City of Bloomington Illinois

MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 20, 2020, 6:00 P.M.

This meeting was conducted under Governor Pritzker's Executive Order 2020-07, Section 6 implemented in response to COVID-19, which suspended in-person attendance under the Open Meeting Act, 5 ILCS 120.

The City Council convened in Regular Session virtually via Zoom with City Manager, Tim Gleason, and City Clerk, Leslie Yocum, physically present in City Hall's Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m., Monday, July 20, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Tari Renner.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tari Renner	Mayor	Present	
Jamie Mathy	Ward 1	Late	6:04 PM
Donna Boelen	Ward 2	Remote	
Mboka Mwilambwe	Ward 3	Remote	
Julie Emig	Ward 4	Remote	
Joni Painter	Ward 5	Remote	
Jennifer Jazmin Carrillo	Ward 6	Remote	
Scott Black	Ward 7	Remote	
Jeff Crabill	Ward 8	Remote	
Kim Bray	Ward 9	Remote	

COVID-19 Update by City Manager

Tim Gleason, City Manager, addressed Council. He provided an update on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Citywide Assessment and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) resident assistance program. He reported that 182 applications were submitted with 106 individuals referred to other organizations for assistance. He stated that staff located at the Arena box offices had had 358 walk-ups and 171 COVID phone calls. He highlighted that two individuals had been approved with funding amounts still pending.

Public Comment

Mayor Renner opened the meeting for public comment. Leslie Yocum, City Clerk, stated that only one person, Zachary Gittrich, had registered to speak virtually, but that he was not present in the Zoom meeting. She continued that no emailed public comment had been received.

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 Mathy, that the Consent Agenda, including all items listed below, be approved as presented.

Mayor Renner directed the Clerk to call role which resulted in the following:

AYES: Mathy, Boelen, Mwilambwe, Emig, Painter, Carrillo, Black, Crabill, Bray

Motion carried.

Item 5.A. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the May 18, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. *(Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)*

Item 5.B. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the May 26, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. *(Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)*

Item 5.C. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the June 8, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. *(Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)*

Presentation, Discussion, and Direction on Future Agenda Topics

The following item was presented:

Item 6.A. Presentation and discussion of the proposed Water Infrastructure Master Plan, as requested by the Public Works Department.

Mr. Gleason introduced the item and informed Council that the Water Infrastructure Master Plan would be brought forward at the next City Council meeting. He asked Kevin Kothe, Public Works Director, to address Council. Mr. Kothe stated that the presentation would provide a high-level look at the 400-page plan which laid out a 20-year plan for the City's water infrastructure. He introduced Amrou Atassi, CDM Smith Consultant, who helped prepare the Master Plan.

Mr. Atassi thanked Public Works Department staff for their assistance during the two-year infrastructure review and completion of the Water Infrastructure Master Plan ("Plan"). He listed the project goals and objectives used during development and explained each component which included the following: demand forecasting and capacity analysis; considerations of water quality and regulations; an assessment of the condition of the facilities; and assessments of the distribution systems. He discussed water usage and the trends for residential, commercial, wholesale, and industrial sectors.

Mayor Renner left at 6:16 p.m. and returned at 6:27 p.m.

Mr. Atassi explained the methodology behind the forecasting of water supply and demand, how data was determined, and then discussed the results. He made recommendations on future City water needs and went on to discuss water quality, regulatory review, and highlighted that the City complied with current federal and state regulations. He discussed potential challenges with nitrate and radium levels and provided various recommendations and treatment solutions. He expressed the importance of planning for replacements to avoid catastrophic malfunction and explain various recommended facilities projects, the necessity of each project, and the estimated cost for each project.

Mr. Atassi closed by explaining the distribution system analysis and providing a Plan Summary listing each project description and the estimated costs of each. Once finished, he welcomed Council questions.

Council Member Mathy asked when the City had last completed a similar in-depth analysis. Bob Yehl, Assistant Public Works Director, responded that it had been approximately 20 years since the last analysis and that it was done on a much smaller scale. Council Member Mathy asked about implementation if the Plan was approved. Mr. Yehl stated that the Plan would be completed over a 20-year timeline, but that regular updates or revisions may be needed along the way.

Council Member Crabill asked how time would affect the estimated costs. Mr. Atassi responded that the figures included were as of the date of the Plan, and that with inflation, the cost of a project could increase over time.

Mayor Renner asked if the infrastructure would need constant monitoring and assessment. Mr. Kothe responded that it would.

Council Member Bray asked for clarification on the Non-Revenue Water Reduction and Smart Cities Technology line items. Mr. Yehl provided a detailed response and listed projects under the two-line items that were currently in progress.

Council Member Mwilambwe emphasized the seriousness that the City was considering a Plan that projected 20-years into the future. He asked for clarification on wholesale water rates and use. Mr. Yehl explained that the City sold water to entities that then resold it (Bloomington Township, Village of Hudson, Village of Towanda, and mobile home parks).

Council Member Carrillo asked how the City would address incorporating equity into low-income areas and areas populated by minorities. Mr. Yehl responded that the City provided the same level of service to all citizens in all areas of the community.

Mayor Renner concurred that it was the City's policy to provide equal service to all. He asked if any updates would largely impact low- to middle-income populated areas. Mr. Yehl stated the Plan would address older parts of the community that had undersized water main pipes and could, by default, impact those areas.

Council Member Carrillo asked about potential impacts related to rate structures. Mayor Renner responded that all citizens pay the same rate. She then expressed interest in Council and staff evaluating potential to create rate brackets based on income. Mr. Yehl responded that staff would continue to consider industry standards and Council input.

Council Member Emig asked for additional information on whether the City's number of troublesome leaks was above industry standards, and if the bulk of the repairs were due to infrastructure. She asked how the City could incentivize water efficiency and how to be build water efficiency as a focus in the City's future. Mr. Yehl responded that water conservation remained important. He noted the Leak Protection Program is widely used and that toilets remained the highest source of leaks. He suggested dispersing additional education materials and information to the community.

The following item was presented:

<u>Item 6.B. Presentation and discussion of the Connect Transit "Connect to the Future" Working Group, as requested by the Administration Department.</u>

Mr. Gleason asked Isaac Thorne, Connect Transit General Manager, to address Council. Mr. Thorne discussed Connect Transit's COVID-19 policies and procedures including reducing the number of buses due to decreased ridership, passenger limits, and regular bus cleaning and disinfecting. He reminded Council that Connect Transit provided transportation to the COVID-19 Testing Site and introduced Judy Buchanan, Connect Transit Trustee, to discuss Connect to the Future recommendations.

Mrs. Buchanan discussed "One Rate for All" riders and pointed out that it had been approved by Connect's Board. She stated that it would be implemented once fare collection resumed. She provided a status update on the expansion of service to City limits and how potential riders could influence the implementation of service. She mentioned the Better Bus Stop Campaign, which would make all bus stops accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and stated that it would be completed in 2024. Mrs. Buchanan noted potential expanded routes in the future.

Mr. Thorne covered the requested investment of funds for Connect Transit's plan prior to COVID-19 versus the revised plan. He explained the funds would benefit the One Rate for All program and the expansion of services. He noted full service would return in August 2020 but that it was uncertain when fare collection would resume. He then provided an overview of Connect Transit's fiscal year 2021 operating budget and the impacts of COVID-19 and expressed concern that funding may not be available from Illinois Department of Transportation ("IDOT") and the State of Illinois due to COVID. He stated that in response to the uncertainty, Connect Transit prepared a budget with reduced IDOT funding and noted that they received $9.1 million dollars in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") funding from the Federal Government. He informed Council that when the Federal CARES Act funding was exhausted, the local funding from the City will be used. He wrapped up by updating Council on the Downtown Transportation Center ("Center") Site Selection Study, noting the eight potential locations. He informed the community that on Wednesday, July 29, 2020 a public meeting would be held that welcomed community input at the Bloomington Center for Performing Arts Center and encouraged the community to complete a short online survey about the Center. He welcomed Council questions.

Council Member Crabill commended Connect Transit for their response to the pandemic and thanked them for considering potential impacts COVID-19 would have on Connect Transit's budget. He asked if Connect Transit would receive a refund from facilitators for incomplete services with the Working Group. Mr. Thorne responded affirmatively. Council Member Crabill then pointed out that IGA (Inter-Governmental Agreement) between the City, Town of Normal, and Connect Transit required the FY 2021 budget to be submitted to each municipality for consideration and pointed out that it had not been. Mr. Thorne responded that both Bloomington and Normal's City Managers sit on the Connect Transit Board and that the document had been made public. He was unsure if the City and Town Councils were required to adopt the budget.

Mayor Renner stated that Council needed a copy of the budget regardless of whether they had to formally approve it or not.

Council Member Crabill confirmed with Ryan Whitehouse, Connect Transit Chairman, that Connect Transit should be affordable, assessable, and equitable in its care for the most transit-reliant population. He also confirmed with Mr. Whitehouse that most of that population should use fixed routes instead of Connect Mobility if they were able. Council Member Crabill then asked about the status of bus stops being made ADA compliant. Mr.

Thorne provided a status update on the progress. Mr. Whitehouse expressed the importance of the campaign and stated that they would be 100% ADA compliant by 2024. Council Member Crabill and Mr. Thorne discussed specific stops in more detail.

Council Member Mathy asked for an update on the bus stop near the new Veteran Affairs (VA) Clinic. Mr. Whitehouse responded, noting the various services Connect provides to veterans, that there was potential to include the VA Clinic in a fixed route after the Hamilton Road expansion was completed. Council Member Mathy formally retracted his prior statements made on the size of buses used by Connect Transit and thanked them for their work.

Council Member Boelen asked for an estimated loss of revenue total due to COVID-19. Mr. Thorne responded that loss in fares totaled approximately $250,000 since March 2020. Council Member Boelen asked for information on the partnership with the McLean County Regional Planning Commission regarding the short-term plan for changes and improvements. Mr. Thorne responded that staff would continue to listen to the community and direct additional services where needed. Mr. Whitehouse stated that the Board directed staff to focus on keeping the bus system operational and then to address expanded services. Council Member Boelen asked how the Board determined items placed in the Executive Summary. Mr. Whitehouse responded that the Board voted and approved each item. Trustee Buchanan confirmed and stated that the Board began by completing low hanging fruit items first.

Council Member Black made the motion, seconded by Council Member Emig, to extend the time allowed for Council discussion by ten minutes.

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

AYES: Mathy, Boelen, Mwilambwe, Emig, Painter, Carrillo, Black, Crabill, Bray

Motion carried.

Council Member Black expressed the importance of clarifying the terms of the IGA by the end of the year. He expressed interest in a fare-free structure and suggested municipalities use cannabis taxes to subsidize fares as the transportation system remained an economic development tool for the community.

Council Member Emig also expressed interest in a fare-free transportation system. She pointed out that COVID-19 had provided an opportunity to explore possibilities. She discussed the survey and restated the public hearing information for the Center's site location. Mr. Thorne pointed out the importance of the survey questions and that they allowed the community and stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback.

Council Member Carrillo agreed with Council Member Black's comments on the IGA and the fare-free transportation system. She expressed concerns with the accessibility of bus stops and encouraged the Connect Transit Board to advocate for City sidewalk upgrades to complete ADA bus stops quicker. Mr. Whitehouse responded that current City Administration had partnered closely with Connect's Board in developments.

The following item was presented:

Item 6.C. Presentation and discussion of the Public Safety and Community Relations Board Annual Report, as requested by the Administration Department.

Mr. Gleason explained the presentation was an annual report by the Public Safety Review Board ("PSCRB") and asked Art Taylor, previous Board Chair, to address Council.

Mr. Taylor noted that the PSCRB was established in 2017 and provided a brief overview of the report. He explained the decision to hold monthly and quarterly meetings and decision to rotate said meetings to various venues within the community. He listed the complaints numbers from 2017, 2018 and 2019 and highlighted that the number of complaints had decreased in 2019. He relayed the discussion topics at the quarterly meetings included the review of PSCRB rules and compliant process, the Bloomington Police Department ("BPD") complaint process, and various presentations. Mr. Taylor discussed community engagement and expressed that the PSCRB held a vital role within the community. Mr. Taylor provided an overview of two complaints, the PSCRB determination, and the results of each complaint. He discussed various recommended policy and code amendments by the PSCRB. He informed the community that there were two openings on the PSCRB and encouraged the community to apply. He welcomed questions from Council.

Council Member Carrillo stated her position on police reform. She recalled that the Welcome City Ordinance was denied, and that Mayor Renner had asked the previous Chief of Police to collaborate with the PSCRB to draft a policy for interactions with ICE. She asked the status of that draft policy. Mr. Taylor responded that the PSCRB had reviewed the request, but determined the request was outside the realm of the PSCRB's established parameters. They chose not to engage in that conversation at that time. Council Member Carrillo asked for a description of BPD's role in the PSCRB meetings and the meeting structure. Mr. Taylor responded accordingly. Council Member Carrillo discussed the authority of the PSCRB and asked Mr. Taylor, considering the current national situation, if it would be beneficial for Council to re-visit the PSCRB's authorities to grant them additional power. Mr. Taylor responded the PSCRB would act within the parameters set by Council and explained that the PSCRB saw themselves as a bridge between the community and BPD.

Mayor Renner stated that he had directed the current Board Chair to continue PSCRB public hearings and to report back to Council on de-militarization of police and any additional items that could be pursued in the future.

Council Member Crabill confirmed the PSCRB complaint review process with Mr. Taylor and explained to the community the role of the PSCRB takes in evaluating a complaint. He pointed out that the PSCRB's review focused on BPD's response and use of proper protocol. He then asked Mr. Taylor what happened if the PSCRB determined there was an issue. Mr. Taylor responded that the PSCRB would then recommend a policy change to the City Manager. Council Member Crabill finished by asking Mr. Taylor a few opinions of his thoughts on the PSCRB and the community.

Council Member Black thanked Mr. Taylor for his time and dedication since the inception of the PSCRB. Council Member Black expressed his belief that local governments improved when more people are involved and thought it was best when the community had robust public conversations. Mr. Taylor stated that the Board took their positions very seriously.

Council Member Mwilambwe echoed appreciation for Mr. Taylor's dedication. He asked if Council could do anything additional to assist the PSCRB. Mr. Taylor stated that community attendance was low, but varied depending on the discussion topic.

Council Initiatives

The following item was presented:

Item 6.D.1. Discussion regarding a Council Initiative submitted by Council Member Mwilambwe to Recognize Juneteenth as a City holiday, as requested by the City Council.

Mayor Renner asked Council Member Mwilambwe to present his Initiative and reminded Council to keep responses to an interest or disinterest in the item going forward.

Council Member Mwilambwe provided a brief history of Juneteenth and explained Juneteenth celebrated the emancipation of enslaved black people. He believed an observance would make an impactful difference and that Juneteenth was an annual opportunity to educate the community on the contemporary struggles of the African American community. He believed it should be an annual celebration promoted by the Economic Development Department and that the programing could be spearheaded by the Human Relations Commission.

Council Member Mathy expressed support in the Initiative, but had implementation questions for future discussion.

Council Members Boelen, Mwilambwe, and Emig expressed support in the Initiative.

Council Member Painter expressed support in the Initiative and was excited for a local celebration similar to the ones she had attended in the past.

Council Member Carrillo expressed support in the Initiative and noted interest in additional consideration for other holidays.

Council Members Black, Crabill, and Bray expressed support in the Initiative.

Mayor Renner directed staff to move forward with unanimous support by Council.

City Manager's Report (5 minutes)

Mr. Gleason recognized two new City staff members, one new engineer in the Public Works Water Division and one new laborer in the Parks and Recreation Department. He went on to recognize one Board re-appointment, as well as three new Board and Commission appointments. He reminded the community to complete the 2020 Census and informed Council the deadline had been extended to October 31, 2020. He informed the community that staff would continue to search for those responsible for the recent distribution of KKK flyers in the community and clarified that he had not insinuated the local Bloomington chapter was involved. He urged the community to continue to work together to make Bloomington a great community and expressed the importance of conversations regarding race and police departments stressing they are crucial to development. He provided then Council an update on the recent Downtown Farmer's Market's attendance and stated that bulk waste pick-up was complete. He commended the Public Works crews for their work especially during the extreme heat.

Executive Session - Cite Section

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment

Council Member Crabill made a motion, seconded by Council Member Bray, that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion carried (viva voce).

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

Tari Renner, Mayor

ATTEST

Amanda Mohan, Deputy City Clerk