



**Minutes  
Committee of the Whole - Regular Session Meeting  
Monday, October 20, 2025 - 6:00 PM**

The Committee of the Whole convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom at 6:00 PM. Mayor Dan Brady called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call**

**Present:** Council Member Jenna Kearns Mayor Dan Brady  
Council Member Micheal Mosley  
Council Member Sheila Montney  
Council Member John Danenberger  
Council Member Michael Straza  
Council Member Cody Hendricks  
Council Member Mollie Ward  
Council Member Kent Lee  
Council Member Abby Scott

**Public Comment**

Chris Mitchell registered to speak, but was not present at the meeting. No emailed public comment was received.

**Consent Agenda**

No Items were presented.

**Regular Agenda**

*The following Item was presented:*

Item 5.A. Bloomington Public Library Renovation and Expansion 1st Year Update Presentation, as requested by the Library Department.

Jeanne Hamilton, Bloomington Public Library Director, presented a first-year update on the Bloomington Public Library's ("BPL") renovation and expansion. She reported that BPL officially reopened on August 1, 2024, after 26-months of phased construction during which they remained open with full services. She reported that the project added 21,000+ square feet of new space and 57,000+ square feet of renovated existing space, resulting in new features including an innovation lab, two recording studios, eight study rooms, one conference room, three community rooms, a children's discovery play area, and a drive-up window.

Director Hamilton stated that the total project cost \$26.1 million, funded by approximately \$4 million in reserves, a \$7.1 million State grant, about \$700,000 in fundraised funds, and a \$14.2 million bond, with roughly 45% of the cost coming from savings or fundraising and 54% from the bond. She explained that the project was guided by four priorities - access, collaboration, innovation, and education. In its first year, the renovated library recorded 292,714 visits with a peak day of 1,756 visits on July 28, and a total of 1,329,938 items were checked out, including 15,285 items picked up via the drive-up window. Director Hamilton also noted that BPL received the 2024

Advancing Community Access Award in recognition of its new offerings and improved accessibility for the community. She then read a testimonial from a customer who raved about the staff and facilities.

Council Member Ward celebrated BPL's renovations, noting that she had used the Community Rooms multiple times and her students had used the recording studio for podcasts.

Council Member Kearns echoed support, stating that the priority of access for all was immediately apparent in the building's orientation and design, as well as the range of opportunities and activities available. She emphasized the importance of meeting rooms of all sizes and commented that having these rooms available for free made it very easy for people to collaborate and meet. She shared how she'd completed the training to use the 3D printers and expressed excitement that such technology was now accessible to the community.

Council Member Lee appreciated the STEM opportunities with innovation. He and Director Hamilton discussed how and when 3D filament was supplied.

Council Member Scott and Director Hamilton discussed attendance statistics during COVID, during construction, and post-construction. Council Member Scott echoed appreciation.

Mayor Brady thanked and congratulated Director Hamilton and the BPL staff. They then discussed that the maximum capacity of the Community Rooms was 300 people.

*The following Item was presented:*

Item 5.B. Presentation on the 250<sup>th</sup> July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration for 2026, as requested by the Parks & Recreation Department.

City Manager Jeff Jurgens and Eric Veal, Parks & Recreation Director, introduced the Item. Director Veal introduced Dave Lamb, his Assistant Director, and James Wayne, Superintendent of Recreation, noting the importance of celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

Mr. Lamb noted that Parks & Recreation staff had worked closely with the Police, Fire, Public Works, and Administration Departments every year to ensure successful celebrations.

Mr. Wayne provided an overview of existing 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities at Miller Park, including paddle boat rides, the zoo, mini golf, concessions, a car cruise, and the evening Sky Concert fireworks show jointly produced with the Town of Normal and sponsored by State Farm. He reported that attendance at Miller Park on July 4<sup>th</sup> had grown from about 6,300 visitors in 2021 to 10,900 in 2025, not including those watching from other locations. In anticipation of America's 250<sup>th</sup> celebration, the City planned to add custom park banners (displayed from Memorial Day to Labor Day) and an oversized American flag hung from a crane at Miller Park during the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>. Looking ahead to 2026, he introduced the idea of a 10-15 minute drone sky show using roughly 100 drones on Friday, July 3, 2026, paired with family-friendly activities, photo opportunities, and recognition of American heroes.

Council Member Ward expressed strong support for adding live music, suggesting that inviting community musicians including high school bands, would be meaningful given local talent. She also supported expanding the fireworks show, but was hesitant about the drone show. She shared other ideas like Council reading the Declaration of Independence.

Council Member Montney thanked staff for their work on past July 4<sup>th</sup> events and then asked about possible coordination with the planned Downtown Streetscape Light Show. Director Veal thanked Council Member Montney for the suggestion and noted his Department was currently

collaborating on the Downtown Project's trees, shrubs, and benches.

Council Member Kearns supported expanding July 4<sup>th</sup> offerings with more activities and community participation rather than investing heavily in a drone show. She liked Council Member Ward's ideas for interactive, civic-focused elements. She stressed that the enhancements chosen should deepen community engagement.

Council Member Lee voiced support for the additional \$2,000 to extend the traditional fireworks show. He supported the drone show, noting that well-done shows he had seen were impressive and memorable. He suggested making the celebration more of a weekend-long event that included live music, which was always a community favorite.

Mayor Brady and Director Veal discussed how staff needed timely feedback from the Council to move forward with bidding and contracting for the 2026 fireworks and any potential drone show. Director Veal noted that the current fireworks vendor, Gateway, was aware that the City and Town of Normal wished to continue with them, but that a joint bid and subsequent Council approval would be required soon. Director Veal emphasized that securing a drone show would need to happen very quickly, as they are in high demand around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Mayor Brady suggested moving the drone show Downtown around the historical McLean County Courthouse. Director Veal explained that drone companies required flat open spaces for safety reasons. Mayor Brady encouraged a family-friendly street festival on July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Council Member Danenberger and Director Veal compared the differences in sound between traditional fireworks and drone shows and the minimal effect drone shows had on pets.

City Manager Jurgens thanked Council for the suggestions and noted there was a consensus to move forward with a more enhanced 4<sup>th</sup> of July event in addition to events on July 3<sup>rd</sup> Downtown. He noted that staff would explore options for Downtown events and bring those findings back to Council.

Council Member Mosley asked staff to evaluate any potential impacts of any Downtown July 3<sup>rd</sup> event, particularly considering ongoing construction and parking issues. He expressed a strong interest in the drone show and noted that, if done well, it could be something the community would want to repeat annually.

Council Member Kearns suggested collaborating with other organizations in town, such as the David Davis Mansion, the McLean County History Museum, and others.

*The following Item was presented:*

Item 5.C. Presentation on Proposed Amendments to the Citywide Bulk Waste Pickup Program, as requested by the Administration Department.

City Manager Jurgens introduced the presentation on potential changes to Citywide bulk waste pickup. He invited Mose Rickey, Public Works Director, Colleen Winterland, Assistant Director, and Sue McLaughlin, Deputy City Manager, to present. He explained that staff had been reviewing how to do bulk waste service more efficiently and improving the process for residents. He noted that the most recent bulk pickup was considered very successful by staff, but that the team had identified additional ideas to further enhance the program, which they would outline and seek feedback on.

Deputy City Manager Sue McLaughlin explained that the current bulk waste system, which included free biannual curbside pickup in May and October, plus year-round use of the Citizens'

Convenience Center ("CCC") for bulk waste, yard waste, recycling, and appliances. She explained that staff had observed significant abuse and exploitation of the CCC by contractors, landlords, and others bringing large, repeated loads at no cost, as well as problems with unsightly and early curb piles before the biannual pickups. She noted that, despite earlier expectations, the CCC model had not proven more efficient or cost-effective, and it had created equity issues for residents who lacked trucks or the ability to haul items. Manager McLaughlin then outlined a proposed new bulk waste process under which the City would provide biweekly curbside bulk pickup with the first bucket/pile free of charge and additional buckets charged at \$30 for the second, \$60 for the third, and \$90 for the fourth, while retaining the existing \$100 per bucket contractor rate for permitted work. She explained that the CCC would no longer accept bulk waste, but would remain open for yard waste and recycling seasonally. Routine bulk pickup would be suspended during leaf season with special situations handled by request, and the CCC would be closed from January through March to free up staff for snow removal, street sweeping, and other public works duties.

Council Member Ward thanked staff for the recent bulk pickup completed and noted the schedule was much clearer to understand. She and Director Rickey discussed the changes and the marketing to minimize the confusion from the previous year's pickups. Council Member Ward and Asst. Director Winterland discussed how pickup by appointment would work, including how appliance pickups and special bulk situations would be handled under the proposed changes.

Council Member Montney asked staff what portion of the current CCC traffic was attributed to yard waste versus other materials and how many residents typically used the site daily. She questioned whether, as the City refines the process, there might be an opportunity to bypass or reconfigure the CCC regarding yard waste to reduce the need for staffing the site. Staff responded that much of the summer volume was grass clippings, explaining how those were hauled to a contracted site, and said they would further review data and processes as part of planning for the future Public Works' Campus.

Council Member Straza said several residents had already asked about returning to a more regular bulk pickup, and how he believed his Ward would welcome the proposed changes. He supported the new structure, noting it should reduce program abuse and costs.

Council Member Lee expressed interest in the street sweeping portion of the proposal. Staff explained that the City had two sweepers (one day, one night), aimed to sweep every street about 12 times a year, and that freeing up CCC staff could allow a third sweeper.

Mayor Brady asked what formal Council action was required. City Manager Jurgens stated that an ordinance would be brought forward at an upcoming meeting.

### **City Manager's Discussion**

City Manager Jeff Jurgens reported that public comment remained open on the second draft of McLean County's future Strategic Land Use Map, and directed residents to the project website. He then highlighted the Bloomington Bison's second hockey season opening night at the Arena being successful, mentioning a record crowd and strong community response. He celebrated a roughly 40% increase in concession sales compared to the prior season's opener, which he attributed to new strategies implemented by Anthony Nelson, Arts & Entertainment Director, Billy Tyus, Senior Deputy City Manager, and the Arena team to reduce lines and improve service. He framed this improvement as an example of the City's broader continuous improvement efforts aimed at reducing the Arena subsidy.

Mayor Dan Brady, too, commented on the Bison's opening night success, noting that just

under 5,000 tickets had been pre-sold for the game. He thanked Director Nelson and his team, as well as all staff for their work in improving Arena operations and delivering a strong event.

**Executive Session**

No Executive Session was held.

**Adjournment**

**Council Member Straza made a motion, seconded by Council Member Hendricks, to adjourn the meeting.**

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

**Ayes:** Kearns, Mosley, Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Scott

**Motion Carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.

**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON**



\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Brady, Mayor

**ATTEST**



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Amanda Stutsman, Deputy City Clerk

