

July 28, 2020
Springfield, Missouri

The City Council met in special session July 28, 2020 at Historic City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ken McClure.

Roll Call

Present. Abe McGull, Matthew Simpson*, Mike Schilling*, Phyllis Ferguson*, Jan Fisk*, Craig Hosmer, Richard Ollis*, Andrew Lear* and Ken McClure. Absent. None.

*Members attending via videoconference.

**Budget
Amendment for
Springfield-Greene
County Health
Department**

Sponsor: Ollis. Council Bill 2020-179.

A special ordinance amending the budget of the Springfield-Greene County Health Department for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$2,748,859.00 to appropriate funds from the Public Health Fund balance to provide additional staff to respond to COVID-19; and declaring an emergency pursuant to City Charter Section 2.12.

Clay Goddard, Director of Public Health and Welfare, provided a brief overview of the proposed. Mr. Goddard explained when there is a public health crisis a Public Health Director will have a period of time when he/she will have to work with the resources present, but he/she knows there is federal funding in the pipeline. He noted it is how you get to the federal funding at the ground level that will define your response. Mr. Goddard noted when he heard the CARES Act funding had been approved by Congress, he knew money was on the way and would help as he continued to navigate his response to COVID-19. Mr. Goddard noted discussion on how to use federal funding would be built around the pillars of testing, containment, and mitigation. He noted testing and containment are expensive and labor intensive. Mr. Goddard noted he appeared before City Council 15 days ago and was asked by Councilman Lear if he was sure he was asking for enough money and at that time he had been in conversations with county commissioners about the CARES Act dollars that are under their control. Mr. Goddard noted he has also been having discussions with the state. He noted these funds are not quite ready to access, there is a process to access the funds, and there will be standards to be met in case of a potential Department of Treasury audit. Mr. Goddard explained how he has typically seen federal funds deployed and why he believes there has been a barrier to funds so far. He explained during the anthrax scare in 2001, federal funds flowed to the state, then to the Department of Health, and to the local levels with very detailed deliverables. Mr. Goddard explained the process was similar during the pandemic of H1N1. He noted this is not the current situation. Mr. Goddard explained federal funds have been sent to county governments to distribute to their local branches of government and not-for-profits; therefore, this has created an extra process and slowed the distribution of funds. He noted there has been a significant increase in the disease in the month of July, and he would like to move quickly in order to be prepared for any potential spike in the fall. Mr. Goddard noted the reason for the original budget adjustment was to fund disease investigation, laboratory capacity, and testing. He noted the proposed is for contact tracing and Katie Towns, Assistant Director of Health, will provide a brief overview.

Mayor McClure clarified the proposed is using funds from the Health Department's reserves and the intent is some, or all, of the money would be reimbursed through the CARES Act or any other sources.

Mr. Goddard answered affirmatively, but noted there are not any guarantees the money will be reimbursed. He noted he presented to the County Commission on Friday morning and as a matter of understanding of the gravity of the situation, the County Commission has asked him to apply for funds in the Healthcare round of funding rather than the originally scheduled last round of funding.

Mayor McClure asked Mr. Goddard to explain the process for applying for funds from the County.

Mr. Goddard explained the application process opened a week ago, there are different categories of reimbursement, and an advisory committee reviews all applications and makes the decisions on funding.

Councilman Simpson asked about rapid antigen tests for diagnostic purposes and if there have been any changes.

Mr. Goddard answered there was a conversation with the state Health Department last Friday regarding testing technology and there is agreement testing technology will continue to evolve. He noted Washington University in St. Louis is working on a saliva-based test. He noted he verbalized to the state need testing capacity in the community, cannot rely on commercial vendors because some of the major labs have had significant delays recently. Mr. Goddard noted the state Health Department agreed and they do have funds to provide assistance.

Katie Towns, Assistant, provided a brief overview of the proposed. Ms. Towns explained some of the Public Health Fundamentals, explain the disease investigation process, and define epidemiology and contact tracing. She noted epidemiology identifies the source and transmission of the disease, monitors and tracks the disease, and develops guidelines to slow the spread of the disease. Ms. Towns explained contact tracing identifies people who have come in contact with a positive individual and initiates quarantine and symptom monitoring to slow the disease spread. She noted staff at the Public Health Department have monitored illnesses such as influenza and Hepatitis A as dictated by statistics and state statutes; however, the addition of COVID-19 has created a large need. Ms. Towns reviewed the Health Department's Disease Investigation Model. She noted the proposed is a request to expand the Epi-Extender Team or what many people think of as "contact tracing" with a contracted company. Ms. Towns noted if the proposed is passed it would allow some of the staff at the Health Department to return to their normal duties, as well as manage the high volume of cases in Greene County. She expressed her opinion there will be a spike in the fall due to gatherings, return of students to school, and fall enrollment at colleges and universities and this contract will allow the Health Department to respond accordingly.

Mayor McClure clarified the services provided are on a contract basis.

Ms. Towns answered affirmatively. She noted this is a Government Services Agreement and will only bill for services used.

Mayor McClure clarified the Health Department is estimating \$2.7 million, but will actually be based upon the need and will bill as costs are incurred.

Ms. Towns answered affirmatively. She noted the Health Department is also pursuing the contract on a six-month term.

Councilman Hosmer asked how the volunteers from the healthcare industry and universities fit into this process.

Mr. Goddard answered the volunteers are not a long-term solution, it is a team to address the current backlog of cases and the volunteers are assisting with the Investigation Team (disease investigation), not the Extender Team (contact tracing).

Councilman Hosmer asked if the Health Department is using cell phone data to locate where the infected person has been.

Ms. Towns answered the Health Department does not use cell phone data for tracking.

Councilman Lear asked if there are multiple vendors available, if the Health Department has selected a vendor, and if the Health Department has selected a vendor how was the vendor vetted.

Ms. Towns noted the Health Department began this process months ago and have been in contact with multiple vendors. She noted the selected vendor has had contracts in other states, has worked with the CDC, and has layers of experience in this type of contact tracing.

Councilman Lear asked if any of the staff from the vendor would be people from the local community or if they are people they already have on staff.

Ms. Towns answered the selected vendor will be working with staff they already have but have told Ms. Towns they will be post positions locally and pull from local talent.

Councilman Lear encouraged the Health Department to try to use local talent.

Mr. Goddard noted there are currently positions available from the last funding approval to the Health Department from City Council and they are looking for local talent.

An opportunity was given for citizens to express their views. There being no speakers the public hearing was declared closed.

There being no questions or comments, Mayor McClure called for a roll call vote.

City Council Bill 2020-179. Special Ordinance 27370 was approved by the following roll call vote: Ayes: Simpson, Ferguson, Fisk, Hosmer, Ollis, Lear, McGull, Schilling and McClure. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Closed Session

Councilman Hosmer moved City Council hold a closed meeting City Council will hold a closed meeting to discuss legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys pursuant to Section 610.021(1), RSMo.; and this meeting, record, and vote shall be closed, and the City Council shall stand adjourned at the end of the closed session.

Councilman McGull seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following roll call vote: Schilling, Ferguson, Fisk, Hosmer, Ollis, Lear, McGull, Simpson and McClure. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.