



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2021

The Columbia City Council conducted a Special Called Meeting on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 using video conferencing technology. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 8:49 a.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., The Honorable Mayor Pro-Tempore Edward H. McDowell, Jr., The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, and The Honorable William Brennan. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore Hammond, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Mayor Pro Tempore Edward H. McDowell, Jr. offered the invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

EVENT RESOLUTIONS

Safety plans that adhere to the COVID-19 pandemic safety and social distancing protocols, as published by the CDC and SCDHEC, have been reviewed and approved by the Columbia Police Department for each of the following events.

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted five (5) to two (2) to approve **Event Resolutions Items 1 through 4**. Mr. Brennan, Mr. Rickenmann, Mr. Duvall, Ms. Devine, and Mayor Benjamin voted aye. Mr. McDowell and Mr. Davis voted nay.

1. Resolution No.: R-2021-024 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for Trivia Night on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 – *Approved*
2. Resolution No.: R-2021-025 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Dinner on Main on Sunday, April 11, 2021 – *Approved*
3. Resolution No.: R-2021-027 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for Live on Boyd Plaza on Sunday April 25, 2021 with a rain contingency date of Sunday, May 2, 2021 – *Approved*



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4. Resolution No.: R-2021-038 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for Baker & Baker Presents Composer George Fetner on Thursday, May 13, 2021 with a rain contingency date of Thursday, May 27, 2021 – *Approved*

Councilor Devine said I want to make sure that people are aware that when we approve events, we are looking at each of them individually and diligently to make sure safety precautions are in place for those attending and working the events. I would caution all event planners to continue to be diligent in providing PPE and safety precautions at any event. If an event comes to us, that does not mean we will approve it if all precautions are not in place.

Councilor Davis said we are not at a point where we need to approve the resolutions as stated. The numbers are still concerning. I don't think we are there yet as a City and if we approve all these events then it's time to do away with the mask requirements and other precautions.

Councilor McDowell said we are on a slippery slope and we could easily have a spike in the numbers that are relatively calm right now. The variants are still there. I can't in good faith approve these events.

Mayor Benjamin said I appreciate that everyone is not just voting but thinking and being very deliberate in sharing their thoughts. It has been difficult to find a balance but we always follow the data. I am encouraged by the progression of the data but you are right, the variants are appearing all around the country and we have to be very intentional and deliberate in continuing the measures we have in place. At the same time, we need to save lives as well as livelihoods. It's important that we try to find that balance. There is no formula but good judgement and investing in public health will get us there. Thank you all for the hard work that you all do.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk