

# Committee of the Whole

Monday, April 10, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

Library Meeting Room in Five Points, Washington,  
380 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, IL

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Mayor Manier called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:35 p.m., with a quorum present.

*Present:* Alderpersons Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Dingledine, Schone, Stevens and Yoder

*Also Present:* City Administrator Snider, Finance Director Baxter, P & D Director Oliphant, City Engineer Carr, Public Works Director Rittenhouse, Police Chief McCoy, Deputy Police Chief Stevens, City Treasurer Strubhar, City Clerk Brod, Attorney Derek Schryer and press

## MINUTES

1. ALDERPERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Nothing provided at this time.
2. CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Nothing provided at this time.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Alderperson Schone motioned to approve the March 13, 2023 meeting minutes; Alderperson Butler seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
4. BUSINESS ITEMS:
  - A. *Recognition of Officer Dan Foster as Handler for the Retired First Washington Police Canine* – Police Chief McCoy welcomed Thor, the newly retired police K9 and his handler Police Officer Dan Foster. Chief McCoy shared that Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup> was Thor's last day of duty and he is retiring to spend time with the Foster family. Chief McCoy noted that Council voted to allow Thor to remain with the Foster family. He also shared that Thor was the first K9 officer for the Washington Police Department and has helped apprehend countless criminals. Chief McCoy presented Thor with a plaque, recognizing his service and congratulating him on his retirement. Officer Foster said this was new but it is the best thing he has done in his career. Thor has dealt with many changes in dealing with drugs. Thor received his first ice cream cone last week. Officer Foster said there is nothing more fulfilling and shared that Thor has helped located missing kids, drugs, money, etc. He is glad that the K9 program will continue. Chief McCoy shared that Thor and the new K9 were gifts from the Zimmerman family who have also gifted all the training and equipment.
  - B. *FY 23-24 Budget-Potential Garden Club Budget Increase* – P&D Director Oliphant shared that Council expressed interest to adding to the budget and according to the Garden Club board members, they spend about \$500-600 on flowers plus additional \$500 for other items. Staff recommends this to be tied to the TIF fund to allow for greater flexibility. Alderperson Dingledine said he is in favor because they do a good job of maintaining. He suggested \$1000. Alderperson Schone asked if the Garden Club meets with Mr. Oliphant so we know the expenses. Mr. Oliphant shared that they do not meet but we send them a check to help offset some of the purchases. Alderperson Stevens asked if Create A Scene is paid through TIF and Mr. Oliphant confirmed that they are. Alderperson Brownfield stated that he is in favor but is concerned it is coming out so late and stated that if Council hears of these items, it should come to Council sooner. Alderperson Stevens asked if the Tournament of Champions comes out of Community Support. Mr. Oliphant clarified that it comes out of the Tourism account. Alderperson Blundy asked if they

do more than just the Square. Mr. Oliphant shared that they do the planters around the fountain, the planter near Brecklin's and the planters near Five Points. Alderperson Blundy suggested \$1,000 or \$1,500. Alderperson Yoder agreed with \$1,000. The general consensus was to provide \$1,000.

- C. *Possible Ground-Mount Solar Array Amendment Discussion* – Mr. Oliphant shared that a solar contractor came to the last meeting and asked for review of the code so that code would allow for ground mount solar. He said Washington is rarer in that we do not allow for it and most communities allow it in some manner. Mr. Oliphant suggested consideration of a few restrictions like a minimum land size. He noted that Germantown Hills limits theirs for one or more acres. Alderperson Blundy is in favor and stated that he is shocked at the number of solar panels in yards in his neighborhood. He stated that they are not the most attractive thing but they are not a bother and he thinks an acre might be too restrictive. Alderperson Brownfield expressed concern and feels they should not be in side yards and stated that if you look at some of our neighborhoods, the yards are tight. Alderperson Brownfield stated that rear yard might be okay but not front or side yards. Alderperson Butler said there aren't that many lots that are an acre and he doesn't think a half-acre would allow for a minimum setback. Alderperson Butler stated that maybe a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres lot would be best. He thinks businesses should allow it. He noted that it is more prevalent and we also need to look at setback. Alderperson Butler also noted there could be an issue with neighbor disputes which may include the planting of trees. Alderperson Stevens asked if people need to go to Planning and Zoning to be approved. Mr. Oliphant clarified that they did originally. Alderperson Stevens thinks these should go in front of Planning and Zoning. Alderperson Brownfield asked if Planning and Zoning would have the last word and wondered if they would then have to go to Council. Mr. Oliphant clarified it goes to Council. Alderperson Yoder stated that he is fine with it but agreed with reviewing setback, height and side yard. Alderperson Adams said he is fine with the backyard and a minimum acreage being  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre. Alderperson Schone said he is good with the ground mounts and asked about the average yard size, noting that they are less than 10,000 feet. He agreed that it shouldn't be close to neighbors so there should be setbacks. He expressed concern that neighbors could complain because they are 100 feet short of the requirement. Mr. Oliphant shared that most lots are  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of an acre. Alderperson Schone noted there should be more consideration to where they are going instead of limiting to the lot size. Mr. Oliphant said some of the smaller lots won't allow the proper sun angle. He shared that in some cases, the lots will restrict themselves. Mr. Oliphant suggested a regulation if they have a 50-foot setback from all adjacent principal structures, they would have to get approval from that neighbor. Alderperson Dingleline asked if that approval is then given, and the property sells, does it stay with the property. Alderperson Dingleline asked if solar permits are 100% rooftop. Mr. Oliphant noted a few people have asked about the ground mount option but majority is rooftops. Mayor Manier asked Mr. Oliphant to do a little more research with other communities. He noted some neighborhoods have an HOA that would prohibit a front mount. All agreed to bring this back for further discussion.
- D. *Excavator Purchase Discussion* – Public Works Director Rittenhouse shared that Public Works has borrowed the township's excavator about 30 times in the past three years. He shared that there are jobs that an excavator works better than a backhoe. He also shared that they looked at size options and noted that they could use a smaller one daily and a large one might only be used a couple times a year. Mr. Rittenhouse explained that staff reached out to Alta Equipment for a Sourcewell quote, and their quote was \$102,194 for a New 2022 Volvo Excavator. He shared that this is a similar make and model that they have used in the past and it is on the lot. They had proposed \$120,000 in the budget. Alderperson Brownfield said they discussed this at Public Works Committee and find these to be very useful. He thinks the in-stock item would be great because ordering one could take until October. Alderperson Yoder agreed and suggested putting it on the Consent Agenda for next week. Alderperson Adams agreed with both. Alderperson Stevens asked if this is a mini or large. Mr. Rittenhouse clarified that this is a mini. He explained when you would use the

different sizes of excavators. Alderperson Stevens asked if Mr. Rittenhouse keeps track when the township borrows our stuff. Mr. Rittenhouse shared that we keep track but he is not sure if they do. Alderperson Stevens stated that she is concerned because Public Works needs a new building and wishes we could save money to work towards a new building. Alderperson Schone asked Mr. Rittenhouse if he could explain the size of this excavator compared to the township excavator. Mr. Rittenhouse stated that the township had a smaller unit which they found convenient for back yards with minimal impact and they thought about getting a large one to share between the two entities but the township replaced theirs with a slightly larger one which makes it harder to use. After many discussions, they think the smaller one would be better utilized. Alderperson Schone is in favor of this. Mr. Rittenhouse shared that he could bring something to Council soon.

5. OTHER BUSINESS: Alderpers Stevens asked about the Chamber of Commerce contract. Mr. Snider said he can look into it and bring more information to Council. Alderperson Blundy asked about stormwater issues and the priority projects. Mr. Carr said he had tried to prioritize them but Council did not reach a consensus, except to move the 223 detention basin to the bottom of the list. He noted the recommendation was then to get them all designed to provide more information so Council could decide if they want to bond for all ten projects or do one at a time. Alderperson Brownfield agreed that is what was done. Mr. Carr shared that they are going to design all ten and maybe look into an extra basin just to the west of the Underwood Basin. He noted that there would be a need to acquire private property which is difficult. Alderperson Blundy asked about Hamilton. Mr. Snider said they reached out to Hamilton who stated that they will need an additional \$6,000-\$10,000 to do so. Mr. Snider also noted our contracts on the projects and stated that Council can guide us as to spending more money with Hamilton. Alderperson Blundy stated that Howard was aware that there were data issues but couldn't do anything about it because the contract was cancelled. He said we had an agreement for him to do his work but we didn't let him do it. Alderperson Stevens said she thinks Hamilton should come back and explain the discrepancies. Alderperson Yoder is good with \$6,000 for them to come back. Alderperson Brownfield and Dingleline stated that they are not interested. Alderperson Adams is in favor. Alderperson Butler stated that he is not sure there is another recommendation that we could get out of it. Alderperson Schone is not in favor of spending more money and doesn't think there will be peace until we bring them back in and spend money foolishly. Mr. Schone shared that he thinks Council has been listening and understands I&I and how water flows which is why we made the decision that they are not in favor of this. He thinks it will waste money for them to tell us what we already know. Mr. Snider anticipates that this will come back in June for more detail. Alderperson Blundy stated that he was not at last week's meeting and the attorney shared something with Council and he would like Mr. Snider to share it again. Mr. Snider explained that he sent an email to Council regarding a lawsuit and FOIA requests that have used more legal fees. He shared that we are being sued by a firm in Peoria claiming we violated an OMA issue and Davis and Campbell will defend us. City Attorney Schryer stated that it is not appropriate for him to comment at this time. Alderperson Blundy stated that he would like standing agenda items on the Committee of the Whole agenda for the Brewpub, Freedom Parkway and Nofsinger. Mayor Manier shared that those updates are provided in the committees and the staff updates. Alderperson Blundy stated that he thinks it should be a standing item so he doesn't have to ask. Mr. Carr shared that they are working on a hub page that will have future updates instead of having biweekly letters to residents. This will provide a story map for public updates. He noted that they are testing Hildale's page and more will come soon. He thinks Alderperson Bundy will be impressed. Mr. Carr shared that it will include photos of progress and noted that this takes time to develop. They are working internally to line up the projects that are coming soon. Mr. Carr shared that they are looking at starting the Square sanitary project this week, in the alley behind the Knights of Columbus Hall. The alley will be closed for about a week. They will come back later to do High Street. This project will require a minor detouring and a letter will go to the post office to allow them plenty of time to prepare and it will also be publicized. Alderperson Stevens stated that Mr. Snider was a proponent for live streaming meetings and asked where would live streaming the meetings on a YouTube Channel be in the budget. Mr. Snider stated

that he estimates it to be about \$50,000-\$100,000 to do it right, and can bring it to Council if they like. Alderperson Blundy said many people would like to sit at home and watch the meetings. Mr. Snider noted that we have some equipment but it is not permanent. He also noted that a room change would be needed. He noted that Decatur has a great template and we would need a technician to run it.

Alderperson Brownfield suggested planning for it next year. Alderperson Yoder asked for clarification regarding the use of the previous streaming equipment. Clerk Brod shared that the previous equipment creates a tripping hazard with its cables and noted the challenges in the current room.

Alderperson Stevens stated that there are unexpected line items in the budget and she would be interested in what Jim's ideas are. Mayor Manier and Mr. Snider clarified that they will bring information back.

Alderperson Stevens asked about the work on Eagle Street curbs. Mr. Carr shared that the only concerns regarding future SRTS work, would be near cross walks. Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Carr feel the next SRTS application will occur late summer early fall.

Alderperson Stevens stated that there are a lot of complaints about the Illinois American Water rate hike. Mr. Carr clarified that their agreement is to just follow our ordinance. Alderperson Stevens asked if we can we raise our water rates because Illinois American Water raised theirs. Mr. Carr shared that they can only raise their rates every four years. Mr. Snider explained that Illinois American Water is a for-profit company and we are a municipality that is not for a profit.

Alderperson Stevens asked if we have applied for any tourism grants. Mr. Oliphant said no.

6. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:37 p.m. Alderperson Stevens moved and Alderperson Brownfield seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

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Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk