



General Government & Public Safety Committee Meeting

Minutes

Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:45 pm

CENTRALIA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

114 S. Rollins Street, Centralia, MO 65240

The General Government and Public Safety Committee Meeting will begin at approximately 6:45 p.m., immediately following the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee Meeting. This meeting could begin sooner or later, depending on the length of the other meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Minutes:

Alderman Robert Hudson called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

2. ATTENDANCE

Minutes:

Aldermen Jessica Orsini, Robert Hudson, David Wilkins, Harold Deckerd, Don Rodgers, and Landon Magley answered roll call. Others present: City Administrator Tara Strain, Public Works & Utilities Director Matthew Rusch, City Attorney Cydney Mayfield, Street & Sanitation Dept. Foreman Deme Towne, Fire Chief Denny Rusch, Officer Larry Dietzel & Deputy City Clerk Beth Kable. Citizens present: Linda Bormann.

PUBLIC SAFETY

3. POLICE DEPARTMENT

a. Activity Report

Minutes:

City Administrator Tara Strain reported that she had talked to Chief Harlan Hatton about the issues with peddlers with no license and the police department is aware of the situation and the violators have been warned and will start receiving citations. If citizens see them, they are reminded to call 311.

b. Chief of Police Monthly Report

4. FIRE DEPARTMENT

a. Activity Report

Minutes:

Fire Chief Denny Rusch said that calls have been down lately except for the calls about downed lines along Jefferson due to the fiber company installing new service. They are also getting ready for Christmas and will bag candy on December 23 in the community room.

5. OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY**a. Emergency Management****Minutes:**

City Administrator Tara Strain said that Boone County Emergency Management contacted her about a class they will be hosting on December 16th for county leaders and was hoping for someone from the city to attend.

b. Protective Inspection**GENERAL GOVERNMENT & FINANCE****6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****a. Chamber of Commerce Reports****Minutes:**

City Administrator Tara Strain gave the Chamber of Commerce report for Betty Gooding who was not able to attend the meeting. The ribbon cutting for Miss Mary Kate's Day Care will be December 11 and Sweet Saturday with carriage rides and home tours will be this Saturday, December 13th. They will also have a ribbon cutting at the Antioch Baptist Church for their new sanctuary on Sunday, December 14th. The tractor parade will be December 19th, and the Chamber is working closely with the Boone County Health Department to ensure everything runs smoothly.

7. PARK BOARD**a. Park Board Minute(s)****8. LIBRARY BOARD****a. Library Board Agenda(s)****b. Library Board Minute(s)****9. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****a. Balance Sheet****b. Budget Report****c. Accounts Payable Over \$1250****10. OTHER GENERAL GOVERNMENT****a. Discussion for Ballot Proposal to Increase Sales Tax to 2%****Minutes:**

City Administrator Tara Strain said that City Attorney Cydney Mayfield has asked the Boone County Collector how much impact the senior tax credit will have on our tax revenue. It will be somewhat unpredictable because the tax break is different for everyone. Tara shared tax history from the past 5 years to

help the board see the trends of tax revenue. There will be a hygienic product tax exemption that will take effect, so this will also decrease sales tax revenue. Overall, the tax revenues for the city are trending down and with the new tax breaks it will go down more. Alderman Orsini asked Cydney if there was a potential bill in legislation to end sales tax on food and she said there was nothing for certain, but it is on the agenda for several groups for the next session. Alderman Orsini thinks that a 1% raise is too much. The raise will make our sales tax just over 9% and she thinks that is too high and suggests a .5% raise at this time. Mayor Chris Cox said that according to his figures, tax revenue has gone down over the last 2 years and we should start to make plans to accommodate for the loss. Alderman Hudson thought that if we were going to put this issue on the ballot, we should go ahead and ask for 1% rather than ask for a .5% this year and have to ask for another .5% in a couple years. He is in favor of asking for 1% to try to make up for the loss in revenue. All aldermen agreed that they would rather go ahead with asking for a 1% raise on the next ballot. Mayor Cox reminded everyone that the Use Tax would be the fairest way to make up the shortfall, but it has failed in the past.

b. Discussion for Ordinance to Amend Chapter 5 of the Centralia City Code

Minutes:

City Administrator Tara Strain asked everyone to review the changes made to Chapter 5 in order to close some gaps in the wording to prohibit people living in houses without utilities. Alderman Hudson asked about the procedure for shut offs for unpaid utility bills and Tara said that they will have 7 days to pay the balance and will then get a warning of compliance. They will have 30 days after that to pay before further action is taken.

11. ADJOURN

Minutes:

There being no further business to discuss, Alderman Rodgers made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Wilkins seconded the motion. On a call by Alderman Hudson for ayes and nays the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Vote results:

Ayes: 5 / Nays: 0 / Abstains: 0