CALL TO ORDER:
The City of Bristol, Tennessee City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Mahlon Luttrell on Tuesday, February 2, 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, Director of Parks and Recreation Terry Napier, Director of Administration Mary Lee Williams, Police Chief Blaine Wade, Director of Community Relations Jon Luttrell, and other members of City staff.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:
Pete Booher, Pastor of Living Water Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Police Chief Blaine Wade 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. Councilman Chad Keen motioned to continue the meeting electronically and Vice Mayor Vince Turner seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

AGENDA ADDITIONS AND / OR CHANGES:  None.

PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS:
2020 Census – The Census Bureau has expressed appreciation for the efforts of City staff and citizen volunteers of the Bristol Complete Count Committee in making the 2020 Census Community Partnership and Engagement Program a success. Cherith Young, Planning Services Manager, was present to receive the recognition on behalf of City staff and the Committee. She acknowledged each member of the Complete Count Committee by name as well as all City staff that were involved. Councilwoman Margaret Feierabend mentioned she was Mayor when this first started and then COVID began necessitating numerous changes. She acknowledged Kevin Flanary, Partnership Specialist with the United States Census, who was the local leader for the Bristol, Tennessee area. Everyone did an outstanding job of working through all the obstacles. Councilwoman Lea Powers asked what the final response rate was given the logistic issues due to the pandemic. Ms. Young replied it was over 90 percent and the Bureau was very pleased with the response for this area and more information should be forthcoming. The Mayor congratulated everyone on a job well done.
PRESENTATIONS:

Bristol, Tennessee Food and Beverage Outdoor Dining Grant - Update - At the January 5th meeting, Council approved a resolution amending an existing appropriation agreement with the nonprofit organization Believe In Bristol (BIB). The amendment provided additional funding to BIB to establish a grant program to assist Bristol restaurants that have been negatively affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Maggie Bishop, Executive Director of Believe in Bristol, gave an update on the grant program and awards. Round One of the Food and Beverage Outdoor Dining Mini Grant has closed out with a total of $21,000 being awarded to the seven businesses that met all the grant requirements including compliance with Tennessee Pledge Guidelines and local executive orders and guidelines. The businesses that received grant monies were Backyard Grill, Bloom Cafe & Listening Room, Blue Circle, Borderline Billiards, Elderbrew, J. Frank, and Moe’s Southwest Grill. As about $6,000 in grant funds remain to be awarded, Round 2 will open this week and applications will be received for a two-week period. Mayor Mahlon Luttrell asked if there was any excitement among the participants and Ms. Bishop emphatically replied yes, everyone was very excited and she had already received inquiries about Round 2. Councilwoman Feierabend explained the Tennessee Pledge Guidelines.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS:

Nancy Madigan, 113 Neal Drive, called in and her husband and neighbors, Rick and Angie Lingerfelt, from 109 Neal Drive, were with her. They are very concerned about the rezoning of 362 Blountville Highway. They are against the rezoning and the proposed new development. They are concerned about devaluation of their property, increased traffic, and increased noise pollution. They have started a petition and many residents on Neal Drive are opposed to the rezoning and this development and support the decision of the Planning Commission.

Melanie Lamb, Attorney with Wilson Worley in Kingsport, represents Mark Corcoran who applied for the rezoning to allow redevelopment of the property at 362 Blountville Highway. There are no formal plans for consideration by the City at this time, just an application of rezoning. The proposed development would be for multifamily apartments. She feels it would be beneficial to the City and it would increase the tax base. The property current has an abandoned single family home on a 4.78-acre parcel. The rezoning request proposes rezoning this property from R-1A to R-3 and is consistent with the surrounding property with the exception of the one area zoned R-1A. The Planning staff recommends the rezoning. She feels this is an appropriate use of the property and would blend well with the uses of the surrounding properties.

APPOINTMENTS:

Board of Zoning Appeals – City Council addressed the vacancy of one seat on the Board of Zoning Appeals for a term of office ending September 30, 2021. All members of Council each spoke on behalf of the candidate. Mr. Garrett Addington was unanimously appointed by roll call vote to the Board of Zoning Appeals to serve a term of office ending September 30, 2021.

Community Development Advisory Committee – City Council addressed the vacancy of one seat on the Community Development Advisory Committee for an unexpired term of office ending April 30, 2021. All members of Council each spoke on behalf of the candidate. Mr. Matthew Slagle was
unanimously appointed by roll call vote to the Community Development Advisory Committee to serve an unexpired term of office ending April 30, 2021.

**Health and Education Facilities Board** – City Council addressed the vacancy of one seat on the Health and Education Facilities Board for a term of office ending June 30, 2026. Mr. Matthew Slagle was unanimously appointed by roll call vote to the Health and Education Facilities Board to serve a term of office ending June 30, 2026.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:**

A. First Reading of New Ordinances:

**Ordinance 21-1 – An Ordinance to Amend Section 405 (B-3 District) of the Zoning Ordinance**

City Manager Bill Sorah stated that over the past several months, the Bristol Regional Planning Commission has discussed proposed amendments to Chapter Four, Section 405 of the Zoning Ordinance as it relates to residential development within the B-3 (General Business District). This discussion was an outgrowth of City Council’s efforts to enhance residential development opportunities. The proposed amendments will reduce minimum lot size and setback requirements for single family and duplex homes located within the B-3 (General Business District). In addition, the amendments will allow for multifamily residential use by right as opposed to special use permit, and increase density thresholds to thirty-five units per acre within the B-3 Districts.

Cherith Young, Planning Services Manager presented the issue to Council during the January 26th work session and will detail the issue this evening. If approved on first reading, the issue will be placed on the March 2, 2021 agenda for a public hearing and second reading.

Ms. Young commented the project commenced in September 2020 in relation to the updated Housing Study, *Summer 2020 Action Strategy*. She detailed the proposed changes of reduced lot size, setback requirements, and building maximum lot coverage for single and two family homes. The changes to multifamily dwellings include multifamily use by right instead of Special Use Permit, increase unit density, and changes in height setbacks. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to send a favorable recommendation to Council for the proposed text amendments.

Councilman Keen motioned to approve the ordinance and Councilwoman Powers seconded. Councilwoman Powers and Councilwoman Feierabend expressed appreciation for the hard work of the Planning Commission and City staff. There were no further comments, a roll call vote was taken, and Ordinance 21-1 passed unanimously on second reading.

**Ordinance 21-2 – An Ordinance to Amend the Bristol Tennessee Zoning Map by Designating Certain Property as R-3 (Multifamily Residential) – 362 Blountville Highway**

City Manager said staff received a rezoning request for property located at 362 Blountville Highway. The request was made by Mr. Mark Corcoran, a developer of multifamily residential property, to rezone the property from R-1A (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-3 (Multifamily Residential). The property, which comprises approximately 4.8 acres, contains a single family residential structure which is currently vacant. There are general business and multifamily uses located on surrounding properties to the east and low density single family land use located on properties to the west and north of the subject property. Mr. Corcoran proposes to redevelop the property for multifamily residential use.
pending a favorable response to his rezoning request. It is important to note that, if rezoned, any use permitted within the R-3 district would be permissible on the property.

The Bristol Regional Planning Commission considered the rezoning request during their December 21st meeting and, by a vote of 7-2, forward an unfavorable recommendation to the rezoning request. Ms. Cherith Young, presented the issue to Council during the January 26th work session and is in attendance this evening to provide further details on the matter. If approved on first reading, the issue will be placed on the March 2, 2021 agenda for a public hearing and second reading. If it is not approved on first reading, the request for rezoning is rejected.

Ms. Young began by detailing a map of the subject property and the surrounding area and also presented photographs of the property. She explained the current zoning and land use of the surrounding properties. If the property is rezoned and is developed for one of the more intense uses, they will be required to add a buffer strip and Ms. Young briefly described the three buffering options. She reviewed the R-1A and R-3 permitted uses which are very similar with the addition of multifamily residential as a permitted use for an R-3 zone. She reviewed the Future Land Use Plan and Map.

Notification signs were placed on the property announcing the request, meeting information, and contact number. Adjacent property owners were notified by letter which included a return envelope and comment sheet. To date, six comment sheets have been received, all in opposition, and one comment sheet was received that was in favor of the rezoning provided a buffer area was required. One phone call of inquiry has been received. In addition, during the appearance of citizens portion of the agenda earlier this evening there was a call from a resident on Neal Drive speaking on behalf of their household and a neighbor that are in opposition. Late this afternoon, a petition was delivered to Planning staff representing fifteen property owners on Neal Drive all opposed to the proposed rezoning. Staff analysis concludes the rezoning complies with the Zoning Ordinance, Future Land Use Plan, and is the most appropriate land use due to abutting commercial / residential properties. The R-3 District would serve as a “step down” zone from low density residential area to commercially zoned area. Staff recommended the Planning Commission send a favorable recommendation to City Council. At their December 21, 2020 meeting, the Planning Commission voted (7-2) to send an unfavorable recommendation to City Council. They felt existing zoning (R-1A) provided a better buffer for existing neighborhood and were concerned about potential density of a multi-family project if developed under the R-3 District regulations.

Vice Mayor Turner asked if the City has any knowledge of the plans for a proposed development of this property. Ms. Young replied staff knows the applicant and knows he has multifamily development experience and interest, but there is nothing on paper at this point. They discussed what the potential rezoning could allow. The Vice Mayor said he knows there is a housing need, but would like to have more information before being able to approve the rezoning request.

Councilwoman Feierabend mentioned this process does not require a plan submittal for a rezoning request, confirmed with Ms. Young that the requestor is waiting on the outcome of his rezoning request before purchasing the subject property, and then she asked for clarification on the differences between R-2 and R-3 zones. Ms. Young explained R-2 would allow single family and duplex uses, but not multifamily use. Councilwoman Feierabend also asked if the site plan application process is where the City checks to ensure a plan which includes things such as parking spaces and turn around area are appropriate for the design and the property. Ms. Young replied the site plan submittal process is where all City departments review the plan to ensure the plan would work with all codes, regulations, and ordinances before giving approval for the project to proceed.
Councilwoman Powers said she has visited the subject property and reminded everyone the rezoning follows the land. She is going to support the decision of the Planning Commission in this matter. She feels in view of the information that is known about the property and the possibility of a multifamily development along with the fact that rezoning follows the land and not the owner, she is not in favor of the rezoning.

Mayor Luttrell asked if the developer could be required to have a wider road. Ms. Young said 24 feet is the minimum width for a two-lane roadway so it is possible a wider road could be required for fire trucks, but that is part of the plan review process. That would be the driveway for the property and hence, a private roadway.

Councilman Keen wanted to know if the developer wanting to purchase the property owns Shelby Heights Apartments and Ms. Young confirmed he does own those nearby apartments. There was discussion about a roadway connecting those apartments to the back of this property on the Blountville Highway and the number of single family units currently permitted on this property, which is 14 units, versus the approximately 62 multifamily units that would be allowed on the same property if the rezoning is passed.

Vice Mayor Turner asked if there was a plan to build a road to connect the two developments would they need a permit. Ms. Young said building a road just to connect the two developments would be a private road for those developments. However, if they wanted that road to also allow access to the Blountville Highway, which is a state route, the permit for that access would have to be approved by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).

Mayor Luttrell asked if any of the names on the petition were the same as those that spoke against it to the Planning Commission or were they in addition to. Ms. Young confirmed that two of the fifteen property owners signing the petition also spoke to the Planning Commission at their meeting December 21, 2020. As Mayor Luttrell also serves on the Planning Commission, he said there were more questions than answers from the developers at that meeting and the answers that were provided seemed to be a little evasive, but that could be due to there not being an actual written plan yet. As a member of the Commission, he voted no on the request. He has also walked the property and done some measuring and tried to visualize multifamily units as discussed earlier. In comparing the proposed idea of multifamily units to other similar developments in the community, he does not think the property at 362 Blountville Highway is the appropriate size / shape to sufficiently handle that type of development.

Councilwoman Feierabend made a motion to approve the staff recommendation of rezoning the property from R-1A to R-3. There was no second, so the motion failed and therefore, the rezoning request was denied.

The Mayor asked City Attorney Danielle Smith if the potential developer could make another rezoning request at a later time if they provided a proposed development plan. She responded there is nothing that requires any plans to be submitted for a rezoning request stating what they plan to do with the property after it is rezoned. In this particular case, the developer chose to provide additional information but was not required to do so. Council was presented a request for rezoning and is aware that any use that is laid out in the zoning ordinance is permitted once the property is rezoned. As to the question of resubmitting the request, there is nothing on the books such as a time limit that would prevent them from doing so. That would apply whether it is the same developer or another person with an interest in the property. Another request for rezoning can be submitted and the entire process would start all over again.
As there was still no second, the motion to approve the rezoning died and there was no vote.

B. Second Reading of New Ordinances: None

C. Resolutions:

Resolution 21-19 – A Resolution Naming the Ruth Clark Herbarium at the Nature Center at Steele Creek Park

City Manager Sorah summarized Resolution 21-19 officially renames the herbarium in the Nature Center at Steele Creek Park in honor and memory of Ms. Ruth Clark. This issue was brought forth at the request of the Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park, was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission at their meeting on January 7th, and received unanimous approval. He asked Terry Napier, Director of Parks and Recreation, to speak to the activities and contributions made by Ms. Clark to the Nature Center for a number of years.

Mr. Napier said one of the outstanding exhibits at the Nature Center is the herbarium which features over 1,100 plant specimens. The herbarium was established in 2008 by Ms. Clark. She personally collected, processed, and labeled 393 specimens. This extensive collection of local plants provides examples of the diverse ecosystem found in the park and has become the basis of a Master of Science thesis at ETSU.

Ms. Clark passed away in February 2020 at the age of 93 and Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park requested the herbarium be renamed in honor of Ms. Clark when it is moved to the new location in the downstairs of the original building of the Nature Center. If the resolution is approved, the many contributions made by Ms. Clark to the Nature Center, Steele Creek Park, and the community will be honored and remembered by the naming of the Ruth Clark Herbarium.

Councilwoman Feierabend spoke on behalf of Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park and stated that their newsletter has an article and pictures of Ms. Clark and her contributions. She moved here from Florida, where she had also worked on an herbarium at the Disney Wilderness in Kissimmee. When she moved here, she was impressed with the diverse flora and fauna in the Appalachian Foothills and Central Appalachian Region and, at the age of 83, asked if she could begin a collection here. She began with two metal file cabinets and two plant presses and things increased from there. An herbarium is a systematically arranged collection of dried plants—leaves, roots, flowers, stems, fruit, seeds—and all labeled with their Latin name, location and date of collection, and name of collector. They are blotted, dried, and mounted. Ms. Clark performed this process often with her daughter working alongside. Councilwoman Feierabend named many others that worked together with Ms. Clark to increase the collection to its current size and diversity and it continues to increase.

Council Keen commented this speaks to the great citizens in Bristol that take time and effort from other potential activities and volunteer them to projects such as this for the betterment of the community. Councilwoman Feierabend added that the passion exhibited by citizens such as Ms. Clark is also exhibited by City staff as well. Councilwoman Powers thanked Councilwoman Feierabend for her comments and mentioned that Steele Creek Park is the third largest municipal park in the state and provided additional information as well as some facts that are unique to Steele Creek Park from a state, national, and even global perspective.

Mayor Luttrell said the Park is amazing and the community is blessed with this attribute and the staff that has the expertise to maintain and protect it, as well as the many volunteers, all of which work together to showcase the Park to all visitors.
Councilwoman Feierabend made a motion to approve Resolution 21-19 and Councilwoman Powers seconded. The resolution passed unanimously by roll call vote.

**Resolution 21-20 – A Resolution Approving Mid-Fiscal Year Pay Increase for City Employees**

The City Manager reviewed that during the budget discussions in the spring of last year, everyone was just beginning to understand the economic implications of the pandemic. Most of the retail shopping had been closed from mid-March to early May and was just beginning to reopen, hence, a cautionary approach was taken in developing the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. It was decided that the budget staff would review the local option sales tax receipts in January when information for the first five months of the fiscal year would be available, and try to make a judgement call as to actual versus budget and would there be an opportunity to make a mid-year adjustment to employee compensation. The review revealed the local option sales tax performed well July through November. The discussion during the January 26th work session was to give a one percent across the board adjustment for all City employees. In addition, the 2018 study conducted by a third-party that analyzed our pay scale recommended some adjustments and identified about half of our workforce was not receiving a competitive wage in comparison to the surrounding communities. As result, a five-year plan was set up to bring wages up to a more competitive level and only one has been implemented. This resolution not only authorizes a one percent increase for all employees, but if any full time employee identified in the study is below their recommended wage for their position after the 1% adjustment the resolution authorizes an additional compression increase which would be 25% of the difference between their adjusted wage and their recommended wage. The adjustment would be effective immediately and the financial impact on the budget would be slightly over $100,000 for the balance of this fiscal year including salary and benefits.

Councilwoman Feierabend clarified this adjustment would make Fiscal Year 2022 the third adjustment of the recommend five. City Manager Sorah reminded Council there has also been discussion about splitting the balance of the adjustments in half and completing the plan in four years instead of five.

Councilman Keen motioned to approve Resolution 21-20 and Vice Mayor Turner seconded. Councilwoman Feierabend stated while Council often says how much they appreciate all the employees for their commitment, enthusiasm, and work ethic, passage of this resolution will back up the words with action. There was no additional discussion and the resolution passed unanimously by roll call vote.

**Resolution 21-21 – A Resolution Authorizing Termination of an Appropriation Agreement with the Bristol Chamber of Commerce for Convention and Visitors Bureau Services**

City Manager Sorah summarized that on July 7, 2020, City Council approved Resolution 20-65 authorizing an Appropriation Agreement providing funding support for the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), a program administered by the Bristol Chamber of Commerce. The agreement established a minimum appropriation of $75,000 to be provided to the Bristol Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of marketing Bristol as a tourist destination. The $75,000 was to be paid to the Bristol Chamber of Commerce on a quarterly basis in the amount of $18,750 per quarter. The agreement contained further provisions which would provide additional funding to the CVB if a restructuring agreement addressing governance of the entity could be reached by September 30, 2020.

The funding and support of the existing governance structure of the CVB was discussed at length during the January 26th work session. Following Council discussion, termination of the partnership with the Chamber of Commerce based CVB was recommended for formal consideration by Council at their
February 2nd meeting. The appropriation agreement contains a provision for either party to terminate the agreement at any time without cause, upon at least a thirty-day written notice to the other party.

Resolution 21-21 formally terminates the Fiscal 2021 Appropriation Agreement with the Bristol Chamber of Commerce for CVB services. The resolution further states that the City will fulfill its original funding commitment of $75,000 in support of tourism marketing services. In addition, the resolution memorializes the City’s position that it does not wish to exercise its right on termination to require the Bristol Chamber of Commerce to repay amounts previously allocated under the agreement.

If Resolution 21-21 is approved by City Council, a written notice of termination will be sent by first class mail to the Bristol Chamber of Commerce President/CEO with an effective date of thirty days from the date of writing.

Councilman Keen motioned to table this item until next month. City Attorney Smith stated that before entertaining a motion to table, there has to be a motion to discuss the main motion. Someone needed to make a motion to either approve or disapprove Resolution 21-21 and a second, then subsidiary motions could be considered. Councilwoman Powers made a motion to approve Resolution 21-21 as stated and Councilwoman Feierabend seconded.

Vice Mayor Turner made a motion to defer the item for thirty days to give opportunity for some discussion. Councilman Keen seconded. City Attorney Smith suggested the motion be to defer until the next scheduled Council meeting and Vice Mayor Turner restated the motion accordingly. The City Attorney stated now was the appropriate time to discuss the motion to defer and vote on that motion. If passed, this item would be deferred to the next regular Council meeting.

Councilwoman Powers said the upcoming budget cycle will be the third cycle this issue has been in question. The Council has made it known they desire to work toward an autonomous voting board with a fulltime appropriately credentialed executive director who would be accountable to the autonomous board that would be making the financial decisions and decisions concerning marketing and business plans. Council was told that was a non-starter if it did not remain under the direct oversight of the Chamber CEO thus making it clear there was no desire to discuss this possibility at that time. Each Council member has entertained phones calls from various people on this issue. Council represents the people and over time, the people of the City of Bristol, Tennessee have made a huge investment in tourism. Council has tried to work collaboratively and invite everyone to the table with some of those requests not being met. It has been said that Council was unwilling to discuss this issue, but it is difficult to have a discussion about potential change when it was made clear things were not going to change. Equity partners need to truly be equity partners. The different professional representation on the board need to have a voice and therefore a vote. Councilwoman Powers said five members of the advisory board have reached out to her in support of an autonomous board with an executive director. Money was appropriated in the budget this year for the CVB if efforts were made to establish an autonomous board, but since no efforts have been made that $54,000 has been left on the table. The other funding commitment of $75,000 the City made to the CVB in support of tourism marketing services will be fulfilled. The City partnered with BTES for marketing the availability of a 10-gig fiber network and that partnership has expanded to include a major marketing plan in some strategic markets. If this resolution is passed, as of the next Council meeting on March 2nd the fiduciary obligation of the City to the CVB will have been met for this fiscal year and there will be two marketing plans in place. She believes we have to disengage to be able to re-engage as individual entities representing the community at large along with professionals brought to the table. We are all friends, we all want what is best for Bristol, and all
want to support tourism at its finest level. The sooner we disengage the sooner we can come together and work for a positive solution.

Vice Mayor Turner understands her position and believes everyone wants what is best for Bristol, but thinks there is no harm in waiting.

Mayor Luttrell has been digging through some numbers over the last several days. It has been said that if Council goes this direction, they do not care about tourism which is untrue. In reviewing contributions made to the non-profits that work toward tourism including the CVB, from 2011 through 2020 the City has donated over $3.6 million. In addition, the City also works with Bristol Motor Speedway and Rhythm and Roots on their direct tourism activities, and the City has spent over $2.9 million in support of these major events over the past eleven years. This brings the aggregate to $6.7 million. The City has also brought in $3.9 million in occupancy tax. These figures show that the City of Bristol, Tennessee and Council definitely care about tourism. We will be doing more for tourism in new ways through additional resources, people, and ideas. The Mayor said it is time to move on.

Councilwoman Feierabend expressed there have been some difficult times and there will be more until we can all figure out how to work better together. If the resolution passes this evening it will clearly show what has been requested and discussed for some time and help things move forward. Tourism needs to be regional and strategic. We need to look at best practices to achieve the goals. Tourism, working together, and being strategic are all very important and hopefully all will be achieved.

Councilman Keen added he spoke with Senator Jon Lundberg who said he has not put any legislation forward nor will he that would impact Bristol’s tourism future. There had been a sense of urgency to take action now, but with this information he feels action on this matter can be postponed until the next scheduled Council meeting.

Councilwoman Powers responded since the issue of the legislation was brought up, she wanted to express she feels it was wise for Senator Lundberg to step back from the legislation he was asked to put together. Since there was an attempt to secure legislation at the state level, it showed the need to move forward on this issue to truly provide the opportunity to take a regional approach. Why wait? She called for the question. The City Attorney informed Council to call for a question needs a second and a two-thirds majority to pass. The current motion is for whether to defer this item to the next regular Council meeting. If that motion does not succeed, then discussion would return to the actual motion to approve the resolution. To call for a question basically ends the debate on the motion at hand which is to defer to the next regularly scheduled meeting. If anyone seconds that motion, it could pass on a two-thirds vote and there would be no more discussion on the pending motion. You would call for a vote immediately. If that motion dies for lack of a second, the Mayor can call for end of discussion and then the vote would be on the motion made by Vice Mayor Turner to defer to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. Councilwoman Powers withdrew her motion so the process can take the natural path. Mayor Luttrell called for a vote as to whether to defer and the results were as follows:

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The Mayor then opened discussion for the motion concerning approval of the resolution. Discussion ensued about the need to look at the bigger picture and to be strategic. Each participating entity should...
have a voice and there should be more voices at the table. Many of the local attractions and assets of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia were mentioned. Bristol, Tennessee and Bristol, Virginia are conjoined at the state line, both with numerous assets, and it is incumbent for the two to work together to lift the community and reach out to Southwest Virginia and other areas of Northeast Tennessee. This is the area where we could be the most effective regionally. It is important for the community to see that we treat each other with respect through our processes and we are willing to work in collaboration to more richly promote tourism. This is an opportunity to work through the issue of appropriately funding the promotion of tourism. Theatre Bristol and The Paramount were also mention as being sources of tourism. The City is very much committed to tourism and if this resolution passes, it in no way means the City is walking away from supporting tourism. This is an effort to create a new model to bring more success than in the past.

Councilman Keen proceeded to read a letter from Senator Lundberg stating he had met with the Chamber and their major concern was how to get the City of Bristol, Tennessee to discuss concerns over funding as Bristol had clearly cut off communications with the Chamber. He told the Chamber the most dramatic action he could take would be to file legislation, but the Chamber said they only wanted to open dialogue. He has not and will not file legislation to affect the tourism here. He sent a letter to the Mayor and City Manager last week requesting they meet with Chamber representatives and has not had any response to date. He believes all parties will benefit in working closer together. Council Keen stated he will be voting no as he feels it is another thing that divides the community. Find the common ground. He wants to look for an outside entity to lead a strategic plan for the future of our area tourism.

Councilwoman Feierabend agreed with Councilman Keen and continued by saying taking this step is to help everyone acknowledge the shared responsibility for things getting to this point. This provides a fresh start and opportunity for a very positive outcome.

Mayor Luttrell replied to Councilman Keen that he did receive the letter from Senator Lundberg, took it very seriously, has given it a lot of thought, and his reply is forthcoming. He did not wish to respond rashly, but rather do so in the appropriate manner after proper consideration. He appreciates the concerns of Senator Lundberg.

Councilwoman Powers reiterated that City appropriations to the non-profits are not statutory, but are benevolent. The City takes tourism very seriously which the information earlier provided by Mayor Luttrell attests. The donations are important to the City and have been given happily in support of tourism and the community. Change is hard, but change for the right reasons, to be productive and provide greater opportunity to showcase the attributes and assets of the region throughout the United States, she believes are the right reasons. The goal of this change is to increase tourism and revenue dollars coming into the region on behalf of all of the people of Bristol. She appreciated hearing the response of Senator Lundberg as this information was initially presented to Council a little differently and his letter provides clarification.

Mayor Luttrell called for a vote to approve Resolution 21-21 and the results were as follows:

- Councilwoman Powers: Yes
- Mayor Luttrell: Yes
- Vice Mayor Turner: Yes
- Councilwoman Feierabend: Yes
- Councilman Keen: No
Resolution 21-21 passed by a roll call vote of 4-1.

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 January 5, 2021 City Council Meeting
- Minutes January 26, 2021 City Council Work Session
- Resolution 21-22 A Resolution Awarding a Bid for Purchase of Two (2) Pickup Trucks
- Resolution 21-23 A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Software Support for GIS
- Resolution 21-24 A Resolution Awarding Bids for Purchase of Uniforms
- Resolution 21-25 A Resolution Approving the Submittal of an Application to the U. S. Department of Homeland Security for Funding under the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program

BOARD OF EDUCATION LIAISON REPORT:
Dr. Annette Tudor, Director of Schools, presented pictures of the new middle school and gave an update on the construction progress.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT:
City Manager Sorah reminded Council of the upcoming legislative luncheon. Kingsport is the host for this year and made the determination last week the Tri-Cities legislative event will be held virtually this year. It will be a very brief meeting, possibly one hour, this Thursday at 11:00 A.M. A Zoom invitation will be sent to those interested in participating. The Council work session will be 11:00 A.M. on February 23rd and Council decided for it to be an electronic meeting.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:
Councilwoman Powers mentioned there was a Believe In Bristol (BIB) this morning and Terry Napier, Director of Parks and Recreation, was named as the BIB Board Spotlight Member. He has been with BIB since the beginning and she appreciates what he does. She was pleased with the discussion of the evening. Everyone was kind and she appreciated the conversation.

Vice Mayor Turner concurred and said he thinks everyone on the Council wants what is best for the citizens and appreciated the opportunity for conversation.

Councilman Keen agreed and also appreciated the discussions. He hopes things will move as quickly as possible and feels that will send a positive message to the businesses in the community. It is his understanding the ticket sales for the upcoming events at the track are going well and he feels the latter
part of this year will see improvement. He is hopeful for a good summer with more vaccinations. Councilwoman Powers added the Rhythm and Roots is full steam ahead hoping for a great festival this year and ticket sales are on point for this time of year.

Councilwoman Feierabend commented that last month the community celebrated the fourth year of events in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., with the events this year taking place virtually. She reminded everyone that while the City does not sponsor a lot of events in the area such as the Christmas Parade, Martin Luther King, Jr. celebrations, etc., the City does support community events. She listed several events that took place last month along with the local entities that partnered to support and enable them to go forward. She thanked the Sullivan County Health Department for all their efforts to help everyone through the pandemic and the Bristol Motor Speedway for their assistance in providing a location for vaccinations to be given. There have been several deaths in the community lately due to COVID as well as other issues and her thoughts and prayers go out to the families dealing with the loss of loved ones.

Mayor Luttrell said we are at a new beginning and he looks forward to the challenges.

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

Tara E. Musick, City Recorder

Mahlon Luttrell, Mayor