

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF THE CITY
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS HELD MONDAY,
APRIL 27, 2015 IN THE COUNCIL ROOM OF CITY HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chairman Agne called the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois to order at 7:10 P.M.

Upon Roll Call, the following members were:

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

Absent: Chairman *Ebersohl and Alderman Mathews. *Chairman Ebersohl arrived at 7:53 P.M.

Quorum Present:

Administrative Staff Present: City Administrator James Morani, City Attorney Tim Palen, Interim Director of Public Works Tim Ahrens, Building Inspector and Interim Zoning Administrator Justin Osterhage, Chief of Police and EMS Director Joseph Edwards and Deputy Clerk Donna Mehaffey.

Guests Present: Ms. Holley Maher and Mr. Pete Shemetulskis of MRCT.

Acting Chairman Agne stated the meeting was called for the purpose of discussing: (1) Approval of Minutes from April 13, 2015 Committee of the Whole Meeting; (2) Gedern Estates Streets; (3) Employee Health Insurance Plan; (4) Sign Code Amendment (Park Athletic Fields); (5) Land Use in C-1 (Neighborhood Business) Zoning District; (6) Meadow Ridge Park; (7) Safe Routes to School Grant Project: Bolm-Schuhkraft Park Connector Trail; (8) Telecommunications Tower Lease (Bremser Road); (9) Citizen Comments; and (10) Other items to be considered or discussed.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 13, 2015 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING**

The minutes of the April 13, 2015 Committee of the Whole committee meeting were submitted for approval.

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Reis and seconded by Alderman Roessler, to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2015 Committee of the Whole committee meeting. Upon Roll Call vote, Acting Chairman Agne abstained (since he was not present at the April 13, 2015

Committee of the Whole meeting) and Aldermen Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

III. GEDERN ESTATES STREETS

This item was tabled until the May 11 Committee of the Whole meeting.

IV. EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN

City Administrator James Morani addressed the committee and reviewed the cover memo (Health Insurance Proposals) with the Savings/Cost Analysis for Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) plans 4 and 7 with a spreadsheet for the medical insurance market analysis. Mr. Morani also handed out the summary of benefits for the City's BCBS current plan and one of the proposed plans to compare the benefits and coverage. Mr. Morani turned the meeting over to Ms. Holley Maher with MRCT. She reviewed plans 4 (\$500 Deductible) and 7 (\$1,000 Deductible) noting the similarities and differences. Ms. Maher explained if the City selected a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA), the employees could keep their deductible of \$250 and a third party administrator would reimburse the employee the difference between the \$250 deductible and the new deductible (\$500 or \$1,000) once the employee goes over the \$250 deductible. Mr. Morani preferred the \$500 deductible plan over the \$1,000 deductible plan since it wouldn't be as much of an increase for the employees and the City and its employees will still see a savings.

There was a brief discussion which plan, 4 or 7, would be best for the City employees. All in attendance were provided the opportunity to ask questions, make comments and offer opinions.

Alderman Huch made the recommendation of plan 4. The City Administrator will prepare a spreadsheet to show how an HRA would work with this plan. A final decision will be made at the May 4 City Council meeting.

V. SIGN CODE AMENDMENT (PARK ATHLETIC FIELDS)

City Administrator James Morani addressed the committee and informed them that he had met with Ms. Jessica Whaley, President of the Columbia Khoury League regarding signage at the park athletic fields. Mr. Morani also referenced his memo regarding the Sign Code Amendment with item 2 to be changed. The change is to delete "dugout" and add "permanent structure". Mr. Morani stressed that the proposed sign code amendment was a draft prepared by himself and Building Inspector Justin Osterhage and that he would like to solicit feedback from the committee.

There was a discussion about signage at both park athletic fields and the committee concurred that signage on the Bolm-Schuhkraft park baseball field should not be allowed; signage may possibly be allowed at the Legion Park ball fields. Mr. Morani agreed that the

CKL is more concerned with signage at Legion Park. It was the consensus of the committee that no signage should be allowed on the back stop of the ball diamonds if it obstructs vision. There was also concern raised about the maximum sign area. The committee was also in agreement that a sign or banner advertising the event may be put up, but a sign permit application from the City is to be obtained. Mr. Morani suggested to only permit signs on dugout/dugout fences and outfield fences at Legion Park. There was also a suggestion of a business sponsoring a field or dugout and then naming that field/dugout after the business. The committee was not favorable to this initiative unless the facility was paid for by the business (e.g. new construction of dugout).

All in attendance were provided the opportunity to ask questions, make comments and offer opinions.

It was the consensus of the committee that Mr. Morani and Mr. Osterhage revise the proposed amendment to the sign code for the next committee meeting, possibly having two (2) feet by four (4) feet signage. Mr. Morani will discuss the proposed signage with CKL president Jessica Whaley.

VI. LAND USE IN C-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS) ZONING DISTRICT

Building Inspector and Interim Zoning Administrator Justin Osterhage addressed the committee about the old Hardee's lot (Lots 5 and 6 of Wedgewood Square). Mr. Osterhage reviewed Section 17.26.020 A & B (C-1 Neighborhood Business Zoned District - Permitted Uses and Special Use Permits) from the Columbia Municipal Code. Mr. Osterhage also reviewed information handed out on the State Bank of Waterloo proposal and a photo of the proposed building and proposed signage. Mr. Osterhage reported that the State Bank of Waterloo just wanted to get some insight if favorable or non-favorable from the committee on the proposed building at that site. The bank's concern is that they would like to have a larger building with a drive through facility. The zoning of C-1 (Neighborhood Business Zoned District) and C-2 (General Business Zoned District) was discussed and was suggested to zone the area C-2. City Administrator James Morani added that this area is the only area in Columbia zoned C-1 and that this lot (lots 5 and 6) is the last lot in Wedgewood Square. Other items discussed regarding the proposed building were the square footage of the building, parking spaces and the number of parking spaces.

Everyone present was given the chance to pose questions, make remarks and propose opinions

It was the consensus of the committee that Mr. Osterhage informs the State Bank of Waterloo that the committee is acceptable with a drive through facility for the proposed bank at the Wedgewood Square location.

VII. MEADOWRIDGE PARK

Alderman Niemietz addressed the committee regarding a concern of Meadow Ridge Park located at 259 Bradington Drive for Police calls during the last twelve months after the park is closed. Police Chief Edwards distributed to the committee a list of calls for service at the park. Chief Edwards reviewed the calls for the last 12 months with the committee and all were after dark issues. Alderman Niemietz suggested to possibly adding chains with bollards to close off the parking lot to the park and there is a need to prevent vehicles from entering the parking lot. Interim Director of Public Works Tim Ahrens reported that the correct park signage hours are now displayed at the park. Chief Edwards advised to give the Police Department a chance to patrol the area, encourage the residents to call the Police Department if there is any type of problem or suspicion and noted the Police Department can even meet with the homeowner's association for that subdivision for guidance. It was also noted that cameras could possibly be installed, but should be night vision cameras which are more expensive. Chief Edwards stated another option would be to park a vehicle at that location with a camera inside. Mr. Ahrens suggested installing parking lot lights in the parking lot for assistance.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the committee to increase police patrols in that area to solve the after dark or park closed issues.

VIII. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANT PROJECT: BOLM-SCHUHKRAFT PARK CONNECTOR TRAIL

Interim Director of Public Works Tim Ahrens addressed the committee on the Safe Routes to School Grant Project: Bolm-Schuhkraft Park Connector Trail. Mr. Ahrens reviewed with the committee the letter received from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) with attachments and two (2) maps of the area in question. Mr. Ahrens reported the route has to be changed since the trail needs to be ADA compliant; he does not want to pause on this; action needs to be taken without delay as a bid for this project is needed by September 2016. Alderman Niemietz asked to have a meeting with the Safe Routes to School committee to get this concern resolved.

It was the consensus of the committee to have a Safe Routes to School committee meeting and City Administrator James Morani will speak to Director of Community and Economic Development Paul Ellis regarding this issue. It was noted that Assistant Superintendent Dr. Beth Horner of Columbia CUSD #4 also be present at the meeting.

IX. TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER LEASE (BREMSEER ROAD)

City Administrator James Morani updated the committee on the Telecommunications Tower Lease (Bremser Road). The City currently has a five (5) year lease extension from Crown Castle for a telecommunications tower located on Bremser Road that was completed about one and one half (1½) years ago. Mr. Morani reviewed with the committee the letter from Crown Castle showing their options plus a Rent Comparison Calculation from year 2015 to year 2035. Mr. Morani reported that he would like to consult with telecommunications attorney, Mr. Dan Vogel with Cunningham, Vogel & Rost, P.C. on a limited basis to possibly lock into a longer term lease. Mr. Morani added that City Attorney Terry Bruckert is in favor of it. Mr. Morani believes the City can increase revenues by \$4,000 or \$5,000 per year but there is the potential for a larger payout.

It was agreed by the committee that Mr. Morani proceed with the lease negotiations. Mr. Morani reported he will get an engagement letter together.

X. CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

XI. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED OR DISCUSSED

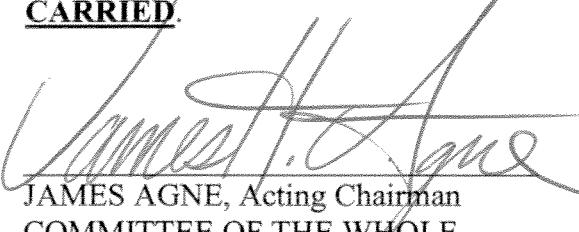
Alderman Roessler asked about the status of the street repair in the Columbia Centre shopping strip mall. City Administrator James Morani stated that he would contact the property owner, Mr. Joseph Koppeis.

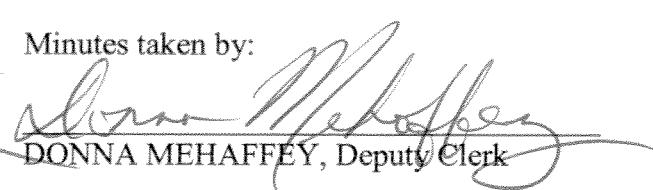
XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz and seconded by Alderman Reis to adjourn the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, April 27, 2015 at 9:26 P.M. Upon voice vote, Acting Chairman Agne and Aldermen Ebersohl, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes taken by:


JAMES AGNE, Acting Chairman
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE


DONNA MEHAFFEY, Deputy Clerk