



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

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

Wilmor Fire Station, 320 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, IL 61571

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

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

Absent: None

Also Present: City Administrator Snider, P & D Director Oliphant, City Engineer Carr, Finance Director Baxter, Public Works Director Rittenhouse, Police Chief McCoy, Clerk Brod, Attorney Derek Schryer

1. ALDERPERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Nothing provided at this time.
2. CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Nothing provided at this time.
3. *Washington Chamber of Commerce Work Agreement* – Mike Herzog, board president of the Chamber’s Board of Directors presented a request for \$30,000 for FY23/24, then create two-year agreement with increases beginning the next fiscal year for up to five more years. Mr. Herzog shared that they didn’t get last year’s request to the City soon enough due unknowns with Chamber events. They feel the Chamber is a good business partner and hopes the City finds the Chamber useful. He apologized for the late ask. Alderperson Blundy asked about the annual events. Mr. Herzog explained that they are in partnership with the City and the Chamber leads them. He is willing to give updates. Mr. Herzog clarified that the Chamber was the lead sponsor for the Meet & Mingle event. He noted they help with the candidate night as well. Alderperson Blundy shared he has had the community comment on the Prayer Breakfast event, stating that they would like it to be a community breakfast not a prayer breakfast. Alderperson Brownfield asked what new ideas they might have that were new and outside the box. He noted other Chambers help put their community in the media. He requested that the Chamber think of the new ideas. Alderperson Martin asked if they do Chamber Checks and if it is possible to do a gift card. Kris Hasten, a local shop owner, noted the difficulties in tracking gift cards among businesses. She also noted business pay a small fee to be part of the Chamber Check program. Ms. Hasten shared that the Chamber has worked on branching out on Good Neighbor Days and did a pop-up during Rove and Ramble as well as other events throughout the community. Alderperson Blundy asked if the Chamber could get the word out about the economic development fund. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that the City has reached out to them. Alderperson Martin asked how the prayer breakfast is considered not inclusive. Alderperson Blundy said the feedback is probably people who are not religious or of a different religion. Alderperson Brownfield noted there is a community pancake breakfast that Alderperson Blundy can also share. Alderperson Adams asked about the Good Neighbor Days event for this year and Mr. Hertzog shared that they have discussed a carnival set up with food trucks or a festival located at Five Points. He also noted fireworks could be incorporated. Ms. Hasten and Mayor Manier noted issues with finding locations. Alderperson Adams suggested new rides. Alderperson

McIntyre expressed his appreciation for the Chamber Bucks program and would like to see how we can help promote those as well. He shared that he purchases community bucks for where he vacations. General consensus was to move forward with working with the Chamber.

4. *E. Cruger Road Detention Basin Maintenance Discussion* – P&D Director Oliphant shared that the City had started a twenty-year agreement in 1996 for the basin at 798 E. Cruger Road. Part of the agreement says the City will provide extraordinary maintenance above the normal pool for the overflow structure at the front of the property. The City was also to provide the engineering services for the construction of the basin. He further shared that this is on private property and outside of City limits. The owner, Pat Minasian, has brought forth issues that occur below the normal pool. Mr. Oliphant noted that the agreement expired in 2016 and although the basin needs TLC, it does not need maintenance. City Engineer Carr explained that anything beneath the water level wouldn't really help us and only benefits the property owner. The plans given to us laid out dry channel storage that was supposed to be dug out by the property owner. Engineer Carr explained that if neglected, the culverts could wash out or eventually rust but language in the agreement puts it as a responsibility of the property owner and he doesn't feel a failure would impact the City if it were to fail. A future annexation was discussed but noted that it was unlikely to happen because they are not contiguous so there would need to be other properties closer that would need to annex first. Mayor Manier noted that this started prior to when the City purchased farmland and houses to keep water out of the city. In 1998, the City bought the final farm for water management use. Most Council members agreed with staff's opinions.
5. *Audio for City Meetings Discussion* – Administrator Snider shared that Council requested this discussion and staff is interested in Council's direction. He noted that Jacob Spitzer has helped with audio at the City meetings. He also shared that Mr. Spitzer's time is limited moving forward and will affect his services. Administrator Snider has recommended the system that Bloomington uses. He noted that Galesburg handles it in-house but they have an IT staff to manage it. He noted challenges if an audio provider didn't show up for a meeting. The addition of mics and the possibility of receiving equipment via donation was discussed. Administrator Snider shared that this is an administrative function and he can reach out to Mr. Spitzer and Pearl Technologies for possible solutions. He continued to express his concern for the manpower. Several Council members feel this would be a benefit to our community and they would like to look into it further. Administrator Snider shared that the City could look into upgrading the speakers in the current meeting room. Alderperson Stevens thinks we need to start with audio. The timing and reason for this discussion was briefly discussed. Administrator Snider expressed appreciation for the City and noted that meeting streaming has laws like closed captioning and other ADA guidelines. General consensus was that staff and Council would like this to help the City appearance of professionalism. Administrator Snider referenced other cities that have built a meeting space to include these items and suggested looking into a hybrid option. A possible meeting location at Five Points was mentioned as the City has dates available per its contract. Administrator Snider offered to look further into it and bring it back to the strategic planning meeting.
6. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:49 p.m. Alderperson Smith moved, and Alderperson McIntyre seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.