

**CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES**  
**January 5, 2021**

The City Council met this date in a regular session, via Zoom, which was available to the public via teleconference, at 7:40 pm.

Present at Roll Call: Mayor Gerry Welch  
Councilmember Laura Arnold  
Councilmember Pam Bliss  
Councilmember David Franklin  
Councilmember Emerson Smith  
Councilmember Karen D. Alexander  
Councilmember Sarah Richardson

A quorum was present.

Also present: Ms. Joan Jadali, Interim City Manager  
Mr. Neil Bruntrager, City Attorney  
Ms. Katie Nakazono, City Clerk

**RECOGNITION**

Mayor Welch and the Council recognized Police Lieutenant Jonathan Williams on his retirement and congratulated him on his new position as the City of Crestwood's Police Chief.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Building Code Amendment – Driveway Standards: Proposed Amendments Include Changes and Additions to Sections 20.352 and 20.355 of the Building Code Ordinance in Order to Clarify and Update Regulations to Match Recent Amendments to the Zoning Code**

Mayor Welch opened the public hearing. Mara Perry, Director of Planning and Development, stated that generally amendments to Chapter 20 don't require a public hearing, but for the sake of consistency, we are having one for these amendments.

Neil Bruntrager, City Attorney, entered the following into the public record:

1. Memo to City Council by Mara Perry, Director of Planning and Development, for meeting date January 5, 2021
2. Chapter 53, the Zoning Code of the City of Webster Groves
3. Building Code of the City of Webster Groves

Mayor Welch closed the public hearing.

**BILL #9138 – FIRST & SECOND READING**

Councilmember Bliss introduced **BILL #9138 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI ADOPTING AND ENACTING AMENDMENTS TO SECTIONS 20.352 AND 20.355 OF THE MISCELLANEOUS BUILDING CODE REGULATIONS AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO**, and at the

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Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

**REMARKS OF VISITORS**

Ms. Conrad read submitted Remarks of Visitor comments into the record. Submissions were received from:

- Daniel Bruzzini (Exhibit A)
- Dave Buck (Exhibit B)

**NEW BUSINESS – MAYOR, COUNCILMEMBERS, CITY ATTORNEY, CITY MANAGER**

No New Business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**BILL #9139 – FIRST & SECOND READING**

Councilmember Smith introduced **BILL #9139 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE VACATING THAT PORTION OF THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY OF AVENUE A BETWEEN 1306 S. ELM AVENUE AND 14 E. ROSE AVENUE ON THE ATTACHED EXHIBIT 1 TO THIS ORDINANCE #9139 AND COMPRISING APPROXIMATELY 4,350 SQUARE FEET AND CONSOLIDATING LOTS FOR A NEW CITY FIRE STATION AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO**, and at the Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

**RESOLUTION #2021-01**

**Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into a Contract for General Contractor Services for the Fire House 2 Project, and Amending the Fire House 2 Budget**

A motion was made by Councilmember Arnold, seconded by Councilmember Bliss, to approve Resolution #2021-01.

Craig Schluter and Matt Nigh of Navigate and Chief Tom Yohe briefly presented the proposed contract and explained the bid alternates.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Resolution #2021-01.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: ARNOLD, BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, ALEXANDER, RICHARDSON, WELCH

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Resolution #2021-01 was approved.

**BILL #9140 – FIRST & SECOND READING**

Councilmember Franklin introduced **BILL #9140 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI, AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE SUBMISSION OF A BALLOT PROPOSITION TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI, ON APRIL 6, 2021, TO CONSIDER IMPOSING A LOCAL USE TAX AT THE SAME RATE AS THE LOCAL SALES TAX OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI, FOR PURCHASES FROM OUT-**

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**OF-STATE VENDORS THAT EXCEED TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS**, and at the Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Councilmember Richardson, seconded by Councilmember Arnold, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on the Consent Agenda.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, ALEXANDER, RICHARDSON, WELCH, ARNOLD

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that the Consent Agenda was approved.

The following consent agenda was approved:

- **Approval of Minutes** – December 15, 2020
- **Resolution #2021-02** – Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into a Contract to Design the Replacement Culvert at Elm and Kirkham
- **Resolution #2021-03** – Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Addendum to the Legal Services Agreement Between Bruntrager & Billings, P.C., and the City of Webster Groves
- **Resolution #2021-04** – Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Addendum to the Prosecutor Legal Services Contract Between the Deschamp Law Firm, LLC, and the City of Webster Groves
- **Resolution #2021-05** – Authorizing the City Manager to Purchase 17 Tasers for the Police Department
- **Resolution #2021-06** – Authorizing the City Manager to Approve Payment for License Fees, Data Storage, and Equipment Maintenance for the Police Department's Body Camera System

**APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

No appointments to Boards and Commissions.

**EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION**

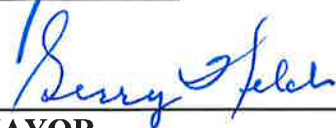
No Executive [Closed] Session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. on motion of the Mayor, duly seconded.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of JANUARY 2021.

  
CITY CLERK

  
MAYOR

**Katie Nakazono - Remarks of Visitors**

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**From:** Daniel Bruzzini <dbruzzini@gmail.com>  
**To:** <citycouncil@webstergroves.org>  
**Date:** 1/5/2021 8:26 AM  
**Subject:** Remarks of Visitors

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Webster Groves is special taxing away its "...position as a premier place to live, work, and raise a family in a traditional yet progressive community."

The City Webster Groves already has a dozen special taxes, including:

- Fire Sales Tax,
- Public Safety Sales Tax
- Police and Fire Pension Fund tax
- Park improvement tax,
- Storm Water Improvement tax,
- Street Improvement tax,
- Capital Improvement tax,
- Second Park and Storm Water Improvement tax,
- Sanitary Sewer Lateral Repair tax,
- Old Webster property tax,
- Old Orchard property tax, and
- Crossroads property tax.

That does not include property taxes, library tax, and the school district tax. Webster Groves sales tax has nearly doubled the Missouri state sales tax to a retail discouraging level of 9.24%.

In May of 2020, while private businesses were shutdown, the city passed an unbalanced budget of \$31.4 million dollars with a projected \$25.4 million dollars in tax collections assuming the response to COVID-19 would be a quote "miserable one-time survival test." If not, the \$11 million of excess taxes collected in the General Reserve Fund would allow for the city to continue spending as usual.

While Webster Groves businesses were belt-tightening and laying off people -- or shutting down permanently -- and while residents were losing their jobs or having their pay reduced, the city employees were still getting twice a year pay raises so as not to "discourage good employees" according to the published City Budget that "says" it puts its residents at the top of its organizational chart.

Thirty-two percent of the funding for the City's budget comes from taxes on sales. No businesses means no sales, and that means no sales taxes collected. Today's customer foot traffic, like an ad in the yellow pages, won't keep local businesses afloat. A use/internet sales tax will discourage shopping at multiple local websites in favor of the one-stop shopping ease of giant online retailers, like Amazon.

Unfortunately, The City of Webster Groves sees more taxation as the only salvation (for city businesses or for city employees?) as it hopes to extract another \$250 thousand dollars through yet another special use tax (i.e. internet sales tax) of 5.775%. 250 thousand is just 0.7% of the 31.4 million dollar budget.

If the City of Webster Groves wanted to increase tax collections with the least amount of controversy, here are some pro-business and pro-resident ways to do it:

1. High-end condominiums/housing near Historic Webster for people to remain in Webster who no longer wish the upkeep of a home but love living in Webster. There is a severe lack of it and the property tax collected, as well as the disposable income of these residents shopping nearby at their favorite Webster Groves stores and restaurants will increase sales tax collections.
2. Don't regulate out property improvements. People with the money to build a bigger house or to add an addition create jobs, generate local sales, increase the value of their neighbor's home, and pay more property taxes. Besides, they can always find a bigger home elsewhere so don't regulate good residents away.
3. Decrease the delay for inspections, permits, and licenses on signage, renovations, and openings. Time is money. Each day delayed by the city and county is a loss in sales tax collections due to a delay in sales, decreased sales, or no sales as businesses open in towns with quicker processing times.
4. No use/internet sales tax on Webster Groves businesses so that they can compete successfully with giant online retailers and residents can "Buy local" for everyone's benefit.

Webster Groves businesses and residents don't need a "baker's dozen" of 13 special taxes. If Webster continues to tax, tax, tax, it will tax itself into a community for the well-off and the well-subsidized. High taxes hurt our elderly and veterans on fixed incomes, our young families just starting out, and our retail businesses. Residents and businesses simply can't afford MORE taxes, unless our motto is a special place "to live, work, and raise a family in a traditional yet progressive community" of Webster "tax'em" Groves.

Dan

Daniel B. Bruzzini  
125 Orchard Avenue  
Webster Groves MO 63119  
Cell: 314 495-5841

**Katie Nakazono - Dave Buck "Remarks of Visitors", City Council Regular Zoom Meeting, January 5, 2021**

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**From:** Dave Buck <dave@buckstl.com>  
**To:** "citycouncil@webstergroves.org" <citycouncil@webstergroves.org>, "people...  
**Date:** 1/5/2021 11:37 AM  
**Subject:** Dave Buck "Remarks of Visitors", City Council Regular Zoom Meeting, January 5, 2021  
**Cc:** Farrell Carfield <farrellcarfield@gmail.com>, Elyssa Sullivan <elyssa.su...

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**To Our Imaginative Mayor, City Council & City Staff,**

As you begin a new year, it is the natural time to look back, reflect and learn from the past, then boldly sail into the future by setting new goals and the strategic plan to accomplish them.

To me, **Vision** is the first and most important element that focuses and guides the entire strategic plan. **Simply defined, Vision is a picture of a desired future state.** Vision is all about imagining and dreaming as you look forward.

Thus, for your consideration, here are my top 10 imaginings for Webster Groves:

**IMAGINE** a community that moves forward at the speed of **trust** every day as the essential foundation between all city departments and the people they serve.

**IMAGINE** a day when **diversity, equity and inclusion** are more than words but real, tangible actions by our community that recognize, accept and celebrate our uniqueness and differences as individuals but also treat all people fairly and equally as members of our one human race.

**IMAGINE** a nationally-recognized **City of the Arts** that lifts our collective spirits every day with a work of art in every home, on every street corner, and weekly concerts and plays in the new Webster Groves Performing Center in the Ozark Theater!

**IMAGINE** no more deep divisions within our community but a commitment to be **peacemakers** by coming together, finding middle ground and creating win-win solutions.

**IMAGINE** a community that respects our **kids** as the most creative people on the planet and therefore regularly includes them by seeking out their different thinking, ideas and solutions to city problems and opportunities.

**IMAGINE** a day when our people are no longer called "residents", but rather "**citizens**" who accept and bear the responsibility of **citizenship** to the community and to each other.

**IMAGINE** that the **real character** of our community lies not in our historic architecture, but in the **hearts of our citizens** as they live the values of human connection, honesty, kindness, acceptance, generosity and humility, among others.

**IMAGINE** when our **multitude of churches** stop operating alone as "functional silos" but join together as **one major united force for good** where the whole has greater lasting impact than the sum of its parts.

**IMAGINE** a community that lives up to its name - "**to share together as one**" - by not always spending but, instead, seeking new ways to share our community's immense talents, skills, creativity, time, energy and possessions for the betterment of others.

**IMAGINE** our city's best ever Mayor, City Council and City Staff working tirelessly to make **Webster Groves the best ever "small town" city in the world!**

But forget about me. The question is: What do YOU **IMAGINE???**

PEACE.

Dave