec systems are a high value, high use, important system.

The bottom lines for the vision is that needs are high for a number of parks, trails, and facilities. The most important facilities for respondents are walking and biking trails, small neighborhood parks, large community parks, and nature trails.

The City should acquire land for preservation and develop walking/hiking trails, fix-up and repair older park facilities, shelters, playgrounds, restrooms, and acquire land to continue to develop the trail loop around the City are highest priority projects respondents are willing to fund with the 1/8th cent sales tax. Support is very strong for a 5 year renewal.

Mayor McDavid stated that things are different now as seen in recent past elections for public safety. New trails as a priority compared to streets and public safety is not a priority. In a situation where people are worrying about how many officers we have, etc., there is large reluctance to increase taxes to fund officers. He has a worry about this passing. We don't want a conversation about needing parks or cops. Mr. Skala agreed and added there is a disconnectedness to ask questions about parks and nothing else. Maintenance issue also comes up in infrastructure discussions too, which connects to this indirectly. Ms. Nauser asked what else will be on ballot in November. Mr. Matthes stated that as we know, this would be the only thing on November ballot. Ms. Nauser stated that those two other measures were defeated, but there were other things on ballot and a strong opposition group on those issues. This being the only thing on the ballot would likely be the predominant group coming. Mr. Skala feels it would be a mistake to make this permanent. Mayor McDavid agreed and added that part of the success is making a specific list of needs and checking off when completed. Mr. Matthes stated that we are on a cycle to have four ballots in one year and we could add a year to this renewal to get it off the 4 ballot/year cycle. Mr. Vine agreed that now is not the right time to do a permanent increase. Mr. Skala would be inclined to go a year more or a year less to get off the cycle. Mr. Trapp noted that adding a year would possibly allow more projects. Mr. Skala would like to see the advantage of extending 1, 2 or 3 years. Mr. Griggs explained that a 5 year renewal means projects are done in four years. Money left is for land acquisition. Mr. Vine felt that 5 to 4 wouldn't impact voting, but would impact the projects.

The presentation on this item as well as the ETC Survey result report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/agenda.php?meetingid=2867&bcid=56>

At approximately 6:42 p.m., Mayor McDavid made a motion for the City Council of the City of Columbia, Missouri, to meet on Monday, May 4, 2015 pursuant to the Pre-Council meeting agenda, in Conference Room 1A and 1B of City Hall, 701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri, for a Closed Meeting to discuss legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys, as authorized by Section 610.021 (1) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and to discuss the purchase or sale of real estate pursuant to the provisions of Section 610.021 (2) RSMo.

The vote was recorded as follows: VOTING YES: PETERS, MCDAVID, RUFFIN, TRAPP, SKALA, THOMAS, NAUSER. VOTING NO: NO ONE.

At approximately 6:43 p.m., the City Council went into closed session pursuant to Section 610.021 (2) RSMo.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:51 PM.