



The City Council of the City of Festus, Missouri met on March 10, 2025, for a Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall located at 711 West Main Street, Festus, Missouri.

I. Call to Order

Mayor Richards called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:

- Councilman Boyer
- Councilman Venz
- Councilman Cook Via Zoom
- Councilwoman Templeton
- Councilwoman Wehner
- Councilman Tinnin
- Councilman Dennis via Zoom

Absent:

- Councilman Collier

Also in attendance:

Mayor Samuel F. Richards presided over the meeting, City Administrator Greg Camp, Finance Director Michelle Vaughn, Accounts Receivable Clerk Jennifer Filkins, Public Works Director Michael Christopher, Building and Planning Director Mark Harris, Parks Director Josh Whaley, Recreation and Tourism Director Barb Lowry, Police Captain Lewis Pippin, Fire Chief Jeff Broombaugh, City Treasurer Lori Eisenbeis, and City Attorney Brian Malone via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Recited

II. Approval of Consent Agenda

- 1. Approval of the Minutes**
 - a. February 24, 2025 – Work Session**
 - b. February 24, 2025 – Regular Session**
- 2. Approval of Bills**
- 3. Correspondence**

Mayor Richards asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mayor Richards announced the bills were in the amount of \$1,065,296.28.



Motion to approve the consent agenda, the bills, and minutes of the Work Session and Council Meeting on February 24, 2025, was made by Councilman Wehner seconded by Councilmen Venz.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Aye
Councilman Cook	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Collier:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Dennis:	Aye
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Wehner	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye
Councilman Dennis:	Aye

Motion carried.

III. Remarks of Visitors

None

IV. Bids

None

V. Ordinances and Resolutions

None

VI. New Business

A. Hampton Inn – Chapter 100

City Administrator Greg Camp started discussions on Chapter 100 that had been previously discussed, reviewed, and approved by the City Council in 2018. Greg explained this is essentially the same incentive package to promote the construction of a three-story Hampton Inn Hotel on the Goodwin property, which he stated does have the support of the ambulance and school district and that the city had considered moving forward on this project in the past. Camp is looking for a green light to pursue consulting with bond counsel to repackage this incentive package for the purpose of the construction of the Hampton Inn and is asking for thoughts and comments on this project.



Councilman Venz is still in favor of the project and stated need another good hotel to move forward with how the city is progressing and thinks that once it is developed it will bring in more business in the area.

Councilman Wehner asked Greg to give him an idea of how the tax incentive package works. Camp stated that on the last two pages in the presentation are where the number pages are located with the breakdown. Initially, Festus Hospitality came to the city asking for a 15-year 100% property tax and real estate tax abatement, a full abatement which would include a reduction of city sales tax, and a waiver of the city's tourism tax. With discussions back and forth with Steadfast City negotiating on Festus Hospitality's behalf the city said the tourism tax was you don't touch it and Camp felt that all the hotels in the city should be treated equally the same, Camp also felt that the 15-year abatement was too long and did discuss a roll-off in years 7, 8, 9 & 10 but they ended up doing a pass through on the personal property so while this is an abatement of all the new real property value, the existing personal property value will still be collected and distributed to the various taxing authorities. The new value of the real property would be abated at 100% for a 10-year term. Camp also mentioned that the construction cost has gone up considerably over the last 7 years and while there has been development on Goodwin property, when this was proposed originally there was no development in that area at all. Camp thinks that with what is happening around the city it is just going to put more pressure on the city's need for additional hotel space. Camp knows for sure that the Holiday Inn Express runs 90% plus occupancy.

Councilman Wehner asked what happens if they try and pull out like they did the last time and don't build. Camp stated that this has come up recently and has been kicking this one around for a while and made it pretty clear that for his comfort level to bring it back to the city council to be hinged on some form of performance guarantees that include deadlines and dates included in the financing agreement in order for this to work.

Councilman Tinnin questioned if the city would need to start all over with the agreement. Camp stated that the agreement would fundamentally stay the same, the numbers and dates inside the agreement obviously would change but the part that the city will want added to it would be the date they plan to break ground and the date they plan to open the doors, which was not included in the original agreement. Councilman Tinnin asked about the sales tax worked out with them on the materials. Camp stated that this is still part of the deal and the abatement of the local sales tax. Councilman Tinnin expressed his concerns that he does not think it is right that they are not getting penalized for pulling the plug and are able to walk back in and do the same thing again and feels it should be a little stiffer. Camp stated that the sales tax abatement is just an incentive to the locals that we control and encourages them to buy the materials locally and if they don't buy them



where the Festus sales tax is applicable then it really is no benefit at all to them. Councilman Tinnin still believes that this is a gray area if they bring in the material from another state or county and believes it is illegal, but did say a lot of people do that. He does still welcome the idea and just has a lot of questions. Camp stated that when this came up in 2018 almost all of the council was here at that time said let's go and they thought they had a developer ready to go. Camp stated that covid played a big part of it but the delay since then has certainly not been all pandemic related but is still in part pandemic related.

Councilwomen Templeton questioned the number of units. Building & Planning Director Mark Harris stated they do not have any structural drawings for it yet. Camp stated he would assume it would be 90 units. Councilwomen Templeton questioned the performance incentive if they don't meet the deadline by such is there a way, the city can impact the agreement in a way that failure to produce will result in X, Y, & Z. Camp stated yes and that is the discussion that they will need to have with Brian Malone, bond counsel and Steadfast, who is representing Festus Hospitality, to make sure those deadlines are included in the agreement and if they don't meet those deadlines then what is the penalty.

Councilman Dennis mentioned that over the past 20-years the city has had numerous things come into the city that have done similar things. For him one thing for citizens that he has been asked several times is that the last thing the city needs is another hotel, and that the city makes a template of where things sit and just added the zoning for the hotel. Dennis went on to say that the city does not necessarily have control over what goes in what space, but there are a lot of people who believe that the city picks and chooses what goes where. Dennis also stated that the city is putting down the ground rules on what can and cannot go in those spaces. Dennis also mentioned that one other question that was posed by one of the councilman is there going to be an initial cost such as if our ladder truck will extend out to a third-floor establishment and that the city does not take on any additional cost. Fire Chief Broombaugh stated they could reach the third floor.

Councilman Boyer questioned Camp if he has ever encountered anything with Hampton Inn relating to a financial package. Camp stated he has not been directly involved with a Hampton incentive but has been on other hotel developments directly or indirectly. Camp also stated that this particular developer brings in a mid-upper tier hotel to the community and will ask for some assistance. Councilman Boyer stated that he felt at the beginning their tax abatements were pretty strong and mentioned that they need us probably more than the city needs them.

Mayor Richards stated that when James Hardie starts building and they bring in their own



workers, their own companies, he asked where those people are going to stay and recommends that the council gets this thing going so that by the time the plant starts the city will be in a good position.

Councilman Venz agreed that he would hate to see it go to another city. Camp stated he and Councilman Cook and Councilman Wehner had a chance to talk on Friday and he echoed some of the similar concerns related to performance, to make sure these folks are going to put shovels into the ground, concerns on the impact of the other taxing jurisdictions. Camp stated this is going to take a while to package and will not be brought back to the council for some time, at least not the next or the following meeting. Camp sensed that the council does want to put some deadlines in the agreement and that there will be some penalties if they don't meet those deadlines because of the time, it is taking the city to put this thing together.

Councilman Tinnin mentioned they already own the ground and believes the city should not give the whole store away since they are going to build regardless and does not want to see the city overdue what they agreed to do the first time. Camp agreed and said the city is not, but it is essentially the same deal with the things that were just discussed tonight, which still needs to be discussed in conversations with Brian, Jason & Mark and then they will have something to bring back to the council. Camp stated he needs the okay to go ahead and have those conversations.

Councilman Cook wanted to mention that there will be income on personal property that is assessed every year, which he believes is going to be around \$9M to \$10M in personal property assessment that is assessed at 32% times the tax rate and asked Camp if that is still correct. Camp stated yes, it was talked about in the original deal and where they ended up was that the personal property would be a pass through while the real estate is abated. The personal property on the furniture and fixtures that need to go into the hotel that are assessed will be a pass through to all the taxing jurisdictions. Camp stated if everyone is comfortable with that, he and Brian will seek out their friends with Gilmore and Bell and will have a talk with Nick with Steadfast first thing in the morning and get rolling on this.

Mayor Richards entertained a motion to allow Greg to go forward with this project.

Motion was made by Councilman Boyer and Seconded by Councilwomen Templeton

Vote:

Councilman Boyer: Aye
Councilman Collier: Aye



Councilwoman Templeton: Aye
Councilman Wehner: Aye
Councilman Dennis: Aye
Councilman Venz: Aye
Councilman Cook: Aye
Councilman Tinnin: Absent

Motion carried.

VII. Old Business

Camp wanted to share with the City Council & Mayor to give some credit to Public Works Director Michael Christopher but also to Shain Dollar who is the cities Right-of-Way Manager that had put together a report on the Edgewood water main project phases 1 & 2 are now complete with over 11,300 feet of water main, 22 new fire hydrants, 159 service connections and 137 feet of storm water feet that was done as part of that project. CE Contracting was an excellent partner on this project and could not say enough about the work they did. They tackled it with urgency and took it to heart and ran with it so definitely a great job by CE. Camp also stated that other than the shortage of the overlays that will come at a later date will finish off all those side streets will put this project to bed. Public Works Director Michael Christopher gave the great news that this project was under budget in the amount of \$360,000. It was mentioned that with the savings of this project will help with future water main projects.

VIII. Mayor and City Council Reports

Councilman Boyer – Congratulated Greg on the nice article in the paper that was wrote up on him and Jason Eisenbeis. Commenting on the good work that the street and water department have been doing and getting a lot done but still more to do, thanked the police department for the fast action on the juveniles that were caught. Boyer is looking forward to the meeting tomorrow on the Red Barn and Splash Pad and asked if Greg was buying lunch and asked if that was just a roomer.

Councilman Wehner – Believes Hampton Inn will be a game changer for the area when it comes in but does think the city should make some guarantees that it starts on time. He is also looking forward to the Red barn tomorrow. Commented on the huge deal with the Edgewood project and complimented Michael on a good job. Wehner also complimented the police on the juveniles kicking in the doors. Commented on the Mardi Gras parade on Main Street and thought they blew it out of the water and at the time Luke came to city council asking permission he was a little Lukewarm on the idea but had heard the crowds were great, the enthusiasm was great and probably next year is going to be something



better. Wehner mentioned that moving forward like with the laptops here tonight the city is advancing electronically and is slowing entering the electronic age and are doing it very well.

Councilman Dennis – Mentioned a lot has been said already but something that is bothering him is the attention the city receives on social media about what the city is not doing and there is always another side of the story where the city did 135 tickets and 143 stops, our fire department trains every day and is always ready to go, our streets, our water and the advancements the city is making to fix infrastructure issues that is at a great pace and guesses good news is never news. Dennis also mentioned the wonderful parks and recreation going on and wants to reiterate to everyone that makes this happen, thank you despite all the negativity the city seems to see. He knows the Mayor and City Council cares and believes the city works hard for the people and not everything is under our control and wanted to say thank you again. He knows people make complaints and that the city takes those complaints very seriously and takes a lot of pride in this city and works hard just like the savings on the water project that will go back into the system to fix something else.

Councilman Cook – Mentioned everything has been said but just needs to know if Greg is buying lunch before or after the ceremony tomorrow and thanked him.

Councilman Collier – Absent.

Councilwoman Templeton – Stated that when you see Festus you see progress but not on one level but on many levels and the old adage is true that if something bad happens some people might tell seven people and something good happens some people might only tell one person to put that in perspective. Templeton asked that since the snow and ice are no longer here if and when Spire will be coming back to Festus or if she can decorate the steel plates for Easter. Public Works Director Michael Christopher stated they have a preconstruction meeting next week on N. Mill and the area manager for Spire reached out to him telling him they only have about two weeks left in that area and are very close to being done and will be getting back to the project not next week but the week after. Templeton thanked Michael and stated she would see everyone at the barn tomorrow.

Councilman Venz – Ditto on everyone's comments and mentioned he will try to be there at the ceremony tomorrow. Venz stated he knew Greg had reached out to the carwash on the issue and asked if there is anything the city can possibly do or does the city just have to let it ride. Camp stated he had not heard back from Club Carwash when he had reached out to the head corporate offices two weeks ago and stated that the entrance



exit is what it is and obviously the popularity of the carwash especially on Tuesdays when they do their discounts and he does believe the city needs to see if there is something they know of that they have dealt with in other locations that they can do here but that is not a conversation he has had yet with them. Venz questioned if the city could have an Ordinance not allowing a no left turn where people would have to go up and turn the other way and feel it is a safety thing. Camp stated that it would fall under the traffic calming where in this location you are dealing with a high volume at certain points at times during the day and could have some engineering analysis done but he would still like to have a conversation with Club Carwash first to see if there is anything they can do together before the city starts having an engineer look at possible solutions. Venz just hates to see people getting irate and going into road rage and something happen. He was really glad to hear Michael tell the council about the savings and hopes the city can do a lot more on water main lines or anywhere the city can improve.

Councilman Tinnin – Mentioned he was looking at Greg’s pictures on the Friday update and something similar to what Councilman Dennis talked about is that we all flush our toilets, and we don’t care, and we don’t know where everything goes and there is a lot of people behind the scenes taking care of all those things. Looking at those pictures you always hear about six to eight people standing around the hole looking at a water break and one guy working but nobody cares when a guy is in the hole at 3am when it is 20 degrees outside and expresses his appreciation of what the guys do.

Mayor Richards – Stated everything has been covered and agrees with what everyone has said. Stated we have a great city and want to keep it that way and we all want to keep it that way and it wouldn’t be that way if it wasn’t for the street department, the water department, parks department, police department, fire department, and all the administrative personnel that the city has. He mentioned he does not get that many phone calls and some of the one’s he does get are not so good but stated every department is doing a good job and council is doing a great job and thinks the city has a great working relationship between the city council, the city administrator, himself and that is what makes things happen especially Greg and Michael on a day-to day basis he does not have to worry if he does not come in that day because he knows he is being informed on things.

IX. Adjournment

Mayor Richards entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Councilman Boyer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Venz.



Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Aye
Councilman Collier:	Absent
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Aye
Councilman Dennis:	Aye
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Ayes

Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

3/24/2025

Date - Approved by Council

Leah Smith
City Clerk
City of Festus, Missouri