

Special City Council Meeting January 9, 2020 (Thursday, January 9, 2020)

Generated by Jennifer R Sorrell on Friday, January 10, 2020

Council Members present

Councilwoman Carolin Harvey, Councilman Adam Loos, Councilwoman Jessica Bradshaw, Councilman Jeff Doherty, Councilman Lee Fronabarger, Councilman Tom Grant, and Mayor John M Henry

Meeting called to order at 6:01 PM

1. Preliminaries to the City Council Meeting

Procedural: 1.1 **Roll Call**

Procedural: 1.2 **Citizens' Comments and Questions**

Procedural: 1.3 **Council Comments, General Announcements, and Proclamations**

Councilman Grant wished everyone a happy New Year.

Councilwoman Harvey announced the Martin Luther King celebration on January 19 at the Civic Center.

2. General Business of the City Council

Discussion: 2.1 **City Council Discussion Regarding the Financial, Operational, and Organizational Information Received from the Carbondale Park District**

City Council members requested additional or more detailed information regarding resident versus nonresident usage; a breakdown of the same for each program under the various categories; the adopted 2020 budget, 2019 audit, tax levy, and pay plan; the 2019 revenues and expenditures report for the Super Splash Park; details for the debt repayment schedule as to the projects and what is being paid off; projected expenditures and revenues; future capital improvements and capital outlay; a legal summary of the different approaches that can be taken for merging operations; history of the bond debt issued to build the golf course, any refinancing of that; and any bond debt that was issued to build the clubhouse, to include other items for which the proceeds from refinancing were utilized.

Discussion by the City Council pertained to the auditor's analysis of the records provided to the City, questions about the boundaries of the two bodies, increasing amounts borrowed through tax anticipation warrants, and remarks regarding the Park District's long term viability.

Discussion: 2.2 **City Council Discussion Regarding the Process of Exploring a Merger with the Carbondale Park District**

City Council members suggested looking at other nearby cities' structures and operations; continuing the work that is already in process; considering specifics of a merger, should the Park District agree to do so, of matters such as integration of employees from the two bodies; quantifying efficiencies to be gained; conducting a comparison of assets; seeking assurances

from the Park District that they desire to utilize the Superblock for tournaments and will devote resources for such purposes; receiving proposals from Staff about a possible approach for a merger, if one can be agreed upon; whether or not this will be feasible for the City; comparing a portion of the package liquor tax to what is available for programming and maintenance in the Park District's budget; a proposed 20 year intergovernmental agreement; and establishing a green space inventory. There was also a request to receive additional details regarding full-time and part-time employees.

City Council discussion included the findings of a Property Tax Relief task force as it relates to government consolidation; the language utilized for the advisory referendum; noting that some matters are not quantifiable; the ability to generate funds or redirect funds for park purposes; concerns that there are not funds to divert for this purpose; considering the question of whether the City wants to take on the golf course; how perspectives and concerns have changed from the beginning of this process to the present; utilizing a portion of the existing package liquor tax ; that the income from cannabis sales is unknown at this time; remarks about how commonplace it is for parks to operate under a municipality's umbrella; comments that the necessary taxes will continue to be paid by the taxpayers whether it continues as is or if the entities merge; concerns about the sustainability of the Park District if the City does nothing; and individual opinions, as well as responses to public questions.

Public Comments:

Chuck Paprocki agreed that money is an important issue, but encouraged considering an increase of available services.

Carrie Martin shared her personal considerations about where to live when she retired and to consider broader implications.

Priscilla Pimentel expressed the concern about maintaining programming for youth, the effects of lack of programming for the youth as it relates to violence, assurances for maintaining programming during lean times, and the impact of early swimming education.

Charlie Howe commented on the loss of population, considering what the public wants, and finding more options. He later commented about Green Earth's operations.

Carmen (no last name provided) inquired about how many parks there were in Carbondale.

3. Adjournment of the City Council Meeting

Procedural: 3.1 Adjourn meeting

There being no further business to come before the public body, the meeting was declared adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Jennifer R. Sorrell, City Clerk

Date