

Committee of the Whole

Monday, May 8, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

Library Meeting Room in Five Points, Washington,

380 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, IL

Mayor Manier called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., with a quorum present.

Present: Alderpersons Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Martin, McIntyre, Smith, and Stevens

Also Present: City Administrator Snider, P & D Director Oliphant, Finance Director Baxter, Public Works Director Rittenhouse, Police Chief McCoy, City Treasurer Strubhar, City Clerk Brod, Attorney Keith Braskich and Press

MINUTES

1. ALDERPERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Nothing provided at this time.
2. CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Washington Jim Bremner from Washington Township provided an update and document about the senior ridership. He shared that they continue to grow and he thanked everyone for their support. His update is attached and made part of these minutes. Katie Beale from Felkers Addition stated that crews are out working on ditches. She stated that she is concerned due to the recent rain. She said some culverts are collapsed or non-existent. She asked if owners are to clean out the culverts themselves.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Alderperson Brownfield motioned to approve the April 10, 2023 meeting minutes; Alderperson Adams seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
4. BUSINESS ITEMS:
 - A. *Discussion for the Use of Golf Carts in Washington* – Police Chief McCoy said they did extensive research per direction from Council. They attached a report to the agenda that included the Illinois State Statute regarding regulations for golf carts. Alderperson McIntyre said he appreciates the Chief putting them together and stated that he is concerned with policing this. He also stated that this is being done in other communities, that requirements would need to be laid out, he has seen restrictions on locations, and he thinks they are a good idea. He noted that Pekin has ordinances pertaining to golf carts and stated that he doesn't want to see them on bike paths. Alderperson Brownfield referenced recent news about a bride who was killed on a golf cart by a drunk driver on her wedding night. He stated that they are hard to police and thinks we will see kids on them. Alderperson Blundy acknowledged the safety concerns but stated that we allow Mopeds and motorcycles and he would rather be hit in a golf cart than a Moped. Alderperson Blundy stated that we take risks when we ride our bicycles and thinks restrictive zones would be smart and this would give our city an advantage to our openness. Mr. Blundy stated that this will allow slow moving vehicles to slow down traffic. He suggested that we charge registration fees around \$1,500 per cart. He feels that seniors want this so they can visit their friends. He did internet research and found 135 cities in Illinois allow them and the larger cities were around the 30,000 in population. Alderperson Adams said he was on Council the last time they talked about this. He stated that over the last six years, only three people have asked about this and one was Blundy, before he was on Council. Alderperson Adams feels the east end of town is too narrow and this adds an extra public safety issue. Alderperson Adams also noted that this could open the City up for liability and he is not in favor. Alderperson Martin said he supports more freedom and would

rather have too much than not enough. He provided an example that if a little girl riding with her grandpa in a golf cart were involved in an accident, it would change people's minds. He shared that Chillicothe has had an incident with golf carts and shared his concern that this may open it up from golf carts, to Gators, then Polaris. He stated that he doesn't see a big difference between motor bikes, electric bikes and motorized wheel chairs. Alderperson Smith stated that she has been contacted by several people and safety is a big concern. She wonders if this could be handled by neighborhoods and suggested a test run in order to evaluate the idea. Alderperson Smith said the fees and inspections would need to be discussed. Alderperson Stevens asked if Chief McCoy has received complaints about golf carts. Chief McCoy said he has received a few complaints but the carts were gone when the department got there. He said scooters aren't an issue because they are licensed vehicles. Alderperson Stevens suggested considering specific neighborhoods and noted a previous conversation concerning the Cherry Point neighborhood. She is also concerned about safety but thinks allowances can be made. Alderperson Butler stated that the requirement is that the unit of local government says public safety won't be compromised. He thinks the resources can be better used elsewhere. Alderperson Butler stated that he hasn't been asked but when it has come up in conversations, and he 100% thinks it shouldn't be done. Mayor Manier said he has never been asked about golf carts and stated the need to be restricted to 25 mph, which there aren't many streets with that speed. Mayor Manier clarified that Trails Edge residents express traffic concerns and this would increase that traffic. A straw poll among alderpersons revealed the following: McIntyre is in favor with restrictions, it must address the whole City and no cost to the City; Blundy agreed with McIntyre; Martin is in favor of additional discussion and being very specific; Butler, Brownfield and Adams do not support it; Stevens is in favor if it were restrictive and not for the entire City; Smith is in favor of more discussion including if people will need to be insured and permitted. Mayor Manier noted concern about picking and choosing streets. Chief McCoy stated that Council would need to choose the neighborhoods and streets. He also noted people would be upset with Council if their cart was towed for crossing streets. Mayor Manier noted deaths in Chillicothe and Pekin related to golf carts. Alderperson Stevens thinks if people want golf carts, they need to be at this meeting. Alderperson Blundy shared that he encouraged the people who have asked him about golf carts, but they did not come. Mayor Manier noted that this has been a topic on Facebook but no one came to the meeting. Alderperson Blundy stated that people may be intimidated and he is disappointed that no one came. Alderperson Stevens suggested advertising it on the City website to see if anyone comes. Alderperson Butler clarified that it wouldn't be a good representation, because people who oppose wouldn't come and we can't manage the City on Facebook. Alderperson Stevens shared that at the public safety meeting where this was discussed, of the two people who wanted it, one is on Council and the other moved out of town. Alderperson Adams shared his concern for parking and narrow streets on the east end of town. Alderperson Martin doesn't feel the need to talk about it again right now but maybe in the future. Chief McCoy shared concern that State Law mandates, if a minor under 16 is caught driving a golf cart, they won't get a driver's license until they are 18 years old. Alderperson Brownfield asked if they have to adhere to driver's license restrictions like the number of passengers, Deputy Chief confirmed that they do.

- B. *Autumn Fest Temporary Road Closure of a State-Maintained Roadway Update* – Chief McCoy explained that they will present this topic at next Council meeting as a resolution.
- C. *Hamilton Engineering Scope of Work - Public Hearing Update* – Administrator Snider stated that a Council member asked for Hamilton to come back to provide communication about his draft report. Alderperson Blundy asked for the cost of a public hearing and Alderperson Butler was correct in estimating \$20,000. Administrator Snider shared that moving forward would be around \$66,000 and include the public hearing. Alderperson Blundy and Administrator Snider estimated the contract was paused about eight months to a year ago. Alderperson Blundy expressed confusion regarding the October 11, 2021 date, the approval, then the paused and stated that Council never voted on it. Administrator Snider said he has spoken on this many times, they did

the smoke testing which gave dismal reports, and they found there isn't any long-term solutions for the IEPA. He noted that the original answer was to put in a new sewer main and it is still the answer. Administrator Snider also explained that Council thought they needed another engineer's opinion and the reports were abysmal again. Administrator Snider clarified that Council needs to say if they want to spend the money to have Hamilton finish the report. Alderperson Blundy noted the I&I issues that were found in one report as well as the analysis of alternate routes. Administrator Snider clarified that Council is the decision maker. Alderperson Blundy expressed frustration that nothing is being done. Administrator Snider stated that the professional engineer has provided his opinion and it is falling on deaf ears and he shared his positive experience with Strand in other cities. Administrator Snider also shared his concern regarding our standing with the IEPA and stated that if we work with them, we will get a 1% forgivable loan and if we wait too long, they will enforce it at rates that will have to go to the rate payers. Alderperson Blundy stated the reason we brought in Hamilton was so no one could be accused of being biased. Alderperson Butler reviewed the scope and timing of the work and stated that the public hearing has lost its value. He also noted that public input was sought from a questionnaire. Alderperson Butler read the comments provided in the report. He noted that this was to take place prior to the final draft, but we already have it. Alderperson Butler asked why would Council go back and spend money on items that we are no longer dealing with and noted the financial impact of waiting. He feels that people who continue to call Strand biased, are wrong. He also stated that we hired them to do a job, they made a recommendation and we continue to ignore it. Alderperson Martin asked what is the end goal of doing this. Alderperson Blundy said there was concern about how the route was chosen so a committee was formed and they went through five or six different companies to do an analysis. He noted that the Pudik's also had someone look at it and reports said it was an I&I issue. Alderperson Blundy described the process of the project but said we never got a final report from Howard, then Mr. Carr looked at it and noticed discrepancies, so we asked Howard to explain. Alderperson Blundy said he wants to ask if he reviewed the other routes and by not having him come back, Howard never got to explain. Alderperson Butler noted that they provided the full report, they tested the probable area, Howard rejected the Pudik's routes and we have spent all the money. Alderperson Butler stated that this is happening because Howard did not give the answer some people are hoping for and Howard and Mr. Waldren had the same conclusion. He also stated that according to his scope, he is completed. Alderperson Stevens referred to the Strand report, stated that Administrator Snider was not told to pause it, Council already voted to finish this, then Administrator Snider paused it for smoke testing. Alderperson McIntyre said he is struggling to understand the use of the words final report but number four says the word draft. He noted the complexity of the issue and stated that he wants to make sure we aren't dealing with something that we can't achieve. Alderperson Butler the website says final draft and the final report would only contain the comments provided at the final presentation. Alderperson Blundy said the initial email stated that the numbers were wrong and this was only the draft report. Mayor Manier asked if we want to spend \$20,000 for a public hearing. Alderperson Adams noted that they can ask questions in June when Hamilton visits. He also shared that the reason this came to be, is because Kaskaskia did not do their part in communicating with the residents. The general consensus was that everyone agreed to have Hamilton come back for discussion.

- D. Evidence Building Discussion* – Chief McCoy stated that this was discussed at the Public Safety meeting. He stated that since 2017 they have desired to upgrade the building to house evidence and with the help of Mr. Carr, they identified Chandler and Associates who came to look at the building. Their report said the City should build a new building and provided an estimate. Chief McCoy explained that they were given \$580,000 with assistance from Darin LaHood. The police department applied for the grant. Dewberry was interviewed and they have been given \$16,000 to proceed with Dewberry. He shared that two of their members live in Washington. Alderperson Adams clarified that the \$580,000 can be used for the building. Alderperson Stevens asked if Chief McCoy would send out the link to the handout.

E. *Possible Ground-mount Solar Array Amendment Discussion Follow-up* – Mr. Oliphant shared that this is a follow-up discussion and they are focusing on:

1. The allowance of a ground mount to have a minimum setback of 50 feet and a neighbor would need permission from the adjacent property owner if it is less. He explained that this has the potential to cause issues with neighbors.

2. Setting a possible minimum lot size. He noted the average lot size in the city is just shy of .5 acres and with more than 50% of lots being .25 acres or less. Mr. Oliphant shared that the only place he found that has this rule is Germantown Hills.

3. Allowing only roof mount systems. Staff would stay clear of this to avoid the subjectivity. Alderperson Stevens said Tazewell County regulations should be the same as ours. She suggested regulations about glare and wondered if the property of an HOA wanted a solar array. She referred to a tricky property on Cruger. Alderperson Martin shared that he is in favor of a small panel in a yard but doesn't like solar farms. Alderperson Martin and Mr. Oliphant discussed regulating the maximum square footage. Alderperson Butler noted the minimum number of panels and explained that the size allowed for a roof would be too tall for a yard. Alderperson Butler thinks solar arrays may work for commercial applications but might not be conducive to neighbors on a ½ acre lot. Alderperson McIntyre agreed with Alderperson Butler and likes focusing on commercial properties. Alderperson Blundy agreed with the commercial aspect. He said he is not as concerned about the looks because people put up weird fences and sheds. Alderperson Adams said he agrees with starting with commercial and ¾ of an acre lots. Alderperson Brownfield agreed with Alderperson Butler. Alderperson Smith is in favor of ¾ of an acre lots and worries if you go with bigger panels it won't be attractive to neighbors. Mr. Oliphant stated that he will look further into it and bring it back.

5. OTHER BUSINESS: Administrator Snider noted that the weekend had six inches of rain and we have had a few requests for limb pick up. We are planning on responding to them as they call into City Hall instead of broadcasting it. He noted that Ameren was having issues and said GFL was initially having issues getting down streets but figured out a solution. Mr. Rittenhouse shared a few isolated incidences where trees did damage. Alderperson Stevens asked for a Brewpub update. Mr. Oliphant stated that they are under contract with a demolition company and hope to start by the end of the month.

At 8:01, Alderperson Martin motioned to go into closed session; Alderperson McIntyre seconded for the purpose of: 5 ILCS 120/2(c) (2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.

8 Ayes: Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Martin, McIntyre, Smith and Stevens

0 Nays:

Motion carried by roll call vote.

6. ADJOURNMENT: At 8:44 p.m. Alderperson Adams moved and Alderperson Brownfield seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk

Disability and Senior Transportation Operations
City of Washington and Washington Township

CURRENT OFFERINGS:

- **65+ Senior \$3 Ride - Township Wide Service – Provided 480 Rides - 1st Qtr. 2023. Service began November 2020 for ambulatory seniors.**
 - **Funded by Washington Township with ride service provided by Morton/Washington Taxi**
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- **Disability Transit provided by CityLift – Provided 424 Rides – 1st Qtr. 2023 to points within the City of Washington, to East Peoria and Peoria. Service began Sept. 2022.**
 - **Funded equally by City of Washington/Washington Township plus a Matching Fed/State Grant.**
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These combined services have provided seniors and disabled persons in our community with a total of 904 rides during the first quarter of 2023, averaging 300 rides month.

The ridership continues to grow, reflecting the importance of transportation for our most vulnerable citizens and the strong community commitment of City and Township officials to meet these needs.

Current Funding is expected to last until February 2025. Planning for 2025 and beyond service needs will involve ongoing ridership numbers and funding availability from the Township, City and available grants.

Questions, comments, opinions or ideas.....Please contact:

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