

Committee of the Whole

Monday, February 8, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.

Banquet Room at Five Points, Washington, 360 N. Wilmore Road, Washington, IL

Mayor Manier called the regular Committee of the Whole meeting of February 8, 2021 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Aldermen Adams, Blundy, Butler, Cobb, Dingledine, Stevens and Yoder
City Administrator Forsythe, Police Chief McCoy, Attorney Derek Schryer, and
City Clerk Brod

Also present: Deputy Police Chief Jeff Stevens, Finance Director Baxter (remotely), P & D Director
Oliphant, City Engineer Carr, Public Works Director Schone, City Treasurer Dingledine
and Kristy Howell with the Washington Chamber of Commerce

Absent: Alderman Brownfield

MINUTES

1. *Aldermen wishing to be heard:* Alderman Stevens stated that she noticed a lot of questions about the high water bills. She shared that she had seen on the City's Facebook page that the billing period was extended by ten days. Mr. Forsythe explain that the timing of the Christmas Holiday caused the meters to be read four days earlier than regularly scheduled last month and this time there were technical issues with the new software that caused the readings to be done four to five days later which created a gap of a total 10 days that were shifted to this recent bill. Alderman Stevens asked how the readers were read. Mr. Forsythe stated that it is all electronic and done at City Hall. Alderman Stevens asked if this affects people with scheduled bill-pay, and will it even out. Mr. Forsythe assured that it will even out and next month will be shorter than typical and they should see a decrease in their water bills. Mayor Manier shared that the ladies up front were slammed and reached out to a few residents who had extremely high bills and found that they had leaks. Mayor Manier asked Mr. Schone and Mr. Carr for the length of time the system has to read to detect a leak. They confirmed that it has to read for a 24-hour period. Mayor Manier shared that some of the spikes were done in the middle of night and maybe we could look into software to catch these spikes, during this budget cycle. Mr. Forsythe shared that the system will catch spikes and contact homeowners and it even caught a leak at his own home. Alderman Stevens asked for a post saying the billing cycle will be shorter next month. Mr. Forsythe responded, yes.

City Clerk Brod shared two public comments which are attached to these minutes.

2. *Approval of Minutes:* Alderman Cobb moved and Alderman Butler seconded to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

3. BUSINESS ITEMS

- A. Chamber of Commerce Update: Chamber of Commerce representative, Brian shared the January numbers; they had 120 business check-ins, 260 total members, and 232 Washington based members. He shared that they had their January ZOOM meeting and discussed new COVID solutions. He also shared that they are using social media posts to help support small businesses. Brian shared that over \$5,000.00 in chamber bucks were redeemed in January. Brian also shared that the Chocolate Crawl is starting and Five Points, Washington is a participant and the event will occur February 8th-14th. They are hosting the ISPIRE luncheon soon and nominations for the Washingtonian, Outstanding Business and Business Beautification are due February 12th.
- B. Budget Review: Mayor Manier introduced Finance Director Baxter to remotely present the Budget Review for Group 1. A copy of her review is included in these minutes. She shared the new report and explained that the new format helps to keep information more readable and includes account numbers to help make it easy to follow. Ms. Baxter opened the presentation for questions. Alderman Stevens asked if we had any control over IMRF and Social Security. Ms. Baxter replied that it is mandated by the State and there was a slight increase in the State IMRF but Social Security has remained the same for years. A short discussion between Alderman Stevens and Ms. Baxter took place clarifying the Washington Area Community Center Bond, in the amount of \$5 million, which was used to help fund Five Points, and that the ¼% Home Rule sales tax is utilized for debt service
- C. Budget Portal Training Presentation: Ms. Baxter provided a visual presentation, showing the budget portal for city staff. This new software portal will replace the system that was used for the last 20 years. Ms. Baxter noted that the passwords and details will be ready for everyone the Wednesday before the next council meeting. She will also send out a link, username and password for everyone to access the portal. Ms. Baxter stated that the actual funds, that include revenue, will be shared on Friday. Ms. Baxter then provided the presentation which included navigation details.
- D. Website Updates and Considerations: City Administrator Forsythe presented the need to update the City website. He shared that Communication Specialist Maureen Lyons will help facilitate this and that funds have been set aside for this. Mr. Forsythe noted that the new site would be more accessible to public and this is a key tool used by staff, residents, visitor and developers. The estimated cost would be \$10,500 and we would receive a \$1,000 discount on website tech support. Alderman Adams shared his support for this. Alderman Cobb asked for clarification about the discount. Mr. Forsythe stated that it is a one-time discount. Alderman Stevens asked about the staff keeping up the website. Mr. Forsythe shared that staff does keep up the website and it is a primary duty of the new Communication Specialist to help maintain it. Alderman Stevens expressed her support for it. Alderman Cobb asked about codifying the code. Mr. Forsythe said that codifying is separate and he will bring a proposal in the future.
- E. Glass Recycling Considerations: Mr. Forsythe shared that this has been considered previously with mixed reviews and ultimately put on hold due to Covid. Mr. Forsythe shared a quote that estimates anywhere from \$330 per month to \$880 per month. Mr. Forsythe shared that we could start a pilot project because we are not locked into a long-term contract and noted that PDC only picks up the container, not other debris that may be left around it. It has been suggested to put it in a slightly more visible location. Chief McCoy expressed his concern for the Police Department location, stating that it wouldn't be a good idea to have too many people in the area behind the Police Department. Deputy Chief shared that it also has security and environmental concerns and it would be a special trip to go to

Police Department location. Deputy Chief Stevens shared that it is not environmentally sound to drive a SUV to drop off glass because glass isn't economical to recycle and environmental carbon would not be offset. Alderman Cobb noted that there are many unanswered questions such as cost, man hours for clean-up, what do we do if people drop off other or larger items, and do a lot of people in the community really want this? Alderman Adams expressed his agreement with the pilot program to see how people treat it. He also stated that the rules of use need to be clear and if they aren't followed it would need to be removed. Alderman Butler says it should be an ongoing pilot program in case abuse were to happen at a later time. He also noted that rodents could be attracted the area as well. Alderman Butler addressed what he feels is a misconception that this has something to do with PDC. He noted that Waste Management stopped recycling glass because it is not economical to do so. Alderman Butler shared his support to try the program on a trial basis, as long as we are not locked in long-term. Alderman Dingledine, agreed with Alderman Butler and feels if the program is abused it should be stopped immediately. Alderman Dingledine responded to the public comment made about yard waste not included in the waste contract, and stated that it is inaccurate because it is included but requires the user to sign up for it. He went on to share that he is willing to try the program. Alderman Blundy agreed to a short-term trial due to some interest but stated that it needs to be pulled if it becomes a problem. Alderman Stevens stated that she agrees that if it is abused, it should be pulled and she thinks it's a good idea. Alderman Stevens stated that the reason it wasn't taken into consideration earlier is that the minutes reflect the Mayor broke the tie because he didn't believe that we needed to take it to a trial basis and she would like to have the minutes reflect this. Alderman Dingledine asked Alderman Stevens if two people providing comments represent the entire community and he stated that we cannot keep reacting to every case. Alderman Steven noted only two people sent a public comment but opinions are shared on social media. Alderman Adams asked what do we do if a larger store doesn't want it. Mr. Forsythe shared that there are other lots available. Alderman Yoder stated that the container has certain sized slots and wondered if they are more likely just leave a bag by the dumpster instead of putting items into the slots and expressed his interest for the trial, but pull it immediately if it is abused. Mayor Manier agreed. Alderman Adams suggested that we share on social media that if it not respected, we need to pull it.

- F. Storm Water Study: Mr. Carr shared that the previously discussed Washington Estates project that had been presented to Council, had potential for applying for a grant. It was noted that during those discussions the Council consensus was not to do the project but possibly do a city-wide storm water study. After review, Mr. Carr and Mr. Oliphant noticed that the city had budgeted \$500,000 as a local match if any grant opportunities were to arise this year but stated that it is unlikely since we are getting towards the end of the budget. Staff is suggesting that we use the budgeted money to fund a storm water study. Mr. Carr noted that the 50, 75 and 100-year storms are occurring more frequently. Mr. Carr shared that this would allow the City to shift from a reactive phase to a proactive phase and would allow for the determination of why the flooding is happening not just where the flooding is happening. This would also allow the City to look at data driven solutions instead of complaint driven solutions. He went on to share that with Business 24 in the near future, we want to make sure we have our storm water issues ready when the project comes in because rework will magnify the problem. Mr. Carr shared that this will help us prioritize issues. Mayor Manier shared that this helps us avoid spending \$400,000 on one situation but look at the big picture. Alderman Stevens asked if the Capital Improvement Plan suggests this. Alderman Stevens provided favor. Alderman Adams agreed this is needed. Alderman Yoder provided favor. Alderman Dingledine noted that we should have started this a long time ago and this will allow for improvement the City for the long run. Alderman Butler said this is the best way to learn. Alderman Cobb asked if this will fund the whole study or just partial. Mr. Carr

stated that we can set this as a maximum. Alderman Cobb said if we are going to start it, we need to do it right and have a plan going forward with funding and grants so it doesn't stall. Alderman Blundy shared without it, there isn't a thorough plan so we need this study to move forward.

4. *Other Business:* None provided
5. *Adjournment:* At 7:31 p.m. Alderman Cobb moved and Alderman Stevens seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk

Valeri Brod

Public Comment

From: Aaron James
Sent: Saturday, February 6, 2021 2:32 PM
To: Valeri Brod
Subject: For Public Comment/Committee of the Whole Meeting

I am commenting on Item 4.E of the Committee of the Whole Meeting 2/8/2021.

I am in favor of the city contracting with PDC to provide a location to drop off glass recycling. I have confirmed with PDC through direct communication with Brian Rhodes, Business Development Manager for PDC, that glass dropped off in dedicated containers will in fact be recycled. It will not simply be trashed. Only glass mixed with other recyclables is trashed because it is not economically feasible to recycle. But, glass in dedicated containers will in fact be recycled.

While there will be extra cost to the city, the need for the container was occasioned by the city's change of contract from WM to PDC. So, it is reasonable for the city to pay for the cost of recycling the glass. The city should budget for recycling.

Thank you,
Aaron James

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Valeri Brod

Public comment

From: Kim
Sent: Saturday, February 6, 2021 3:33 PM
To: Valeri Brod
Subject: For Public Comment/Committee of the Whole Meeting FEB 8 2021

To the City Council:

With regards to the existing PDC waste contract, I AM interested in having a container for glass recycling located in Washington. My family has made 4 trips to Pekin to recycle glass since PDC took over the contract. I preferred Waste Management. We were able to recycle our glass curbside and were able to recycle much more plastic with Waste Management. I would also like to say that I believe yard waste should be included in any waste contract in future and open burning banned. As a person with asthma, it is quite frustrating to be unable to be outside or open my windows because of people burning yard waste. For the sake of everyone's health, please ban open burning.

Kim Waguespack

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