

## CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES

April 7, 2020

The City Council met this date in a regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall at #4 E. Lockwood Ave., and available to the public via teleconference at 7:46 p.m.

Present at Roll Call: Mayor Gerry Welch  
Councilmember Bud Bellomo (present via teleconference)  
Councilmember Laura Arnold  
Councilmember Pam Bliss  
Councilmember David Franklin  
Councilmember Emerson Smith

A quorum was present.

Also present: Mr. Steve Wylie, City Manager  
Mr. Neil Bruntrager, City Attorney  
Ms. Katie Nakazono, City Clerk

### **REMARKS OF VISITORS**

No Remarks of Visitors.

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

No New Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **BILL #9121 – FIRST & SECOND READING**

Councilmember Arnold introduced **BILL #9121 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 60, THE TRAFFIC CODE, ARTICLE VI, SECTION 60.340 “NOTICE OF STOP INTERSECTIONS” AND ARTICLE XI, SECTION 60.660 “REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO DISPLAYING STATE REGISTRATION PLATES” AND 60.665 “USING COUNTERFEIT LICENSE PLATES PROHIBITED” AND REPEALING SECTION 60.320 “VEHICLES TO STOP AT DESIGNATED SCHOOL STOPS” 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.

City Manager Steve Wylie stated that this is just matching things up with State Statutes.

### **FIREWORKS DISCUSSION**

Scott Davis, Director of Parks and Recreation, gave a brief presentation on Community Days fireworks. Our previous contract with J&M Displays has expired. We put out an RFP and only one submitted an RFP, our previous provider, J&M Displays. One Tennessee company said they don't do any shows in Missouri, and Gateway Fireworks stated they can't do any July 4 shows. J&M is also booked on July 4. I contacted J&M and Gateway to see if they could do a show another day during Community Days. J&M is not as of now, Gateway could on Friday July 3. They have not presented a full RFP to us. He stated that the show will have to be shot from Memorial Field, as Hixson is undergoing renovations. It is a tight space, but is able to be shot from there. Other considerations include that other communities have canceled their celebrations, so there is hesitation to plan that far ahead. We are still shooting for it to happen. The Lions said they have until about June 1 to cancel. The question tonight is do we want to offer a fireworks show? Do we want to use that July 3 date?

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Councilmember Bellomo asked what this typically costs. Mr. Davis stated that it is generally \$17,500 - \$22,500. The show on either side of July 4 is a smaller show, around \$5,000. It is a combination of City funds and sponsorship funds.

Councilmember Bellomo stated that he would be inclined to save the money and not commit it. We are in a tight financial situation, as are businesses that might sponsor it.

Councilmember Franklin stated that if there is one time in our democracy that we should be shooting off fireworks, it should be this year. Celebrating the Constitution and what it represents is important and \$17,500 is not going to break the bank.

Councilmember Arnold asked if they were looking at ways to make it safer. Mr. Davis stated that Gateway is mocking up a stronger rack system than they would normally utilize. They didn't recommend a perimeter fence around the shoot house. They stated that if there was something safer they could do, they would already be doing it.

Councilmember Arnold asked if they considered smaller shells. Mr. Davis stated that that had been discussed. The largest we currently shoot is three inches. There is a new regulation in effect that makes the finale go down to 2.5 inches but there is potential to go lower.

Councilmember Arnold asked if this location puts it closer to the crowd. Mr. Davis agreed that it does.

Council and staff discussed the feasibility of having Community Days.

Councilmember Bliss asked about Gateway's cancellation policy. Mr. Davis stated that they could look into putting that in the contract. We would likely have to pay half as a deposit, which would get us a show at a later date. That's how we got New Year's Eve to begin with.

Council and staff discussed possible alternate versions of Community Days.

Councilmember Arnold stated that aside from social distancing, it doesn't appear that this plan is very different from what we have done in the past, safety wise. That means that we are essentially saying last year was a one in a million shot and we are ok with not changing things.

Mr. Wylie stated that it is not one in a million, and they will tell you that. But if that shell hadn't run parallel to the earth and been slightly elevated, it would clear a fence and still go into the crowd. They are not going to guarantee.

Councilmember Franklin stated that they are inherently dangerous.

Mayor Welch asked if they have to make a decision. Mr. Wylie stated that they can plan and look at what is going on around June 1.

Mr. Davis stated that we don't have to make a decision on Community Days tonight. We don't have to make a decision on fireworks tonight. Probably by the next meeting, we will need to make a decision if we want to do it or not. When Gateway gives me a proposal, I am going to need to get a contract before you. They will need time to get things ordered and set up so they can shoot. So next meeting we will need a decision on whether or not we are having fireworks.

Councilmember Smith asked about safety. Mr. Davis stated that it is a similar distance to the crowd, just a different angle. Both locations are tight.

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Mayor Welch asked if there is another location in town. Mr. Wylie stated that they have looked at that, but nothing comes to mind. We just didn't want to work on this if you didn't want to have anything.

Councilmember Bliss stated that it is too early to decide.

Mr. Davis stated that he will keep moving forward on it and bring something to the next meeting.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

Mayor Welch called for the vote on the Consent Agenda.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: BELLOMO, ARNOLD, BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, WELCH

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that the Consent Agenda was approved.

The following consent agenda was approved:

- **Approval of Minutes** – March 17, 2020
- **Resolution #2020-14** – Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into a Contract to Design the Replacement Culvert at Newport and Yeatman, and to Amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2020

Mayor Welch addressed the PR firm hiring. Mr. Wylie stated that he doesn't have all of the information. You will probably need a discussion. I don't have anything negative.

Council discussed the role of the firm. Councilmember Bliss stated that they want to ensure the community is being represented.

It was agreed to make this a Work Session topic for the next meeting.

Mayor Welch stated that she thinks it is important to know who the principals will be if they hire Vector.

Mr. Wylie asked if the future meetings would be virtual or in person. Mr. Bruntrager stated that he has recommended to all entities that they meet virtually. Councilmembers indicated that they had the capability to Zoom from home.

### **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 8:20 p.m. on motion of the Mayor, duly seconded.

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PASSED AND APPROVED this 21<sup>ST</sup> day of April 2020.

*Barney Steller*  
MAYOR

*[Signature]*  
CITY CLERK

