



We Are Columbia

COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2022

The Columbia City Council conducted a meeting on Tuesday, October 18, 2022 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29201. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tempore, The Honorable William Brennan, The Honorable Aditi Bussells, The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, and The Honorable Joe E. Taylor, Jr. 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. *The minutes are numbered to coincide with the order of the meeting.*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

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

Councilor Taylor took a moment of personal privilege to introduce Mark Fisher as proprietor of Ambrosia, which is a new restaurant on Main Street. Welcome to Columbia. You have a beautiful restaurant and I enjoyed a great dinner last night.

Mr. Mark Fisher, Ambrosia Restaurant partner introduced George Simbus and Jay Floyd as the managing partners of Ambrosia. A lot of hard work went into the building. We look forward to serving you all authentic Greek food. The recipes are generational going all the way back to George's grandmother and mother.

Mr. Jay Floyd, Ambrosia Restaurant managing partner said thank you for having us. We look forward to serving you when you come over.

Mr. George Simbus, Ambrosia Restaurant managing partner said thank you for the opportunity to serve Columbia and hopefully do something for this block.

Mayor Rickenmann said thank you for your investment. I can't wait to try it.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Dr. Bussells, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.



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PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No one appeared at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Council is asked to approve the September 6 and September 20, 2022 Council Meeting Minutes.

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Dr. Bussells, Council voted unanimously to approve the September 6 and September 20, 2022 Council Meeting Minutes.

PRESENTATIONS

2. Domestic Violence Awareness Month Proclamation - The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor

Mayor Rickenmann and the members of City Council proclaimed the month of October 2022 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the City of Columbia.

Mayor Rickenmann said the Domestic Violence Walk is on Saturday, October 29, 2022 at Page Ellington Park, 2220 Gregg Street.

3. American Pharmacists Week Proclamation - The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor

Mayor Rickenmann and the members of City Council proclaimed the week of October 25-31, 2022 as American Pharmacists Legislative Week in the City of Columbia.

4. 2022 Fire Prevention Month Proclamation - The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor

Mayor Rickenmann and the members of City Council proclaimed the month of October 2022 as Fire Prevention Month in the City of Columbia.



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Mr. Aubrey Jenkins, Chief of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department said thank you mayor and Council. It is always our desire to keep Columbia and Richland County safe from fire. The theme for this year is: fire won't wait, plan your escape. Fire prevention is not just an October thing, it's year round. We did inspections, demonstrations, and we have really focused on working with schools. We even did a fire drill at one of the city buildings today to make sure that we are safe.

5. Employee Recognitions and an Introduction - Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said we would like to extend a special thank you to Sgt. Mary Sumter and Officer Eunice Ferguson for representing the Columbia Police Department while joining other Midlands law enforcement as Honor Guards for the 9/11 Memorial Service. Division Chief William Brosius of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department was the keynote speaker. Additionally, Chief W.H. "Skip" Holbrook joined Major Roberts and Lt. Wesley at Eastminster Presbyterian Church, for the Servant Leaders service and awards luncheon. At the luncheon, two of our up and coming female police officers were recognized and presented with the Eastminster Presbyterian "Servant Leaders" award; Officer Lauren Bazel (South East Region) and Officer Ashanti Rembert (TRU) along with Captain Kevin Patterson of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department.

Mr. William Holbrook, Columbia Police Department Chief said thank you for allowing the Police Department and Fire Department to be recognized. Chief Jenkins, thank you for your leadership and your continued partnership. The Servant Leadership Award speaks for itself. These two ladies are fairly new police officers and they have found their role in our department very quickly. I have seen them both in action and I can tell you that they represent us very well. Sergeant Sumter is a professional standards internal affairs sergeant and she does a spectacular job. Most importantly, she mentors our young police officers, especially our young female police officers. Officer Eunice Ferguson represents over 30 years on the job. She retired with distinction and she is now a school resource officer. I would like to recognize Sargent Leroy Solomon. This is another example of someone that puts service before self. After 27 years, he retired with distinction as a sergeant. He has chosen to come back and represents us every single day keeping this building safe and looking after our city manager and staff every day. It is my pleasure to recognize him with a five year service pin for his second go around. Lastly, I want to recognize Southeast Region Captain P.J. Blendowski, a 20-year veteran of the Columbia Police Department. The FBI National Academy is an opportunity that is afforded to less than 1% of law enforcement in the United States. It is very difficult to be selected. The graduation ceremony took place on September 13, 2022 in Quantico, Virginia. Captain Blendowski was among 235 fellow law enforcement officers to receive the graduate distinction. His performance exemplifies



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all that is expected of a leader and a law enforcement professional. It is my pleasure to recognize him for this achievement and for his 20 years of service.

Ms. Missy Gentry, Assistant City Manager for Development said I believe Gloria Saeed was hired 20 years ago. Gloria has held several positions. She started with the city as a loan officer. She served as deputy director for housing and development, executive director for CHDC and TNDC, and interim director of Community Development. In 2017, she was promoted to director of the Community Development Department. There is never a moment that I have dealt with Gloria when she hasn't been anything other than professional and kind regardless of the message she is delivering. She is a true public servant. She cares about the city, her community, and all of the individuals that she serves. I want to thank her for her service and we appreciate all that she has contributed. Today is also her birthday.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said I am really excited about two new hires. The City of Columbia announces Kameisha Heppard as the director of Homeless Services for the City of Columbia. As the director of homeless services, she will develop the necessary systems and programs for Rapid Shelter Columbia to provide accountability for the city's overall strategies and outcomes to address homelessness. She will serve as a liaison for the city to coordinate and strengthen community partnerships in an effort to provide greater impact through the agencies and organizations. Kameisha has an associate's degree in Applied Science, Bachelor of Science in Social Work, and a masters in Social Work which she received from the University of South Carolina. She is certified in trauma informed care, child welfare, and forensics. She specializes in working with substance abuse clients and their families as well as children, adolescents, and adults in need of counseling. Our second new hire is Mackin Wall. She will be the new homeless services project manager. Mackin has served the homeless community for several years through her educational pursuits, volunteerism, and work experience. She is also a University of South Carolina graduate. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Masters of Social Work. She specializes in project management, outreach, fundraising, and building a network of community partners. As project manager, she will manage the day-to-day operations of Rapid Shelter Columbia and provide oversight for the provision of wraparound services and other strategies for homeless services.

Mayor Rickenmann said we can't go without recognizing Chief Holbrook for being named the Chamber of Commerce Public Servant of the Year. Congratulations Chief.



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CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 6 THROUGH 18

Upon a single motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Taylor, Council voted unanimously to approve Consent Agenda **Items 6** through **18**.

6. Council is asked to approve a Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Professional Services Agreement for State Lobbying Services, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to Kyle Michel Law Firm, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$72,000.00, which is not an increase from the previous fiscal year. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Governmental Affairs (1011103-636600). The original budget amount is \$72,000.00.

7. Council is asked to approve a Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Professional Services Agreement for State Lobbying Services, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to Ed Givens - Fellowship Strategies, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$72,000.00, which is not an increase from the previous fiscal year. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Governmental Affairs (1011103-636600). The original budget amount is \$72,000.00.

8. Council is asked to approve a Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Professional Services Agreement for State Lobbying Services for Fiscal Year 2022/2023, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to Tompkins, Thompson & Brown Government Affairs in an amount not to exceed \$72,000.00, which is not an increase from the previous fiscal year. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Governmental Affairs (1011103-636600). The original budget amount is \$72,000.00

9. Council is asked to approve a Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Professional Services Agreement for Federal Lobbying Services, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to CapitalEdge Strategies, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$90,000.00, which is not an increase from the previous fiscal year. This firm is located in Washington, DC. – *Approved*

Funding source: Governmental Affairs (1011103-636600) The original budget amount is \$90,000.00.



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10. Council is asked to approve a Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Agreement for the Three Rivers Greenway Project Development, as requested by City Administration on September 21, 2022. Award to the River Alliance in an amount not to exceed \$55,000.00, which is not an increase from the previous fiscal year. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Admin - Operations - Special Contracts (1011111-638300) \$29,000; and City Council Allocation - River Alliance (2124321-680130) \$26,000. The original budget amount is \$55,000.

11. Council is asked to approve the Annual Renewal of ONESolution IFAS Software Maintenance Services for the City's core financial, procurement, human resources, payroll and budgeting system, as requested by the Budget and Program Management Office on September 26, 2022. Award to CentralSquare Technologies, LLC in the amount of \$226,986.41, which is not an increase from the previous fiscal year. This vendor is located in Lake Mary, FL. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Program Management Office - Maintenance & Service Contract (6218950-638200). The original budget amount is \$226,986.41.

12. Council is asked to approve a new Contract to Purchase 62 Lifepak Automated External Defibrillators, as requested by the Columbia Fire Department on September 1, 2022. Award to Stryker Sales Corporation using the National Association of State Procurement Officials Contract in the amount of \$168,477.06. This vendor is located in Portage, MI. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Fire Suppression - Special Departmental Supplies (1012303-627100) \$84,238.53; Fire Administration-County - Special Departmental Supplies (208230-627100) \$84,238.53. The original budget amount is \$168,477.06.

13. Council is asked to approve a new Contract to Purchase 120 sets of Globe Bunker Gear, as requested by the Columbia Fire Department on September 9, 2022. Award to Newton's Fire and Safety Equipment, Inc. using the Houston-Galveston Area Council Cooperative Contract in the amount of \$401,112.00. This vendor is located in Graham, NC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Fire Suppression - Safety Clothing and Suppliers (1012303-6259000) \$200,556.00; Fire Administration-County - Safety Clothing and Suppliers (2082301-625900) \$200,556.00. The original budget amount is \$401,112.00.



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14. Council is asked to approve Contract Amendment #5 for Project SD8325; Shandon Rosewood Drainage Study Phase II, as requested by Columbia Water on September 12, 2022. Award to Cox and Dinkins, Inc. in the amount of \$91,542.50. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Stormwater Improvement Capital Project Control - Shandon Phase 2 - Capital Project Costs (5549999-SD832502-658650). The original budget amount is \$2,685,060.00. The budget amount for this amendment is \$91,542.50. The total revised budget amount is \$2,776,602.50.

This is a Mentor Protégé Program project. Cox and Dinkins, Inc. is the mentor and will provide project administration and management, land surveying, utility mapping, engineering design, permitting, bidding phase support, construction phase services, project closeout, and record drawing services at 60.46% (\$55,347.50) of the amendment amount. Palmetto Consulting Engineering Group, Inc., a Minority Business Enterprise (W) located in Columbia, SC, is the protégé and will provide engineering design and construction administration services at 27.31% (\$25,000.00) of the amendment amount.

The following firm will provide additional services:

F&ME Consultants, Inc., located in Columbia, SC, will provide geotechnical engineering services at 12.23% (\$11,195.00) of the amendment amount.

15. Council is asked to approve Contract Amendment #4 for Project SS7425; Rocky Branch 03 Sewer System Evaluation Study and Sewer Rehabilitation, as requested by Columbia Water on September 16, 2022. Award to Brown and Caldwell in the amount of \$163,070.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Water and Sewer Capital Projects/Capital Project Cost (5529999-SS742501-658650). The original budget amount is \$1,226,800.00. The budget amount for this amendment is \$163,070.00. The total revised budget amount is \$1,389,870.00.

This is a Clean Water 2020 Program project and a Mentor Protégé Program project. Brown and Caldwell is the mentor and will provide additional general services during construction, along with additional site visits and observation services at 60.63% (\$98,873.00) of the amendment amount. 4D Engineering, a Minority Business Enterprise (W) located in Lexington, SC, is the protégé and will provide additional site visits and observation services at 39.37% (\$64,197.00) of the amendment amount.

16. Council is asked to approve Contract Amendment #2 for Project SD8371; Penn Branch Stabilization, as requested by Columbia Water on August 26, 2022. Award to McCormick Taylor, Inc. in the amount of \$221,078.75. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*



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Funding Source: Stormwater Improvement Capital Project Control - Penn Branch Drainage Improvements - Capital Project Costs (5549999-SD837102-658650). The original budget amount is \$412,015.00. The budget amount for this amendment is \$221,078.75. The total revised budget amount is \$633,093.75.

This is a Mentor Protégé Program project. McCormick Taylor, Inc. is the mentor and will provide construction administration services at 72.44% (\$160,148.75) of the amendment amount. Chao & Associates, a Minority Business Enterprise located in Columbia, SC, is the protégé and will provide construction oversight and completion of as-built topographic services at 27.56% (\$60,930.00) of the amendment amount.

17. Council is asked to approve a new Professional Services Agreement for Project SD8450; Program Management Services for Stormwater System Improvements, as requested by Columbia Water on February 25, 2022. Award to Woolpert, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$1,948,000.00. This contractor is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Stormwater Improvement Capital Project Control - Project Management System Improvements Project - Capital Project Costs (5549999-SD845001-658650) \$1,490,000.00; Engineering Storm Water Improvements - Special Contracts-W/S, SW (5534202-638305) \$458,000.00 . The original budget amount is \$1,948,000.00.

Woolpert, Inc. is the prime consultant and will provide capital improvement project services, asset management program services, program management, and other services at 55.01% (\$1,071,500.00) of the total contract amount.

The following subconsultants will provide additional services:

Chao & Associates, a Minority Business Enterprise located in Columbia, SC, will provide engineering, inventory, mapping, easement/right-of-way, and construction management services at 4.29% (\$83,500.00) of the total contract amount.

HDR, Inc., located in Columbia, SC, will provide public outreach, easement/right-of-way, low impact development, green stormwater infrastructure design and evaluation, and public/private partnership services at 0.51% (\$10,000.00) of the total contract amount.

P.J. Noble & Associates, Inc., a Minority Business Enterprise (W) located in Columbia, SC, will provide public meetings and outreach services at 7.70% (\$150,000.00) of the total contract amount.

Weston and Sampson Engineers, Inc., located in Columbia, SC, will provide operation and maintenance of storm drainage system services at 30.18% (\$588,000.00) of the total contract amount.

Southern Commercial Development, located in Lexington, SC, will provide traffic control services at 0.26% (\$5,000.00) of the total contract amount.

WE3 Consultants, LLC, located in Saluda, SC, will provide public/private partnership, public meetings, and outreach services at 0.51% (\$10,000.00) of the total contract amount.

Clemson University, located in Clemson, SC, will provide public/private partnership and student education services at 1.54% (\$30,000.00) of the total contract amount.



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18. Ordinance No.: 2022-082 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 11, Licenses, Permits and Miscellaneous Business Regulations, to add Article XIII, Purveyors of Cannabis Products - *First reading approval was given on October 4, 2022 – Approved on second reading.*

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

19. Ordinance No.: 2022-083 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 14, Article IV, to add Sec. 14-108, "Discharge of Fireworks" Establishing the Manner and Times of Lawful use of Fireworks and Providing Certain Civil Penalties for Violations thereof – *Approved on first reading.*

Public Safety Committee Recommendation: 09/27/2022; Approval (3-0).

Councilor Duvall said we are adopting an ordinance that sets reasonable times for fireworks to be used. There will be a civil penalty enforced by the Columbia Police Department. It includes exemptions for permitted events. This complements the ordinance that is being considered by Richland County. We were trying to make it so that the county and the city would have almost the same type of enforcement for the use of fireworks.

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2022-083 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 14, Article IV, to add Sec. 14-108, "Discharge of Fireworks" Establishing the Manner and Times of Lawful use of Fireworks and Providing Certain Civil Penalties for Violations thereof.

20. Ordinance No.: 2022-092 - Consenting to the Inclusion of Property in a Multi-County Industrial/Business Park (Project Framework, a Portion of Richland County TMS #11501-01-04, 11501-01-21 and 11501-01-01) – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2022-092 - Consenting to the Inclusion of Property in a Multi-County Industrial/Business Park (Project Framework, a Portion of Richland County TMS #11501-01-04, 11501-01-21 and 11501-01-01).



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21. Ordinance No.: 2022-095 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates – *Approved on first reading.*

Ms. Teresa Knox, Esq., City Attorney said on May 18, 2021, we passed an ordinance that amended the sewer service rates. That was section (a) and (b) of our code 23-149. Somehow section (c) was deleted when it was sent over to Municode to be published. This is just adding back section (c) that was omitted by Municode. It is not a rate increase.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2022-095 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates.

22. Ordinance No.: 2022-096 - Authorizing the Conveyance of 0.16 Acre (6,989 SF) being a portion of unopened Washington Street; Richland County TMS#09009-10; CF#250-579 Project Name: Proposed Hotel at Wayne Street and Hampton Street – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mayor Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2022-096 - Authorizing the Conveyance of 0.16 Acre (6,989 SF) being a portion of unopened Washington Street; Richland County TMS#09009-10; CF#250-579 Project Name: Proposed Hotel at Wayne Street and Hampton Street.

RESOLUTIONS

23. Resolution No.: R-2022-084 - Permitting the City of Columbia Fire Department to collect money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association – *Approved*

Councilor Duvall said I would like to explain why I will vote no on this particular resolution. State law requires that municipal governments consent to the collection of money in the right of way. This is dangerous for the officers that are in the right of way collecting money and dangerous because other people that see our officers out there might think that they don't have to have permission. It is also dangerous because the money that is collected by these officers is in cash.



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Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Dr. Bussells, Council voted five (5) to two (2) to approve Resolution No.: R-2022-084 - Permitting the City of Columbia Fire Department to collect money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Ms. Herbert, Dr. Bussells, Mr. Brennan, Mr. McDowell, and Mayor Rickenmann voted aye. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duvall voted nay.

24. Resolution No.: R-2022-090 - Adopting City of Columbia Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Grant/Rebate Program and Funding – *Approved*

Economic and Development Committee Recommendation: 09/13/2022; Approved (3-0)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2022-090 - Adopting City of Columbia Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Grant/Rebate Program and Funding.

EVENT RESOLUTIONS

25. Resolution No.: R-2022-069 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at Paint the Town Garnet and Black – USC Homecoming Event at 747 Saluda Avenue, perimeter around the Fountain Plaza, 727 Harden Street Parking Lot and the 2000 block of Greene Street on Friday, October 28, 2022 – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Taylor, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2022-069 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at Paint the Town Garnet and Black – USC Homecoming Event at 747 Saluda Avenue, perimeter around the Fountain Plaza, 727 Harden Street Parking Lot and the 2000 block of Greene Street on Friday, October 28, 2022.

26. Resolution No.: R-2022-077 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Chili Cook-Off at the 2100 block of Greene Street on Saturday, November 12, 2022 – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Brennan Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2022-077 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Chili Cook-Off at the 2100 block of Greene Street on Saturday, November 12, 2022.



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APPOINTMENTS

27. Board of Zoning Appeals – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to appoint Davis Whittle to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a term of three years.

28. Columbia Music Festival Association – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Dr. Bussells, Council voted unanimously to appoint Amanda Cooper and Nicolas White to the Columbia Music Festival Association for a term of four years.

29. Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Taylor, Council voted unanimously to appoint Diana Stevenson as a developer representative to the Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission for a term of three years.

30. Greater Columbia Community Relations Council – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Taylor, Council voted unanimously to reappoint Tyler Bailey and appoint Alexis Bolin, Ashley McClendon, Erica Wright, Carl Toby Hoffman, Willie Hariford, Lindsey Shealy, and Sarah Lyles to the Greater Columbia Community Relations Council for a term of three years.

31. Planning Commission – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mayor Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to appoint Toby Goodlett to the Planning Commission for a term of three years.

32. Riverbanks Parks Commission – *Deferred*



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OTHER MATTERS

33. Office of Gun Violence Prevention Briefing - The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor

Mayor Rickenmann said this is a crisis in our community. We are up 31% in gun violence and by the rate we are going, there are going to be over 130 shootings in our community. We need to make sure that we are moving forward with this office. We have the opportunity to take advantage of not only the funding that we have today but future funding at the federal level and the state level to address gun violence. Gun violence costs the United States between \$173 billion and \$332 billion annually. A single murder is estimated to cost a U.S. city between \$10 million and \$19.2 million. According to three peer review studies, this cost factors in municipal resource expenses, property damages, medical costs, criminal and court costs, and lost labor. Gun violence disproportionally affects black males. The Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP) will serve as the quarterback for city crime reduction resources. A key element of the mission will be assessing and improving environmental factors and behaviors that lead to violent outcomes. The OGVP will be charged with connecting community members with job training, apprenticeships, and other alternatives to lifestyles that lead to violent outcomes. The OGVP will also help to connect the Columbia Police Department (CPD) with communities in order to establish stronger relationships. The framework for addressing gun violence is prevention, intervention, and enforcement of people, places, and behaviors. Creating the OGVP allows the City of Columbia to be an eligible recipient for numerous federal grants from the U.S. Department of Justice. Senator Scott has vocally supported Columbia creating this office to put federal funds in play for reducing violence in our city. Allowing the city to serve as the custodian of these efforts will remove duplicity and allow the city to work with partners already engaged and succeeding in the community. Richmond, CA started one of the first Offices of Violence Prevention and has seen an 80% reduction in gun violence since 2007. The proposed funding source is American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money to establish the first 3 years of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention. This is a qualified use of ARPA funding. We are looking at a total of \$802,800 for staff, benefits, and expenses. CPD identified chronic hotspots that together account for only 2% of Columbia's surface area, but experiences up to 53% of gun violence. The OGVP will send law enforcement and/or credible messengers into these pinpoint areas to build trust with people in the community and encourage them to seek an alternative to violence. Short-term goals include: achieve 100% government agency participation in statistic reporting, increase participation of local non-profit organizations involved in data sharing, implement a six month deadline for action plan proposals with a yearly follow-up, create a catalog of available state and federal grant resources, plan a number of annual community events to foster continuous interaction, and create a set of goals for agencies to meet. The OGVP will align and leverage



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preexisting resources to effectively and efficiently combat gun violence and identify other courses of action to stop the killings.

Councilor Duvall said we have a program already underway in the City of Columbia that was funded by the Department of Justice for \$900,000 that is almost a carbon copy of what has just been explained. How is this going to merge with the existing program?

Mayor Rickenmann said that is not a city program. A third party entity received a justice grant that is only focused on a single zip code in a single area. This plan is the quarterback to deal with all the pockets through our community; not only district one, district two, district three, or district four. We have identified those pockets. The office will coordinate so that we can impact a larger part of our community.

Councilor Taylor said I respect your concept and your ideas to reduce gun violence in Columbia. We have some blocking and tackling still to do. We need to ensure that our sworn officer positions are fully staffed in our Police Department. We are not where we need to be and we need to double down on our commitment to get our Police Department fully staffed. We need the prosecutors that we pay for as citizens of Columbia to be fully engaged to make sure the people that commit these gun crimes understand they are going to stay in jail if you do something bad in our city.

Councilor McDowell said the data and the statistics speak volumes but I need more time to dig deeper into this.

Mayor Rickenmann asked Mr. McDowell to clarify his concern. This is the third time that I have come forward with this. We spend three times this amount of money paying third party entities with hospitality money whose directors make \$200,000 more money than what we are trying to invest in gun violence. If we want deeper and clarifying information, I would like very specific questions because we need to start moving forward. The numbers aren't decreasing.

Councilor McDowell said this is the first time we have seen this in printed form and spelling out the program itself. I am not disagreeing with what we want to do and what we need to do because it is very much needed in our city. We have to talk about budgets and about who does the hiring. There needs to be better clarification of what we need to get done and who will get it done.



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Councilor Herbert said I need to digest and review the PowerPoint. I have always supported and advocated for an Office of Gun Violence Prevention. I have specific issues with the price tag. I don't know if we need to start off with three people for three years. We need to follow what other cities have done because they have been successful in what they have done as opposed to expanding the focus because when it is too broad nothing gets done.

Mayor Rickenmann said everybody that I have talked to that has an office like this and our own Police Department will tell you it's not nearly enough. We have to start somewhere. We have the opportunity to go after other grants by establishing this office. Over a three year period, \$800,000 is not a lot. We are talking about trying to save lives. We first need to hire the director. The director may say you only need one staff person and a second person to be a grant writer. We have to create a budget for us to move forward with the discretion of the city manager. I'm glad to clarify any questions but we are getting to a point where we have to start moving forward.

Councilor Brennan said I am very supportive and want to move this forward.

Mayor Rickenmann said I am asking for Council to endorse the proposal so we can get it on the next agenda for a vote. We are not spending the money today, but we need to have a budget that we can build from. These are one time funds with deadlines. I am looking for commitment so that we can dive deep with staff and put together the right job descriptions. We can adjust the budget on a yearly basis. I would push to have the budget designated and if we don't have what we want or if we need less money, we can make adjustment in a year. We need to appropriate it for the entire three year period.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said I will sit down with the mayor to more thoroughly define this. I think some of my questions would probably be to help me explain how to delineate between efforts of the office and CPD. I haven't seen any job descriptions but I can do that. I'll switch gears from homeless services to the OGVP and focus on helping to frame staffing.

Councilor Duvall said I endorse Ms. Herbert's recommendation that we limit this to one hire. That one person can focus on Mr. Taylor's suggestions because we already have a gun violence prevention program funded at \$900,000 in City of Columbia. I think this is a duplication of a program and I would not support it in the way it's presented.

Mayor Rickenmann said you can't keep confusing the conversation. It is one specific area which does not cover all the other areas. We support directors of ballets and all kinds of stuff giving hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding but we are not going to fund or support an OGVP.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2022

Right now, I am more worried about innocent lives being taken. Are you telling me that paying for festivals is more important than taking money that the federal government has given us to put towards these effort? We are talking about a program to try to reduce gun violence in our most challenged areas. All we are asking for is a commitment to use the money we have and leverage it to get something better. A lot of information has been shared. I would rather you vote right now and say you don't support it and you would rather continue to allow people to get shot in our communities than put money into this program.

Councilor Brennan said it needs to make it to the agenda and let's vote in two. I look forward to getting the questions answered that some of our colleagues have and maybe changing the program to meet their needs, but this needs to move forward.

Councilor Herbert said it is imperative that we sit down and discuss it prior to coming back to Council. We don't need to have this full discussion like we are having now, but we haven't been given that opportunity. Before it comes back, I would request that we sit down and talk through the nuts and bolts so that people can feel more confident.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said I need to think about how to advise on the staffing part. I am not an expert in it, but I will certainly try to dig deep and bring you all something that you can take action on and go through it line by line if we have to. It sounds like Councilwoman Herbert is asking for a work session or just some meetings so we can get clear. I need clarity as well on what the staff person will look like.

Mayor Rickenmann said you can't start talking about hiring people unless you know there is a commitment there and we have a basis to do it. Conceptually this is how you have to go forward. You don't have to have all the answers yet. We didn't have all the answers when we started the homeless program and we ended up doing something that is impactful, changing our community, and addressing an old issue with compassion. I hope that is where we are headed here.

Councilor Bussells said there are a lot of great ideas on the table. I am supportive of this initiative and I would love to talk to you from a public health perspective on who would be successful in this role. I am happy to meet with you and the city manager about that. There are a couple of models out of Baltimore, Portland, and Atlanta where we can look to them to see what works. We need to continue some of these logistics and technical conversations next week and make sure that we have our ducks in a row so that we can vote on November 1st.



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2022**

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REFERRALS, REPORTS AND NEW BUSINESS

There were no committee referrals, reports or new business at this time.

PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Doreen Skelton, Eureka Street resident said I want to end homelessness. I have several programs and plans. Everybody who I have talked to agree that these programs would work. It is my passion to end homelessness and I am just asking you to give me a job. I am asking you to consider making me a project manager over these plans that I want to implement to end homelessness. I have talked to educated people with degrees and they are all for me. I am asking you to give me some time to sit down with you all and go over my plans.

Mr. David Lewis said I want to thank the Council for making multiple proposals to end gun violence. Please make sure that they not only include the educated reality of it but the street smarts and common sense. It does not matter how much education you have. If you don't know what the streets think, then you don't know the real agenda of what is actually taking place. You will have ultimate failure again and again. I have seen so many programs come out that sound good. Again, education is one thing but the reality can be a totally different thing.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk