



9641 Bellefontaine Road  
Bellefontaine Neighbors, MO 63137  
Phone: Office: 314-867-0076  
Cell: 314-706-0920  
Fax: 314-867-1790

## **FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK, NOVEMBER 21, 2023**

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**Dear Citizens:**

**I pray you and your family are safe and healthy!**

**I promised to be transparent so you would be informed about what's happening in our "Great City" and hold me accountable for my decisions. I'm keeping that commitment.**

**I'm writing to inform you that Alderman James Thomas read a "No Confidence" statement on Thursday, November 20, 2023, at the Board of Alderman's and Mayor's meeting. I had an opportunity to respond.**

**This morning, I received a voicemail at 9:97 from Naseem Benjamin, a reporter from the Post-Dispatch, saying that they were notified about what happened and asked for an interview. I met with him at 4:10 p.m. today in my office. Our City Clerk, Semmie Ruffin-Hall, was present. The story might be in today's newspaper.**

**My Response:**

- 1) We had all of the vents and carpets cleaned in the police, public works departments, and city hall. Each company was asked to present a bid for each job. There were three bids submitted. I didn't have to get proposals because each job was under \$10,000. After checking each company's report with the BBB, we chose Dalmation Cleaning. They performed the work at different times. This information was given to the board.**
- 2) There was no misappropriation of funds. The payment was assigned to the wrong account. Payment was made from the correct account.**

- 3) **There was a unanimous vote by the Board of Alderman on May 4, 2023, to freeze hiring except for essential employees. I hired a finance clerk, who is a crucial employee. The city lost its bond rating because of the late audit and for not having GAP (general accounting policies) in place. We are still not in compliance!**

**There is only one person in the finance office producing checks, doing accounts payable, payroll, and producing payment ledgers! The executive branch, mayor, and city administrator ensure that our government runs efficiently and has the authority to hire. We don't have the proper number of employees to offer services and handle daily tasks. While prohibiting hiring ALL essential employees, the board gave themselves a raise in the 2023-2024 budget.**

- 4) **There was never a security breach (see attached statement from Finance Director Lori Lenz).**
- 5) **The Executive Branch is given certain powers by Missouri State Statute 79.120 and our city Ordinance 2418 sections 2-47 and 2-48, free from interference from legislators.**
- 6) **The Executive Branch started working on the budget on Tuesday, May 10, 2023. We completed it on Wednesday, May 31, 2023. It was a balanced budget with all new and present essential employees, and the general fund was projected to have a \$9928 surplus. The board of Alderman didn't complete and pass their budget in time for the Parks and Recreation Director, Jimmy Kirincich, to submit a grant application. (See attached statement).**
- 7) **Sometimes, there were conflicting schedules, which prohibited giving notice within 24 hours. We invited the Board of Alderman to participate in ALL budget meetings.**
- 8) **Please see the attached statement.**
- 9) **Our Directors of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Chief of Police have been and still are working to receive additional bids. We currently have a**

**company working on installing cameras, monitors, PA systems, etc. They have been working for several months.**

- 10) On Thursday, October 5, 2023, a vote was to expend funds to give to employees. The vote was three yes and three no. I broke the tie by voting yes. Audio, videotape, and minutes will be available after our City Clerk, Semmie Ruffin-Hall, transposes the meeting minutes.**
  
- 11) The legislative branch receives invoices and ledgers to pay the city's bills 48-72 hours in advance. There have been mistakes, and the board has been asked to communicate their findings promptly. The city bills have been paid to prohibit late fees, loss of credit rating, and disconnect notices.**
  
- 12) The Executive Branch hosted a "Career Fair" to attract and hire essential employees.**
  
- 13) I respect the recommendations from the Missouri Municipal League and have chosen to continue to project a united government. I also agree that we need to have our finances audited. FY2022 is late, and the FY2023 will be late as well. The Board of Alderman voted on Thursday, November 20, 2023, to hire CR Williams & Associates for both audits. I will be assisting our Finance Director in preparing for our audits.**

**Your Servant Leaders  
Mayor Dinah Tatman  
Employees & Staff**