MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 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 both in-person in City Hall's Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom conferencing at 6:00 p.m., Monday, June 15, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Tari Renner.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tari Renner	Mayor	Remote	
Jamie Mathy	Ward 1	Remote	
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, discussed staffing numbers and pointed out that half of those working remotely had returned to in-office work. He explained the Arena Box Offices on the corner of Front St. and Madison St. continued to be open for the public while all other City facilities were open by appointment only. He stated that Administrative Court would also resume this week with additional health safety measures. Outdoor dining would be expanded with various lane closures as staff continued to review the potential for full street closures. He also noted that City Parks and Recreation staff, in conjunction with a local gardening group, would be planting pots to make blockades more decorative. Mr. Gleason ended with an update on City finances during COVID-19. He stated that revenues were better than projected with the potential to end $1 million better than anticipated.

Public Comment

Mayor Renner opened the floor for public comment and John Reed, who had registered in advance of the meeting spoke live. Leslie Yocum, City Clerk, then stated that Steven Hass had emailed public comment, which she provided to Council before the meeting.

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 Carrillo made a motion, seconded by Council Member Emig, that the Consent Agenda, including all items listed below except Item 5.A., be approved as presented.

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.

Item 5.A. was pulled from the Consent Agenda by Council Member Crabill.

Item 5.B. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the April 22, 2020 Special Session 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 April 27, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. *(Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)*

Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda

Item 5.A. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the April 20, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department.

Council Member Crabill, who had pulled the item from the Consent Agenda, proposed that page 2 of the minutes be amended. He read his amendments aloud. Council Member Crabill believed the amendment provided a more accurate summary and reflected important information regarding the City's coverage for COVID-19.

Council Member Crabill made a motion, seconded by Council Member Bray, to approve the April 20, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes as amended by Council Member Crabill.

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

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

Motion carried.

Presentation, Discussion, and Direction on Future Agenda Topics

The following item was presented:

Item 6.A. Discussion and direction on an Aldermanic Initiative Proposal to Bring the Downtown Task Force Report Back to Council for Acceptance, as requested by the City Council.

Council Member Mathy asked for clarification on the Aldermanic Initiative process. Mr. Gleason responded accordingly. Mr. Gleason stated that the Downtown Task Force's final Report ("the Report") from 2017 had been included in the Council packet. He addressed a variety of accomplishments that staff had completed from the Report.

Council Member Mathy explained that he wanted to bring the Report back to Council for consideration because he believed there were multiple items to still be addressed that could benefit Downtown. He pointed out that in an effort to save and make best use of funds, development projects should be completed alongside improvement projects. He addressed the importance of providing staff direction and believed the plan could assist staff.

Council Member Carrillo asked whether there would be a staff presentation at a future meeting with the item expressed in such a presentation. Mr. Gleason stated that staff could do a presentation if that was what Council desired.

Council Member Crabill asked Melissa Hon, Economic Development Director, about completed improvements, and asked if she believed a presentation would be beneficial. Mrs. Hon responded that staff could present the projects completed in relation to the Report.

Mayor Renner reiterated the process of Aldermanic Initiatives.

Council Member Mwilambwe expressed interest in a presentation, but believed it was premature to place it on a City Council meeting agenda.

Council Member Boelen stated that before accepting the Report, she wanted the catalyst project removed. She asked Council for clarity on a unified vision for Downtown. She noted that Connect Transit should be included in discussions of redevelopment, and expressed interest in more upscale bus stops.

Council Member Emig believed that Sections 1-3 of the Report should move forward, but that Section 4 should be removed. She stated while Council Member Boelen's comments about design were important, Council should consider implementation plans for the Report first.

Council Member Black pointed out Council's diverse views and opinions of the Report and how to move forward. He addressed the need for a decision and expressed interest in a staff presentation.

Council Member Mwilambwe left 6:32 p.m.

Council Member Carrillo agreed with Council Member Black and stated that Council should continue Downtown development. She did not favor repeat cycling of reports, but was interested in updating/adopting a plan.

Council Member Crabill wanted to discuss non-controversial items that could be completed, and agreed with Council Member Boelen that a vision for Downtown was needed.

Council Member Mathy stated that the vision for Downtown should focus on it becoming a tourist destination. He noted Bloomington had two of the three top tourist attractions in Illinois: Route 66 and Abraham Lincoln. He believed the City should also focus on preserving Downtown's historic appearance.

Council Member Painter agreed with her fellow Council Members and asked when Downtown way-finding signage would be installed. Mr. Gleason responded that staff had been waiting on IDOT permits, but that it had recently been received, and signage would be installed soon.

Council Member Mwilambwe returned at 6:42 p.m.

Mayor Renner asked Mr. Gleason if he had the direction needed from Council to move forward. Mr. Gleason responded affirmatively.

The following item was presented:

Item 6.B. Discussion and direction on an Aldermanic Initiative Proposal to Extend the Waiver of Late Fees and Penalties for the City's Food & Beverage Tax, as requested by the City Council.

Council Member Mathy reminded Council that they had previously waived or prorated many fees or penalties due to COVID-19. He stated that he was recommending that late fees and late charges on food and beverage taxes be waived for 90 days, actual taxes remaining due.

Council Member Boelen agreed that all businesses should be treated the same.

Council Member Mathy concurred with Council Member Boelen.

Council Member Black expressed interest in similar leniency with Administrative Court.

Council Member Carrillo expressed support of the Initiative.

Council Member Mwilambwe expressed support of the Initiative but wanted to understand the financial impact. Mayor Renner addressed the difficulty of providing an accurate financial impact.

Mr. Gleason stated that the City had already waived interest fees and penalties for food and beverage taxes, utilities, parking tickets, ordinance violations, some amusement taxes, and hotel/motel taxes for 30 days beyond the end of the Governor's Emergency Declaration. He asked Scott Rathbun, Director of Finance, to address Council and discuss his recommendation for a period beyond 30 days. Mr. Rathbun confirmed Mayor Renner's comments about the difficulty of projecting the financial impact. He suggested extending the time frame from 30 to 90 days, and the possibility of linking reinstatement to Phase 4 instead of Phase 5 of the Governor’s plan.

Council Member Mathy expressed support in tying the Initiative to Phase 4 instead of Phase 5.

City Manager's Report (5 minutes)

City Manager Gleason corrected a statement he made on Item 6.A. (Aldermanic Initiative) that a presentation would appear on the next City Council Meeting. He stated that bulk waste pick-up would begin July 6, 2020 and reminded the public to complete the 2020 Census. He also celebrated the success of the recent social distanced Farmer's Market and noted that future Farmer's Markets would follow the same format.

Executive Session - Cite Section

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment

Council Member Carrillo made a motion, seconded by Council Member Mwilambwe, that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion carried (viva voce).

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

Tari Renner

Tari Renner, Mayor

ATTEST

Leslie Smith-Yocum

Leslie Yocum, City Clerk

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON ESTABLISHED 1850