



SPECIAL City Council Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 21, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.
In a banquet room at Five Points, 380 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, Illinois

Call to Order	Mayor Manier called the special meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. with a quorum present.
Roll Call	Present: Alderpersons Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Schone, Stevens and Yoder Absent: Alderperson Dingleline
Also Present	Mayor Gary Manier, City Engineer Dennis Carr, Planning and Development Director Jon Oliphant, Public Works Director Brian Rittenhouse, Finance Director Joanie Baxter, Deputy Police Chief Jeff Stevens, City Clerk Valeri Brod, City Attorney Derek Schryer and Press
Pledge of Allegiance	All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Manier.
Citizens Wishing to be Heard	None provided at this time.
Review Agenda for Deletions or Additions	Nothing was added or deleted at this time.
Consent Agenda	Mayor Manier presented the Consent Agenda for approval of the following items: A. 2022 MFT Ace in the Hole Pay Request B. 2022 MFT United Contractors Midwest Pay Request Alderperson Brownfield motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, Alderperson Adams seconded. <u>Motion carried by roll call vote:</u> <u>Ayes: 7</u> Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Schone, Stevens and Yoder <u>Nays: 0</u>
Public Works Committee	Public Works Committee Acting Chairman Brownfield shared that there is one business item to bring forward and introduced City Engineer Dennis Carr to provide details.
Item A-1 <i>2022 Crack Sealing Approval</i>	Mr. Carr shared that he had an item that was a little too late to add to the last meeting agenda. They had budget \$60,000 for crack sealing. They reached out to D&D Sweeping to help generate a materials list. They have five roads that need to be addressed including Jefferson, Kingsbury, Elgin, Westminster and South Main. He shared that each road is in different conditions and in need of crack sealing. The intent is to draw cost by contracting as opposed to doing it in house. Mr. Carr shared that they are unable to complete it in house so they reached out to two local firms. D&D Sweeping from Eureka came in at \$32,400. Alderperson Schone motioned to approve the bid, Alderperson Brownfield seconded. Alderperson Stevens shared that she drives on Devonshire and it has a bunch of cracks. She asked if it on the list too. Mr. Carr shared that the roads chosen were showing different types of cracks, in a variety of conditions. Choosing a variety of conditions helped them get the quotes and this helps get the crack sealing completed before winter. Mr. Carr clarified that redoing the bid would cause the bids to not be until the November meeting and they try to finish crack sealing before the first snowfall. Mr. Carr stated that the rest of the \$27,000 can be done in the spring when the temperatures are warmer. <u>Motion carried by roll call vote:</u> <u>Ayes: 7</u> Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Schone, Stevens and Yoder <u>Nays: 0</u>
Mayor	Mayor Manier announced that they received a grant for the Nofsinger intersection but unfortunately, there was an accident at that intersection before the start of the meeting. He stated that he hopes everything is okay.
City Administrator Item A <i>Policy discussion concerning the enforcement of city code violations identified by Robinson Engineering Study</i>	City Administrator Jim Snider shared that Alderpersons Blundy, Stevens and Yoder called this meeting to discuss policy regarding enforcing City Code violations with the I&I and staff correspondence with residents. Alderperson Brownfield stated that he doesn't have an issue. He shared that Council has asked staff to communicate with people. He noted that they are not wanting to fine residents but would like to fix the I&I issues. He stated that he is confused as to why we are meeting because staff is doing what was asked. Alderperson Brownfield also shared that he has received calls from concerned residents, but knew it would happen.

Aldersperson Blundy said he was confused because they were talking about the hardships placed on residents because we are asking them to fix I&I issues. He noted discussion that the city would fix the city's portion. He stated that he had no idea the letters were going out and he had been contacted about the letters. Aldersperson Blundy stated that his intent wasn't to force the residents to fix the issues. He stated that it was not fair to focus on a specific part of the community and it is not fair unless we test all residents. He stated that the city needs to address issues and there is not a clear plan on where to go.

City Administrator Snider stated that staff is responsible to enforce the code of the city, similar to police and we send approximately 250 shut-off notices each month. He also stated that this has been discussed numerous times at council meetings that this was the way we were going. He noted that the whole purpose of Robinson was to identify noncompliance. Mr. Snider stated that the letters were professional and informative and they did not talk about fines because Council hasn't discussed fines. Mr. Snider said our responsibility is in place as City Council gives the authority. He noted that this is an emotional situation and apologized that Council was not given a heads-up that it was sent but our authority is given by Council which is why the letters went out. Mr. Snider stated that the report said there were issues, so staff responded to the report.

Aldersperson Yoder stated the he was also caught off guard and noted that the letter said it was on behalf of Council. He stated that this was discussed at the Committee of the Whole meeting and two Council members were in favor but others said nothing, including himself.

Mayor Manier shared that no one said they were not in favor and one aldersperson said to put it in the newspaper. Mayor Manier stated that this would be like Deputy Stevens asking Council if he could write a ticket.

Aldersperson Blundy stated that this is unique and sensitive and he is not attacking Mr. Carr. He stated that he has issues with the way this is being handled and questioned the timing and communication.

Aldersperson Stevens said the most egregious part was seeing that it said this was "on behalf of Council". She stated that there was no straw poll and there were two alderspeople who talked about letters and she stated that it needs to be put in the paper because everybody needs to know what is going on. Aldersperson Stevens felt that she was caught off guard when people contacted her and this was disturbing.

Aldersperson Schone stated that he had the feeling at Monday's Council meeting that they weren't doing enough to address I&I and this is part of it. He stated that from his experience, we are addressing the issues. He also stated that more could be done if Council would spend more money towards it. Mr. Schone also stated that this is a push by staff to get as much I&I addressed as possible and Mr. Carr was doing what he could do to address the I&I. Mr. Schone said confusion is that it states "on behalf of Council" and if he received a call, he would share that Council did agree to this. He went on to state that his message would be that this is an ordinance and it needs to be adhered to and the City would help them as much as possible.

Aldersperson Stevens stated that in the previous discussion the residential side was a minor contributor to I&I and they would focus on the city side. She stated that the letters went out to the small group that was affected and this wasn't budgeted this year even though the letter said the money is budgeted. She stated that she is all for budgeting more money for the city side and she hopes to see a map of where the city's side of I&I issues are.

Mayor Manier stated that the word unbudgeted bothers him because the Hamilton Report and smoke testing was unbudgeted and he thinks the use of the word is confusing. He also stated that as part-time elected officials, we need to let staff do their job and that Jim has more to do other than answer these questions. He shared that staff is inundated by a few alderspersons asking 20-30 questions per week and he would hate to lose staff over questions.

Aldersperson Butler stated that the agenda said this is regarding the enforcement of code and there is not enforcement here. He shared that the letter asks the resident if they would like to participate in the grant program. The letter says "city staff requests that you repair or replace your clean-out cap" and is not enforcing the City Code violation. Mr. Butler stated that everyone here was aware of the smoke testing and they were probably interested in the results. Mr. Butler continued to state that as far as the phrase "on behalf of City Council," we own the ordinances and everything City staff does is on behalf of Council. Aldersperson Butler also stated that if you look back at Hamilton's presentation it says they will look for connections that should not be connected but it is not guaranteed and not only was it not guaranteed, it failed miserably. He noted in a meeting they discussed this and there were no objections to the suggestions.

Aldersperson Adams stated that while on one hand it may have been nice to know the letter was going out, he has not received a call from anyone and this is in his Ward. He stated that there are a lot of things going on with Council that are not great. He noted situations that get eye rolls and Facebook pages that belittle other aldermen without any word. He stated that he thinks we need a better way to be more respectful across the board.

Mayor Manier agreed and added to also respect staff stating that they are professionals and deserve better.

Aldersperson Schone agreed with Aldersperson Adams and tries to keep in mind when staff brings items forward, this will this bring the city forward. He will explain to residents that it may takes weeks, months or years to get some projects done. We need to move the City forward.

**Aldersperson's
Comments**

Aldersperson Brownfield stated that the staff we have is second to none and it is not our job to micromanage them. There is no reason that staff should be afraid to talk to them and it's frustrating that staff is scared to death of Council. Aldersperson Brownfield stated that our staff would be hard to replace and he is concerned about the City Administrator's health. He stated that we can't expect responses right away because they need time to reply and have lives outside of city.

Adjournment At 5:01 p.m. Alderperson Stevens moved and Alderperson Brownfield seconded to adjourn.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.



Valeri Brod, City Clerk