

**CITY OF FERGUSON, MISSOURI  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 26, 2019**

Mayor James W. Knowles, III called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 110 Church Street, Ferguson, Missouri and immediately led a silent prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Councilman Byron Fry	Present	Mayor James W. Knowles III	Present
Councilman Keith Kallstrom	Present	Councilwoman Linda Lipka	Present
Councilwoman J. Toni Burrow	Present	Councilwoman Ella Jones	Present
Councilwoman Heather Robinett	Present		

A quorum was declared. Also present were City Manager De'Carlton Seewood, City Attorney Apollo Carey, and City Clerk Octavia Pittman.

A point of personal privilege was granted to Councilman Fry to address negative comments against his character. He noted that he was not a candidate for council, but an appointee and he signed the tax affidavit in good faith; his taxes are paid in full. In regards to personal post venting on his private facebook page during the riots in his community, he was upset. To show his true character the next day he immediately began cleaning up the community, picking up debris and such. He added that he has moved on and asked that everyone else do the same.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*(Citizens' comments and discussion will be heard at this time and shall be limited to a total of three (3) minutes per speaker, which may be increased at the discretion of the Mayor, or by a motion approved by a majority of the members of the Council present at the meeting.)*

**Gerry Noll** spoke in opposition of the Better together plan and encouraged the city to pass a resolution in opposition. He stated he is opposed to the state wide vote and Stenger's involvement that may result in a promotion.

**Ted Guterrez** announced his work with UMSL small business development center; he is currently in the Urban League office. He noted many services provided at no cost for entrepreneurs and added that he looks forward to working with the community and neighborhood associations.

**Elder Annette Jenkins** announced her prayers for Mr. Seewood on his journey. She also stated she is troubled and worried about the community. She is concerned with Councilwoman Burrow's interjection of God in the meeting to explain her serving the Mayor. She stated the Council should work together and serve the people. She also noted concerns with appointed Blume as the interim City Manager as he is cited in the consent decree for promoting tickets.

**Mike Person** announced he is the committeeman for the Ferguson Township and is also running for Council Ward 1 noting his missions with included reduced crime, recruiting police officers and promoting the consent decree.

**Adrian Shropshire** addressed the blueprint of the city in his eyes from 2015-2018; noting the turnover of the parks director, police chief, and city manager. He added that he was hurt to hear that no one is willing to come to the city, Unrein has been with the city wearing multiple hats and would be able to work it out. He asked that council the put their personal issues aside, to be transparent and do the right thing.

**Deborah Carter** (EarthDance) announced that they are teaming up with the FFSD, they have furnished vegetables and are working to educate the kids on the importance of eating healthy.

**Rachel Levi and Molly Rockamann** (EarthDance), Molly announced that she will go on a 1 year sabbatical to visit other farms and introduced Rachel as the acting director in her absence.

**Kick Kassof** offered comments regarding Fry's statement that the community needs to move on. He added that while he agrees, you don't do so by stirring up the same hostility that kept the city from moving forward all these years. He stated that he was upset of the burning and such and puts a lot of trash on social media but the line must be drawn somewhere.

**Alicia Street** offered comments that the city is moving backwards. She added comments of moving black leaders forward and doing right by Mike Brown.

**Blake Ashby** welcomed Councilman Fry, noted Mr. Seewood will be missed and congratulated Mr. Bell and Mr. Blume asking that he is given a chance. He added that the beauty of democracy is individuals have an opportunity to vote for changes. He also offered comments of the lost value in stability, noting stability is needed in the police department.

**Amanda Canaday** wished Mr. Seewood luck. She also offered comments of the police down department down officers and an unsafe environment being created by decisions of the Mayor and Council. She added that tax payer money isn't being used for what it was voted for. She asked the council what they will say when they have to look into the eyes of a family that has lost a loved one because they are not being properly supported.

**Cassandra Butler** stated that Mr. Seewood is leaving at an awkward time and asked that the Council not reopen the police chief search until the city manager is hired. She added that the city has the candidate in Interim Chief McCall. She also stated her dismay in the ward 3 council appointment process. She asked what the assistant city manager is for if they are not expected to perform on an interim basis if a vacancy occurs. She questioned the upcoming town hall on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, stating it should be opened to everyone for a consistent message.

**Emily Davis** questioned the police chief process, the timeline for applications and interviews. She stated that the Ferguson Collaborative and PROUD have petitioned the council to participate; she questioned this process and asked how one signs up to sit on the citizen interview panel. She added that the Council knows that the appointed of Fry was not the best choice.

**Jamil Franklin** stated that it is extremely dark on the last block of Church; other blocks there are 10-11 street lights however there are 7 on Church, mainly in front of city hall. He noted the number of children on the block, the lack of single family homes, and the incidents of car break ins and other crimes asking that additional lighting is installed. He also spoke of the storm drain in the right of way and the large volume of stagnant water, neighbors have previously tried to dig it out; he asked the city for a solution.

### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Seewood offered comments of serving the city for close to 10 years in total. He added that this is a community that has issues but is a community that cares about each other. He stated that he, along with the Council, department managers and citizens have worked hard and he can see the forward momentum. He stated his excited of the road ahead.

In response to public comments he added that previous conversations have been had with the city engineer regarding the issues on Church, while it is not an easy fix, the city is aware. He added that the police contract is a priority.

Interim Chief McCall provided an update regarding the staffing levels noting that we have an officer that left and is returning to begin on the 4<sup>th</sup>. He also stated that final backgrounds are being on potentially 4 officers and the department is working on a continual process of eligibility. There are currently 41 officers. With regards to the consent decree, final use of force police has been sent to the DOJ this week to be finalized; other policies are also continuing to move forward. With regards to dispatch, it is a continual process, 3 are in backgrounds and interviews are set next week.

Mr. Seewood explained the process for the police chief; there were 38 applicants, narrowed to 18 for questionnaires, 16 returned for staff review and narrowed to 6 to begin the interview process. This is where the process currently stands. He also clarified that the Council has not been involved in the FOP negotiations process just staff and attorneys. This as the first process will always be a long process but it has reached the financial aspects. As for tax increases, in 2015 the city experienced a \$3.5M deficit, to rectify the city down-sized a number of employees and underwent several tax initiatives; the property tax of which did not pass, EDST for economic development, the utility sales tax to keep fire house 2 open and get 5 additional police, and the county wide Prop P for public safety (police and fire).

## **PRESENTATION**

### **Appreciation to Former Councilman, Wesley Bell**

A plaque was presented to County Prosecutor Bell for his service as Councilman of Ward 3. He in turn thanked Councilwoman Jones, Former Councilman Fletcher and Former Councilwoman Mitchom who served with him after the incidents of 2014.

### **Appreciation to City Manager De'Carlton Seewood**

A plaque was presented to De'Carlton Seewood for his service as City Manager, noting that his service ranged over 10 years in total. Mr. Seewood reiterated that he truly cares for the community, will miss everyone and good things lie ahead.

It was also announced that a reception will be held in his honor on February 26<sup>th</sup> at the community center, 4-6pm.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**None**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**None**

## **MINUTES**

### **Council Special Meeting Minutes February 12, 2019**

### **Council Regular Meeting Minutes February 12, 2019**

Motion was made by Councilwoman Lipka and seconded by Councilman Fry to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Unanimous vote in favor taken; **MOTION PASSED.**

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Mayor Knowles noted that CRB vacancies are still pending as well as the need to make appointments to the North County Festival/Square Community Improvement District.

**REQUEST**

None

**PROCLAMATIONS**

None

**RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution No 2019-10 – A Resolution Authorizing The City Manager To Enter Into And Execute A Contract For Management Of The Ferguson Farmers Market**

Without objection, Attorney Carey provided the title only reading. This contract, if approved, would select a new farmers market management company to run the weekly farmers market.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Robinett and seconded by Councilman Fry to approve Resolution #2019-10. **ROLL CALL:** Councilman Kallstrom – yes; Councilman Fry – yes; Councilwoman Robinett – yes; Mayor Knowles – yes; Councilwoman Lipka – yes; Councilwoman Jones – yes; Councilwoman Burrow – yes; **MOTION PASSED.**

**BILLS REQUIRING FIRST READING**

None

**BILLS REQUIRING SECOND READINGS**

**Bill No 7161 – An Ordinance Amending Article V Of Chapter 2 Of The Municipal Code By The Addition Of A New Article Pertaining To The Establishment And Functions Of The Farmers Market Commission**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lipka and seconded by Councilman Kallstrom to read Bill #7161 a second time and place it upon its passage. Attorney Carey read the Bill a second time. City Manager Seewood explained that this bill will enact an advisory board for the Ferguson Farmers Market. **ROLL CALL:** Councilwoman Lipka – yes; Councilwoman Jones – yes; Councilman Kallstrom – yes; Councilman Fry – yes; Councilwoman Burrow – yes; Councilwoman Robinett – yes; Mayor Knowles – yes; **MOTION PASSED.**

**Bill No 7162 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 13 Article III Of The Code Of Ordinances For The City Of Ferguson Missouri By Adding A New Subsection 13-74, Relating To A Seven Dollar Surcharge To Be Collected As Part Of The Court Costs On Matters Before The Municipal Court For The State Wide Court Administration Fund**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lipka and seconded by Councilwoman Robinett to read Bill #7162 a second time and place it upon its passage. Attorney Carey provided the title only reading. City Manager Seewood explained that this Bill will impose a \$7 court fee pursuant to new state regulations to be applied to the statewide court automation fund. **ROLL CALL:** Councilwoman Lipka – yes; Councilwoman Jones – yes; Councilman Kallstrom – yes; Councilman Fry – no; Councilwoman Burrow – yes; Councilwoman Robinett – yes; Mayor Knowles – yes; **MOTION PASSED.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Appointments to the Farmers Market Commission**

Motion was made by Councilwoman Robinett and seconded by Councilman Fry to appoint **Christopher Jaurigui, Deborah Rice Carter, Kathleen Koelker, Ron Brown, and Sandy Hunter** are appointed to the **Farmers Market Commission**. Unanimous vote in favor taken; **MOTION PASSED.**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Councilman Fry** offered an apology if anyone was offended by his comments made earlier.

**Councilman Kallstrom** stated appreciation for Wesley Bell and outgoing City Manager Seewood.

**Councilwoman Burrow** thanked the Mr. Seewood and congratulated the appointees to the Farmers Market Commission. She also offered comments of the foolishness of discrediting people stating this is the last time she will address it, she added that this is not the place, we are here to do the business of the day.

**Councilwoman Robinett** congratulated Wesley Bell and thanked Mr. Seewood for the work he has done to move the city forward. She thanked AT&T as she was awarded the Champion of Diversity and Inclusion Award. She also offered comments of the efforts to thinking through the change of policies.

**Councilwoman Lipka** agreed that the council does not have a personal agenda other than moving the city forward. She wished Ms. Rockamann the best of luck on her sabbatical and congratulated those appointed to the Farmers Market Commission. She also passed along that MSD will have on the ballot prop S, a waste water rate proposals; more details can be found at [www.stlmsd.com/ratecommission](http://www.stlmsd.com/ratecommission). She added that she was not invited to the meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>; Councilwoman Burrow clarified it was from the Library for elected officials and had nothing to do with the city council.

Councilwoman Burrow also questioned the rule regarding commission members that may owe taxes. Attorney Carey stated that there is no obligation to search for the status however if aware, the individual should be contacted and made aware of the charter/code provision and the penalty.

**Councilwoman Jones** offered comments that she was elected along with Bell and Fletcher in 2015 and hit the ground running. She offered comments of the working relationship with Mr. Seewood and stated that she will miss him; he has given the city his all and it is up the Council to keep it up. She announced that she attended the SoulFisher Ministry grand opening, she attended the Rep Gina Walsh meeting in Jeff City with 20 other city representatives regarding SCR1 which states we are opposing the city / county merger and that we want free holders and the municipalities that are impacted should be the voting entities. She thanked the residents that came to the Robert Superior Meeting along with Ms. Shelton and Mr. McCall for sending an officer. March 13<sup>th</sup> GreenWay Green will have a class on the power of growing food.

**City Attorney Carey** offered parting words to Mr. Seewood along with comments of his role as a great leader.

**City Clerk Pittman** comments that Mr. Seewood is a great leader and will be truly missed.

**Mayor Knowles** reiterated his appreciation for Mr. Seewood, noting his sorry to see him leave but happy for him to grow personally and professionally. He also clarified comments that no

one will want to here to put it in the proper context, stating the difficulty in searching for a new city manager given the proposed change with the merger. He added that people wouldn't want to do so with the possibility that they will lose their job in 18 months and comments of the difficulty and making sure that they are providing the leadership expected.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**None**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Councilwoman Lipka and seconded by Councilwoman Jones to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 pm. Unanimous vote in favor taken; **MOTION PASSED.**

**Approved on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2019.**

ATTEST:

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James W. Knowles III, Mayor

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Octavia Pittman, City Clerk