



**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL - SPECIAL SESSION  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2023, 6:00 P.M.**

The City Council convened in Special Session in the Government Center Chambers at 6:00 P.M. Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance ending with a moment of silent prayer/reflection.

**Roll Call**

| Attendee Name    | Title                  | Status  |
|------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Mboka Mwilambwe  | Mayor                  | Present |
| Jenna Kearns     | Council Member, Ward 1 | Present |
| Donna Boelen     | Council Member, Ward 2 | Present |
| Sheila Montney   | Council Member, Ward 3 | Present |
| John Danenberger | Council Member, Ward 4 | Present |
| Nick Becker      | Council Member, Ward 5 | Present |
| Cody Hendricks   | Council Member, Ward 6 | Present |
| Mollie Ward      | Council Member, Ward 7 | Present |
| Kent Lee         | Council Member, Ward 8 | Present |
| Tom Crumpler     | Council Member, Ward 9 | Present |

**Public Comment**

Mayor Mwilambwe read a public comment statement of procedure. Misty Metroz emailed public comment and the following spoke in person: (1) Gary Lambert; (2) Jackie Beyer; (3) Surena Fish; and (4) Scott Stimeling.

**Consent Agenda**

*Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled by Council from the Consent Agenda for discussion are listed and voted on separately.*

**Council Member Boelen made a motion, seconded by Council Member Ward, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.**

Item 6.A. Consideration and Action on Approving the Minutes of the September 18, 2023 Regular Committee of the Whole Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

Item 6.B. Consideration and Action on Approving the Minutes of the October 16, 2023 Regular Committee of the Whole Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

Item 6.C. Consideration and Action on Approving the Minutes of the October 9, 2023, Regular City Council Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

**Mayor Mwilambwe directed the Clerk to call roll:**

**AYES:** Kearns, Boelen, Montney, Danenberger, Becker, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Crumpler

**Motion carried.**

## **Regular Agenda**

*The following item was presented:*

Item 7.A. Consideration and Action on Approving the 2023 Tax Levy Estimate for the City of Bloomington and the Bloomington Public Library, as requested by the Finance Department.

Mayor Mwilambwe thanked staff for their efforts in preparing the Item.

Tim Gleason, City Manager, thanked all those involved and clarified the purpose of the Item. He then introduced Scott Rathburn, Director of Finance.

**Council Member Crumpler made a motion, seconded by Council Member Boelen, to separate discussions of and voting for the City of Bloomington and Bloomington Public Library levies.**

**Mayor Mwilambwe directed the Clerk to call roll:**

**AYES:** Kearns, Boelen, Montney, Danenberger, Becker, Lee, Crumpler

**NAYS:** Hendricks, Ward

**Motion carried.**

Mr. Rathburn shared background information on the timeline in creating the tax levy estimate and information regarding the City's 5-year history of equalized assessed value (EAV). He discussed the FY2025 recommendation, as well as next steps for approval.

Council Member Becker thanked Mr. Rathburn for his department's efforts and stressed his belief in lowering the tax levy.

Council Member Montney shared examples of how the community would be impacted by the increased levy. Mr. Rathburn and her then discussed funding of public safety pensions and she concluded by speaking against an increase in the levy.

Council Member Crumpler thanked Council Member Montney for her comments and then discussed EAVs with Council Member Becker.

Council Member Hendricks stated that this vote would ultimately be a compromise. He shared the goals of the City and recommended the levy be approved as presented.

Council Member Boelen thanked Mr. Rathburn for his presentation and asked him to walkthrough how the levy would work, how shortfalls would be covered, and impacts to staffing levels, if any. Mr. Rathburn responded accordingly.

Council Member Montney pointed out the importance of having public discussions about important topics and asked Mr. Rathburn to discuss reserves and ARPA funding. Council Member Montney mentioned revenue sources that she believed could be used to avoid increases.

**Council Member Ward made a motion, seconded by Council Member Hendricks, to approve the City of Bloomington Tax Levy Item.**

**Mayor Mwilambwe directed the Clerk to call roll:**

**AYES:** Kearns, Boelen, Danenberger, Hendricks, Ward

**NAYES:** Montney, Becker, Lee, Crumpler

**Motion carried.**

Mayor Mwilambwe opened the floor for questions regarding the Bloomington Public Library Tax levy.

Council Member Montney asked about a remodeling grant that had been granted. Jeanne Hamilton, Library Director, stated that roughly \$7 million was received. They then discussed use of the funds, as well as unplanned cost increases. Julian Westerhout, Bloomington Public Library Board of Trustees President, joined the discussion. He clarified how the bond was used, and explained how the parking deck and other features were added. Council Member Montney went on to discuss the library's increase in budget and her concern about adding another increase.

Mr. Westerhout stated that it was difficult to build an expansion without a budgetary increase for staffing, programming, and inflation. He went on to recognize the library staff and contractors who worked through the remodel.

Council Member Montney shared ideas the Library could consider for improving the project and library operations. She asked about the Connect Transit Initiative. Mrs. Hamilton talked about how the Library had demonstrated its ability to scale back its budget and how she saw the expansion as an opportunity to add staff to better meet the needs of the community. She explained the Initiative, its impact, and its use of minimal staff time.

Mr. Westerhout commented on the community's excitement for the library expansion and its completion in the spring.

Mayor Mwilambwe requested a motion to extend time for the discussion.

**Council Member Crumpler made a motion, seconded by Council Member Henricks, to extend the discussion by 5 minutes.**

**Mayor Mwilambwe directed the Clerk to call roll:**

**AYES:** Kearns, Boelen, Montney, Danenberger, Becker, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Crumpler

**Motion carried.**

Council Member Montney agreed the expansion was an asset to the community and clarified her issue was with increasing budgets.

Council Member Crumpler thanked Mrs. Hamilton for decreasing the library's levy request and asked for an update on the Friends of the Library program. She shared that around \$700,000 had been raised through the Program. They then turned to discussing the levy and he asked if the requested amount would allow the Library to continue current service levels. Mrs. Hamilton stated that the current requested amount would allow some additions to service levels, but that any reduction in the request would negatively impact Library plans.

Council Member Boelen asked if the Library anticipated adding new staff. Mrs. Hamilton shared staffing plans and how they fit into the expansion. Council Member Boelen expressed budgeting concern regarding new staff. Mr. Westerhout stressed that the Library Board had thoughtfully worked to balance both big ideas and realistic budgets and that staffing was just one area of consideration. Mrs. Hamilton walked through staffing plans.

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL - SPECIAL SESSION

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2023, 6:00 P.M

Page 3 of 5

Council Member Ward asked procedural questions regarding making a motion.

**Council Member Ward made a motion, seconded by Council Member Hendricks, to approve the Bloomington Public Library Tax Levy Item.**

**Mayor Mwilambwe directed the Clerk to call roll:**

**AYES:** Kearns, Boelen, Danenberger, Hendricks, Ward, Crumpler

**NAYES:** Montney, Becker, Lee

**Motion carried.**

*The following item was presented:*

Item 7.B. Presentation and Discussion on Hydraulic Modeling: East Street Detention Basin and Related Sewer Improvements, as requested by the Department of Operations & Engineering Services.

Mayor Mwilambwe introduced Jeff Jurgens, Deputy City Manager.

Mr. Jurgens discussed the Item briefly and turned the floor over to Matt Moffitt, Associate Vice President of Baxter & Woodman.

Mr. Moffitt identified recent incidents of flooding within the City and shared maps of the City's current stormwater and sewer infrastructure. He reviewed the company's risk analysis for future flooding on East Street and proposed Baxter & Woodman Inc.'s recommendations for flooding mitigation and associated costs.

Council Member Ward thanked Mr. Moffitt for his presentation and asked about storm types and whether climate change had an impact on them. Mr. Moffitt discussed the way storms were predicted and shared storm statistics over the last 30 years. She then asked about Nicor Gas' involvement in the project. Kevin Kothe, Operations & Engineering Services Director, stated that discussions with Nicor were ongoing.

Council Member Crumpler commended the project's green infrastructure and thanked the speakers for their time.

Council Member Lee asked Mr. Moffitt to compare Bloomington's project to that of a similar project in Champaign, IL. Mr. Moffitt stated that the Champaign project was ultimately more expensive and larger. Council Member Lee also commended the project's green infrastructure.

Council Member Boelen asked about the timeline of the project. Mr. Kothe explained that there were several phases and that it was a multi-year project. She then asked if discussions with the railroad had begun, and Mr. Moffitt confirmed they had. Council Member Boelen expressed concern for wet basins and the production of mosquitoes. Mr. Moffitt clarified that most basins were treated for mosquitoes.

Council Member Ward stated that the railroad would also be impacted by future flooding. Mr. Kothe agreed.

Mayor Mwilambwe asked for an estimate of how many years the project would take. Mr. Moffitt stated that 3-4 years was a realistic timeline for this project.

Mr. Jurgens thanked the speakers and shared the opportunities the project would bring.

Mr. Gleason commented on the project's benefit to the community and identified ways that the City could pay for the project, including grant opportunities.

### City Manager's Discussion

Tim Gleason, City Manager, wished the staff and community a Happy Thanksgiving.

### Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

### Adjournment

Council Member Boelen made a motion, seconded by Council Member Danenberger, to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Mwilambwe directed the Clerk to call roll:

**AYES:** Kearns, Boelen, Montney, Danenberger, Becker, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Crumpler

**Motion carried (viva voce).**

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 P.M.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON



Mboka Mwilambwe, Mayor

ATTEST



Leslie Smith-Yocum, City Clerk

