

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING OF
THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS HELD MONDAY,
JANUARY 28, 2019 IN THE COUNCIL ROOM OF CITY HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ebersohl called the Committee of the Whole committee meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois to order at 7:00 P.M.

Upon Roll Call, the following members were:

Present: Committee Members - Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Reis, Holtkamp, and Martens. Mayor Hutchinson was also present.

Absent: Alderman Huch.

Quorum Present.

Administrative Staff Present: City Engineer Chris Smith, Director of Community Development Scott Dunakey, Accounting Manager and Acting City Treasurer Linda Sharp, Police Chief Jerry Paul, Deputy Chief of Police Jason Donjon, InterDev Systems Engineer II James Mitchell, Accounting/Clerical Assistant Kelly Mathews, and Deputy Clerk Donna Mehaffey.

Chairman Ebersohl introduced Ms. Kelly Mathews who will be taking Ms. Donna Mehaffey's place due to her upcoming retirement. Ms. Mehaffey served the City of Columbia for 40 and ½ years.

Chairman Ebersohl stated the meeting was called for the purpose of discussing: (1) Approval of Minutes from the January 14, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting; (2) Limb Removal Program; (3) Mercy Clinic MOU; (4) Parking Restrictions for Commercial Vehicles in Residential Areas; (5) Portable Sidewalk Signs; (6) 2020 Census; (7) Business Licenses and Regulations; (8) Other Items to be Considered; (9) Public Comments; and (10) Executive Session – 5 ILCS 120/2(c).

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 14, 2019 COMMITTEE OF
THE WHOLE MEETING**

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz and seconded by Alderman Roessler to approve the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, January 14, 2019. Upon roll call vote, Chairman

Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Reis, Holtkamp and Martens voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

III. LIMB REMOVAL PROGRAM

City Engineer Chris Smith reported on the tree limb removal program for the City. It has been three years since the bidding of the tree limb removal program. The contract was for three years with All Type Tree Service with an option to extend two years. Mr. Smith said he has met with Ms. Dawn Brucker of All Type Tree Service and she is acceptable to extend the contract another two years. Mr. Smith noted the contractor will be using the iPad for coordination with the City's GIS.

It was the consensus of the Committee to recommend to the City Council for consideration the extension of the Tree Limb Removal Program for two more years with All Type Tree Service.

IV. MERCY CLINIC MOU

Mr. Smith addressed the Committee on the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Columbia and Columbia Ill Medical, LLC (Mercy Clinic) regarding the proposed development at 1019 Valmeyer Road (formerly the Video Exchange). In September 2018, Mr. Smith said the City had given permission to Mercy Clinic to remove 120 yards of dirt from City property for use on the site. They have now purchased the property and are in the design process. The MOU will formalize the arrangement for Mercy Clinic to remove the material. Mr. Smith recommended the City move forward with the MOU.

It was the consensus of the Committee to recommend to the City Council for consideration at their next meeting the Mercy Clinic Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Columbia and Columbia Ill Medical, LLC for the proposed development at 1019 Valmeyer Road.

V. PARKING RESTRICTIONS FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLES IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Mr. Dunakey explained to the Committee that he has been working with Aldermen Ebersohl and Reis on revising the code related to parking restrictions for commercial vehicles. He referenced the Existing Parking Code Excerpts - 10.36.010 Parking Restrictions on Certain Types of Motor Vehicles and the Proposed Parking Code Revision B and C. Mr. Dunakey said item B of the current parking code would be replaced with the new item B and item C would be added. The changes will keep commercial vehicles from parking on residential streets.

Alderman Reis said what started the proposed change was an incident on Rapp Street where a piece of heavy equipment was left on a street for a long period of time.

Mayor Hutchinson questioned the changes and was concerned about residents that have a commercial van and bring it home after work and park it on the street. Mr. Dunakey said with the proposed revisions, it would only be legal to park the commercial van on the street for one hour.

Alderman Niemietz asked if the parking could be based on weight or size or some other way. She also added that some of the residential streets in Columbia are only so wide. She suggested to discuss this issue further before changing the code and look at different scenarios on different streets.

City Engineer Chris Smith said there is 20 feet needed for a parking space on a road and Alderman Holtkamp said 20 feet would be too short for a one ton truck.

Alderman Roessler suggested to add code parking violations for large construction equipment; backhoes, loaders, excavators, etc. only that could not be parked on the street.

Mr. Dunakey said he does not know where the weight of 10,500 pounds came from in item B of the existing parking code excerpts. The 10,500 weight does not correspond to any federal weight or state licensing classifications and said this section would be easier to regulate using Federal or State classification.

It was pointed out the parking restrictions would be most relevant for the older areas of Columbia as the newer subdivisions have restrictive covenants and homeowners' associations that enforce them.

Chairman Ebersohl recommended one commercial vehicle at a residence with some restrictions. An audience member asked what if one residence (two homeowners) each had a company van that they brought home. There could be two commercial vans parked in front of the home.

It was the consensus of the Committee to discuss this issue further at a future committee meeting.

VI. PORTABLE SIDEWALK SIGNS

Mr. Dunakey said at the January 14th Plan Commission, the Plan Commission voiced concerns of the proliferation of sidewalk signs that are located in the downtown area and asked staff what should be done about it. Mr. Dunakey said he could develop temporary guidelines since the City was not enforcing the prohibition of these types of signs. Mr. Dunakey said the sidewalk signs are not mentioned in the Municipal Code so since they are not mentioned in the code, they would be prohibited. Mr. Dunakey added that many

sidewalk signs have appeared in the past few years and they have been deferring enforcement until a new Sign Code can be adopted. Mr. Dunakey said there are access concerns in some areas and businesses may be taking advantage of the City's lack of enforcement. There may also be violations of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) as some of the signs are located on the sidewalk ramps.

Mr. Dunakey reported on a draft for review memorandum for the guidance on the display of sidewalk signs (A-frame signs or sandwich boards) directed to core business district establishments. He presented this to the Committee for their consideration and review. The proposed memorandum was also presented for feedback to the Plan Commission at their meeting tonight. There wasn't much feedback but thought it was a step in the right direction until a new Sign Code can be drafted, but one Plan Commission member thought the sidewalk signs should not be there at all.

Mr. Dunakey stated in the memo that as a reminder to local businesses, portable sidewalk signs are not allowed in the C-2 General Business Zoning District per the Columbia Municipal Code Section 15.44.210. The City has chosen to postpone enforcement of this provision to support a business-friendly atmosphere in the core business district, but some concerns have come up as this type of sign has become more frequent along Main Street in recent years. The City's Sign Code will be updated in the next 1-2 years and enforcement on the prohibition of the sidewalk signs during that period will be subjected to: Only one sidewalk sign per business; displayed signs only to be placed adjacent to the business establishment; signs only to be displayed during the establishment's hours of operation; and signs and sign structures shall not block or interfere with pedestrian access to sidewalks, building entrances/exits, wheelchair ramps, or violate the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and published national ADA guidance.

Alderman Agne understood the sidewalk signs were not allowed, but when the economy tanked in 2008-2009, the businesses placed them on the sidewalks, and he understood there were no complaints. Mr. Dunakey agreed, but with no enforcement he thought it be best to get some guidelines in place. It was noted that the minimum clearance for a sidewalk is four feet.

Alderman Niemietz stated safety is needed first, but the only problem is the signs for businesses located off Main Street would not be able to have their signs on Main Street. They can only have one sign and it has to be immediately adjacent to the business. She would not like those businesses penalized and added their sidewalk signs bring in business. She also said Main Street has been built up beautifully, does not want to see vacancies off Main Street because they do not have the ability to draw customers in for businesses behind Main Street. She questioned portable sign placement being limited to "adjacent to the businesses" especially when the business is located off Main Street within a retail complex. Alderman Niemietz suggested the Committee review the situation for a couple of weeks.

Mr. Dunakey has researched this issue with other communities and this particular sidewalk sign problem would be considered an off-premise sign, plus location is everything. If the business wants the sign on Main Street, the business should be located on Main Street. He added a lot of the issues for the off-Main Street businesses is the sidewalk signs are being placed in front of the sidewalk ramps. Mr. Dunakey said adjacent could mean different things; A. Right next to the building and not out in the middle of the sidewalk; and B. Somewhere in front along the building, not a block away. Mr. Dunakey said he could go either way with it.

Alderman Holtkamp suggested the size of the portable sidewalk signs should be spelled out up front and in writing. Mr. Dunakey said he can do that and will add the maximum signage for the portable sidewalk signs.

Mayor Hutchinson said the sidewalk signs help businesses, but safety is needed first. He added that this is a rough middle ground; the City has just started enforcing the feather signs that have been placed at businesses, and has received phone calls that the City is not business friendly. The City still needs to be very cognizant of what looks decent for the whole community.

Mr. Dunakey will work on the revisions discussed and bring it back to the Committee.

VII. 2020 CENSUS

Mr. Dunakey reported on the upcoming 2020 Census. A meeting was held last Tuesday with Margie Williams from the U.S. Census Bureau. Mr. Dunakey explained there will be a new program with partnering with communities to get the word out and to do as much as possible to get a whole count. There will be new social media tools and apps to complete the census, get the information disseminated and will utilize committees called Complete Count Committees appointed by the Mayor as shown on page 11 of the 2020 Census Program handout. Mr. Dunakey said Ms. Johnson didn't give an exact date, but committees will have to be appointed sometime in March. Mr. Dunakey reminded the Committee to share the proposed appointments for the Complete Count Committees to the Mayor and City Administrator.

Mayor Hutchinson pointed out the importance of the 2020 Census. The 2008 Special Census was completed and then the 2010 Census showed a drop in population and noted a lot wasn't done for that census. The 2017 Special Census paid for itself as it showed more residents in Columbia. More residents means the City gets more money. Mayor Hutchinson stated to make sure the City starts education for the upcoming Census early.

VIII. BUSINESS LICENSES AND REGULATIONS

Mr. Dunakey updated the Committee that he, City Attorney Terry Bruckert, and City Administrator James Morani have been discussing the need for changes to the City's

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Mercy Clinic MOU – 4 pages

Parking Restrictions for Commercial Vehicles in Residential Areas – 2 pages

Portable Sidewalk Signs

2020 Census – 23 pages

business licensing with updating the language and classification of business licenses so that it is consistent with other parts of the Columbia Municipal Code and the Zoning Code. They will have information to present at the next Committee meeting.

IX. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED

There were no other items to be considered.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)

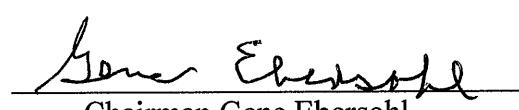
Chairman Ebersohl inquired if there was a need to go into Executive Session. There was none.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Holtkamp and seconded by Alderman Martens to adjourn the Committee of the Whole committee meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, January 28, 2019 at 7:42 P.M. Upon voice vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Reis, Holtkamp and Martens voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes taken by:


Chairman Gene Ebersohl
Committee of the Whole


Donna Mehaffey, Deputy Clerk