



City of South Bend Common Council

441 County-City Building • 227 W. Jefferson Blvd
South Bend, Indiana 46601

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<http://www.southbendin.gov>

NEWS RELEASE

Subject: Councilmembers Respond to the Cancellation of the Monday, January 23, 2023 Common Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 24th, 2023

Contact: Bob Palmer, Council Attorney: bpalmer@southbendin.gov

Councilmembers Respond to the Cancellation of the Monday, January 23, 2023 Common Council Meeting

We, the below signed members of the South Bend Common Council support the decision of President Sharon McBride to postpone the Monday, January 23, 2023 Common Council meetings. We also denounce Clerk Dawn Jones' attempts to ignore and deflect her inability to do her job and follow the law by instead holding a politically divisive and inflammatory press conference.

The facts are that all of the bills scheduled for Monday were to be heard in Council Committee meetings beginning at 3:30 p.m. on Monday. By State law and City ordinance, Notice should then have been posted online, posted on the 4th floor, and gone out via email by 3:30 p.m. on Thursday. That Notice MUST include day, time, and place of meeting. Legally compliant Notice did not go out via email until 4:39 p.m. Friday, did not get posted online until late Friday night and was not posted on the 4th floor until late Monday morning.

Those are the facts. In addition to those facts, the agenda that was sent out was littered with misspellings and errors, including incorrect times.

Upon realizing the late Notice on Friday evening, the Council attorney consulted with the State Public Access Counselor, and both agreed that Council would be in violation of State law and City Ordinance if it were to go ahead with Monday's meetings. That is why the meeting was postponed.

State law gives the Clerk zero authority in Council business and the Public Access Counselor has stated that the Clerk is passive secretary of the Council. However, in the last few weeks Clerk Jones has made repeated attempts to violate State law and City ordinances in attempts to further her own political agenda. Two weeks ago, she attempted to place a bill on the Council meeting agenda that was not properly & legally filed. This week she again tried to change the Council meeting agenda on her own accord and then made accusatory statements to cover up her own failure.





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We reiterate that the decision to postpone the meeting had nothing to do with the Reparatory Justice bill and any accusations that it did are strictly political theatre. The decision to postpone Monday's meetings was the correct decision and we support following the law. Council President McBride is working on rescheduling the meeting and the Reparatory Justice bill will be heard when the Clerk can properly follow Council procedures and the law.

Sheila Niezgodski
Vice President
Sixth District

Canneth Lee
Committee of the Whole
First District

Troy Warner
Fourth District

Rachel Tomas Morgan
At Large

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