CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING SEPTEMBER 21, 2015

City Logo Design Rationale

The symbol for the City of Bloomington is multifaceted in its visual and conceptual approach. Visually the symbol and the City's identity represent a modern progressive style which is consistent with the City's government. The symbol is based on three different concepts which combine to represent the City in a contemporary and appropriate way.

First and foremost is the chevron. The City government is a respected agency dedicated to serving the public. In this way, the chevron represents service, rank and authority.

The symbol may also be seen as a three dimensional building. This represents growth and diversity in our community.

Finally, the flower or plant derived from the original name "Blooming Grove," represents a community that is friendly and safe. Progress and growth are also associated with plant life as well as regeneration and renewal.

The symbol's positive upward movement is representative of the City's commitment to excellence!

City of Bloomington – Strategic Plan

Vision 2025
Bloomington 2025 is a beautiful, family friendly city with a downtown – the heart of the community and great neighborhoods. The City has a diverse local economy and convenient connectivity. Residents enjoy quality education for a lifetime and choices for entertainment and recreation. Everyone takes pride in Bloomington.
Jewel of Midwest Cities.

Mission
The Mission of the City of Bloomington is to be financially responsible providing quality, basic municipal services at the best value. The city engages residents and partners with others for community benefit.

Core Beliefs
Enjoy **S**erving Others
Produce Results
Act with **I**ntegrity Take
Responsibility Be
Innovative Practice
Teamwork
Show the **SPIRIT!!**

Goals 2015
Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services
Upgrade City Infrastructure and Facilities
Strong Neighborhoods
Grow the Local Economy
Great Place to Live – A Livable, Sustainable City
Prosperous Downtown Bloomington

12/11/2010

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

2015 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal **1. Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services**

Objective
- a. Budget with adequate resources to support defined services and level of services
- b. Reserves consistent with city policies
- c. Engaged residents that are well informed and involved in an open governance process
- d. City services delivered in the most cost-effective, efficient manner
- e. Partnering with others for the most cost-effective service delivery

Goal **2. Upgrade City Infrastructure and Facilities**

Objective
- a. Better quality roads and sidewalks
- b. Quality water for the long term
- c. Functional, well maintained sewer collection system
- d. Well-designed, well maintained City facilities emphasizing productivity and customer service
- e. Investing in the City's future through a realistic, funded capital improvement program

Goal **3. Grow the Local Economy**

Objective
- a. Retention and growth of current local businesses
- b. Attraction of new targeted businesses that are the "right" fit for Bloomington
- c. Revitalization of older commercial homes
- d. Expanded retail businesses
- e. Strong working relationship among the City, businesses, economic development organizations

Goal **4. Strong Neighborhoods**

Objective
- a. Residents feeling safe in their homes and neighborhoods
- b. Upgraded quality of older housing stock
- c. Preservation of property/home valuations
- d. Improved neighborhood infrastructure
- e. Strong partnership with residents and neighborhood associations
- f. Residents increasingly sharing/taking responsibility for their homes and neighborhoods

Goal **5. Great Place – Livable, Sustainable City**

Objective
- a. Well-planned City with necessary services and infrastructure
- b. City decisions consistent with plans and policies
- c. Incorporation of "Green Sustainable" concepts into City's development and plans
- d. Appropriate leisure and recreational opportunities responding to the needs of residents
- e. More attractive city: commercial areas and neighborhoods

Goal **6. Prosperous Downtown Bloomington**

Objective
- a. More beautiful, clean Downtown area
- b. Downtown Vision and Plan used to guide development, redevelopment and investments
- c. Downtown becoming a community and regional destination
- d. Healthy adjacent neighborhoods linked to Downtown
- e. Preservation of historic buildings

AGENDA

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING AGENDA
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
109 E. OLIVE STREET, BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2015, 5:30 P.M.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call of Attendance**
3. **Public Comment**
4. **Consideration of approving the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of August 17, 2015.** *(Recommend that the reading of the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Proceeding of August 17, 2015 be dispensed with and the minutes approved as printed.)*
5. **Presentation of the Budget Task Force Committee Final Recommendations.** *(Alderman Scott Black, Presentation 30 and Council Discussion, 30 Minutes)*
6. **Adjournment**

Note: No action will be taken on any matters at this meeting beyond approval of the minutes.

REGULAR AGENDA

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

FOR COUNCIL: September 21, 2015

SUBJECT: Consideration of approving Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes from August 21, 2015.

RECOMMENDATION/MOTION: That the reading of the minutes of Committee of the Whole Proceedings of August 21, 2015 be dispensed with and the minutes approved as printed.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK: Goal 1. Financially sound City providing quality basic services.

STRATEGIC PLAN SIGNIFICANCE: Objective 1d. City services delivered in the most cost-effective, efficient manner.

BACKGROUND:

In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Committee Proceedings must be approved within thirty (30) days after the meeting or at the Committee's second subsequent regular meeting whichever is later.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Committee Proceedings are made available for public inspection and posted to the City's web site within ten (10) days after Committee approval.

COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED: Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Not applicable.

Respectfully submitted for Committee consideration.

Prepared by: Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk

Reviewed by:

Recommended by:

David A. Hales
City Manager

Attachments:

- August 21, 2015 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Motion: That the reading Recommend that the reading of the minutes of Committee of the Whole Proceedings of August 21, 2015 be dispensed with and the minutes approved as printed.

Motion: ______________________ Seconded by: ______________________

	Aye	Nay	Other		Aye	Nay	Other
Alderman Black				Alderman Mwilambwe			
Alderman Buragas				Alderman Painter			
Alderman Fruin				Alderman Sage			
Alderman Hauman				Alderman Schmidt			
Alderman Lower							
				Mayor Renner			

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE SESSION
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS
MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2015; 5:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Renner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and asked City Clerk Lawson to call the roll.

2. Roll Call

Aldermen: Jim Fruin, Kevin Lower, David Sage, Mboka Mwilambwe, Amelia Buragas, Joni Painter, Karen Schmidt, Scott Black, Diana Hauman

3. Public Comment

Mayor Renner opened the floor to public comment.

The following citizens offered comments to the Council:

Alton Franklin
Ron Schultz
Judy Stearns

4. Review and Discussion regarding the FY'15 Year-End Financial Unaudited Report

Mayor Renner introduced this item by its title and introduced Patti-Lynn Silva. Ms. Silva, provided an updated PowerPoint for them, and had already sent out a draft so that they could review the numbers over the weekend.

Pertaining to the Fund Overview, Ms. Silva, these five (5) funds are important to discuss because they make up 75% of this City's almost $200,000,000.00 budget, the General Fund getting most of the focus being 51%.

The General Fund projections have had an interesting year, referring to December 2014, where projections were done starting with the adopted budget that is seen in column 1. The budget was adopted with a small surplus that was somewhat inadvertent, but we had the 11th hour taxes that were passed, she said. As the year progressed, they realized they were going to have some middle dropping sales tax, and they had come to the meeting in December of 2014, with a $2.1 million dollar projected deficit. With the committee's direction, they were able to freeze the budget and with about $1.6 million in revenue cuts and some positive revenue projections, they closed that gap during the year as reported to the committee. The Revised Budget column, the $3.8 million added to the expenditures, which were the use of fund balance and that during the year they also had reported that they had deficits in other funds; the Solid

Waste Fund, the Coliseum Fund and so forth. Those budget transfers have to run through current operations and that is why there is an increase from $91.2 million to $94.6 million. They did not spend that, even though they had the authority to spend $94.6 million. When the freeze was put in place, there were a several staff transitions, and departments returned an additional $3 million on top of the $2 million in savings. This as a positive, but points out that when there were several staff transitions they do not have a lot of business continuity as a City.

With the exception of electricity and fuel, which listed on the chart shows substantial savings. Therefore, they were not able to get bids out, say the police windows and things that were needed. The $3.8 million used for budget transfers throughout the year was almost a complete wash with the savings that was returned. Though savings is good, the savings will not help their deficit going forward. In this case, it is because most of it was personnel related. Originally the City thought the fund balance would drop down to $10 million, and it looks as though the City will be just shy of $12 million because of that savings. City will remain at 13%. Our credit rating agencies will be happy about that even after we had such a sizable budget transfer.

The General Fund Revenue is the unaudited actuals; however, it is believed that those totals are close and does not expect those to change. About 35% of General Fund Revenue and the rates that we charge are dictated by the state and we are not able to increase those revenues. The ones that are available for increases that would make a difference in the current deficit include, property tax, the home rule sales tax, the utility tax, and some of the other ones, the charges for services and fees will be coming back to us shortly for a contract on studying all of the City's fees and charges for services to see what it would take to update them and also substantiate them.

Ms. Silva provided a historical perspective on the Home Rule Sales Tax dating back to 2007. As you can see fiscal year 2013 was a stellar year, the best year we have had. In 2009, the huge increase is due to 0.25 point that was earmarked for debt service and we have been dropping off since then. At the time that we adopted the budget, we thought that the sales tax would come in at about $14.43, it really came in unadjusted at $14.14, and we are finding what our new norm is with that without a rate increase. State Sales Tax, which she states is slightly different due to the automotive factor; the Home Rule State Tax we do not tax unlicensed vehicles licensed personal property, so the state tax is a little bit different and there was a huge increase in 2013 based on automotive.

Regarding the General Fund Expenditures, this is a synopsis of what the final pre-audit numbers came in as. Our principal and interest payments are strictly for our Capital Lease Program and our transfers out are listed there. They are mainly for our debt service, the money for the local motor fuel tax, street resurfacing program and then the contribution to solid waste.

Water Fund, it has almost 170% fund balance. Because of some transitions in the water fund, they have not been moving forward with some of their planned capital projects and so their expenditures came in under budget. They have been consciously accumulating fund balance; they probably have about $150 million worth of infrastructure needs. This is not a lot of money for their needs that are upcoming, but there was not a lot of capital project work done this year. Locust /Colton Phase 2 was postponed which left them in a positive. Their ending fund balance is 50%. We would love to see fund balance 15% or above. Regarding the Storm Water Fund, same idea there as sewer, storm, and water kind of move together.

Regarding the Solid Waste Fund the revenue shown is based on user fees. The subsidy shown is our budgeted subsidy in the 15 year budget for total revenue of $6.7 million. Expenditures, she stated they believe are going to be at $7.4 million. Solid Waste had an operating loss of $635,000.00, unaudited. They transferred, and there was the deficit that she previously reported to the Council in December, that big part coming out of the General Fund of $3.8 million--$1.6 million of that came here to the Solid Waste Fund to correct their deficit fund balance. They have a net ending fund balance of $635,000.00, unaudited and unadjusted, for 2015. They began to make changes to the program in 16 biweekly, so really it is 16 year, we had a rate increase, but we were give the direction to find those deficiencies, so this is kind of pre-direction from the Council.

Mayor Renner thanked Ms. Silva and asked if anyone had any comments or observations. No comments were made. He stated that it is good news that we are at 13% of our fund balance.

5. Presentation and Discussion on the Comprehensive Plan Pre-Approval and Implementation Plan

Mayor Renner introduced this item by its title and introduced Vase Pinnamaraju, Executive Director, McLean County Regional Planning Commission. Mayor Renner thanked her on behalf of the City of Bloomington for her continued hard work on this plan and her energy towards it.

Vasu Pinnamaraju began by thanking the Mayor and spoke of how phenomenal the community has been. She discussed "Bring It Bloomington", and that it is a lengthy report, She explains how this 18-month long process was conducted in 3 phases and summarizes each phase.

Phase I: Existing Conditions Analysis: She states this resulted in an interim identifiable at the end of July 2014. The Existing Conditions Report really is a lot of data crunching, looking and reviewing various plans to be sure they had a good understanding of the work already done.

Phase II: Community Visioning and Outreach: At the end of this phase, an interim identifiable was a Vision and Values report which prioritized the hopes and dreams of the community for the future of Bloomington. This report was published at the end of December 2014.

Many workers tried to work on making the vision into a reality and the product of that is the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission recommended approval to the Council at their last meeting on August 12, 2015. As a snapshot of community involvement, this plan is a great example of how members of the community together can collectively shape the future. She stated that over 2,000 members have shared their hopes and dreams for the future of this community. She stated that 130 members of the community have invested a tremendous amount of time and talent into this process. They participated in 13 different working groups and met for 10 months anywhere from 1 to 1 ½ hours each month collectively, resulting in nearly 1,300 hours of work.

Lastly, over 60 agencies; public, private, and non-profit, were all involved and showed extreme enthusiasm to partner with the City of Bloomington to really implement the comprehensive plan. As a result, the plan went through many public hearings at the Planning Commission Meeting. This plan is reflective of what the community wanted to see and it did gain a lot of public support during these public hearing processes. This could not be what it is without the help and support of numerous working group members who volunteered to serve on many of the technical groups. Some of the elements that are seen in this comprehensive plan have not been traditional elements within a comprehensive plan; such as, Arts and Culture and Education. These are subjects that we all typically work in silence, but ultimately it effects our quality of life in this community. Without subject matter expertise of all of these working group members, we could not have addressed these topics efficiently in the plan and without the guidance of the Council, which was very much involved throughout this process, and the Planning Commission members, many of them meeting numerous times to discuss these results at the Planning Commission meeting, and the plan's team and committee, that was the administrative committee, that gave us assistance on a day-to-day basis, and also the Advisory Committee that was appointed by the Mayor who met as needed to provide guidance at critical junctures.

The Interim report, but what they found out in existing conditions, among many things, there is a stark difference between Bloomington's Code, meaning downtown and established older neighborhoods, is hugely different than the rest of the community. When we looked at Bloomington's median we stack up really good against any internet community, or for that matter national mediums, which is a fact that we want to celebrate, but as a community trying to envision the future we also need to take a deep look at what our issues are and how we can become the premium community that we already are continue that into the future.

She states that a snapshot of the Vision and Values report, seven core values stood out. She highlights two of these on the overhead projector that really will be visible for the rest of this presentation. One of those is dynamic neighborhoods. There was an enormous amount of discussion throughout these community surveys, and the entire community survey was open-ended questions so people were free to discuss topics that they want to discuss and also in a much more holistic way, not item by item. She stated that what they learned was that nearly 80% of all comments were very heavy on neighborhoods. That is their immediate community, they want to make sure that the neighborhoods that they live in, invest in, and play in are thriving into the future. This applies to both old neighborhoods and new neighborhoods. She states that if you run through the plan, what you will see is a huge focus on the older neighborhoods. The reason for that is that newer neighborhoods, defined as being within the last 50 years, the infrastructure is new and the housing is new. The reason for the emphasis on established neighborhoods is to ensure that some of these neighborhoods have suffered this investment for decades and they cannot afford to suffer anymore this investment.

The second one is solid infrastructure. She states that this has been a topic at the City Council meetings a lot, but that is something that she has heard quite a bit during this process. People want to maintain what we have in good condition before we rule out new.

Jennifer did a fantastic presentation about population projections. This is the first time ever that we have identified two different scenarios, both of which are very possible. She refers to the overhead, and states that the one in blue, based on that history as a community we have been growing nearly two and one-half percent (2 1/2 %) annually for the last two (2) to three (3) decades. Historically, we have several advantages. That will put us in 2015 nearly at 82,000 people and based on housing and other information, we know that we are not quite there. She states that this is the first plan. She states that not just here in Bloomington, the new economic situation across the country, many communities are having to do this. Unfortunately, their economic situation is fluid and the scenario at the bottom of the report, in orange, does project the last five (5) years of information into the future. She cautions that we cannot just rely on those numbers because taking five (5) years of information and projecting it 20 years into the future is statistically wrong, but also it is not acknowledging the advantages that we have as a community, our central location and our quality of life. She states that the projection in the middle, the black dotted line, is taking both of these scenarios into consideration; the new economic realities, the historic advantages, but also acknowledging what needs to be done, it is not an automatic given.

The Planning Commission retained the services of GIS Research Consultant to identify what is the cost of development, and that report is published on their website for detailed review. The numbers used here are not national numbers these are local numbers. This is based on their assessments, based on the City's financial audits and financial reports from 2013. The idea is not to analyses every piece of property to see what it is that we are reaping from here. The idea is to understand moving forward, we are suggesting new development—what working in the past and what did not, and why it did not. She refers to the circles on the graph, she states that the first circle is about 2.5 miles from downtown, which on the East side it takes you to Veterans Parkway, and then from that point onwards it is a mile out.

She states that she wants to point out three things on the map. The cord that is shown with the -$ is something that is to be expected. That is a core City that has been losing property values and assessments. This study took the revenues that the property generates and matched it up with expenses, which includes public services; such as police, fire, etc. That is something they did expect given the property values declining.

Two developments to highlight and us an example; Grove and Fox Creek. It cost the City several million dollars to make those subdivisions happen. Grove was built 8 years ago and the City spent nearly $11,000,000.00 just to get the sewer/storm/water installed there. This does not even take into account the investment that Benwood or other public agencies-school districts had to make in those areas, nor does it take into account the additional dollars spent by the City to weed (33:52)out the Kickapoo Creek, etc. What we are showing there is a deficit, but she states that there are several assumptions that went into the study and modification of any assumption would probably change this a few cents here or there. Those assessments are at their peak. The new developments, big houses, are something of value today and if at their best we are still seeing a negative yield; that is not a good rate of return. She states that 8 years into this project the City reaped less than $500,000.00, which is less than 5% rate of return. The same applies to Fox Creek, nearly $10,000,000.00 of investment returned about 15% thus far in nearly 20 years. What is common between both of these is that in anticipation of growth, we have extended service out into these areas. The growth may or may not happen during the time frame that these infrastructure investments need to be made again.

Based on the community input, one of the big lessons for them is that we need to make sure that our existing infrastructure is in good shape. Our investments already made need to be capitalized before we make new investments. She states that she wants to reiterate this as the plan uses this as the fundamental framework.

The other fundamental building block for this plan is that they have heard a lot about neighborhoods. People really want to see their neighborhoods and investments being preserved. There was quite a bit of discussion about East versus West and there is a social and economic divide, and they would like to see this somehow mitigated. This is not unique to Bloomington. Regardless of which community you go, every City has this, but as a community we want to aspire to be the premium community that we can be. Comprehensive planning is a great time to really take the input from the community and see how we can make this happen. She states that the areas on the map in pink and orange are our established older neighborhoods. The area colored in blue are the relatively newer neighborhoods within the last 50 years, with the majority of that being east of Veterans Parkway. Looking at these new neighborhoods, most of them are suburban style with single family homes and lots. Upon closer look, our established older neighborhoods are not all equal. The regeneration area, as they framed it (in the pink), is quite different from the preservation area and these characteristics present different opportunities and challenges as we move forward with implementation of this plan. If we are trying to group all of the established older neighborhoods into one big part and try to address that with a big broad stroke, we may not be able to get to the most important areas that need to be addressed. She states that one of the largest things we will see in this plan is placing a high priority in the regeneration area. This area has suffered a large disinvestment in at least the last 50 years. The infrastructure was built at least 100 years ago. Both above and below ground there is a huge need for infrastructure improvement. The big priority was placed on this regeneration area because given the amount of disinvestment that has happened in this area created a lot more than infrastructure or housing issues. It has social issues and other issues that are much more complexly related. The education system is interrelated with the neighborhoods, economic development is also related in this. Therefore; unless we look at all of these together, no one aspect of this can be addressed without looking at other aspects. She states that when they say high priority, it should not just be high priority for the City, but it should also be high priority for the agencies and entities that really want to make this community truly the first-class community that it should be. She gives an example of the landlocked school district that does get affected based on the demographic needs within these neighborhoods, and the type of schools really dictate the quality of neighborhoods and vice versa.

Every street and neighborhood in here is a treasure trove of history. This once elite section of the community, she believes today is a truly mixed income neighborhood. From an infrastructure prospect, the preservation area, which is the orange section that she previously pointed out, infrastructure is just as much of an issue here that it is in the regeneration area. The History Preservation Plan has not been updated in at least a decade and there are no resources associated with it. Therefore, many of the issues that were pointed out in this section of the City are related to the importance of these historic resources and why they need to be preserved.

In summary, our core is that we have an amazing downtown with a lot of potential for improvement. Together with the regeneration area and the preservation area, the success of downtown and success of these established older neighborhoods are dependent on each other.

Some of the work that has been done ensures they are not replicating the work that has been by other plans. Many plans were adopted by the City council, several resources were allocated to those plans and she wanted to make sure they integrated those effectively in this process. The Comprehensive Plan, it is an integrated parks and open space system that links all of the various individual plans in order to maximize these for recreational and other purposes.

City plans do not just affect the City's budget, but also affects other's budgets. The same applies to County plans, School District Plans and the rest of the regional and agency plans. The list and chart that is being shown from the Mclean County Mental Health Action Plan and how 22% of all calls to the Police are mental health related. Under the Public Safety Plan, the Fire Department is constrained for resources and it is one of the City's biggest budget items.

The Proposed Land Use Plan ensures they effectively utilize their existing infrastructure. This is extended out through the next 20 years. The proposed development approach calls for prioritization and reviews the 3 Tiers used. When she talks about infrastructure, she is not only speaking of the sewer and water, but also to fire safety. She discussed Future Use and that it is not land contiguous to incorporated area and without access to City services.

The City has grown in the last 15 years. She states 2000-2010 were boom years of population growth. Allocations were made to be sure to not cut down on the ability of the community to grow.

She reviews the next steps:
1. Adopt the plan, a 20 year timeline.
2. Establish an oversight process led by the Community Development Dept.
3. Keeping the community posted.

She concludes and states she is available to take questions.

Mayor Renner states time has been allocated for questions. He thanked Ms. Pinnamaraju and expresses how it is very important for us as a community to ask what our short, mid-term and long-term goals are in a variety of different areas. He would like an implementation component to the plan and suggests one method would be to adopt a plan in the near future and set goals by the end of the year to set up specific priorities. He states he is open to any suggestions from other Council members on how to follow up on this plan, as this is the first time for a plan such as this.

Mr. Hales, following up on the objectives for the night, regarding the three (3) key items for adopting the plan and how quickly the Council should act on adoption of the plan. Secondly, the Implementation Plan, who will prioritize the recommendations, and whether that will be staff or Council handling that. He expresses how critical the Implementation Plan is to the City Manager and the Senior Management Staff. Lastly, he asked about the Zoning Code, which is probably the next major piece of implementation, and the timeline for that. He asked Mr. Dabareiner to brief the Council on the needs and timeline to get this accomplished.

Alderman Sage asked Ms. Pinnamaraju about a golf course in the community that is considered park acreage and asked if she could look into this as to how this could be addressed so that is aligns with the Park Master Plan from a definition prospective. She agreed that she will look into this and let him know.

Mayor Renner wanted to make it clear for the audience and for the record that when they are talking about a plan, they are speaking as to what they want to do short term; 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, and he stated that it is absolutely the Councils responsibility as elected officials to determine what those priorities would be. He stated he personally believes that doing this in work groups would be the most efficient way to handle this in any reasonable time, but he believe it is critical however they do this. The resources are a related, but separate decision he believes, as there may be new challenges or opportunities that would arise as time goes by. He wanted to make it clear that they are not committed to spending, for instance, $10,000.00, they are instead saying that these are our priorities as we move forward.

Mr. Dabareiner, discussed implementing the plan. At this time, it is a work in progress. He stated there has been a lot of public input, which is the foundation of any Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is also a part of the Comprehensive Plan of which is, too, a public process in its creation. The Comprehensive Plan has over 600 recommendation of which can be subdivided into three. Each recommendation has a primary actor (who), and a recommended [when] short or long-term process. There is much guidance in the draft document that will lead to an adopted document. Each of the recommendation can be divided into three categories: 1) Zoning Ordinance, 2) Internal Systems, link the plan to the Capital Improvement Plan through Public Works and Engineering, and 3) Outside Agency, is where the RPC category takes the lead. The City can encourage and share the information that is within our plan. The zoning and studies categories make up approximately 60% of this 600 recommendations, and would be considered to be one action by the Council—creation of a new Zoning Ordinance. Secondly, the Internal Systems is 25% of the recommendations. Some of the recommendations are simple in nature, and some are more complex and requires additional work. The timing of these task can be reviewed as he has set aside a small amount with the Community Development budget to accomplish some of the processes within this budget year, the Zoning Ordinance can be updates or rewritten within one year.

Alderman Schmidt, agrees that the zoning is the foundation of any older neighborhood as within older neighborhoods, you see a variety of mixed use housing and commercial developments, as well as negative effects that it has on housing values. She expressed concerns with Mr. Dabareiner low staffing levels within the Community Development Department. She asked for a plan to accomplish this level of work without having a sufficient number of staff within the office.

Mr. Dabareiner, there is a lot of work that goes into this type of project, as his department is taxed pretty heavily at this time. Most of the work could not be done without outside assistance which would be the only way to get this done. He does not have Planners sitting around awaiting the next big project. The Community Development Department only has one planner who is busy completing other assignments. Therefore, we would need to hire consultants to do the work. The Zoning Ordinance is the one document that follows every comprehensive plan.

Alderman Fruin, would the people in the community think that government (state, federal, county, or city) is too restrictive on zoning and code enforcement. Sometimes, the City can make it difficult on new businesses or existing businesses, and we have to find that balance of wanting things done according to Code requirements. He complimented Vasu and Jennifer as well as City staff that worked on this Comprehensive Plan that this document serves as a blueprint to Bloomington's future. He supports having this plan placed on the August 24, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Agenda for approval.

Alderman Hauman, echoed the remarks of Alderman Fruin and thanked Vasu and City staff for their work efforts to bring the Comprehensive Plan forward on the August 24, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Agenda for approval. She expressed concern over having the plan sit on a shelf, and stated that the Council must take action on this plan quickly.

Mayor Renner, agrees that the Council needs to take action on this plan and set a date for implementing the plan, suggesting that the Council break into groups to review and work on an implementation plan. That is only one idea, and is open to receiving additional suggestions/ideas.

Alderman Schmidt, echoed the comments of Aldermen Hauman and Fruin and agrees to having the Comprehensive Plan placed on the August 24, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Agenda.

Alderman Buragas, thanked Mr. Dabareiner and Vasu for their work efforts in bringing this plan forward. She is very pleased that the Zoning Code has been included as one of our first priorities within the plan. Agrees with Alderman Fruin about having overly restrictive regulations and should work to safeguard that; however, damaging is our regulations that are vague and inconsistent. We have that in some instances. So, it would be great to have a clear and concise Zoning Code in order to make our system work much better than it does.

Mayor Renner, persons have come to Council with complaints that historically the City has been very selective in enforcement with law-abiding citizen's verses slum landlords.

Alderman Black, agrees that the plan needs to come to Council; however, would like to see some type of schedule of implementing the plan.

Alderman Painter, agrees that the sooner the City gets started, the better the community will feel about having a plan, and seeing the City honor the plan that was created with community input.

Alderman Mwilambwe, agrees with the plan and the Council should move forward with adopting the plan. Appreciates distraction when they occur; however, we need to be able to refocus in order to move forward with the implementation. He stated that he does not agree with the workgroups, but need to look for efficient ways to meet with staff and the County.

Alderman Sage, agrees with moving forward; however has one request for managing the agenda. He requested additional time to have to present the Budget Task Force recommendations to the Council.

Alderman Lower, does not support it, but would support a plan. He does not believe that this is grounded in reality. He ask who will ultimately be responsible for this plan. This plan is too restrictive, we need to be very careful about how we change to Code as well as including small businesses. Changing the rules often causes problems. Everything that the Council does have a cause and effect.

Alderman Fruin expressed respect for Alderman Lower's opinion; however stating, he sees that as our other master plans, that being a blueprint to move forward.

Ms. Pinnamaraju stated that the County is one of many agencies that is enthusiastically awaiting the implementation of this plan in Bloomington.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Alderman Hauman, seconded by Alderman Black to adjourn Regular Session. Time: 7:01 p.m.

The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll which resulted in the following:

Ayes: Aldermen Fruin, Lower, Sage, Mwilambwe, Buragas, Schmidt, Black, Hauman, and Painter

Nays: None

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON	**ATTEST**
Tari Renner, Mayor	Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Committee of the Whole Meeting
September 21, 2015

Agenda Item No. 5

Presentation of the Budget Task Force Committee Final Recommendations. *(Alderman Scott Black, Presentation 30 and Council Discussion, 30 Minutes)*

RESOLUTION NO. 2015 - 18

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE FORMATION OF A BUDGET TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington has an annual general fund operating budget of approximately $95,000,000 and had to utilize money from its reserves to pass a balanced budget for FY 2016; and

WHEREAS, the City is expected to face a projected structural deficit of approximately $8,000,000 in its general fund in Fiscal Year 2017 and could lose up to an additional $4,000,000 in loss of state income tax or similar state revenues as proposed in the Gubernatorial budget; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2008, the City had a negative unreserved fund balance in its general fund in the amount of ($109,000) and since said time has worked to improve the City's reserves; and

WHEREAS, upon implementation of certain policies by the City Council, including a Fund Balance Reserve Policy, the audited unreserved fund balance grew to $14,000,000 by fiscal year 2014; and

WHEREAS, common accounting practices call for unreserved fund balance to be 10 to 15 percent minimum with a goal of two months of operating expenditures be available for unforeseen or catastrophic events; and

WHEREAS, during this same time, the City Council has pursued master planning of major infrastructure, transportation, streets, sidewalks, park, zoo, and bicycles, to measure and evaluate the condition, demand and estimate future City costs; which is still underway. Early estimates are calling for an estimated $400,000,000 in deferred capital needs for all funds. Approximately, $110,000,000 is associated with the general fund for facilities improvement and repair, and street resurfacing; and

WHEREAS, the City has two major sources of revenue, including sales tax (approximately 28 percent of general fund revenues) and property tax (approximately 18 percent of general fund revenues);

WHEREAS, the City has seen lower than estimated sales tax revenue over the last two fiscal years and has held the sales tax rate steady since fiscal year 2009 when there was a .25 percent increased earmarked for the annual debt service related to the U.S. Cellular Coliseum and to help restore the general fund balance; and

WHEREAS, the City's property tax has either been held constant or decreased in recent years, notwithstanding a slight increase in fiscal year 2011 which was earmarked for City pensions; and

WHEREAS, to help address previous fiscal issues, the City reduced the total number of full time equivalent employees, going from 864 in fiscal year 2008 to 760 in fiscal year 2014. Notwithstanding the reduction in staff, during this same time period the City population grew (estimated growth was at least an additional 14,000 people through 2013), increasing the demand for City services; and

WHEREAS, the increased demand for services, the increased costs of providing services, and the emergency repair of aging infrastructure is converging with declining or flat general fund revenues to create a structural deficit; and

WHEREAS, other long-term cost saving measures instituted by the City Council included an aggressive Police and Fire Pension Funding Policy, which required a short-term investment of approximately $6,000,000 to save the City up to $70,000,000 over the life of the pension; and

WHEREAS, extensive citizen engagement has taken place over the last two years, from multiple agencies, both regionally and locally, on the City of Bloomington and its finances. Citizen, meetings, surveys, academies and other public engagement have revealed a public understanding noting the need to increase revenue with corresponding efforts to make reductions and gain efficiencies in city operations; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the City of Bloomington has proposed the formation of a Budget Task Force to examine the City's fiscal situation and make recommendations on budgetary matters; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force will be composed of nine members, including three aldermen, two representatives from the business community as recommended by the McLean County Chamber of Commerce, two representatives from the non-profit community and two additional community representatives; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Task Force shall include: (1) examining and making recommendations that outline different approaches to address the City's long term structural budget challenges; (2) with the use of priority based budgeting as a tool, working with City staff to produce budget scenarios that provide the City Council with options to address the City's long-term structural deficit; and (3) presenting a report to the City Council at a Work Session Budget meeting on or before September 21, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force shall be in existence from adoption of this resolution and shall cease its operations upon presentation of the report on or before September 21, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force shall be subject to the provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act and shall elect from one of its own members a secretary to take meeting minutes; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager shall be responsible for providing the Task Force with necessary staff to assist it in its functions; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Committee shall consists of those persons identified within this Resolution;

WHERAS, City Council will simultaneously continue to discuss the City's budget and fiscal issues, with a focus on infrastructure, and will incorporate reports from the Task Force into these discussions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE City Council of the City of Bloomington, McLean County, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1. The above stated recitals are incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. The City Council of the City of Bloomington hereby formally creates the Budget Task Force Committee, which shall be considered an *ad hoc* committee. The Task Force shall consist of nine people, including: Alderman Sage, Alderman, Black, Alderman Buragas, John Zeunik (community representative), Jamie Mathy (community representative), Dontae Latson (non-profit representative), Deana Frautschi (non-profit representative), and two individuals to be named by the McLean County Chamber of Commerce to represent the business community. The Task Force shall be co-chaired by one Alderman and another member of the Task Force as decided and elected by the Task Force. The Task Force shall meet initially at the call of one of the alderman appointed to the Task Force and thereafter at the call of either of the co-chairpersons. A majority of the Task Force (i.e., 5 members) shall constitute a quorum of the Task Force to conduct business.

Section 3. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately after its passage and approval.

APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Bloomington, McLean County, Bloomington, Illinois, May 11, 2015, by a vote of 8 to 1.

Tari Renner

Tari Renner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cherry Lawson

Cherry Lawson, City Clerk

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING AGENDA ADDENDUM I
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
109 E. OLIVE STREET, BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2015, 5:30 P.M.

Addition:

5 **Presentation of the Budget Task Force Committee Final Recommendations.** *(Alderman Scott Black, Presentation 30 and Council Discussion, 30 Minutes)* PowerPoint Presentation Attached.

Note: No action will be taken on any matters at this meeting beyond approval of the minutes.

September 21, 2015

To: Bloomington City Council
From: Budget Task Force
Re: Report for City Council

Background

The past few years there's been growing City Council interest with improving the budget process. This included being more proactive in budget timing and further engaging our community in budget conversations.

Currently the City Manager develops and delivers a proposed budget to the City Council in February. The Council then has the opportunity to review and give budget feedback. With the statutory May 1st date to pass the budget, it's difficult for the Council to offer guidance to Staff. And this leads to a process that seems more reactive than proactive.

Also there's been more intentional efforts to engage our community in budget conversations including:

- Citizen Summits
- Mayor Open Houses
- Online survey
- Aldermen Ward meetings

Part of the rationale for creating the Budget Task Force (BTF) was to help the Council be more proactive in the budget cycle. Also to provide another opportunity for community engagement.

On May 11th the City Council created the BTF with the following charge:

1. Examine and make recommendations that outline different approaches to address the City's long-term structural budget challenges
2. Work with City Staff to produce budget scenarios that provide the City Council with options to address the long-term structural deficit
3. Present a report to the City Council at its work session in September

Current BTF Work

The BTF consists of three aldermen and six community leaders, and met for the first time on May 26th.
The Mayor opened the meeting by again emphasizing that "everything is on the table." The BTF talked about the Council charge and a schedule to meet the very aggressive September deadline. Also a review of Police & Fire pension funding and the Solid Waste program were also completed.

On June 8th the BTF had a first touchpoint with the Council. Key takeaways were:

- Majority Council support for the BTF to look at the combination of spending (service) decreases and revenue (tax/fee) increases to close the projected FY17 budget deficit of $7M.
- Affirmation of spending 2014 priorities identified by the Council
- Consider possible budget items beyond the FY17 budget in supporting long-term budget sustainability

On July 27th the City Manager shared possible suggestions with the BTF for helping reduce the FY17 budget by $4M. The BTF reviewed these, and determined some needed additional consideration.

Suggested Budget Scenarios

Consistent with the charge and based on June 8th Council feedback, the BTF has worked with City Staff, task force members, and citizen suggestions to look at different approaches and has developed some ideas for addressing budget challenges including:

- FY17 budget cuts to start closing the projected $7M deficit
- FY18+ budget items for sustainable budget reductions and
- Revenue increases

Police & Fire Pension Funding

(Blue indicates BTF Consensus)

FY17 Budget

FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)

- **Review Ramp Up payment schedule while maintaining required state minimum and supplemental payments and supporting Council policy of 100% funding by 2041**

Solid Waste

FY17 Budget

- **Implement 1st bucket charge for curbside bulk waste pick-up (not branch/shrubbery)**
- **Increase bucket charge for additional curbside bulk waste pick-up**
- **Bulk waste at city drop-off yard is free.**

Additional BTF Suggestions
Review a 35-gal refuse can fee increase
Outsource entire solid waste program
Special bulk waste charge for landlords

Comments
Funding solid waste with property taxes penalizes businesses as they already must pay these expenses.
General Fund covers only brush/shrubbery bulk waste.

FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)

- **Review bucket charge increases.**
- **Review potential landfill closing on solid waste program**

Using five groupings the BTF also tried to bring new context around balancing our suggested budget saving ideas including:

- Program Reductions or Eliminations
- Service Reductions or Eliminations
- Shared Services
- Alternative Service Delivery
- Operational Efficiencies in Service Delivery

Program Reductions or Eliminations

<u>FY17 Budget</u>

- **Seek full reimbursement - School Resource Officer Program (-$300K)**
- **Recover full cost of Downtown Police Hire Back from Downtown beneficiaries (-$120K)**

<u>Additional BTF Suggestions</u>

- **Study impact of eliminating School Resource Officer Program**

<u>FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)</u>

- **Explore formation of a Park District (City, City/Town, City/Town/County)**
- **Adopt Ordinance/Policy for Parks/Rec revenues covering X% of expenditures (Currently 50%) with low-income considerations**

Service Reductions or Eliminations

<u>FY17 Budget</u>

- **Misc. department reductions (-$43K)**
- **Complete BCPA operational audit including potential Foundation impact**

<u>Additional BTF Suggestions</u>

- Sell Creativity Center
- Sell BCPA, eliminating $1M in annual operating expenses
- Convert the BCPA to an enterprise fund
- Reduce BCPA budget (-$250K)

<u>FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)</u>

Shared Services

FY17 Budget

- **Seek maximum cost recovery of total $480K estimated expense for CIRA airport Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting**

FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)

- **Review Police firing range cost recovery**
- ETSB (Emergency 911) Revenue Sharing

Alternative Service Delivery

FY17 Budget

- **Initiate a review of outsourcing golf operations by FY17 budget adoption.**
- **Review selling all three city golf courses by FY17 budget adoption.**

Additional BTF Suggestions

FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)

- Revise policy for golf enterprise fund that if any outside fund transfer is needed, triggers review to contract out golf course operations
- **Explore combining (both internal and external) management for Coliseum and BCPA**

Operational Efficiencies in Service Delivery

FY17 Budget

- **As FY17 budget process starts, all departments should develop contingency 5% reduction plans**

FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)

- **Allocate budget resources to investigate operational efficiencies in all departments**
- **Total compensation plan and job audit review for all city employee positions**

Revenues

As directed by the Council the BTF also reviewed various revenue options. There is a BTF preference to consider city license/fee increases, Home Rule Sales tax, and Property taxes.

Principles

- As proposed revenue increases are reviewed, stay below central Illinois communities, and using Town of Normal as benchmark.
- By ordinance/policy new revenues to be targeted for specific, new budget expenditures (infrastructure, pensions, capital expenses, etc.)

FY17 Budget

- **Complete the city's comprehensive fee and rate study and prepare for cost recovery policy decisions with phased implementation, using Town of Normal as a benchmark and align for actual costs.**
- **Increase Home Rule Sales tax up to ½% to help address the FY17 structural deficit with consideration for the council to explore up to an additional ½% to address other specific targeted expenses for example capital, pensions, etc.**
- **Property tax rate increase to 1.35 equating to about $645K annually, tied to Police & Fire pension funding.**
- **Increase golf course fees.**

FY18+ Budget (Sustainability)

- **Review sending overdue parking tickets to a collection agency**
- **Review Implementing a computer system and hardware to move the operations of the 3 parking decks the City owns to 24 by 7 pay by hour operations.**
- **Review Downtown Master Plan – Parking Recommendations**

Summary / Next Steps

The BTF was tasked with reporting out on three items:

1. Examine and make recommendations that outline different approaches to address the City's long-term structural budget challenges.
2. Work with City Staff to produce budget scenarios that provide the City Council with options to address the long-term structural deficit.
3. Present a report to the City Council at its work session in September.

The BTF, working with Staff did review and outline different approaches to addressing he city's deficit. Also the BTF did two touchpoints with the Council to check philosophy and possible budget scenarios.

As the BTF finishes their work it's now important for the Council to carefully consider these ideas and act in a responsible and deliberate way to move forward with both possible budget cuts and possible increased revenues.

Bloomington council backs budget task force

MAY 12, 2015 12:00 PM • MARIA NAGLE MNAGLE@PANTAGRAPH.COM

BLOOMINGTON — Hoping community members will bring a fresh perspective to fixing the city's budget problems, eight of nine aldermen have backed Mayor Tari Renner's new budget task force.

Only Ward 1 Alderman Kevin Lower voted Monday night against creating a nine-member panel to help the council solve the city's structural deficit.

The mayor wants the task force to assess the city's budget situation, examine pros and cons of various options and present recommendations at a Sept. 14 council work session.

Renner also sees the task force as a way to get "a broader, communitywide perspective."

But two people who addressed the council during the meeting's public comments session said they believed the Citizen Summit, which involved about 100 residents in January, and a citywide survey sent out over the winter were better avenues to use in pursuing the public's input.

"I think this is something we need to try," Renner said, adding, "Now at the end of the day, it's the 10 of us who decide. This is just a way of clarifying options, another way of looking at things other than the 10 of us going through a budget session that was, frankly, not very productive back in March."

Ward 6 Alderman Karen Schmidt said she supported the measure because the task force will look at many of the same elements that the council looks at, "but with a different lens and taking a lot of the information that came out of the Citizen Summit and the various ward meetings ... and synthesizing all of that."

The task force will have three aldermen; two representatives of nonprofit organizations; two other community members; and two business representatives recommended by the McLean County Chamber of Commerce.

Renner's appointees are: Aldermen David Sage, Scott Black and Amelia Buragas; former McLean County Administrator John Zeunik; downtown business owner Jamie Mathy; YWCA President and CEO Dontae Latson; and community leader Deanna Frautschi.

Possible recommendations of the task force could include decommissioning one or two golf courses, cutting services or programs or raising some taxes and fees, said Renner.

Lower said he was not on board with the budget task force idea.

"We did talk about many of those ideas in our meeting in March," Lower said. "We should have had follow-up meetings. We should have narrowed things down and found ways to actually make some cuts and that is not what this (council) tends to want to do."

Budget task force seeks City Council direction

JUNE 08, 2015 8:15 AM • MARIA NAGLE MNAGLE@PANTAGRAPH.COM

BLOOMINGTON — The Bloomington City Council will review its budget philosophy during a work session Monday that precedes the regular meeting.

During the voting session at 7 p.m., the council will consider renewing its annual service agreement with the Downtown Bloomington Association and $90,000 in financial support.

The work session begins at 5:45 p.m., when aldermen will be asked to provide direction to the community budget task force so it can focus on options that eventually would meet with council approval.

Ward 2 Alderman David Sage, a co-chairman of the task force, wants to know whether aldermen want to see options that focus on the city continuing to ask bigger consumers to pay more, or to use more property taxes to cover the operational expenses.

The task force also wants to know if the council supports decreased spending by limiting city-provided services.

Mayor Tari Renner wants the task force to assess the budget, examine options and present recommendations at a Sept. 14 work session.

Without changes, the city expects a $7 million structural deficit for fiscal year 2017, which begins May 1, 2016.

The city approved a balanced general fund budget of $94.6 million for fiscal year 2016, but it drew $3.5 million from reserves to balance the 2015 budget and may tap reserves again this fiscal year.

Editorial: Should city be in the golf course business any longer?

JULY 22, 2015 7:00 AM

Jim Pearson has offered a hole-in-one opportunity to the city of Bloomington and city leaders should consider it, taking a full swing from the back tee.

Pearson, a local developer and architect, is pitching the idea of privatizing the city's three public golf courses: The Den at Fox Creek, Prairie Vista and Highland Park.

It's a worthy idea at a time when the city is looking to make up a $7 million budget deficit, but city leaders need to put in a great deal of study before making a decision. Bloomington doesn't need another situation like the recent downtown redevelopment plan that got pushed aside over what turned out to be a lack of financial information to proceed.

Before anyone gets too excited — or riled up — about the idea, consider this: municipalities offer golf courses, tennis, Frisbee and pickleball courts, swimming pools, zoos, arts and convention centers and arenas as a way to draw new residents and businesses.

But if the municipalities are short on cash, and the amenities can't support themselves (either through revenue or private foundation support), then they need to be put on a "could cut" list.

That's where Bloomington is, and a budget task force is looking at options in advance of a September meeting where task force members will share their recommendations.

Pearson admittedly has little background in golf course management; he proposes hiring a management team versed in golf course leadership. Even with that, the city isn't locked in to selling or leasing the courses to him and his development group.

They could go, in whole or in part, to any developer who has the background and track record to make the courses self-sufficient. Pearson points out that Highland Park, for instance, could be reconfigured to include residential development along the south side, or could be redesigned as a 12-hole course.

Highland is probably the most vulnerable of the three: It's the oldest. It's a good course and has its fans, but the design came during a different era and doesn't include some of the challenges or amenities that newer courses offer.

But the bottom line is this: If a city amenity can't support itself, then it should be considered open to being changed, reduced in size or sold.

"The real question is: Should a municipality be in the golf management business in today's world?,"

Ward 9 Alderman Jim Fruin asked in a story in Sunday's Pantagraph. "It seems like there is more and more emphasis on the city managing its infrastructure and public safety."

It's a good question and one that deserves a thoughtful answer.

Vogel: No easy answer to Bloomington budget woes

AUGUST 08, 2015 7:00 AM

How would you feel if the City of Bloomington were to turn off every other street light to save a few hundred thousand dollars next year? Or plow residential streets only when more than 4 inches of snow has fallen?

That's the kind of startling and potentially controversial idea that's surfacing as rubber meets the road in the city's effort to close a $7 million hole in its budget.

If you're part of the every-government-is-too-big-and-wasteful crowd, you're thinking these ideas are a scare scheme designed to garner public support for higher taxes or fees. If you're in the please-don't-let-Bloomington-become-a-Danville bunch, you're thinking a tax increase may be acceptable if it keeps lights on and streets plowed. Most people, I suspect, believe there surely are less pronounced, visible and impactful ways to save money.

This much we know: The city today has about 10 percent fewer full-time employees than seven years ago (616 vs. 683). City Manager David Hales admits additional efficiencies can always be found. But in an impassioned, nearly emotional statement at last week's community budget task force meeting, he said city employees are "already stretched and stressed," and that "maybe we're trying to do too much with our reduced staff." Something, Hales seemed to be saying, has to give.

He outlined consequences attached to ordering each city department to trim its budget by a proportional amount. ("These are ideas — not recommendations," he cautioned.) Eliminate three jobs in the Public Works Department and we'll experience a 40 percent reduction in pothole patching and more traffic light failures, Hales said. Closing O'Neil Pool could cause an uptick in juvenile crime, he suggested. Reduce the economic development budget and efforts to keep and attract business will be hurt, just when we most need them (think Mitsubishi).

Elected officials would be shirking important responsibilities if they took the easy way out and ordered each department to cut its budget by the same percentage. Better to absorb input from constituents, digest information and advice from the city's staff, and then collectively determine how to put core services, taxes and fees, and quality-of-life issues into better balance.

Some ideas put on the table by task force members are potentially divisive. Reduce hourly wages? Close the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts? Get out of the golf course business?

Others seem a foregone conclusion. You can count on further adjustments in solid waste fees and service. And I suspect the city will relax its existing plan to bring police and fire pensions to a fully-funded status sooner than later. That would ease the present budget squeeze, but forego millions in future interest savings.

Certain aldermen may never warm to even a quarter-cent increase in the city sales tax, if only because they felt excluded from tax chats held with Normal. Some believe using even a sliver of new revenue to help fund a new soccer complex is a non-starter. But what of mental health care needs?

Give city leaders credit for not following the state's reckless habit of kicking the can down the road when faced with a budget challenge. There will be unpopular decisions made, and even more if the state puts the squeeze on cities' revenues.

Glen Ludwig - Resident of Ward 8

1. Get out of Golf   Best exit plan is to **sell** all of the courses. Leasing is not a permanent solution. Golf is a mature recreational business. If indeed you have an interested buyer, now is the time to get out. Keeping the admittedly beautiful Highland Course, to soften the resistance to change is not practical. Having a single course will reduce the critical mass required for a success business. Highland should be attractive to a creative investor as there are alternative uses for the property.

2. Get out of the business of Bulky Waste. Seek to engage private parties who seek to take over that business. Create a "bulky waste service provider" licensing process. Not as a major source of income, but to provide some assurance that those proving this service are doing a good job. Post contact information of the licensed providers on the City website.

3. Longer term, explore privatization of all waste removal. It works for other cities, why not here? Doing so – lets someone else deal with the "dump is full" issue.

4. Reduce the number of employees that are union members – many are paid more than private sector rate, particularly when benefits are considered. The 3 above will help with that. Based on Steve Vogel's column, the City has averaged reducing employment by about 10 per year over the last 7 years. I would urge a continuing look for alternatives for privatization and exiting non critical services and business with a goal of reaching an employee team of 500, or less by 2020. But go easy on cuts to the accounting/finance areas. There are a number of structural changes to be made, and effective financial analysis is important to assure good decisions. We seem to have a talented financial area, and we don't want to have to engage a consultant every time a study is needed.

5. P&R District Explore creating a Normal / Bloomington Parks and Recreation District (suggest the N/B name order, to make those to the North more receptive). A Park District could levy its own taxes and nurture a business model focusing on improved efficiency. Work to put the BCPA in this district. Likely cannot include the Coliseum in the district, at this time, as that would be a road block from the Normal viewpoint.

6. Town/City Collaboration   I have lived in both Normal and Bloomington, thus do not suffer from paradigm paralysis that I suspect tends to hinder the implementation of change within the footprint of the town and city. Has an initiative ever been studied to form a Metro Public Safety approach to providing Police and Fire services? I would expect that better service coverage and improved efficiency in both fixed and human asset investment utilization would occur.

7. Revenues - Increase sales tax, consider a city auto sticker used for street improvement, do we have a bike sticker- could be used for Trail improvement, and review and adjust cost of all license and fees

8. Human Resources   The actions suggested above, will impact the employees of the city. Moral will likely suffer. I don't know if the HR budget includes any significant amount for annual training. Do we have an employee group or an employee TEAM? What is the culture within the employee team? Have our employees been trained that to be successful as a city employee, there is a need to be able to embrace change? There is likely a significant need to Train the Keepers. Budget for significant and relevant team employee development. Those that don't want to develop their careers should be given an opportunity to work elsewhere. I don't think the taxpayers can afford to pay employees who are not engaged and happy with their jobs.

On Sunday, August 2, 2015 5:57 PM, Ken S <keswanberg@gmail.com> wrote:
Alderman Sage,
I am submitting 3 suggestions to the Budget Task Force. Two of which are additional sustainable revenue sources and 1 cost saving suggestion.

Revenue Source 1 - Send overdue parking tickets to a collection agency. Currently the City has $205,000.00 in outstanding parking tickets. There would be no cost to the City to implement this service. The company that the City purchased the parking violation system from offers a collection service. They have an average collection rate for municipalities of 44%. That could generate over $80,000.00 for the City. There would be no cost to the City. The company would also help the City set up the processes. There would be a fee of $10.00 per ticket for the company to process. This cost can be added to cost of the ticket. This service would not add much work to the City employees. A change to the ordinance would be required to send parking tickets to collections. Last fiscal year the City wrote off $53,000.00 in uncorrectable tickets. You might be surprised of how much has been written off since 2008.

Revenue Source 2 - Implement a computer system and hardware to move the operations of the 3 parking decks the City owns to 24 by 7 pay by hour operations. Currently the Lincoln deck is 9am - to 6pm Monday through Friday hourly pay operations. I did an analysis of possible revenue by moving the Lincoln Garage to 24 by 7 pay operation. This analysis looked at additional revenue outside of regular business hours of 9am to 6pm. Based on the number of vehicles that entered the Lincoln Garage. If each vehicle stayed for 2 hours, there would be an additional $168,000.00 in revenue for the City.
If each vehicle stayed for 3 hours, there would be an additional $204,000.00 in additional revenue for the City. I was not able to get counts of vehicles entering the other two garages for my analysis. With the other two garages added to 24 by 7 hourly pay, I would estimate $200,000.00 to $300,000.00 in additional revenue to the City. I will be honest that this would come with a cost. The current company that the City purchased the current parking system from has a solution to add the functionality that I have described. The company also offers the option to pay for the implementation over 3 or 5 years. The additional revenue would cover the annual payments.

Cost saving 1 - The City currently pays maintenance for two Water Billing systems. The current Springbrook system and MUNIS Utility Billing system. The MUNIS Utility Billing system is to replace the aging Springbrook system. MUNIS Utility Billing system was supposed to be implemented 2 years ago. It has been consistently been delayed by Finance. As a result, the City is paying maintenance on two water billing systems. By moving forward with the MUNIS Utility Billing system would reduce costs and man hours cost for the City.

I have details of these suggestions because I was an employee of the City. I resigned my position of 14 years July 31, 2015. I worked in IT and supported the Parking Violation system. I created proposals for items 1 and 2 of this list.
****

From: Mike Fitzgerald [mailto:fitz2143@yahoo.com]
Evening David, and John and Amelia and Scott

here are some of my recommendations:

1. the council at the start of the budget cycle must tell the CM/staff the amount of money they have to spend. not like the present system where the CM/staff develop a budget and basically tell the council, you make the decision now that we've put numbers out there. they must live within the means that you/council dictate to them.

2. staff vehicles should be turned in/done away with and staff, if/when they use their private vehicles for business, will have that use approved by their supervisor, and will be required to turn in documented mileage/fuel numbers for reimbursement. i would give you a dollar figure but attempting to decipher the current budget figures as to what is spent on staff vehicles is next to impossible to ascertain.

3. make the BCPA an enterprise fund just as the golf courses and coliseum. this would result in a minimum savings of at least $1.7 million dollars.

4. sell Highland Park golf course or keep Highland Park golf course and privatize The Den golf course. additionally, regardless of what is done with the golf courses, revamp the fee structure for all the courses to include a scale that can be worked which ensures those golfers who play daily, are responsible for paying additional fees. i.e., i have a bloomington pass which cost me $1200 for this year. i will play approximately forty rounds of golf which is $30 for green fees every time i play. some golfers pay for the same pass that i have and golf 150-200+ times per year which is roughly $8 - $6 per round for green fees.

5. the CM promised a reduction of thirteen workers when the new garbage trucks were brought in. this never came to fruition and the personnel reduced were seasonal workers.

6. have ISU/IWU students do a cost reduction study for the CVB/DBA/and the other entity which slips my mind. the purpose would be to determine what bang for the taxpayer bucks are realized. have these entities prove their worth to the taxpayers vice having them just state periodically they are providing opportunities for new businesses.

7. increase liquor license fees. make the downtown bars pay for the OT hours put in by city police officers.

8. sell city properties that are not being used to entities who have a legitimate plan for development that will benefit the city/taxpayers.

9. reimburse the police/fire retirement funds at the 91% level. this will meet/exceed state requirements by 2041 and will save the city/taxpayers valuable dollars.

10. minimize travel by CM/staff. many times the admin/police/fire depts send numerous personnel to off site conferences. what is the pay back? what do they bring back to their depts? what about teleconferencing? this area has the possibility for big dollar savings.

11. admin contractual/commodity/dues expenses have doubled since 2014. why?

12. city clerk/finance dept salaries have increased 20-25% since 2014. why?

13. workman's comp claims are on a constant increase. why? what is being done to minimize these claims? admin/clerk/HR comp claims are projected to be $36k for 2016. finance comp claims are projected to be 500% high in 2016 than in 2014. why? info svcs comp claims are projected to be almost double in 2016 compared to 2015. why? park maint comp claims for 2016 are projected to double from 2015. why? recreation comp claims for 2016 are projected to double for 2016. why? workman comp claims for the miller park zoo are projected to almost double from 2015 to 2016. why? comp claims for the police dept are projected to increase $180k from 2015 to 2016. why? comp claims for the police commo center are projected to increase by 70% from 2015 to 2016. why? fire dept comp claims are projected to increase by $200k from 2015 to 2016. why? PACE comp claims are projected to increase by 100% from 2015 to 2016. why? code enforcement comp claims are projected to increase by 80% from 2015 to 2016. why? facilities maint comp claims are projected to increase by 125% from 2015 to 2016. why? parking opns comp claims are projected to increase 90% from 2015 to 2016. why? public works comp claims are project to increase by 90% from 2015 to 2016. why? street main comp claims projected to increase by 67% from 2015 to 2016. why? engineer admin comp claims project to increase 80% from 2015 to 2016. why? fleet mgmt increasing comp claims by 70% from 2015 to 2016. why?

14. finance contractual expenses have increased 50% since 2014. why? information contractual expenses are projected to 66% higher in 2016 than in 2014. why? parks/rec contractual expenses will almost triple from 2014 to 2016. why? recreation contractual expenses will increase 25% for 2016. why? aquatics contractual expenses are projected to increase by 20% for 2016. why?

15. snow/ice removal expenses are increasing dramatically in all areas from 2015 to 2016. why? comp expenses will increase by 100% from 2015 to 2016. why?

16. EDC salaries/contractual/benefits increasing expenses by $120k from 2015 to 2016. why?

This was a line by line inventory of 335 budget pages in Book 1. My personal opinion is that the 2016 budget numbers have been increased in an unrealistic manner which has driven up the budget numbers. From having worked many budgets in my professional life I can only surmise this "padding" of the budget presents an unrealistic estimate of expenses for reasons I'm sure I understand why. I won't speculate as to the why but will leave that up to you and the budget committee. But, I will state unequivocally, there appears to be areas, specifically in workman's compensation/salaries/contractual/benefits that require an objective body look at them.
I'm tired David and I hope this provides you with something you and the committee can work with. Have a good week.

Evening Dave, Amelia, Scott, John,

Have continued to think about budget items and would like to pass on these thoughts.

1. Who generates the 2016 projections for department budgets? For the majority of departments, it appears that 2016 proposal figures are significantly different from 2015 actual figures specifically in the areas of workman's compensation, salaries, benefits, commodities and contractual. I've learned that departments have no input when developing budgets for their departments for accounts which begin with 5/6, only accounts which begin with 7. If this is true, who develops the budgets for those accounts beginning with the numerals 5/6 without each department's input for these specific line items?

2. My second comment is about the significant differences between proposed figures for the upcoming year and the actual figures from the previous year. When a department has a budget for a proposed dollar amount for the upcoming year and the actual amount from the previous year is significantly less, what is the justification for this significant increase? If the significant increase is not realized at the end of the new budget year, where do these dollars go? This question can be asked about every line item in every departmental budget. What happens when expenses exceed budgeted amounts and what happens when expenses are less that budgeted amounts? Where do the leftover dollars go? Are new budget year figures being padded for "worst case scenarios"? Budgeted vs. Actual vs. Proposed figures need to be studied to determine if over budgeting is occurring.

3. When looking at the golf courses you may be interested to know that $123k budgeted for the courses is taken back by administration at the beginning of the budget year. Why and where do these dollars go?

It appears the budget process within the city leaves something to be desired. Departments have little to say about the majority of their budgets; proposed numbers for departments are generated with minimum if any input from departments; proposed figures appear to be inflated. There could be significant savings for taxpayers by refining/refiguring proposed figures.

Have a good evening. Is there going to be a budget committee meeting this coming Monday?

mike fitz

From: Mike Fitzgerald [mailto:fitz2143@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 9:46 AM
To: Diana Hauman; Dave Sage; Scott Black; Amelia Buragas
Subject:

Copied this from today's pantagraph blog. Food for thought. Has/will any of this be addressed by the subcommittee/council? Is this in fact true? If so, why hasn't anything been done to collect these "easy" dollars? mike fitz

Why doesn't the Budget Task Force address collecting unpaid bills instead of reaching for the low hanging fruit and raising taxes and fees? This is the current state of affairs according to documents I received under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. Various uncollected fines and fees: $ 3,910,222.32
2. Past Due Uncollected Business License Fees : $15, 858.50
3. Past Due Uncollected Parking Fees: $5,426.73
4. Past Due Uncollected General Billings Owed by Businesses:$7,884,70
5. Local Uncollected Past Due Taxes from Various Businesses: $335,531.23
6. Uncollected Water Bills: $308,127.08 (Note over $19,000 past due over 120) days.

Total: $ 4,586,192.06 Uncollected Revenue

This doesn’t even include the half a million dollars Snyder Realty owes the city for Tap on Fees, or another two hundred thousand dollars another developer owes for Park Dedication Fees and Tap on Fees.

9/8/15

I have been reading about the possibility of selling one of the Bloomington golf courses to save money and help the City of Bloomington negative budget. According to the article in the Pantagraph 7/19/15 the deficit for the 3 courses for 2015 is going to be around $500,000.00 and in 2016 $190,000.00. It also states the three courses need around $1,700,000.00 in infrastructure/renovation and repairs (not sure what at Highland needs 1.3 million).

I am not sure your golf courses were ever designed to make a profit – revenues exceed expenses. How much is the Cultural Center subsided each year? Then there is the Coliseum. It has never made a profit before debt service much more after debt service. Has the Zoo ever covered expenses? Do the numerous parks around town produce a profit? All these items are subsided.

We need to keep Highland. It is a great place for starting golfers and retiring golfers to play. Prairie Vista covers their expenses therefore should not be sold. And the Den is the Signature course designed by Arnold Palmer so it should not be sold.

Why is it being discussed to sell one of the golf courses because the 3 of them need to be subsided for a lot less money than the other items mentioned above? Why not close the Cultural Center or the Coliseum or the Zoo or some parks?

You discuss the rounds of play are down. I believe this is across the nation. One suggestion to attract golfers to The Den is to lower the price. Currently the weekend rate with cart is $58.00. That is way too expense for Bloomington/Normal. If it was $50.00, or $48.00 (the same as Prairie Vista) I think you would increase your play with very little extra cost.

The other suggestion is to have a beverage cart on the course. You do not need to have it during the week if it is slow but it should be out all day on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The amount of profits would greatly outweigh the cost of the driver.

I think there are other ways to balance the budget other than closing part of what makes Bloomington a great place to live.

Thanks.

Dennis Stafford

Ps: And part of the way to balance the budget is not to spend anything for land to have a motel/hotel built downtown. If we are broke we are broke. Stop sending money we do not have.

Budget Task Force Recommendations

Building a sustainable budget

Members

- Alan Dodds
- Dave Fedor
- Deanna Frautschi, Chair
- Dontae Latson
- Jamie Mathy
- John Zeunik

Aldermen

- Scott Black
- Amelia Buragas
- David Sage, Chair

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Purpose

- Approved by Council May 11, 2015, and designed to examine and make recommendations that outline different approaches to address the City's long-term structural budget challenges, work with City staff to produce budget scenarios that provide the City Council with options to address the long-term structural deficit, and present a report to the City Council at its work session in September.

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Budget Task Force Process

- Met 9 times from 5/26-9/14
  - 1 meeting for process
  - 2 meetings of background information
  - 4 meetings primarily spent discussing cuts
  - 1 meeting primarily spent discussing revenue increases
  - 1 meeting summarizing recommendation
- Several Council touch points throughout summer

Process – Next Steps

9/21/15 – Present recommendations to City Council

Starting in October, staff will craft resolutions for each recommendation for the Council to vote for approval

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Recommendation – High Level

- The recommendations presented show Budget Task force consensus
- Citizens should pay for services consumed
  - The higher the consumption, the higher the individual cost
  - Fees should be in line with service costs
- Combination of new revenue and service cuts
- No new revenue for new programs/departments
- Bloomington and other government partners should share costs equal to use/benefit

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Recommendation

Using five groupings the BTF also tried to bring new context around balancing our suggested budget saving ideas including:

- Program Reductions or Eliminations
- Service Reductions or Eliminations
- Shared Services
- Alternative Service Delivery
- Operational Efficiencies in Service Delivery

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Police and Fire Pension Funding

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- No changes (new estimates per Lauderbach & Amen, LLP)

Fiscal Year 2018 and beyond

- Review Ramp Up payment schedule while maintaining required state minimum and supplemental payments and supporting Council policy of 100% funding by 2041

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Solid Waste

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- Implement 1st bucket charge for curbside bulk waste pick-up (not branch/shrubbery)
- Increase bucket charge for additional curbside bulk waste pick-up
- Bulk waste at city drop-off yard is free

Additional BTF Suggestions:

- Review a 35-gal refuse can fee increase
- Outsource entire solid waste program
- Special bulk waste charge for landlords

Comments:
Funding solid waste with property taxes penalizes businesses as they already must pay these expenses

General Fund covers only brush/shrubbery bulk waste

City of Bloomington Illinois

Solid Waste -

Fiscal Year 2018 and beyond

- Review Bucket Charge Increases
- Review potential landfill closing on solid waste program costs

Program Reductions or Eliminations

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- Seek full reimbursement - School Resource Officer Program (-$300K)
- Recover full cost of Downtown Police Hire Back from Downtown beneficiaries (-$120K)

Additional note

- Study impact of eliminating School Resource Officer Program

Program Reductions or Eliminations

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- Misc. department reductions (-$43K)
    - Complete BCPA operational audit including potential Foundation impact

Additional BTF Suggestions

- Sell Creativity Center
- Sell BCPA, eliminating $1M in annual operating expenses
- Convert the BCPA to an enterprise fund
- Reduce BCPA budget (-$250K)

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Program Reductions or Eliminations

Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond:

- Explore formation of a Park District (City, City/Town, City/Town/County)

- Adopt Ordinance/Policy for Parks/Rec revenues covering X% of expenditures (Currently 50%) with low-income considerations.

Shared Services

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- Seek maximum cost recovery of total $480K estimated expense for CIRA Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting

Shared Services

Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond:

- Review Police firing range cost recovery

- ETSB (Emergency 911) Revenue Sharing

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Alternative Service Delivery

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- Initiate a review of outsourcing golf operations by FY17 budget adoption.

- Review selling all three city golf courses by FY17 budget adoption.

City of Bloomington Illinois

Alternative Service Delivery

Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond

- Revise policy for golf enterprise fund that if any outside fund transfer is needed, triggers review to contract out golf course operations

- Explore combining (both internal and external) management for Coliseum and BCPA

Operational Efficiencies in Service Delivery

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- As FY17 budget process starts, all departments should develop contingency 5% reduction plans

Operational Efficiencies in Service Delivery

Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond

- Allocate budget resources to investigate operational efficiencies in all departments

- Total compensation plan and job audit review for all city employee positions

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Revenues

As a principle, there is a BTF preference to consider city license/fee increases, Home Rule Sales tax, and Property taxes.

Principles

- As proposed revenue increases are reviewed, stay below central Illinois communities, and using Town of Normal as benchmark.
- By ordinance/policy new revenues to be targeted for specific, new budget expenditures (infrastructure, pensions, capital expenses, etc.)

Revenues

Fiscal Year 2017 (starting in May 2016)

- Complete the City's comprehensive fee and rate study and prepare for cost recovery policy decisions with phased implementation, using Town of Normal as a benchmark and align for actual costs
- Increase Home Rule Sales tax up to ½% to help address the FY17 structural deficit with consideration for the Council to explore up to an additional ½% to address other specific targeted expenses for example capital, pensions, etc.
- Property tax rate increase to 1.35 equating to about $645K annually, tied to Police & Fire pension funding
- Increase golf course fees

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Revenues

Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond

- Review sending overdue parking tickets to a collection agency
- Review implementing a computer system and hardware to move the operations of the 3 parking decks the City owns to 24 by 7 pay by hour operations.
- Review Downtown Master Plan – Parking Recommendations

Conclusion

The Budget Task Force attempted to review the City's budget structure at a high level. This recommendation should not be interpreted as a solution to Council. Rather, this recommendation presents key ideas for Council consideration, review and action.

Questions and Discussion