

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING OF  
THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS HELD MONDAY,  
NOVEMBER 25, 2019 IN THE COUNCIL ROOM OF CITY HALL**

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**1. 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, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle. Mayor Hutchinson was also present.

Absent: None.

Quorum present.

Administrative Staff Present: City Administrator Doug Brimm, City Attorney Terry Bruckert, Director of Community Development Scott Dunakey, Accounting Manager/Treasurer Linda Sharp, City Engineer Chris Smith, Chief of Police Jerry Paul, Deputy Chief of Police Jason Donjon, EMS Chief Kim Lamprecht, and Deputy Clerk Kelly Mathews.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Tim Gutknecht, representing Gedern Village HOA, addressed the Committee regarding the conveyance of the areas of common ground in Gedern Village. Mr. Gutknecht was informed by Monroe County Mapping and Platting department that there is a stretch of the former railroad right-of-way that was not included in any of the platted subdivision. The ground is currently in the name of GCA Holdings, LLC. The Gedern Village HOA informed Mr. Gutknecht that this stretch of railroad right-of-way was labeled as “common area” in plats handed out by the developer. The Gedern Village HOA has been maintaining this stretch of property for more than 20 years. Mr. Gutknecht was informed that GCA Holdings, LLC would voluntarily convey the stretch of property as long as the City has no objection.

Dwayne Worley explained how the HOA has maintained the property throughout the years.

City Attorney Terry Bruckert requested an approximate amount of money spent on the maintenance of the property and all documents they have. After Mr. Bruckert receives the information, he will meet with Mr. Brimm to come to a conclusion on this matter.

**3. APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 28, 2019  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Roessler and seconded by Alderman Martens to approve the Closed Session minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City Council

of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, October 28, 2019. Upon roll call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. **APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 12, 2019 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz and seconded by Alderman Martens to approve the Closed Session minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Tuesday, November 12, 2019. Upon roll call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 12, 2019 MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Huch and seconded by Alderman Niemietz to approve the minutes of the Municipal Buildings of Property Committee of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Tuesday, November 12, 2019. Upon roll call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

6. **DISCUSSION OF PROPERTY TAX LEVY FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING APRIL 30, 2020**

City Administrator Doug Brimm briefed the Committee regarding the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 property tax levy. Mr. Brimm explained that he and Accounting Manager, Linda Sharp, are projecting a conservative increase of 5.30% in the City's equalized assessed valuation. Mr. Brimm also stated that in an effort to ensure a majority of new revenues are captured, the total proposed levy has been increased 4.70%.

Mr. Brimm explained to the Committee they are proposing to ratchet up the corporate levy for general purposes by 7.39%, IMRF will be covering projected expenditures wholly in tax year 2019, and Social Security, FICA, and Medicare ratcheting up slightly to cover projected expenditures. It is anticipated this will be the fifth consecutive year the City tax rate will decrease.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Tax Levy Ordinance will be ready for consideration at an upcoming City Council Meeting.

7. **DISCUSSION OF GRADING PLAN AND EASEMENT AMENDMENT PLAT FOR LOT 8 VILLAGE OF WERNINGS SUBDIVISION**

Director of Community Development Scott Dunakey provided the Committee the proposed grading plan and easement amendment plat for Lot 8 in Village of Wernings. Mr. Dunakey explained the current owner wishes to install an in-ground swimming pool, which the current lot design does not allow for. The proposed changes, designed by Millenia Professional Services, are confined to Lot 8 and will not impact adjacent

properties. Mr. Dunakey stated the Plan Commission and City Staff recommend approval of the grading plan and easement amendment plat.

**8. DISCUSSION OF A SIGN VARIANCE REQUEST FOR FCB BANK (FORMERLY COLUMBIA NATIONAL BANK)**

Director of Community Development Scott Dunakey updated the Committee regarding the sign variance request for FCB Bank. Mr. Dunakey explained that Columbia National Bank was recently bought by FCB Bank, which is why they need to change the signage. Mr. Dunakey reported that FCB Bank utilizes LED electronic message center (EMC) signage at their branch locations. The applicant wishes to use existing sign structure along State Route 3 for their EMC sign. Sign Code Section 15.44.290.J limits EMC sign to 6 feet. The applicant is requesting a variance to allow the height of the EMC sign to not exceed 10 feet. Mr. Dunakey stated City staff worked with the applicant to set the EMC sign standards similar to the sign located at DOPW.

Mr. Dunakey stated the Street Graphics Advisory Committee and City Staff recommend approval of the grading plan and easement amendment plat.

**9. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED**

Director of Community Development Scott Dunakey stated there will be an ordinance up for consideration at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting to replace a Park & Recreation Advisory Board Member. Dr. Gina Segobiano resigned, and the Mayor would like to appoint Assistant Superintendent Courtney Castelli as her replacement.

Chief of Police Jerry Paul requested the Committee consider approval of hiring Dylan Verret as a full-time Police Officer at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting. Chief Paul explained Mr. Verret passed all pre-employment testing and he has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville.

**10. CLOSED SESSION**

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

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Holtkamp and seconded by Alderman Agne to adjourn the Committee of the Whole committee meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, November 25, 2019 at 7:27 P.M. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes taken by:



Chairman Gene Ebersohl  
Committee of the Whole



Kelly Mathews, Deputy Clerk