



The City Council of the City of Festus, Missouri, met on Monday, February 9, 2026, for a Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall located at 711 West Main Street, Festus, Missouri.

I. Call to Order

Mayor Richards called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Councilman Collier
Councilwoman Templeton
Councilman Venz
Councilman Cook
Councilman Tinnin

Absent:

Councilman Boyer
Councilman Wehner
Councilman Dennis

Also in attendance:

City Clerk Leah Smith, Finance Director Michelle Vaughn, Building and Planning Director Jim Walker, Police Chief Doug Wendel, Fire Chief Jeff Broombaugh, Public Works Director Michael Christopher, Recreation and Tourism Director Barb Lowry, and City Attorney Brian Malone.

Pledge of Allegiance

Recited

Motion to amend the consent agenda to table Bill No. 4871 and Resolution No. 4871.5, was made by Councilman Cook, seconded by Councilman Venz.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye



Councilman Tinnin: Aye

Motion carried.

II. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes

2. Approval of Bills

Mayor Richards asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mayor Richards announced the bills were in the amount of \$1,132,384.17.

Motion to approve the consent agenda, the bills, and minutes was made by Councilman Collier, seconded by Councilwoman Templeton.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye

Motion carried.

3. Correspondence

III. Remarks of Visitors

Mayor Richards presented the Festus Girls Cross Country Team a proclamation as State Champions, declaring February 10, 2026, as "Festus Girls Cross Country Team Day."

Mayor Richards presented Carson Driemeier of the Festus Boys Cross Country Team with a proclamation as State Champion, declaring February 11, 2026, as "Carson Driemeier Day."

- Mary Fakes, 9 Cedarbrook Drive – Spoke of transparency.
- Travis Layton, 2916 High Ridge – Spoke of water collection and use related to data centers.



- c. Dan Moore, 717 Jerome Drive – Spoke of growth and not rushing decisions.
- d. Jerry Hill, 1631 Vine School Road – Spoke of selling his farm off Plass Road if a data center is built.
- e. John Youmans, 921 North 4th Street – Distributed handouts and spoke of actions of the City Council.
- f. Erica Carter, 14 Ashford Place – Presented a resident petition and spoke of authority over decisions of the City.
- g. Rick Belleville, 801 Burns Court – Spoke of data center pollution, electric, water and grid shortage.
- h. Cody Vogel, 6704 Sycamore Landing – Spoke of data center technological advances and practicality for the future.
- i. Alexander Bischoff, 884 Woodridge Drive – Spoke of experience in studying data centers and suggested experts to help with unknown.
- j. Matt Drinen, 1332 Melvin Drive – Asked the City Council to table Bill No. 4871 with no defined user or transparency.
- k. Sherman Smith, 4300 Highway N – Spoke of experience working inside data centers.
- l. Eric Fehn, 25300 Buck Creek Road – Spoke of experience in IT and data centers.
- m. Bob DeGarmo, 150 North 5th Street – Spoke of resident petition and suggested a one-year moratorium on data centers.
- n. Oscar Harrell, 1015 Utility Drive – Encouraged the practices that made City successful.
- o. James Gerding, 468 Huntington Trails – From Local 562 and thanked the City Council for their hard work and sensible legislation.
- p. Austin Jackson, 141 Dublin Lane – Spoke of jobs a data center would provide, and the millions projected to schools and emergency services.
- q. Martin Strong, 1302 North 3rd Street – Spoke of pending litigation with City and opposes a data center.

IV. Bids

a. Police Department – Radio Upgrade

Chief Doug Wendel reported that Jefferson County 911 is upgrading its radio system, requiring the City to upgrade its base radios as well as add a third radio position while they are onsite to take advantage of discounted pricing and labor. The total cost is \$176,397.00, to be funded through a budget amendment from Public Safety capital outlay reserves, with installation anticipated this summer after not being included in the original budget due to an uncertain timeline.

Motion to approve the Jefferson County 911 bid for \$176,397.00 for radio upgrades was made by Councilwoman Templeton and seconded by Councilman Venz.



Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye

Motion carried.

V. Ordinances and Resolutions

Bill No. 4871 and Resolution No. 4871.5 were tabled.

Clerk Smith read the following:

Bill No. 4872 - An ordinance of the City Council of the City of Festus, Missouri; establishing a four-way stop on Central Avenue at the intersection of Ridge Avenue; and establishing the placement of sign enforcing said stop sign; and establishing an effective date.

Public Works Director Michael Christopher reported the intersection of Central Avenue and Ridge Avenue was reviewed by consultants Intuition & Logic and it was found that the sign distance at the intersection creates a warranted need for a stop sign to be installed creating a 4 way stop.

Councilman Venz inquired about Horine Road to which Mr. Christopher shared that it is still of interest and potentially part of a larger improvement project with MoDOT. Councilwoman Templeton inquired about South Mill at Walnut to which Mr. Christopher agreed that it may be a part of the same Safe Streets for All project with MoDOT.

Motion to suspend rules to read Bill No. 4872 a second time was made by Councilwoman Templeton and seconded by Councilman Tinnin.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent



Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye

Motion carried. Clerk Smith read Bill No. 4872 a second time.

Mayor Richards called for a vote to finally approve Bill No. 4872.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye

Bill 4872 finally passed.

VI. New Business

a. Annual Recognize Juneteenth - June 19, 20 and 21, 2026 (Quad City Juneteenth Committee)

Mayor Richards spoke of the Fifth Annual Juneteenth Celebration June 19-21, 2026, and asked the City Council to join him in acknowledging the holiday.

Motion to recognize the 5th Annual Juneteenth Celebration from June 19 through June 21, 2026, was made by Councilwoman Templeton, seconded by Councilman Collier.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye



Councilman Tinnin: Aye

Motion carried.

b. Festival Request – Sigurblot 2026 on April 11, 2026 (Four Brothers Meadery)

Mayor Richards spoke of how successful and respectful Four Brothers Mead are during all events held in the City. Chief Wendel had no opposition or concern.

Motion to approve the Sigurblot 2026 Festival Request on April 11, 2026, was made by Councilwoman Templeton, seconded by Councilman Venz.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye

Motion carried.

c. Festival Request – Twin City Mardi Gras Parade on February 14, 2026 (Taytro's)

Luke Tetrault from Taytro's spoke of the event, explaining that is the same event as last year and has met with Chief Wendel to discuss location and roadblocks.

Motion to approve the Twin City Mardi Gras Parade Festival Request on February 14, 2026, was made by Councilman Venz, seconded by Councilwoman Templeton.

Vote:

Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye



Motion carried.

VII. Old Business

None

VIII. Mayor and City Council Reports

Councilman Boyer absent.

Cook discussed a traffic study and confirmed details with Building and Planning Director Jim Walker. He noted that Mary Fakes would not find his name in Sunshine records for travel expenses because he personally paid for the trip, and he encouraged the Council to explore geothermal injection as a cooling option for data centers. He also addressed recent personal attacks, warning that more may occur, and emphasized that while he understands disagreement, he expects it to remain civil.

Councilman Collier nothing to share.

Councilwoman Templeton nothing to share.

Councilman Wehner absent.

Councilman Dennis absent.

Councilman Venz agreed with Councilman Cook with toughness and wishes the best for the City.

Councilman Tinnin disagreed with people reaching out to councilmembers families and attacking them.

Mayor Richards explained that he has been absent since December 1 due to being in Rochester, Minnesota with his wife and brother-in-law. He expressed frustration that some individuals contacted officials in Silverthorne, Colorado to complain about the City Administrator, calling it inappropriate and out of line—especially involving attacks on him and his family. He added that the situation may get worse before it improves.

IX. Adjournment

Councilman Cook made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Collier.

Vote:



Councilman Boyer:	Absent
Councilman Collier:	Aye
Councilwoman Templeton:	Aye
Councilman Wehner:	Absent
Councilman Dennis:	Absent
Councilman Venz:	Aye
Councilman Cook:	Aye
Councilman Tinnin:	Aye

Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

2/23/2026

Date - Approved by Council


Leah Smith
City Clerk
City of Festus, Missouri