



## Introducing new Councilmembers

On June 2, 2020, the residents of Independence voted for the four district council seats. Citizens re-elected 1st District Councilmember John Perkins, and selected three new councilmembers for Districts 2, 3, and 4. Here is a brief biography and contact information for each of the new councilmembers.

of Professional Sales experience in home improvements and finance.

Councilmember Steinmeyer received a Bachelor's degree in Christian Ministries from Oral Roberts University. He and his wife, Kana, have completed 15 years of missionary work in more than 26 countries.

Councilmember Steinmeyer is the father of three and has two grandchildren.

Email – [msteinmeyer@indepmo.org](mailto:msteinmeyer@indepmo.org)

Phone – (816) 325-7022

### 4th District Councilmember Daniel

**Hobart** was elected to his first term on the Independence City Council in June 2020. He is a lifelong Independence resident that attended Luff Elementary, Bridger Jr. High and Truman High School graduating in 1991, Leroy Brown's last graduating class. He went on to Graceland College where he earned a B.A. in History in 1995. He then went to Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, where he graduated in 1998 with his Juris Doctorate.

Councilmember Hobart passed the Missouri Bar in 1998 and went to work for the Public Defender's office in Rolla, Missouri. He took the Kansas Bar in 1999 with an eye on returning to the KC area, which he did in 2001. He then went into solo practice in 2003. Earning his Eagle Scout in 1988 and then working as a public defender gave him a greater appreciation for service to community. His interest in City government peaked last summer with the budget issue that nearly ended City retirees' health benefits, which included his dad, a retired Independence police officer.

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The City Council meets on June 15 following the installation of the three new district Councilmembers. Council meetings will continue in-person and digitally.

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CityScene is published by the City Manager's Office, located at 111 E. Maple Ave., Independence, MO, 64050.  
For information, call (816) 325-7086.



### Second District Councilmember Brice

**Stewart** was elected to his first term on the Independence City Council in June 2020. He was born and raised in the rural community of Braymer,

Mo., located in Caldwell County. He graduated from Hardin Central High School and went on to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Colorado Technical University and an Associate's degree in Network Administration from Sanford Brown College.

Councilmember Stewart currently works as a System's Analyst for Jackson County, Mo. He has previously worked as a law-enforcement officer for the Ferrelview Police Department for nine years and once held the rank of Chief of Police for three years. He also served the Edgerton Police Department for four years.

He is the father of two daughters, Ollie and Emeline.

Email – [bstewart@indepmo.org](mailto:bstewart@indepmo.org)

Phone – (816) 325-7220

### Third District Councilmember Mike

**Steinmeyer** was elected to his first term on the Independence City Council in June 2020. He is a licensed Missouri Realtor with ReeceNichols and has more than 20 years



# City continues to adapt services and hours in response to COVID-19

The City of Independence announced on June 22 that it will remain in Phase 1 beyond the projected date of July 1. Phase 1 has been modified with a few updates for Parks | Recreation | Tourism Department facilities.

“The gating criteria we developed for the City of Independence COVID-19 pandemic reopening plan has not been met,” Mayor Eileen Weir said in a release. “This included a sustained decrease in positive cases, robust testing and tracing capabilities, and adequate PPE. In the first 21 days of June, eastern Jackson County experienced more positive cases of COVID-19 than we did in March, April or May. Since declaring a State of Emergency on March 12, Independence has committed to an aggressive, proactive, and forward-looking approach to protecting the health of our community. Our Incident Command Team continues to collaborate with area health experts and providers to monitor cases and hospitalization while we work to increase testing and tracing capacity for our citizens.”

As of July 1, all residents of eastern Jackson County are required to wear a mask when

in public. You can find details related to this order from the Jackson County here, [jacksongov.org/1199/Jackson-County-COVID](https://jacksongov.org/1199/Jackson-County-COVID).

The Independence City Hall, Independence Police Headquarters, and Independence Utility Center will continue to be open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Guests and staff will be required to participate in a temperature check and basic health screening prior to entrance. Those individuals found to have a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to complete their business online or via phone calls or digital meetings.

Additionally, the City has made the decision to keep the Vaile Mansion, Bingham-Waggoner Estate, Chicago & Alton Depot and 1827 Log Cabin closed for the 2020 season. The annual holiday events at the Vaile Mansion and Bingham-Waggoner Estate will be evaluated in September.

“These are difficult decisions, but we remain focused on slowing the spread of COVID-19 so we can resume community events and gatherings as soon as possible,” Mayor Weir

said. “We are not there yet, and only through continued vigilance will we be able to move forward. I urge every citizen and visitor to limit activities, wear a mask when you leave your residence, wash your hands frequently, and stay home if you are not feeling well.”

You can find an updated overview of the City's Phases as well as anticipated timelines associated with them here, [indep.us/2020phases](https://indep.us/2020phases). Please keep in mind that the timelines and guidelines may change as conditions warrant.

Below is a summary of updates made to the City's Phase 1 services and facilities reopening plan which went into effect on July 1:

Baseball fields and Independence Athletic Complex will reopen for practices and games with a limit of 50 participants, coaches and spectators. Games and practices will be scheduled to allow cleaning of facilities between each group. Tournaments will not be allowed in Phase 1.

The Independence Uptown Market Farmer's Market will allow foot traffic beginning on July 11. Vendors, staff, volunteers and visitors will be required to wear a mask. Visitors will also be required to follow markers to move through the space. Vendor spots are limited to ensure proper distancing for all parties.

The Sermon Center, Truman Memorial Building and George Owens Nature Center will reopen with 50 percent capacity and social distancing requirements. Classes will resume at the Sermon Center and Truman Memorial Building with strict social distancing enforced. All patrons will be required to wear a mask. Individuals who are engaged in high intensity activities may not be able to wear a face covering if it causes difficulty breathing but should wear a mask before the activity and as soon as their breath returns to normal.

The Palmer Senior Center, basketball courts, playgrounds and spraygrounds will remain closed until further notice.

On June 15, the Independence City Council approved the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget. This budget was \$311 million, down \$5 million from the previous year due to budget impacts and forecasts associated with COVID-19. The Council has requested regular updates on the impact COVID-19 is having on the budget. Citizens can watch Council Meetings and Study Sessions live on YouTube at [indep.us/YouTube](https://indep.us/YouTube) or on City7 (Comcast Channel 7). Agendas can be found online at [indep.us/councilagendas](https://indep.us/councilagendas).



## Wearing a cloth face covering in the summer



Make sure your cloth face covering fits correctly (snug on the sides but loose over the nose and mouth). Choose a light-colored, breathable fabric, such as cotton, if you will be wearing it outside.



Avoid extreme heat when possible and plan your activities to take place at cooler times during the day.



Bring a spare in case yours gets sweaty and a bag to put it in until you get it home to wash.



If breathing becomes difficult, please take off your cloth face covering and in an emergency, call 9-1-1.

**For the latest updates on changes to services, closings and cancellations in the City of Independence related to COVID-19, please visit [indep.us/coronavirus](https://indep.us/coronavirus).**



## How to drain a pool

Waste water is removed from your property through either the storm sewer or the sanitary sewer. Ideally, you should drain pools and spas into the sanitary sewer to ensure that water ends up at the treatment plant where all chemicals, including chlorine, can be removed. This can be done through any plumbed drain in your home, including a floor drain. Water entering the storm sewer is not treated, so any pool water that is released to the ground can enter a stream or creek. Chemicals in pool water can damage the streams or creeks and harm wildlife.

To safely drain pool water onto your lawn, be sure to de-chlorinate the water before

draining. This means monitoring the pool for 3 to 5 days, and testing the chlorine levels. Once a pH of 7-8 is reached, and before algae starts to grow, it is safe to begin slowly draining the water onto your lawn. Be sure to drain very slowly to limit the amount of runoff. This practice is acceptable only if the water stays within your property boundaries - there should be no runoff onto adjacent lots nor onto the street. Releasing the water too quickly can create nuisances like standing water or eroding soil.

For more information on storm water pollution prevention, contact Municipal Services at 325-7711

## Independence Recognized for Continued Commitment to Arboriculture

For the 21st consecutive year, the City of Independence Power & Light has been recognized for its commitment to utility arboriculture when it was named to the 2019 Tree Line USA. Tree Line USA, a partnership between Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters, recognizes public and private utilities for pursuing practices that protect and enhance America's urban trees. Tree Line USA promotes the dual goals of delivering safe and reliable electricity while maintaining healthy community forests.

City of Independence Power & Light achieved Tree Line USA by meeting five program standards: provide annual worker



training in best tree-care practices; sponsor a tree-planting and public education program; maintain a tree-based energy conservation program; and participate in an Arbor Day celebration.

More information about Tree

Line USA can be found at [arborday.org/TreeLineUSA](http://arborday.org/TreeLineUSA).

## City focuses on transit

On May 27, the City of Independence announced it had reached an agreement with the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) to supplement transit funding for one year utilizing funds provided by the CARES Act. As part of the agreement, the City will receive \$1.6 million. These funds will be used for the fixed-route transit system (IndeBus) through the Fiscal Year 2020-21 which runs July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.

“Public transportation is an essential service in our community and is vital for our workforce, students and visitors, and I was determined not to allow it to lapse,” Independence Mayor Eileen Weir said in a release. “Whether you use the bus service or not, you rely on someone who does. Independence has been a leader in transit in our region, and thanks to the strong relationships we have formed with the KCATA over the years, we were able to reach an agreement at this critical time. We are now charged with getting to work immediately to sustain and expand our public transit beyond 2021.”

City officials are now working with the KCATA to find long-term funding for this vital service for citizens. The 2021-22 Fiscal Year budget process begins in January and a proposed budget will be shared with the Council in May 2021.

## SantaCaliGon Cancelled

On June 29 the Independence Chamber of Commerce announced the 2020 SantaCaliGon Festival was cancelled.

The Chamber is working with previous festival vendors to create a virtual shopping platform. Details and an expected roll-out date will be announced soon.

Look for updates from the Independence Chamber of Commerce and the SantaCaliGon® Days Festival Committee at [ichamber.biz](http://ichamber.biz) and [santacaligon.com](http://santacaligon.com).



Government works best when residents get involved.

Learn more at [indep.us/boardscommissions](http://indep.us/boardscommissions)



Are you looking for a way to get involved? Have ideas on how to make our community better? Please consider applying for City Boards and Commissions.

You can find information on the boards as well as the application information itself at [indep.us/boardscommissions](http://indep.us/boardscommissions).

At this time, Boards and Commissions are meeting virtually and citizens can watch these meetings on the City's YouTube Channel, [indep.us/youtube](http://indep.us/youtube), or on Channel 7.

Questions? Contact the City Clerk at (816) 325-7010.



# A new look - introducing Municipal Services

In April, City Manager Zach Walker announced the Public Works and Water Pollution Control Departments would be combined into the new Municipal Services Department.

"There is no question COVID-19 has challenged us, but it has also inspired all of us to look at new opportunities for our community," City Manager Zach Walker said. "This restructuring of the Public Works and Water Pollution Control Departments will streamline the services we provide to the public, remove duplicate services in the two separate departments and continue to provide the Charter-outlined services to our community. This is a service combination seen in several communities across the country and we look forward to the innovations it will allow us to capitalize on in the years to come."

City Manager Walker named Lisa Phelps, formerly the director of Water Pollution Control, the director of the new Municipal Services Department.

"The Water Pollution Control Department was originally part of Public Works but in the early 80s the decision was made to break the departments up," Phelps said. "I am excited about the potential we have here to improve on the steps both of these departments had already begun, from new equipment to

streamlined technology and services that will positively impact our citizens."

One step to improve customer service is the transfer of the development engineering staff from Public Works into the Community Development Department, creating a one-stop shop for business and developers seeking to invest in Independence. It is believed this will streamline the development process.

"As the area begins to reopen, we are already receiving positive feedback from developers and businesses regarding this change," Community Development Director Tom Scannell said. "We look forward to improving the interactions we have with developers as we settle into this new system."

"From snow removal to street maintenance, the Public Works and Water Pollution Control crews had long worked together," Phelps said. "We are excited about the opportunities to cross train our staff in more service areas and continue to provide the high-quality response our citizens have come to depend on."

The City is also using this time to reorganize how departments are housed within City Hall. Municipal Services is now located on the second floor across the lobby from Community Development. The Finance and Administration Department has moved to the third floor along with the City Manager's and City Council's offices.

## CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Eileen Weir (816) 325-7027

City Council Office (816) 325-7022

Online at [indep.us/citycouncil](http://indep.us/citycouncil).

Email at [citycouncil@indepmo.org](mailto:citycouncil@indepmo.org).

### Councilmembers

John Perkins	District 1
Brice Stewart	District 2
Mike Steinmeyer	District 3
Daniel Hobart	District 4
Karen DeLuccie	At-Large
Mike Huff	At-Large
City Manager Zachary Walker	(816) 325-7170

## Where can I...

### Pay my Jackson Co. property taxes:

Historic Truman Courthouse  
112 W. Lexington, Suite 114  
Independence, MO 64050  
Phone: (816) 881-3232

### Apply for a marriage license:

Historic Truman Courthouse  
112 W. Lexington, Suite 30  
Independence, Missouri 64050  
Phone: (816) 881-4608

### Apply for a business license:

Independence City Hall  
111 E. Maple  
Independence, MO 64050  
Phone: (816) 325-7079

### Pay a ticket issued by the City:

Independence City Hall  
111 E. Maple  
Independence, MO 64050  
Phone: (816) 325-7230  
Some tickets may be paid online at [indep.us/paytickets](http://indep.us/paytickets).

For more information on Jackson County offices, visit [jacksongov.org](http://jacksongov.org).

For more information on City offices, visit [indepmo.org](http://indepmo.org).

## CITY7 City of Independence Government Access Television

### City Council Meetings

Live meetings: 6 p.m. on Mondays  
Replays: 9 a.m. on Mon., Wed., Fri.  
1 p.m. on Sun.

### Planning Commission Meetings

Live meetings: 6 p.m. on 2nd & 4th Tues./month  
Replays: 10 a.m. on Tues. and Thurs.  
1 p.m. on Sat.

Learn more at [indep.us/city7](http://indep.us/city7)

### Numbers to Remember

Animal Shelter	325-7207	Parks & Recreation	325-7843
Adopt-a-Street	325-7602	Park Vandalism	325-7208
Barking Dogs	325-7213	Police Non-Emergency	325-7300
Building Permits	325-7401	Fire Non-Emergency	325-7123
Business Licenses	325-7079	Potholes	325-7624
City Council Office	325-7022	Report Power Outage	325-7550
City Manager's Office	325-7170	Street Lights	325-7535
Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477	Stormwater Pollution	325-7727
Drop-Off Depot/Trash	325-7600	Utilities	
Drugs	325-6272	Customer Service	325-7930
Graffiti	257-7824	Pay by Phone	325-SERV
Mayor's Office	325-7027	Payment Assistance	254-4100
Municipal Court	325-7230	Weeds, Trash	325-7193
Neighborhood Watch	325-7643		

## Regional Animal Shelter

Help them find a forever home.  
Adopt a homeless pet.

21001 E. Hwy. 78, Independence  
11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Wed. - Sun.  
Call (816) 325-7207



Always spay or neuter.

