

**CITY OF HAZELWOOD
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Hazelwood City Council was called to order by Mayor Matthew G. Robinson at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, in the Council Chambers of Hazelwood City Hall, 415 Elm Grove Lane.

Mayor Robinson asked those present to join in a moment of silent meditation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

On roll call the following members of the Council were present:

Robert C. Smith
Jen Hatton
William C. Hoops, Jr.
Job Marquez
Kelly Wadlow
Matthew G. Robinson
Lisa M. Matlock
Warren H. Taylor

Council Member Robert Aubuchon was not present. City Clerk Julie Lowery declared a quorum was present. Also present were Interim City Manager David Leezer and City Attorney Kevin O'Keefe.

AGENDA

There being no amendments proposed, Mr. Taylor moved, seconded by Mr. Hoops, the adoption of the agenda as printed. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Matlock moved, seconded by Mr. Hoops, the adoption of the consent agenda as printed. The following vote was recorded on the motion:

AYE - 8

NAY - 0

Mr. Smith
Ms. Hatton
Mr. Hoops
Mr. Marquez
Ms. Wadlow
Mayor Robinson
Ms. Matlock
Mr. Taylor

The motion passed unanimously and the consent agenda, including a closed meeting immediately following the regular meeting to discuss litigation and consult with the City Attorney in accordance with the provisions of RSMo 610.021(1), was adopted.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

Ms. Matlock moved, seconded by Mr. Hoops, to approve the minutes of the December 18 regular Council meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

**EMPLOYEE
SERVICE AWARDS**

As his biography was read, Fire Chief Dan Luley received his 25-year service award.

**EMPLOYEE
INTRODUCTIONS**

Interim City Manager David Leezer introduced newly hired Human Resource Manager Tiffany Paul.

Police Chief James Hudanick introduced newly hired Police Officers Ashley Johnson and Jason Gramling.

**DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE CITATION
FOR VALOR**

Chief Hudanick presented the Distinguished Service Citation for Valor to Police Officer Austin Bishop for his bravery and selflessness during a house fire in October 2024.

Chief Hudanick stated Officer Bishop's heroism serves as a powerful reminder of the dedication and courage exhibited by law enforcement officers who put themselves in harm's way to safeguard others. In the face of immediate danger and without hesitation, Officer Bishop entered a burning residence not once but twice, driven by the urgent need to rescue both a human occupant and a pet trapped inside. Fully aware of the personal risk involved, Officer Bishop demonstrated unparalleled courage, prioritizing the safety of others above their own. His actions during this critical incident reflect not only extraordinary bravery but also an unwavering commitment to duty and the values of public service. Officer Bishop was also named Employee of the Third Quarter.

**PURPLE HEART
AWARD**

Chief Hudanick presented the Purple Heart award to Police Officer Steve Andreski for recognition of the injuries sustained in the line of duty during a traffic crash in October 2023.

Chief Hudanick stated this incident resulted in significant injuries to Officer Andreski's head, lower back, and knee, rendering him unable to return to work since the event. On the day of the crash, Officer Andreski was actively fulfilling his responsibilities, putting himself at risk to serve and protect the community. Chief Hudanick stated the Purple Heart is awarded to those who endure personal harm in the course of their service, and Officer Andreski's situation is a poignant example of the physical toll that such dedication can entail. Despite the challenges posed by recovery, his bravery and commitment to public safety remain an inspiration to colleagues and the community alike.

PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS - None

CITIZENS HEARINGS AND PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

Mayor Robinson explained the procedures to be followed during a hearing. He invited anyone desiring to make a comment to come forward at this time.

THANK YOU Vic-Thor Rose 5037 Tulip Tree Lane commended the Public Works Department for clearing the roads during the snow event earlier in the month.

INVITATION TO MLK TRIBUTE Alexis Robinson and Annette Hood, members of the Community Enrichment Commission, invited the City Council and staff to the 23rd annual tribute to Doctor Martin Luther King Junior on Sunday, January 19, at 7 p.m., at Civic Center East.

CITY MANAGER'S STATUS REPORT Mr. Leezer stated he submitted a 90-day plan to the Council and proposed that a Department Director present before the Council to discuss activities in their department.

Mr. Leezer sent the Council an End of Year Report, highlighting departments' successes in 2024. Mr. Leezer commended the Streets Department for their exceptional work during the recent storms, as well as the Police and Fire Departments for their contributions.

Mr. Leezer addressed complaints from residents regarding driveways and mailboxes being blocked by snow pushed by plows, stating the primary goal is to keep streets clear and safe for traffic.

Mr. Leezer announced a Missouri Department of Transportation open house for the Route 67 corridor upgrades will be held on Thursday, January 16, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Civic Center East.

Mr. Leezer announced that effective February 3, Code Enforcement will fall under the Police Department's jurisdiction.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will host a virtual meeting on the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) on Thursday, January 23, from 6 to 8 p.m., providing updates on remediation projects in our region.

PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

COMMUNICATIONS

MLK INVITATION An invitation to the Martin Luther King Junior celebration was received from the Community Enrichment Commission.

CHARTER COMMUNICATION	A notice of upcoming price changes was received from Charter Communications.
EWGCG BRIEFINGS	The December 19 issue of Briefings was received from the East-West Gateway Council of Governments.
MLMSTL NEWSLETTER	The January 2025 issue of The Link Newsletter was received from the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis.
EWGCG BRIEFINGS	The January 2 issue of Briefings was received from the East-West Gateway Council of Governments.
REQUEST FOR BUSINESS LICENSE FEE WAIVER	A request for a waiver of their \$25 business license fee, based on their tax-exempt status, was received from The Hope Light Foundation, 908 Hazelvalley Drive.
EWGCG BRIEFINGS	The January 9 issue of Briefings was received from the East-West Gateway Council of Governments.

Ms. Matlock moved, seconded by Mr. Hoops, to waive the business license fee and to receive and file all communications. The motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

COUNCIL RETREAT & CONTRACT	Mayor Robinson stated the Council needs to vote on a new contract with AAIM and schedule meetings individually and as a group in order to prepare for the Council retreat.
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Ms. Matlock asked that the retreat be put on hold. She feels this money was not well spent and the Council should be able to work out their differences as a group.

Ms. Wadlow asked if the cost was separate from the last counseling sessions.

Mayor Robinson answered affirmatively.

Mayor Robinson explained that this initiative is aimed at resolving conflicts among members of the Council. He stated that the Council had publicly announced its commitment to finding a solution that would bring everyone together and prevent such conflicts from occurring in the future.

Ms. Hatton emphasized the importance of unity within the group, but also how important it was to be responsible with taxpayer funds. She stated that this matter should be addressed with maturity.

Ms. Matlock stated that there had been no follow-up from previous sessions, and this might be a suitable time to involve the Human Resources Manager that the City has hired.

Mr. O'Keefe reminded the Council that when all members are present for a meeting, it must be publicly posted and open to the public. This requirement may make it challenging to speak candidly with one another and meetings like this should have safeguards in place, such as a monitor, to ensure that discussions focus on interpersonal matters.

Ms. Wadlow asked if Mr. O'Keefe could be their intermediary.

Mr. O'Keefe replied if the Council wished, he would mediate their meeting.

Ms. Matlock motioned to approve the contract as stated. There being no second, the motion died on the floor and no action was taken.

BOARD/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS	Mayor Robinson nominated Karen Rahmberg, Nick Ray, and Courtney Ray, for appointment to the Green Committee Board and Lisa Simpson to the Neighborhood Watch Commission.
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Mr. Taylor moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, to approve the preceding appointments. The motion passed unanimously.

SNOW REMOVAL	Mayor Robinson announced that the City received numerous phone calls expressing gratitude for the snow removal efforts.
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MCDONNELL BLVD.	Mr. Smith requested an update on the closure of James S. McDonnell Boulevard.
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Mr. Leezer responded that he would get a timeline for reopening and provide that information to the Council.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

AMEND CHAPTER 340 HANDS-FREE DRIVING	Chief Hudanick stated staff recommends amending <i>Chapter 340. Miscellaneous Driving Rules</i> , to add Section 340.240: Use of Electronic Communication Devices while Driving.
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Chief Hudanick stated that the Missouri General Assembly, through the passage of Section 304.822, RSMo., has preempted local jurisdictions from enacting regulations concerning the use of electronic communication devices by motor vehicle operators that are not in strict conformity with state law. The City of Hazelwood aims to ensure compliance with state law by updating local ordinances. This law aims to enhance road safety by reducing distracted driving incidents while respecting individual rights and state reporting requirements.

Ms. Matlock moved, seconded by Ms. Wadlow, to concur with the staff recommendation to amend *Chapter 340: Miscellaneous Driving Rules* and to place the draft bill on this agenda for introduction. The motion passed unanimously and the bill was added to the agenda as item 17.a.

AMEND CHAPTER 215 Chief Hudanick stated staff recommends amending UNLAWFUL DISCHARGE *Chapter 215. Unlawful Discharge*.

Chief Hudanick stated the proposed amendments to Chapter 215 of the Code include the addition of Blair's Law Provisions, which explicitly prohibits the reckless discharge of a firearm within or into the City limits. This aligns the City's regulations with Missouri State law (Section 571.031, RSMo. Supp. 2024) to enhance public safety. The proposed amendment also includes repealing Special Permits for firearm discharge, which allowed the City Manager to issue permits for firearm discharge and included permit application processes, safety determinations, and revocation procedures. Chief Hudanick stated these changes modernize the ordinance, remove outdated language, and emphasize safety and alignment with state law.

Mr. Smith inquired about the quarter-mile exemption concerning any occupied structure and whether the City has any areas where this would be a concern.

Chief Hudanick responded that the area located off Missouri Bottom Road could be a potential area where such an exemption is permitted, however, the distance factor would need to be examined before any permits would be granted.

Mr. Hoops moved, seconded by Ms. Hatton, to concur with the staff recommendation to amend *Chapter 215. Unlawful Discharge* and to place the draft bill on this agenda for introduction. The motion passed unanimously and the bill was added to the agenda as item 17.b.

RENTAL REGISTRATION UPDATE	Chief Hudanick reported to the Council that the Rental Registration program is up and running and gave an update on the overall progress.
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Chief Hudanick stated staff has created a 260-page operating manual designed to assist homeowners and renters with the new program. Data indicates that approximately 48% of residential properties within the City limits are rentals. The public will be educated on the processes involved, and the program is expected to be fully implemented by July 1, 2025.

Ms. Wadlow asked whether staff would report to the Council regarding information related to their Wards.

Chief Hudanick replied affirmatively if that is the wish of the Council.

**FEE FEE &
FLAMINGO SPEEDING
UPDATE**

Chief Hudanick stated the City is continuing its efforts to place speed cushions and signage on Fee Fee Road and Flamingo Drive.

**BUYOUT
RESERVE AT
WINDING CREEK**

Project Development Coordinator Nikki Miller stated staff has been working with the owners and the sub-consultant of the Reserve at Winding Creek apartment complex to apply for funding for a buyout project.

Ms. Miller stated the proposed project would be funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Swift Current program. The project would consist of property acquisition of 19 buildings on Normandie Court, demolition and restoration to open space land. Once the buyout is complete the City will be responsible for the maintenance of the 18.86 acres of property. The proposed project includes a local match of 25% and a federal share of 75%, totaling \$12,435,911.34. The property owner will provide the required local match amounting to \$3,108,977.84.

Mr. Smith asked how Ms. Miller came up with the total amount.

Ms. Miller responded to total is based off an appraisal and includes the cost of demolition, title paperwork, and any necessary abatement.

Ms. Miller stated the paperwork would first be submitted to the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency, and then forwarded to FEMA. She stated the entire process would take at least a year before a decision is reached, with an additional two years to complete the project.

The Reserve at Winding Creek's representative Charlie Attar was available for questions and gave a brief description of ownership of the apartment complex.

Mr. Smith asked how far up Normandie Court the property went.

Mr. Attar responded behind the Mosque.

Ms. Matlock moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, to concur with the staff recommendation to approve the application for a buyout project. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT – None

CITY CLERK'S REPORT - None

**COMMISSION AND
BOARD REPORTS**

Ms. Matlock moved, seconded by Mr. Hoops, to receive and file the minutes of the September 12 City Plan Commission, the October 24 Pension Plan Board of Trustees, and the November 12 Community Enrichment Commission meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS - None

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF BILLS

AMEND CHAPTER 340 Mayor Robinson called for the first reading of a bill to amend
HANDS-FREE DRIVING *Chapter 340: Miscellaneous Driving Rules*, to add Section
340.240: Use of Electronic Communication Devices while
Driving.

There were no objections and Bill 5154 was read by title only:

AN ORDINANCE ENACTING SECTION 340.240 OF THE HAZELWOOD CITY CODE RELATING TO HANDS-FREE DRIVING.

Bill 5154 will be on the agenda for second reading on February 5.

AMEND CHAPTER 215 Mayor Robinson called for the first reading of a bill to amend
UNLAWFUL DISCHARGE *Chapter 215. Unlawful Discharge*.

There were no objections and Bill 5155 was read by title only:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 215.140 AND PROHIBITING THE RECKLESS DISCHARGE OF A FIREARM WITHIN OR INTO THE CITY LIMITS.

Bill 5155 will be on the agenda for second reading on February 5.

SECOND READING OF BILLS AND ACTION ON BILLS - None

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MLK TRIBUTE Mayor Robinson announced the Martin Luther King Jr. tribute
would be held on Sunday, January 19, at 7 p.m. at Civic
Center East.

CITY HALL CLOSED Mayor Robinson announced City Hall would be closed on
January 20, for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

CITY HALL CLOSED Mayor Robinson announced City Hall would be closed to the
TO PUBLIC public on January 27.

COUNCIL MEETING Mayor Robinson announced the next regular Council meeting
would be held Wednesday, February 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the
Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council,
the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Matthew G. Robinson - Mayor
City of Hazelwood, Missouri

ATTEST:

Julie Lowery, CMC - City Clerk
City of Hazelwood, Missouri