



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 8, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.

Five Points Washington, 360 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, IL 61571

Mayor Stevens called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., with a quorum present.

Present: Alderpersons Blundy, Ernst, Johnson, Martin, McIntyre, Moss, Sluder and Smith

Also Present: Interim City Administrator/City Engineer Carr, Finance Director Baxter, Planning & Development Director Oliphant, Public Works Director Rittenhouse, Police Sgt Brian Simpson, City Treasurer Crocker, City Clerk Brod, Attorney Walton and Communications Specialist Roberts

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. APPROVAL OF REMOTE ATTENDANCE
3. ALDERPERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Alderperson Smith thanked the Bicentennial Committee for viaduct mural. Alderperson McIntyre expressed his appreciation for the 9-11 memorial service which received great reviews. He also appreciates the new sidewalks on Grandyle. Mayor Stevens shared that the 9-11 ceremony began last fall when Northern Tazewell David Houseworth offered to help revive the event. She also thanked Alderperson Martin for his help with the sound system.
4. AUDIENCE COMMENTS
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Alderperson Sluder motioned to approve the August 11, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting minutes, Alderperson Smith seconded. *Passed by voice vote.*
6. NEW BUSINESS:
 - A. *State Historical Marker Discussion* – Engineer/City Admin Carr explained that John Ackerman outlined the process for an historical marker to dedicate our Bicentennial and suggested the Camp Libby site as an option. Engineer/City Admin Carr mentioned the Heyl Pony Farm and Candlewood Bridge as additional options that could be considered. Staff would like to pursue a plan for the Candlewood Bridge to have a sign installed upon its completion. Alderperson McIntyre favors the Candlewood Bridge option and would like input from the Historical Society. Alderperson Ernst would like input from the Historical Society and is comfortable with staff's suggestion of the Candlewood Bridge. The City's financial obligation would be \$6,000. There are no known restrictions that the signs may impose and the bridge is already on the National Register. Alderperson Moss wouldn't want to impose additional restrictions on private owners and wondered about other specific events regarding the bridge. Alderpersons Martin, Blundy and Sluder agreed about seeking input from the Historical Society. Alderperson Blundy also stated he would want the Historical Society's input before moving forward.
 - B. *Washington Park District Annexation of Portion of 223 Property* – The City Attorney shared that his firm represents both the Park District and City and they will work to make sure there are no conflict issues. P&D Director Oliphant noted the property was annexed when the city purchased it and two parcels in Park District boundaries are adjacent to Cruger Road. The Park District can't do this alone due to timing of acquisition and size of parcels per Illinois Park District Code. P&D Director Oliphant noted that the City will need to support a petition by the Park District. He noted the City pays property tax on the property because it is farmed. The City would pay an additional approximately \$680 for the Park District's portion of the property tax. Park District Director Brian Tibbs shared that there are

several properties that were acquired by the City and not governed by the Park District. Alderperson Ernst hopes the property will become a productive part of the city. Regarding the timing of the request, P&D Director Oliphant explained that the Park District asked for it and he wishes they would have caught this in 2013. He noted other annexations require specific notifications to other taxing bodies and feels we should make this part of our future procedures. He also doesn't see any issues if the property is sold or developed. Alderperson Blundy does not favor doing this now and would like to wait until the property is developed. Mayor Stevens noted the new information, the additional cost to taxpayers and suggested discussing it at the goal setting session. Alderperson Martin is optimistic about future development and feels we should move forward. Alderpersons Johnson and McIntyre noted that if had been done in 2013, the Park District would not have asked and it saved the City \$680 for that many years. Alderperson McIntyre feels this should be completed by the end of the year and noted that it benefits residents. Majority of Council wishes to move forward.

- C. *Goal Setting Session Update* – Engineer/City Admin Carr shared that it will be held on September 20-2025 at 8:00 a.m. He noted the community-wide survey closes on Wednesday and encourages everyone to complete it.
- D. *City Branding Update* – Communication Specialist Amanda Roberts shared a presentation. She noted that the City only has a blue logo not a set brand. She explained that a brand is a full story and creates consistency. After researching other municipalities, she found that communications fall under the City Administrator and reinforces the guidelines. She shared the timeline of the project noting research, reviewing demographics, a workshop and this Council briefing. She shared a guide from Chandler, Arizona and noted that the workshop included the creation of words that we want residents to feel and hear, font review, social media engagement, and communication pillar development. She shared a color palette based on scenes from the city that included the traditional blue plus the warmer colors from our schools as well as a few neutrals. She is working on a Brand Guide to be approved by Council. Ms. Roberts shared that Council should vote the logo and tagline and shared two logo concepts that would need to go to a designer for refinement. She shared three possible taglines that match the pillars: 1) “Our home, your story.” 2) “Discover your story here.” and 3) “A place to belong.” She shared that Facebook interactions are up and it is still a work in progress. She would like Council to review the materials and give feedback to the Interim City Administrator. Alderperson Martin loves the idea of a brand guide, the consistency and direction but doesn't favor the taglines. He likes the logo with Washington's head. Alderpersons Sluder and McIntyre agreed. Alderperson McIntyre notices less attendance at meetings and hopes people are watching online. He also favors the Washington head and would like more tagline options. He likes the W associated with the high school. Ms. Roberts expressed her appreciation for the feedback and shared that some items can be shared in the community to be collaborative. Alderperson Moss feels the need to rebrand and asked about adding examples. He asked about sharing General Washington in the imagery and wouldn't dismiss the colonial items. He also noted that there is an expense in brand implementation.
- E. *Door-to-Door Soliciting Ordinance Discussion* – City Attorney Walton shared that Chief Stevens created a redline version of the code changes for reference. He explained that there is no hurry. The city attorney explained that there are many items such as door-to-door solicitation, political solicitation, brick and mortar business consideration, and food truck consideration. He noted a lot of first amendment cases regarding panhandling. Alderperson Moss feels we should be as restrictive as possible, noting an email from a citizen addressing youth fundraising. Several council members felt the document is difficult to read. Alderperson McIntyre feels code should be restrictive but allow school fundraisers. He favors restricting hours and making it easy for officers to enforce. He feels solar soliciting might go away after the Big Beautiful Bill passes. Alderperson Blundy liked the photo ID requirements and noted when implement, residents have choice to join a no-solicitation list. Alderperson Martin also agreed but suggested allowance for local lawncare companies or individuals. Attorney Walton explained that making it very specific can create issues with efficiency. Alderperson Johnson agreed that there is a difference between a student selling books or young person trying to start a pressure washing business and suggested a process that would be less expensive for a young entrepreneur than a large solar company. Alderperson Blundy suggested a waiver of fees for residents. Attorney Walton shared that enforcement would be significant and feels complaints about kids wanting to shovel or mow are different than business within the City. He explained that a successful ordinance creates requirements and law enforcement making it simple to weed out the ones that will create the complaints. Alderperson McIntyre noted the concerns are with traveling roofers after large storms as well as solar sales people, not the kids mowing or shoveling. City Engineer/City Admin

Carr asked if enforcement is tied to a complaint. He noted that if a solar company brings in 13 people, one complaint can be tied to the entire company. Alderperson Smith feels this will help. Attorney Walton shared that the businesses causing problems will go to other communities where it is easier.

- F. *WPD Monthly Report* – Sgt Brian Simpson shared the monthly and year-to-date reports. He noted it is a small data set but overall traffic is up but crime is overall down. He shared that he received a report from the fire department. It was clarified that “central” referred to a portion within the fire district that is a outside of city limits but served by our fire department.
7. OTHER BUSINESS: Alderperson Sluder received emails about safety concerns at the crosswalk at Westminster and Dallas Roads. Engineer/City Admin Carr shared that a request for signage was received. He noted some signs are for larger roadways and that a rapid flashing beacon might be more appropriate similar to ones installed on Centennial and on BUS24 near LeFleur. Alderperson Sluder noted the heavier traffic due the new portion of Dallas Road. Alderperson Moss is in favor, due to the size of the neighborhoods. Engineer/City Admin Carr suggested more community education emphasizing the need to stop when pedestrians are in a crosswalk. Alderperson Smith shared her concern for motorized bikes wondering if they could ride on the streets. Sgt Simpson explained that the CCs and wattage dictate who can use them and where they can be used. Alderperson McIntyre noted complaints on social media and difficulties with enforcement. He feels they should be treated similar to gas power bikes. He also noted inquiries about golf carts and feels Council should make a statement about them along with e-scooters. He requested future discussion. Engineer/City Admin Carr added that additional discussions will come to the next Committee of the Whole meeting. Consensus supported further public education. Sgt Simpson shared that Russell’s hosts a bicycle rodeo.
8. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:59 p.m. Alderperson Smith moved to adjourn; Alderperson Sluder seconded. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk