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City of Peculiar ⁹⁰⁰ Responds to Accusations of Violations

In an online story published on Friday, July 24, the *Belton Star Herald* reported that “an apparent violation” of the Missouri Open Meetings Law occurred on Tuesday, July 21, 2009.

The City believes it has committed no violation and issues the following clarification.

On Tuesday the Board of Alderman and Senior Staff of the City went into a closed session pursuant to RSMO 610.021(3) for one hour to discuss a revenue shortfall and potential solutions to prevent a reduction in City Services. One of the solutions considered was a reduction in force. Five individual employees were discussed and whether their employment should be terminated. Missouri law expressly authorizes the Peculiar Board of Alderman to go into closed session to discuss specific employees in order to protect their individual privacy. Since this was a work session, no vote was taken.

The Board of Alderman, following its regular meeting on Tuesday, again went into a closed session for two reasons. One of the reasons was to discuss litigation strategy with the City Attorney as authorized by RSMO 610.021(1). A second topic in this closed session was again discussion of individual personnel and whether their termination as employees was in the City’s interest to deal with budgeting issues. Again, Missouri law RSMO 610.021(3) authorizes a closed session. No vote was taken.

Like many small communities across Missouri coping with the economic downturn, Peculiar is facing decisions. A special public meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 28 at 6:30 p.m. in Peculiar City Hall to continue this decision making process.

The Journal will have a follow up in next week’s issue. /