

City of Washington

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Minutes for Monday, June 12, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.
In the 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, City Engineer Carr, Finance Director Baxter, Public Works Director Rittenhouse, Police Chief McCoy, City Clerk Brod, Attorney Derek Schryer and Press

MINUTES

Mayor Manier opened the meeting by sharing that Jessica Tilton from Washington has become Miss Illinois and going on to the Miss America event. He congratulated her accomplishment.

1. ALDERPERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Nothing provided.
2. CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Mr. Winne who resides on Westgate, shared that he is speaking on behalf of residents near him. He shared that their back yard fills with water after rain. He stated that the neighbors spoke and found the problem to be upstream. Mr. Winne stated that it is caused by the senior living center on Newcastle Road, and they learned that this has been going on for more than 20 years. He also noted the effects of climate change which is bringing more rain. They are asking for Council to help them with the problem. Mr. Winne shared that he contacted the nursing home but was told not to call again. He stated that there are no curbs or drains in the parking lot. He shared the direction of the flowing water and fears a young kid will be going too fast during a rain and have an accident. He stated that he has photos over the last 20 years and would like to meet everyone on the committee. He noted that he used to be on the Chamber.
Washington resident Maria Taylor stated that she has been in Washington more than 17 years. She shared that she had moved away but moved back and bought a duplex on Kingsbury to help close the financial gap after she closed her restaurant Maria's, A Good Place to Eat. Ms. Taylor noted that she has always had water issues in her back yard but saw a river after the oil spill and she noted that she had to remove a large tree. Ms. Taylor stated that her garage has a crack from the shift of land. She stated that the erosion and water problems are from the events of the diesel spill. She shared that she met her neighbors two weeks ago, and learned they had issues as well. She asked Council to help her. Mr. Winne spoke again and shared that the previous owner spent \$15,000 to put in a tiling system and purchased four sump pumps.
A Washington resident who didn't identify himself stated that one person put up a berm that has helped. Mr. Winne spoke again, stating that the berm did not help his issue.
Another resident who did not identify themselves stated that she sees a lot of water run down Kingsbury. She said water has come up out of her toilet and she was told she has a back up in her home. She shared that she had a company camera her line but they didn't find a blockage or cracks. The company told her that if water is coming back through the toilet, it is probably the stormwater. She shared that she works from her home and needs the house to be sanitary. She noted that it has happened several times. She stated that she doesn't know what else to do because she has done everything they have asked of her.

A resident who lives in the 400 block Gilman shared that he has a flooding issue since he moved in in 1993. He is interested in how Council will decide which project is addressed first. He shared that he can't pull out of his driveway due to flooding. He stated that it is a capacity issue, and he has spoken to the City engineer about it. He feels that he is lucky his has not backed up into his basement.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Alderperson Brownfield motioned to approve the May 8, 2023 meeting minutes; Alderperson Adams seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS:

- A. *Grist Mill Ventures Project Update* – Administrator Snider shared that Marlene Miller has sought an injunction stopping the demolition to progress. He shared that a hearing is scheduled on Friday in Tazewell County. City Attorney Schryer shared that Ms. Miller filed the injunction and a temporary restraining order. She feels several of her property rights to the area, specifically an ingress/egress and a space for a garbage can, have been violated. She feels the demolition impedes on those rights. Mr. Schryer explained that the court will review evidence and decide if the demolition can precede. He noted the hearing is scheduled for Friday at 10:00 a.m. Administrator Snider shared that the developer, Nathan Watson, will be bringing a request next month for financial assistance for the properties next to the Grist Mill development site. Administrator Snider noted there is no money in the TIF so it will require general funding. Alderperson Blundy asked if Administrator Snider knew the amount to be requested. Administrator Snider did not. Administrator Snider and Alderperson Stevens clarified that it will be for the buildings to the east of the development property. Alderperson Blundy asked what they plan to develop there. Administrator Snider stated that they haven't been given specifics, but it could possibly be a banquet hall or more restaurants.

- B. *Review of Committee Meeting Structure* – Administrator Snider explained that the proposed structure would discontinue the standing committees and move all reports to the Committee of the Whole meeting which he suggested moving to 6:00 p.m. He also feels that we are also ready to move the meetings to the Washington Fire Department, beginning in August. These changes will be reflected in the draft ordinance. He recommended the removal of the Board of Local Improvements because it has not met in over 20 years. Administrator Snider is looking for guidance from Council. Alderperson Stevens noted that there will be a change in people on other committees. Alderperson Brownfield stated that he is in favor of the change because everyone will hear information at the same time which can then be discussed. Alderperson Adams agreed with Alderperson Brownfield. Alderperson McIntyre agreed and thanked Administrator Snider for working on this. Mayor Manier asked if anyone is not in favor. Alderperson Butler feels this will help eliminate redundancy. He stated that the value of the standing committee helps in case they need to take a closer look and a standing committee could be assigned on an as-need basis. Administrator Snider noted that the proposed language allows for subcommittees to be created if needed. He suggested that a standing committee only meets if the Mayor sees fit. Alderpersons Stevens is in favor and Alderperson Blundy agreed and feels a subcommittee could be formed by assigning the right people for that committee. Alderperson Martin stated that he is indifferent, so he is good with moving forward. Alderperson Smith suggested keeping the meeting at 6:30. Alderperson Butler thinks having two different meeting times may be confusing to the public. He feels we should start with 6:30 and if the meetings run long, they can adjust. General consensus agreed with the 6:30 start time.

- C. *Review of Meeting Streaming Costs* – City Administrator Snider shared that Council requested to look at streaming meetings. He provided details about the company Bloomington and Canton use for their streaming. He noted that the system is run remotely from Dallas, by someone who the operates permanently installed cameras and puts agenda items on screens. They also have the option to use closed caption. He shared that the video is also searchable by words. City Administrator Snider shared that the initial cost is about \$128,000 and an annual cost of \$44,000 for a subscription. He feels the Galesburg system is professionally done and it is contingent upon their four IT staff, which we outsource. Administrator Snider stated that the initial cost was

\$153,000 but there is an ongoing cost of \$50,000-\$100,000 needed for staffing. Administrator Snider explained that Pekin hires someone to install cameras and runs the audio, but he feels the audio is poor. He also shared that Morton has a similar system, but they have someone record it then post it the next day. Administrator Snider said this can be viewed as an investment and this will help the way people view Washington. Alderperson Adams likes the first option that would have better video and audio. He thinks people are getting more interested in the meetings. He also likes the electronic voting options. Alderperson McIntyre agreed with the first option due to the lack of IT staff. He thinks citizens will like this for transparency. Alderperson Stevens is in favor of the first option as well. Alderperson Brownfield asked how long the equipment will last. Administrator Snider shared that Decatur is transitioning from SD to HD. He stated that technology will get better but it is an unknown. Alderperson Brownfield asked where the money would come from, which is his only concern. Administrator Snider stated that it would require a budget amendment and a 2/3 vote to approve the expenditure. Alderperson Blundy is in favor. He said he had people who wanted to be more involved but don't want to come to meetings and this is a great way to allow that. He stated that he shares the same concerns as Alderperson Brownfield and feels lesser systems might not work. Alderperson Martin likes the idea of being able to hear and see meetings better but feels this is expensive. He asked if we could reach out to Eureka College and asked if they could help. Administrator Snider clarified that it is Council's decision. Alderperson Smith stated she had people tell her that they would like to hear better. She feels the cost may be extreme and suggested a three-year trial to see if more get involved. Alderperson Stevens asked about the high school's system and if they have an IT team. Alderperson Blundy suggested partnering with the high school and using their IT team. Administrator Snider is going to investigate further.

D. Property and Liability Insurance Renewal – Finance Director Baxter introduced Dennis Hermann form Summer and Associates to provide details regarding the renewal. He shared that the correct total for property and casualty under HCC/Tokyo which is \$224,973. He also stated that Option 1 with Selective is \$202,296, Option 2 with IPMG is 257,830 and Option 3 with Travelers is \$302,546. He noted that they received an additional quote from Travelers for Cyber Liability for \$65,023. He noted that recent loss runs are impacting our rates and we are facing a \$26,000 increase. He shared the breakdown in the summary report from the packet and shared that it has increased 25% due to property values. Mr. Hermann noted that higher deductibles are likely, which may have been impacted by recent hail storms, wind and vehicle. The carriers were unwilling to quote the existing deductible. He shared that the loss runs for the last four years averages 77%. Mr. Hermann recommends going with Selective for property casualty and Burnham Flower for cyber coverage. He shared that the firms have a lot of experience in various areas and the underwriter lives in this area. They also have a local safety and loss control representative in Washington.

Alderperson Blundy and Mr. Hermann discussed the types of vehicle claims including hail claims and two that are not yet counted in the coverage. Mr. Hermann clarified that there is always a risk of being dropped and that our claims are a concern because the insurance companies want to make money. Mr. Hermann further explained that they review history and look at preventable controls. He noted that cyber training is especially important. Administrator Snider shared that some communities use an insurance pool and they are self-insured and some communities receive rebates but the pools have an assessment. He stated that we do an excellent job with safety in Police Department and Public Works. Administrator Snider shared that we have a good firm for cyber security but everyone is vulnerable to an attack. Placing a reserve for the Goat Springs lawsuit was discussed. Alderperson Stevens and Mr. Hermann discussed sewer backups on City and private properties, clarifying that you have to prove intent to cause the damage to be liable. Regarding providing claimant details to Council, Administrator Snider stated that this is an administrative function and confidentiality is involved which allows the removal of any political influence. He stated that we should trust our administrative team to handle these. Alderperson McIntyre asked that we have 9, 10 or 11 claims for the past three years and a \$2,500 deductible on one isn't bad but the \$25,000 for all adds up, so increasing to a \$5,000 will raise the overall cost significantly. Mr. Hermann noted that only a couple hail events could put us back to that rate.

Alderson Adams noted that Selective is a good carrier and a good company and he agrees with Administrator Snider that Council does not need to be involved in claims. Alderson Stevens stated that she doesn't need to know all the details but she is concerned about the number and type of claims, for general purposes. She is also interested if the same person has multiple claims. Mr. Hermann shared that it is important to know that the hail deductible is per individual City building not all buildings together. General consensus was that everyone was good with what was presented and Mr. Hermann's recommendation.

- E. *Catherine Street – Paving Type* — City Engineer Carr noted that Council has discussed this several times and the general thought was to wait for the new Council so they could have input. Mr. Carr shared the pros and cons of brick vs asphalt. He noted that brick is stronger but higher maintenance and asphalt can be easily managed in-house. He also noted the difference is about \$153,000 more per block for brick. Mr. Carr shared that if we use asphalt, we can get to the next road quicker. He noted that a brick road has a different need for plowing that would need a new equipment purchase. He shared that West Holland is plowed using a pickup truck. Mr. Carr explained that pavers on West Holland are permeable with a sand base and the soil is largely clay and we cannot street sweep it because we don't want to sweep out the sand. He also explained that the bricks on Catherine are not in condition to reuse so we would have to use a new brick. Mr. Carr shared that we could possibly use the bricks in crosswalks like they did in Peoria. Alderson Butler and Mr. Carr clarified that the bricks in a crosswalk will be set lower so they can use a plow on them. Alderson Butler doesn't think they should put the premium into this. Alderson McIntyre agreed that the brick is beautiful but doesn't feel it makes sense for a longer investment. He stated that he likes the brick crosswalks in the first couple blocks to keep the historical look. Alderson Blundy feels it comes down to what we want the historical district to look like. He stated that Holland is removed from the square and he is not sure why it was chosen. He feels Council should create a vision of the area first. Mayor Manier clarified that Holland was chosen because it is named after our founder and it has historic homes. Alderson Adams likes the brick crosswalks. He shared that he has lived in that area almost his whole life and feels the historical value has been gone for a long time. Alderson Brownfield agreed. Alderson Adams noted the lack of fluidity in the roads. Alderson Martin would like to consider bricking Main Street to High Street or doing the brick crosswalks. Alderson Smith and Mr. Carr clarified that it is Council's decision to decide how many crosswalks to do. Administrator Snider asked Mr. Carr to provide the cost of each crosswalk. Alderson Stevens likes the doing a couple blocks with brick crosswalks and creating a plan for the other streets. Mayor Manier asked Mr. Carr to bring some pricing back.
- F. *BRIC Application Consideration* – Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that this is FEMA's program for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC). It addresses flood issues. Mr. Oliphant explained that FEMA has asked for a Notice of Intent to FEMA so they could determine what might be eligible. The application cycle will likely open this fall and close in early 2024. He noted that we entered a HUD program where we made it to the final round but were not selected. He clarified that each state is only allocated \$2 million in funding and the odds of receiving a grant are low. Mr. Oliphant explained that we originally thought it was only projects in the previously approved and adopted national mitigation plan, but the feedback we heard back is that we could submit any projects from our stormwater plans. Alderson Blundy is in favor of asking. Mr. Oliphant shared that federal grants take a little more work but he is willing. Alderson McIntyre noted many projects to choose from and asked Mr. Oliphant to let them know if it is too daunting. All would like to pursue this opportunity.
- G. *Stormwater Project Priorities* – City Engineer Carr showed the Washington Senior Living Center on screen. He explained that the residents who came tonight have two different issues. First, he shared that there was a diesel leak and the City was not a part of the cleanup. He then showed where the surface draining takes place and explained that they had to open the area to connect their pipe to a blind T, which is something the City would not do. Mr. Carr stated that they originally found a clay plug and root intrusion. They shared that finding with Ms. Taylor. Mr.

Carr stated that she is the only one with this issue and stated that the diesel issue runs to Christendale. Mr. Carr then explained that the residents and the City are both campaigning to the IEPA. He noted that the remediation is still ongoing and they are sampling the Tottenham tributary. Mr. Carr stated that the City doesn't own any of the property, easements, rights-of-way or pipes, making this a civil issue. Mr. Carr shared that the City tries to help get the neighbors talking to each other. Mr. Carr said without the City acquiring additional right of way, the city is unable to help further. Ms. Taylor interrupted the meeting but was asked return to her seat. Mr. Carr explained that downstream waterways do not put pressure on upstream pipes.

Alderson Blundy and Mr. Carr clarified that they are waiting on the IEPA, who is in charge of the cleanup. Mr. Carr believes the spill happened in 2021. Administrator Snider shared that the owner of the nursing home is in a lawsuit which may be the reason for the delay. Mr. Carr clarified that these issues are a matter of State Law, not a City ordinance. Mr. Carr further clarified that one cannot increase the flow of water and push it on a neighbor's property. He shared that the senior living center put in a pipe to reroute water. Mr. Carr shared that the residence at 1405 has a berm and tile that runs in the berm and outlets near the road. He said the south end of the tile is plugged and not draining. Mr. Carr stated that the berm is breached and the water is then hugging the inside of the berm. This is flow from the downspouts, parking lot, and shed roof which makes it a surface drainage issue. Mr. Carr noted the old City alley was traded in the 1960s for another easement and we can't do work on private property. Mr. Carr shared that the senior living center told the City to not contact them again. Administrator Snider noted the liability issues. He stated that this is a civil matter between homeowners and the senior living center. Attorney Schryer explained that this will not be the last time we have a drainage issue and said the City is only trying to help the homeowners address the issues. Giving the easement back to the City was discussed. Mayor Manier stated that we are not going onto private property to fix issues. Alderson Brownfield declared the need to let staff do their job and noted the lack of time to do additional work. Alderson Stevens stated that the City had done work on private property at a creek near Kern and on South Wilmore. She thinks the City can send a letter stating that there are issues and a lawsuit can happen. Alderson Adams noted concern for the City getting involved in civil matters. He is relying on the City Attorney and the State Statute.

Moving on, Mr. Carr shared that when the storm systems were being reviewed, they were looking at City systems not private systems. Mr. Carr shared the project story map showing the 10 priority projects brought forward by TWM in order of recommendation. Mr. Carr stated that it makes sense to give Catherine a place to drain so that the new road can be put in. He noted that it could divided it into two sections. The next recommendation would be Walnut/Adams/Church Street which had the highest recommendation from TWM due to how high the water gets on property. Alderson Blundy and Mr. Carr discussed mitigating the property then, Mr. Carr showed the region that sits northwest of Washington Estates. He showed the ponding before and after photos and stated that this would come with purchasing property. Mr. Carr noted the cost vs benefits of the different areas. He shared issues near Gillman, Mackenzie and towards Grandyle and noted that this would also be a good time to put in a sidewalk where the pipe will be. Mr. Carr shared details about the detention area north west of Patricia Street which would include making the pond larger. He noted that there are big flows coming from the farm to the north and adjustment to the drains in the back yards would be needed. He also noted many issues with yard grading near Debates, Patricia and Grandyle. Mr. Carr explained that changing the drain covers could help open up the drain. Alderson Blundy asked about the homes on Kelsey and after it was reviewed, Mr. Carr found that the overtopping driveway on Dallas, cannot be made large enough to handle the flow. He also noted that there was a breach in a berm behind a house on Kelsey that was never fixed and now causes everything to the west of that berm to back up. He shared that he looked into acquiring property near the Underwood Pond, but they are not interested. Mr. Carr said the driveway for the Dallas property was designed for a 2-year event. Mr. Carr feels the solution is to purchase the home and remove the driveway which blocks water upstream. Mr. Carr and Alderson McIntyre noted that there are landscape berms and privacy fences that are holding up water drainage. Mr. Carr continued his presentation by providing information about detention on the 223 property. He noted that the City already owns the property and this has a large impact on the whole system. Alderson Blundy asked if this includes both yards and

buildings. Mr. Carr said this could be up to the building. Alderperson McIntyre asked how about the impact to the Nofsinger Realignment and Mr. Carr shared that this is keeping that project in mind. Mr. Carr then explained the Northridge Storm Sewer would increase and remove water from the back yards and a dry basin area in Washington Park could be added along with a berm to the south which would add protection. Mr. Carr said at first the park district was not on board but Mr. Carr will explain that this is not a pond. He also noted the biggest benefits will be in the Jackson/Monroe area. Mr. Carr thinks that the City crews could maintain it. Mr. Carr then shared details regarding the Meadowview storm sewer on Locust Street where they will increase the size of the pipes. An easement in this location will help. Mr. Carr said they had originally talked about bonding with a total price of about \$11 million.

Administrator Snider shared that our bond director noted that with eight months of sales tax revenue, we are trending about \$1.15 million per year. He also shared that interest rates have doubled in the past year although municipal bonds are at the top of the list for quality.

Administrator Snider said we can do one project at a time or place \$10-\$12 million of projects on a 20-year bond and have it serviced by the sales tax. This would allow us to tackle the projects sooner. Alderperson Butler said if we were to put the projects out to bid, it would take a couple years and it will only mitigate 76 buildings and eat up our sales tax for the next 20 years. He expressed concern with leaving the City with no funding source. Alderperson Butler stated that excluding the regional projects, this is almost \$70,000 per building. Alderperson Brownfield expressed concern about handcuffing future councils. He thinks with current interest rates, he would go year by year. Mr. Oliphant noted that the BRIC program could be considered noting that the projects with the higher the number of mitigation points would likely stand a better chance for funding. Alderperson Adams stated that projects, except for the regional projects, would be paid for in six years and he feels the Walnut and Adams storm sewer project might be good for the grant option. Alderperson McIntyre suggested completing the Catherine area before the street is redone. He said he would like to have them all done at once, but a bond would keep us from using other resources in the future. He also would like to tighten up the policy to help protect residents in the future. Alderpersons Martin and Adams clarified the total interest that would be paid if bonded. Administrator Snider noted that these are 2023 estimates and prices will go up in the future. Mayor Manier suggested looking into a smaller group of projects to bond. Administrator Snider said a big cost of bonding is the cost of issuance.

H. WTP#1 Roof Replacement Discussion — Public Works Director Rittenhouse shared that the Waste Water Treatment Plant roof was inspected after the hail storm and it was not damaged but needs to be replaced. They were trying to put it off one more year but during the last rain the roof started leaking. He stated that the extent of the damage will be revealed when they remove the shingles. They have \$31,000 in the Building Maintenance Fund and the fiscal impact is estimated between \$22,000-\$35,000. They recommend getting a few more quotes and moving it to this year's budget. Alderperson Brownfield suggested having the roof looked at again after the second hail storm. General consensus was to move forward and get more quotes.

5. OTHER BUSINESS: City Administrator Snider shared that Hamilton will be at the July 17th meeting. Alderperson Stevens asked about the property next to City Hall and Administrator Snider shared that we don't have a need for a parking lot now, but we likely will in the future. Administrator Snider noted there may be other properties that are interested in selling their property. Alderperson Stevens asked to put the future of the parking lot on the agenda. Alderperson Stevens stated that she would like to see something creative in the space to show we are progressive.
6. ADJOURNMENT: At 9:30 p.m. Alderperson McIntyre moved and Alderperson Stevens seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk