CALL TO ORDER:
The City of Bristol, Tennessee City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Mahlon Luttrell on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was held electronically via Zoom.

ROLL CALL:
Present: Mayor Mahlon Luttrell, Vice Mayor Vince Turner, Councilwoman Margaret Feierabend, Councilman Chad Keen, and Councilwoman Lea Powers.

Others Present: City Manager William Sorah, City Attorney Danielle Smith, City Recorder Tara Musick, Director of Development Services Tim Beavers, and other members of City staff.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:
Tim Johnston of Beech Grove United Methodist Church gave the invocation. Councilman Chad Keen led the pledge of allegiance.

DISCUSSION OF NECESSITY FOR CONDUCTING ELECTRONIC MEETING:
City Attorney Danielle Smith explained the requirements for holding an electronic meeting. The electronic meeting is necessary to protect public safety, health, and welfare due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Vice Mayor Vince Turner motioned to continue the meeting electronically and Councilwoman Margaret Feierabend seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

AGENDA ADDITIONS AND / OR CHANGES:
City Manager Bill Sorah stated there were two late additions to the agenda, Resolution 21-17 concerning the relocation of Island Road and Resolution 21-18 authorizing engineering services for the project. As these were late additions, the City Manager will read the resolutions at the appropriate point on the agenda.

PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS:
Human Trafficking Awareness Day – Councilwoman Feierabend read a proclamation recognizing January 11, 2021 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day in Bristol, Tennessee. Natalie Ivey, Executive Director of the Community Coalition Against Human Trafficking (CCAHT), was in attendance to accept the proclamation. Ms. Ivey thanked Council for the recognition and gave additional information on trafficking in the area. In East Tennessee, particularly the smaller communities, children experiencing trafficking are most commonly being trafficked by a family member or family friend. This crime is happening now in our community and often in plain sight. It will take all of the community working together to become educated, recognize, and respond to stop this victimization. She shared contact information for their regional office in Knoxville as well as the local office in Johnson City.
PRESENTATIONS:

FY 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report - Mr. James Bence of Mauldin and Jenkins presented the Independent Auditor’s Report for the year ended June 30, 2020. He reviewed the background of Mauldin and Jenkins. He is the engagement partner this year, has been with the firm for 18 years, and worked with local governments the entire time. Adam Fraley was the quality assurance partner this year and he has been with the firm 25 years and is also their government industry service leading partner. The Fiscal Year 2020 financial statements received an unmodified opinion meaning there were no material weaknesses or instances of material noncompliance. Major programs were economic development and Title I which also had no material weaknesses or instances of noncompliance. The GFOA recommends three to four months of reserves and the City meets the industry standards. He reviewed the cash flow trends of the proprietary funds and upcoming standards and implementation dates.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Ordinance 20-18 – An Ordinance to Amend Section 309 (R-E District) of the Zoning Ordinance

The City Manager said Section 309 of the zoning ordinance deals with the Established Residential District (R-E). This is the newest of our residential districts as it was developed in 2009. In administering the permitted uses within the R-E district over the past couple of years, staff has noticed ambiguity and lack of clarity in some of the related text. As result, over the last several months Development Services staff and the Planning Commission reviewed the provisions guiding development in the R-E District in an effort to provide clarity and reduce ambiguity in the interpretation of the existing language contained in the ordinance. The Planning Commission concluded the review during their November 16th meeting and unanimously recommended amendments to address these concerns. Council approved Ordinance 20-18 on first reading at the December 1, 2020 meeting. City Manager Sorah asked Cherith Young, Planning Services Manager, to detail the proposed revisions.

Ms. Young presented slides listing the changes and then summarized the main points which are to update the purpose, update the permitted use and special use permitted lists, clearly define the residential front façade and what constitutes residential front façades for structures in the R-E District, and to articulate the requirement of a build-to range. Something new for the R-E District is a build-to range for the front façade of the structure rather than what is typically referred to as a setback. Ms. Young then provided detailed information on each change.

There was no public comment and the public hearing was closed.

Ordinance 20-19 – An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Map of Bristol, Tennessee by Designating Certain Property as B-1A (Limited Business / Institutional) – 837 Hill Street

City Manager Sorah summarized this is an owner-initiated request for the rezoning of property located at 837 Hill Street. The property, comprised of 0.18 acres, is owned by Wallace Properties Management Group, LLC and is currently zoned R-E (Established Residential). The owner requests the property be rezoned to B-1A (Limited Business/Institutional). There is currently a residential structure located on the parcel. If the rezoning request is approved, the structure will be demolished and the parcel will be incorporated into the existing inventory lot located at the corner of Hill Street and 9th Street. The rezoning request was considered by the Bristol Regional Planning Commission during their November 16th meeting and received a favorable recommendation. Council approved Ordinance 20-19 on first reading at the December 1, 2020 meeting.
Cherith Young, Planning Services Manager, presented the current zoning map and associated information as well as the Future Land Use Map of 837 Hill Street and the surrounding area. Included were pictures of the parcel and the vacant structure. She detailed the permitted uses of the current R-E zoning and of the proposed B-1A zoning. Public notification of the rezoning request was given through signage placed at 837 Hill Street and adjacent property owners received letters of notification with a comment sheet that could be returned to the City. Staff received two comment sheets both of which were in favor of the rezoning. In addition, two phone calls were received inquiring about the rezoning and were neither in support of nor in opposition to the request. Due to the zoning of the adjacent parcel being in agreement with the Future Land Use Plan and Policies, staff requests approval of the proposed rezoning. At their November 16th meeting, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to forward a favorable recommendation to City Council.

There was no public comment and the public hearing was closed

APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS: None

APPOINTMENTS:

Library Board – City Council addressed the vacancy of two seats on the Library Property Board for a term of office ending December 31, 2023. Councilwoman Feierabend, Vice Mayor Turner, and Mayor Luttrell each spoke on behalf of both candidates. Ms. Anne Rife and Ms. Allyson Rutherford were unanimously appointed by roll call vote to the Library Board to serve a term of office ending December 31, 2023.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

A. First Reading of New Ordinances: None

B. Second Reading of New Ordinances:

Ordinance 20-18 – An Ordinance to Amend Section 309 (R-E District) of the Zoning Ordinance

This item was summarized during the Public Hearing portion earlier on this Agenda. Councilwoman Lea Powers motioned to approve the ordinance and Councilman Keen seconded. Councilwoman Feierabend expressed her appreciation for the hard work of the Planning Commission and City staff to improve the clarity and help the guidance be as user friendly as possible. Councilwoman Powers thanked Planning staff for the education, guidance, and professionalism they provide to the Planning Commission enabling them to do a good job on behalf of the community. There were no further comments, a roll call vote was taken, and Ordinance 20-18 passed unanimously on second reading.

Ordinance 20-19 – An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Map of Bristol, Tennessee by Designating Certain Property as B-1A (Limited Business / Institutional) – 837 Hill Street

This item was summarized during the Public Hearing portion earlier on this Agenda. Councilwoman Feierabend asked if Wallace or the homeowner made the initial request for the rezoning. Wallace Properties Management Group, LLC, the current property owner, made the request, but the owner of the home on the property was also supportive of the request. Councilwoman Powers said it was a great match between homeowner and business. Councilwoman Feierabend commented there are several nice homes in that area and while she supports growth she also desires to see the integrity of those homes
preserved. Councilwoman Powers stated a home nearby recently sold for a very good price and there are on-going renovations of several homes in that area and she feels the area is beginning to show some new life through renovations. Councilman Keen motioned to approve the ordinance and Vice Mayor Turner seconded. There were no further comments, a roll call vote was taken, and Ordinance 20-19 passed unanimously on second reading.

C. Resolutions:

Resolution 21-1 – A Resolution Amending Appropriation Agreement with Believe in Bristol, Inc. for Program Support

City Manager Sorah mentioned the City has an existing appropriation agreement with the nonprofit organization Believe In Bristol (BIB) serving our downtown community and this resolution is an amendment to that agreement. As Council discussed during the December 1st business meeting as well as the work session December 15th, there is recognition that our food and beverage businesses have suffered, perhaps disproportionately, in regards to the business sector within our community as result of the pandemic. In trying to explore creative ideas that might help offset some of the financial impact, City staff worked with Believe in Bristol staff to consider different alternatives. One was to provide equipment and outdoor spaces for outdoor dining opportunities as the weather moderates. This quickly shifted to a grant opportunity which other communities have utilized that will allow restaurants downtown as well as throughout the City of Bristol, Tennessee to take advantage of an opportunity to secure outdoor equipment that might facilitate outdoor dining at their restaurants. This matter was discussed by Maggie Elliott, BIB Executive Director, with the BIB Board and received a favorable response. The City Manager requested Ms. Elliott provide additional information.

Maggie Elliott informed Council some program guidelines have been established for grant applications. They will be offering one-time mini-grants up to $5,000 per business to help Bristol, Tennessee food and beverage businesses with costs to expand outdoor dining in 2021. The purpose is to support the economic sustainability of Bristol, Tennessee locally owned restaurants and preserve jobs. There are three eligible equipment grant tiers. The first includes supplies such as tables, umbrellas, and chairs with up to $1,000 in assistance. Tier II is tents and heaters with up to $2,500 in assistance. Tier III is greenhouse and igloo installations with assistance up to $5,000. All grant applications require site plans and permissions such as café permits upon application. Upon successful completion of application, each one will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis and recommended by the BIB Economic Vitality Committee, with the final vote by the BIB Executive Committee.

If this resolution is approved, the application period will open January 11th and end January 22nd. If any funding remains after the initial application period, a second round of applications will open February 1st. Eligibility requirements include that the BIB will award funds only to food and beverage businesses within city limits of Bristol, Tennessee. The applicants must be a legal business entity and show proof of secretary of state registration or business identification number. They must have 50 or fewer full-time employees or equivalent (two part-time equals one full-time). They must have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19 and show a documented minimum of 25% decline in revenue in comparison to any quarter in 2019 or 2020. The business must be in compliance with the Tennessee Pledge Guidelines, the Sullivan County Tennessee Executive Orders, and the Sullivan County Tennessee Health Department recommendations. If any business is found out of compliance, they risk forfeiting or returning the award to BIB. Corporate owned franchise businesses are not eligible, but independently owned and operated franchise businesses registered within the State of Tennessee are eligible if they meet the other program requirements. Deadline for submissions is January 22nd, applications review
will be January 25th – 27th, recommendations will be sent to the executive committee for January 29th voting, followed by award notification. The announcement of awards and potentially the next round of grant opportunities will follow on February 1st. Ms. Elliott reviewed the grant application specifics. She added that she had spoken with several food and beverage businesses in the downtown area and all were in favor of any assistance made available, but she would like the opportunity to speak with more restaurant and beverage businesses prior to opening the grant application process, hence, the selection of January 11th pending Council approval this evening.

Vice Mayor Turner asked who would follow up to ensure the grant money was used for the purpose intended and what if a recipient goes out of business shortly after receiving a grant and purchasing the equipment. Ms. Elliott replied they are reimbursable grants so receipts for the equipment must be shown to receive the money. If something slightly different than the items originally submitted was purchased, as long as it still meets the eligibility requirements and any applicable permissions / permits were obtained, BIB would work with them. However, in any case the purchase must be for outdoor dining specific uses. The other issue is addressed in the eligibility requirements with the requirement that funds must be exhausted by the recipient and the purchased equipment placed into use within ninety days of being awarded or subject to returning funds and materials to BIB. In addition, a summary of results must be provided within six months of receiving the grant detailing what they did and the outcome. At this point in time, some types of businesses are not eligible such as a food or beverage business tied with a government entity, government agencies, home-based businesses, churches, businesses that are not open to the public for regular hours, and mobile food vendors. Mayor Luttrell asked for a definition of ‘normal hours’ and Ms. Elliott replied things such as ‘by appointment only’ does not accomplish the mission of this program. The desire is for the businesses to fill the community need for more outdoor dining as well as to help keep their door open.

Councilman Keen made a motion to approve Resolution 21-1 and Councilwoman Powers seconded. Councilman Keen thanked City staff and BIB for the efforts to help address the needs of this specific sector of our business community. Councilwoman Feierabend mentioned it will be interesting to see how many people take advantage of it. The resolution then passed unanimously by roll call vote.

**Resolution 21-2 – A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the City of Bristol Redevelopment Plan by Creating the Volunteer Parkway South Redevelopment District**

The City Manager explained over the past eight months, efforts have been made to identify potential incentives to increase residential development within our city limits. Council has already approved several measures toward that goal and this is one of the last that staff proposed for consideration. Resolution 21-2 amends the City of Bristol Redevelopment Plan which was originally adopted in 2005. A redevelopment area is eligible for tax increment financing (TIF) for projects that meet the criteria. Initially, the City looked at redevelopment areas from a commercial perspective. There are three areas that were under consideration on the original redevelopment plan that were identified as potential use for residential development. In 2005, no action was taken on these sites. Staying consistent with the desires of Council to explore every opportunity to incentivize residential development, two areas are being brought to Council for consideration. The first is the Volunteer Parkway South Redevelopment District which Resolution 21-2 creates. As an initial step to approval of the redevelopment district, the matter was formally considered by the Bristol Housing Authority during its December 9th meeting. Following a public hearing, the proposed plan amendment received a unanimous vote of approval by its Board of Directors. Next in the process is for City Council to make a similar designation.
The Volunteer Parkway South Redevelopment District study area has historically functioned as a mixed-use development supporting a blend of race event related land uses such as retail vendors and campgrounds as well as multifamily residential developments. The study area also contains properties that are either vacant, underutilized, or not consistent with the highest use of the property. Joel Conkin of the Bristol Tennessee Housing Authority has provided TIF guidance to the City over the last several years and was in attendance to give additional information.

Mr. Conkin presented information on both the Volunteer Parkway South and the Hillside / Booher Road Redevelopment Districts as they are related and the latter is the focus of the next agenda item, Resolution 21-3. The Volunteer Parkway South is a new district and declaring it a district does not approve a TIF for any specific project, but makes that area eligible for future redevelopment tools that are available through the TIF statute which is the number one incentive tool. He presented maps showing the two districts and explained the two resolutions declare these properties are redevelopment districts, they meet the statutory definitions required to declare them redevelopment districts and make them eligible in the future for TIF should a developer bring forward a project in the boundaries of these districts. At the request of the City Manager, Mr. Conkin also provided information specific to the Hillside / Booher Road Development District and reiterated that Resolution 21-3 declares the designations previously stated for the Volunteer Parkway South district are the same for this district. Councilman Keen motioned to approve Resolution 21-2 and Vice Mayor Turner seconded.

Councilwoman Feierabend stated encouraging development in this area has been discussed for awhile and it is exciting for both of these areas to become redevelopment districts. She thanked everyone that worked on this task. There was no additional discussion and Resolution 21-2 passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Resolution 21-3 – A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the City of Bristol Redevelopment Plan by Creating the Hillside / Booher Road Redevelopment District

Councilwoman Feierabend motioned to approve Resolution 21-3 and Councilman Keen seconded. There was no discussion and Resolution 21-3 passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Resolution 21-4 – A Resolution Authorizing Entry into an Agreement for “Bristol is Ready” Marketing Campaign

City Manager Sorah mentioned that at City Council direction, staff has pursued the development of a marketing plan that could be developed in conjunction with Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES) to showcase our area, specifically Bristol, Tennessee as a desirable community especially in this telecommuting environment that has come to the forefront in recent months. A beautiful environment for recreation and exciting technology-based infrastructure are here for potential residents seeking to relocate from more densely populated urban areas to less congested urban areas making Bristol a prime candidate. The Community Relations staff has worked with our BTES partners and the High Roads Agency of Kingsport, to develop a plan. The City Manager requested Jon Luttrell, Director of Community Relations, give a program overview and talk about a proposed agreement that Resolution 21-4 supports to engage the services of the High Roads Agency for this marketing effort.

Mr. Luttrell stated there were discussions during the last two Council work sessions about the development of a campaign designed to leverage the funds that had been previously designated for tourism marketing activities and redirecting them to showcase community assets, not least of which is the available 10-gig fiber network from BTES. The goal is to spur population growth through enticing
professionals in long-term or permanent teleworking situations as result of the pandemic to consider Bristol, with a lower cost and higher quality of life, as their new home alternative. Desire was expressed about utilizing television advertising in some of the larger markets within the Southeastern United States. It was determined the best plan was to deploy the existing branding, the ‘Bristol Is’ concept in a very intentional manner to reinvigorate it and put it to work telling our story. Mr. Luttrell gave further details on how this would be accomplished while continuing to work in conjunction with the High Roads Agency of Kingsport, Tennessee.

The City and BTES have been working with the High Roads Agency on promoting the 10-gig availability, as well as some of our quality of life assets, for about two years. The agency proposes to create the “Bristol is Ready” campaign which will include 30-second broadcasts and cable television spots in the target market areas of Nashville, Tennessee and Atlanta, Georgia, programmatic video and social media advertising, and the development of a microsite to support viewing the web on a variety of devices. He gave an overview of the program and specifies about the various platforms. He showed a video that was produced in-house by BTN-TV and the draft homepage for the microsite at the BRISTOLISREADY.COM domain. The provision of these services by High Roads Agency will have a total cost of $78,700 which will be shared with BTES. The City’s portion of the project costs will total $49,000 and is available from uncommitted funds originally designated for Discover Bristol.

Councilman Keen asked about the project timeline. Mr. Luttrell replied if the resolution is approved this evening, the target start date is January 15th with a thirteen to fifteen week ad flight schedule in the two target markets. The domain is secured and the template has been set up so it will take minimal effort to activate the microsite, BRISTOLISREADY.COM. The information will be updated and fleshed out to include additional appropriate information such as an inventory of local available housing and residential construction incentives.

Councilwoman Powers is excited about the campaign and thinks the microsite is the key to the project and people, especially younger people, are getting more of their news through digital ad placements. She feels this is a cost efficient campaign and she complimented City staff on producing the video aspect and their collaboration with BTES and High Roads. Good job.

Councilman Keen asked about a way to determine the return on investment. Mr. Luttrell said they have been in discussion with High Roads about options to capture information through user requests and general digital analysis. They would like to be able to ‘tell the story’ of someone first hearing about Bristol then relocating to make Bristol their new home. Councilwoman Feierabend then asked for data as to how long it takes someone to decide to move or what helps to precipitate that decision so that we will know if this particular project was part of that process and help determine our next step. Mr. Luttrell commented that everyone is at a juncture trying to determine what the next steps are in terms of how the remote working environment and the quality of life in larger urban areas will look in six months. Different approaches will be tried to determine what works the best and be adjusted accordingly. Councilwoman Powers motioned to approve Resolution 21-4 and Vice Mayor Turner seconded. There was no further discussion and the resolution passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Resolution 21-17 – A Resolution Awarding a Bid for the Relocation of Island Road NE

As mentioned earlier in the evening, this resolution was a late addition to the agenda. City Manager Sorah provided some background on the issue. In August of 2018, City Council approved Resolution 18-77 authorizing Bristol’s Industrial Development Board to enter into a development agreement with Centre Pointe, LLC to support the advancement of a commercial development known as Centre Pointe
74. An element of the agreement required the City to seek grant funding from the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) for the relocation of a portion of Island Road. The grant application was successful and required the City to administer the road relocation project including the award of a construction contract.

On December 14th, bids for the Island Road relocation project were received with Baker Construction Services, Inc., of Bluff City, Tennessee, submitting the low bid in the amount of $964,404.10. On a project that utilizes TDOT funding, once the bids are opened the bid has to be submitted to TDOT for their approval before the City can take action. Notification of approval of bid award was just received from TDOT and rather than delay the project by placing this on the next business meeting agenda, the item was placed on this agenda as a late addition. Since it was a late addition, the City Manager read the resolution as required. The project costs will be shared on a fifty percent basis with TDOT. In accordance with our reimbursement agreement with Centre Pointe, LLC, the City’s portion of the Island Road relocation costs will be reimbursed by the developer.

Councilwoman Feierabend motioned to approve and Councilman Keen seconded. There was no discussion and Resolution 21-17 passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution 21-18 – A Resolution Approving an Engineering Services Agreement for the Relocation of Island Road NE

This is a companion resolution associated with the same Island Road NE relocation project. Anytime TDOT funds are utilized for a project, there is a requirement for third-party construction inspection and administrative type services to be obtained. These services must be provided by an engineering firm approved by TDOT. Mattern & Craig, Inc., is a local firm approved by TDOT and one the City has used for past projects and they have performed admirably. Resolution 21-18 formally approves an engineering services agreement with Mattern & Craig, Inc., of Johnson City, Tennessee, in the amount of $236,600. The project costs will be shared on a fifty percent basis with TDOT. In accordance with our reimbursement agreement with Centre Pointe, LLC, the City’s portion of the Island Road relocation inspection costs will be reimbursed by the developer. As this resolution was also a late addition to the agenda, the City Manager read the resolution as required.

Councilman Keen motioned to approve and Councilwoman Powers seconded. There was no discussion and Resolution 21-18 passed unanimously by roll call vote.

CONSENT AGENDA:

City Manager Sorah presented the Consent Agenda to Council. Vice Mayor Turner motioned to approve and Councilwoman Powers seconded. The following items were approved by unanimous Council roll call vote:

- Minutes December 1, 2020 City Council Meeting
- Minutes December 15, 2020 City Council Work Session
- Resolution 21-5 A Resolution Awarding a Bid for Purchase of Bulk Fuel
- Resolution 21-6 A Resolution Awarding a Bid for Final Clarifier #4 Replacement at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
Resolution 21-7  A Resolution Awarding a Bid for Purchase of Tandem Dump Truck
Resolution 21-8  A Resolution Awarding a Bid for Purchase of Bulk Concrete Products
Resolution 21-9  A Resolution Awarding a Bid for Purchase of Towable Air Compressor
Resolution 21-10 A Resolution Authorizing Purchase of In-Car Video Systems with Body Cameras
Resolution 21-11 A Resolution Authorizing the Amendment of an Agreement Related to the Demolition Landfill
Resolution 21-12 A Resolution Approving the Extension of Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act Benefits to Employees of the City of Bristol
Resolution 21-13 A Resolution Adopting a Revised Written Public Records Policy for the City of Bristol, Tennessee
Resolution 21-14  A Resolution Adopting Amended and Restated *Rules and Procedures of the City Council*
Resolution 21-15  A Resolution Authorizing Entry into an Amendment of an MOU Related to SROs
Resolution 21-16  A Resolution Approving a Grant Agreement with the Tennessee Department of Transportation for Urban Operating Assistance Grant Funds

BOARD OF EDUCATION LIAISON REPORT:

Dr. Annette Tudor, Director of Schools, thanked Council for supporting the School Resource Officers (SRO) amendment and City Manager Sorah, Police Chief Wade, and Major Eads for helping them navigate that process. Jeff Tickle made a donation to the school for capital improvements for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. This will allow them to establish plans for a school store operated by students to sell items made by the students through the CTE program. It will also help to upgrade some of the facilities with new flooring and paint for the shop areas and to purchase new equipment to bring programming up to current standards. Next fall, a certified nursing assistant (CNA) program will be added in partnership with Ballad. She gave a COVID update stating students will return to classes tomorrow for all remote learning for two weeks. Those who chose in-person learning will return to the schools January 19th. The delay is to give two weeks post-holiday in effort to reduce potential COVID issues. New funds will be available to the school system from the latest round of CARES funding. Staff vaccinations should occur at the end of January and those efforts will be coordinated with the health department. Some of the school nurses have already been vaccinated. January meal distribution began this afternoon and will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Dr. Tudor provided some details on that program. She then thanked Council for support concerning standardized testing.
CITY MANAGER’S REPORT:

City Manager Sorah reminded Council the NETWORKS Board meeting is the third Wednesday this month, at 8:00 A.M. on January 20th. The Council work session will be 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, January 26th. He reviewed topics on the agenda, including initial budget discussions and Council directives for the next fiscal year. He asked how it should be held. The latest Executive Order from Governor Lee allows Council to continue to meet electronically through February 27th and the Slater Community Center is available for in-person meetings, therefore providing opportunity for a hybrid meeting. Councilwoman Feierabend preferred to join it virtually and Councilman Keen also preferred to join virtual. Mayor Luttrell, Vice Mayor Turner, and Council Powers are all okay with meeting in-person, socially distanced so the decision was for the January work session to be held in a hybrid format. The City Manager addressed the project for the reconstruction of East Cedar Street. There have been multiple meetings concerning the traffic flow for this project during the next four months. It was determined the best plan for safety of the public as well as the construction workers and to expedite project completion is to close the portion of East Cedar Street from the intersection of King College Road to Florida Avenue. This route will be open only to residents in that area which have no other access to their homes and will be closed to all through traffic. The Community Relations Department has sent notification postcards to all residents in the area. The detour and traffic plan will distributed to the area residents and made available to the general public.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Keen complimented City staff on work on the East Cedar Street project. The addition of a nursing program to Bristol Tennessee City Schools is huge for both the students as well as to help the local medical community. He requested Community Relations staff work with BTES staff to analyze the coverage, overlaps, gaps, etc., of BTN-TV and BTES Channel to see if these platforms are being used effectively and efficiently. He mentioned the smell coming from the Bristol, Virginia Landfill area and he has spoken with Bristol, Virginia city officials. They informed him they are replacing some gas / condensate lines in and around the landfill. He requested City Manager Sorah share information on the problem and process involved since he has several years work experience in utilities for both Bristsols. The City Manager could not speak to this specific problem as he did not have information, however, he explained how state environmental agencies look at, monitor, and remediate these type of situations. Councilman Keen wished everyone a Happy New Year 2021.

Councilwoman Feierabend thanked citizens for their concern of issues and their participation as we are all in this together. It is important to inform the City of problems as Bristol covers a lot of territory and Council and staff are not always aware of an issue. She thanked City staff in all departments for their extra efforts as things have not slowed down despite the pandemic. She also expressed appreciation for all the essential workers and their efforts to help provide health care and necessities for the community. She mentioned upcoming events and that there are several in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Councilwoman Powers mentioned there have been many loved ones lost to COVID and encouraged everyone to not give up, but to continue the three points of social distancing, frequent hand washing, and wearing masks. She thinks it is great that schools have options for in-person and remote learning. She encouraged everyone to support small businesses and is pleased with the assistance being offered to local small businesses through Believe In Bristol. She requested Council to keep the ‘City Family’ in mind as the discussions for the budget for next fiscal year begin and take a good look at the compensation plan to continue working toward bringing salaries and compensation in line. Also, please remember the area non-profits including the arts such as Paramount and Theatre Bristol. As a Council member, it is a
pleasure working with all City staff and she expressed appreciation for their keeping Council well educated on all fronts. She congratulated Finance Director Tara Musick and the department for the clean audit and well-deserved accolades and all of the efforts to keep the City finances straight.

Mayor Luttrell was pleased so many positive things were approved on this agenda and he feels many good things are going to happen in the near future. There is light at the end of the tunnel with COVID, but please remain cautious and follow the recommended guidelines. He expressed appreciation for all of City staff and the work performed on a daily basis. He mentioned the landfill issue and that he had been requested to join the website concerning this issue and thus has been in communication with several residents in the Fairmount area. He has tried to reassure them everyone is concerned about their wellbeing and are working toward remediating the problem.

Vice Mayor Turner wished everyone a Happy New Year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:34 P.M.

Tara E. Musick, City Recorder

Mahlon Luttrell, Mayor