

City of Muscatine
In-Depth City Council Minutes
7:00 p.m. – April 9, 2020

This meeting was held electronically due to meeting regulations regarding the spread of COVID-19.

Mayor Broderson called the City Council In-Depth meeting for Thursday, April 9, 2020, to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers present were: Hopkins, Froelich, Malcolm, Gordon, Brockert, Jindrich and Brackett.

Councilmember Jindrich moved to approve the second reading of Ordinance #2020-0118, approving the vacation of alley right-of-way in block 29 of the Original Town of Muscatine. Seconded by Councilmember Froelich.
Vote: Ayes – 7, Nays – 0, Motion carried.

Councilmember Gordon moved to approve the second reading of Ordinance #2020-0119, amending the rental housing code and relocating the rental housing code and other specific sections of the City Code relating to the regulations of property maintenance to a newly created title within the City Code. Seconded by Councilmember Brackett.
Vote: Ayes – 7, Nays – 0, Motion carried.

Councilmember Hopkins moved to approve a Request changing the dates for this year's free electronic drop off week from April 27th thru May 2nd to July 13th thru July 18th, and the free tire drop off week from May 11th thru May 16th to July 20th thru July 25th. Seconded by Councilmember Brockert.
Vote: Ayes – 7, Nays – 0, Motion carried.

At this time Mayor Broderson stated there were concerns with City Council and local businesses regarding the 2nd Street Streetscape Project and if the work could be moved up or delayed to accommodate the businesses impacted by COVID-19.

There were questions from City Council regarding the timing of the work to be performed, how much access would be lost to businesses, if the project could be delayed, if delaying the project would affect the funding of the project, and the possibility of expediting the project while the businesses are already closed.

Public Works Director Brian Stineman was present to give an overview of the plans and timelines anticipated for the project. He stated the work for phase I is set to start on Monday April 13th and be completed no later than October, 2020. Phase II would run from January 2021-October 2021.

Mr. Stineman shared the contractors plan to do the work in phases in order to keep access to businesses available at all times with the exception of when concrete was being poured in front of the business doors.

Mr. Stineman stated in regards to delaying the project until 2021, there would be no loss of funding as this is a City funded project however; the city would spend approximately \$650,000 in delay fees to the contractor to cover expenses incurred by them.

Mr. Stineman stated that the sewer work that is planned as part of this project is failing and if not done this year could become an emergency fix and would have to be done anyway.

Finance Director Nancy Lueck stated that the money used for this project was being borrowed through bonds and there were guidelines as to how long the City would have to spend the money for the project.

Eric Reader, Greater Muscatine Area Chamber of Commerce, asked that the City make efforts to get feedback from the downtown businesses and stay in communication with them through the process.

There was a consensus with City Council for Mr. Stineman to contact the contractor and discuss the possibilities of expediting the project and to discuss plans to do so.

Councilmembers requested that they receive weekly updates throughout the duration of this project.

Councilmember Jindrich discussed the possibility of the City having a small business loan/grant to help the businesses that have been affected.

At this time City Department Heads were present to give updates regarding changes in City services due to COVID-19 regulations. These include no public access to City buildings, closure of Art Center and Library, change in Muscabus routes, processes for making payments, process for applying for various permits and available online options for programs being offered by various departments.

Communication from City Council Members.

Councilmember Gordon asked that residents be respectful of neighbors when burning in fire pits, and burn clean wood not debris.

Councilmember Brackett encouraged citizens to stay home if possible and if out to wear a mask.

Mayor Broderson thanked the Teamster Union for donating and delivering 8 gallons of hand sanitizer to the City for use by employees.

The closed session scheduled was cancelled due to technical difficulties.

Councilmember Brackett motioned for meeting to be adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Diana Broderson, Mayor

Greg Jenkins, Interim City Administrator