

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois
Held Tuesday, September 07, 2021 in the Council Room of City Hall.**

A. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Hill called the City Council of Columbia, Illinois to order at 7:00 PM.

B. Roll Call

Present: Aldermen Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury.

Absent: Aldermen Huch.

Quorum present.

Administrative Staff present:

City Clerk Andrew Hitzemann

City Attorney Terry Bruckert

City Engineer Chris Smith

City Treasurer Linda Sharp

IT Manager James Mitchell

Deputy Chief of Police Karla Heine

City Administrator Douglas Brimm

Chief of Police Jason Donjon

EMS Chief Kim Lamprecht

Assistant City Engineer Tim Ahrens

Deputy City Clerk Kelly Mathews

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Proclamations/Recognitions/Presentations

Mayor Hill asked everyone to take a moment of silence to remember the service men and women who have been killed in the line of duty in the last week and for the 20th anniversary of September 11th.

1. Constitution Week

Mayor Hill proclaimed September 17th through September 23rd as Constitution Week 2021. September 17, 2021 marks the two hundred thirty-third anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America.

2. Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Mayor Hill proclaimed September 2021 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Columbia. Childhood cancer is the leading cause of death by disease in children. Mayor Hill asks Columbia local businesses would display a gold ribbon to recognize Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

E. Public Input

Public Input - Don Henson Sr.

Mr. Henson explained he emailed the Alderman, Mayor, and City Offices a preliminary complaint he wanted to address at this meeting. He has been a Columbia resident since 1982 and is 83 years old and has had brain surgery and has brain damage which affects focus and memory. He wanted to bring attention to a potential scam affecting Columbia residents. He is suggesting the City Attorney provide the Council Members of a summary of arrangements or contacts between Residents Energy, LLC and the City of Columbia. After discussing with City Administration, it was recommended to talk with City Police. The police called him back and stated that they did not see criminal intent. On September 6th, a complaint was sent to the City and asked to discuss at tonight's meeting. The issue with Residents Energy, LLC affects all Columbia residents. He is requesting the City Council protect the elderly in the community.

F. Comments & Announcements - Mayor

There were no Mayor Comments & Announcements

G. Comments & Announcements - Aldermen

There were no Aldermen Comments & Announcements.

H. Comments & Announcements - Department Directors

City Administrator Douglas Brimm introduced Pat Battoe who is the new full-time paramedic. He has worked for the City of Columbia in the past in a part-time basis.

Mr. Brimm provided an update on the Walnut Ridge subdivision. With this subdivision the City accepted a performance bond in lieu of improvements. The developers had begun on the improvement plans but there were items outstanding. Based on what was approved by the City Council the developers has until May 31st to complete the improvements or the City Council could pass a resolution to Call the Performance Bond. The Community Development Department and City Attorney has been working with the developers. It appears that the development is proceeding with the improvements. There are 5 or 6 items which remain out of the 27. Since it is past the original May 31st deadline, he wanted to provide an update.

Alderman Roessler questioned if building permits were still being allowed.

Mr. Brimm confirmed the final plat was recorded and they are buildable lots.

I. Consent Agenda

City Clerk Hitzemann read the Consent Agenda.

1. Motion to Approve Minutes of the August 16, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting
2. Motion to Approve Closed Session Minutes of the August 16, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting
3. Motion to Approve Payment of Vouchers for the Period of August 13, 2021 through September 4, 2021 in the Amount of \$345,986.74

4. Motion to Approve Statement of Funds for July 31, 2021
5. Ordinance No. 3585 Recognizing the City of Cahokia Heights, Illinois as the Successor to the Commonfields of Cahokia Public Water District

Mayor Hill inquired if the Council wished to remove any items prior to a motion. There were none.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Riddle, and seconded by Alderman Holtkamp, to approve the Consent Agenda as read.

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

J. Unfinished Business

1. Ordinance No. 3586 Amending the Offices of Appointed City Officers for the Fiscal Year of the City Commencing May 1, 2021 and Ending April 30, 2022

Mr. Brimm explained this ordinance finalizes appointments for City Officers in respect to the City Attorney and Director of EMA. Mayor Hill nominated the Law Firm of Bruckert, Behme & Long, P.C. for City Attorney and Josh Bayer as Director of EMA.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Khoury, and seconded by Alderman Niemietz, to pass and approve Ordinance No. 3586 Amending the Offices of Appointed City Officers for the Fiscal Year of the City Commencing May 1, 2021 and Ending April 30, 2022

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

2. Resolution No. 2021-19 Approving a Lease and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gedern Village Homeowners Association

Mr. Brimm explained based upon prior discussion with City Council at the last meeting, the City Staff and Mayor Hill completed negotiations with Gedern Village for public access to Gedern Village owned trail which connects with the GM&O trail. In exchange for an easement in perpetuity over the Gedern Village owned trail, the City agrees to lease unimproved portions of 04-09-300-006-000 for a period of 20 years. The lease will renew for additional 20 year terms unless 6 months' notice is provided by either party.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Holtkamp, and seconded by Alderman Niemietz, to pass and approve Resolution No. 2021-19 Approving a Lease and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gedern Village Homeowners Association

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

K. New Business

1. Motion to Approve Knights of Columbus Donation Drive Request (September 17-18, 2021)

Mr. Brimm stated Knights of Columbus sent a letter to the City asking permission to conduct a donation drive which was originally denied by Staff due to the high traffic for the Song4Soldiers event. After communicating with the Knights of Columbus Chairman, they stated they would stop collecting prior to Song4Soldiers and it is Staff recommendation to allow this to proceed.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Riddle, and seconded by Alderman Martens, to pass and approve the Motion to Approve Knights of Columbus Donation Drive Request (September 17-18, 2021)

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

2. Motion to Award 2021 Concrete Replacement Program to Henke Excavating, Inc. in the Amount of \$76,937.50

City Engineer Chris Smith explained they received two bids on August 31, 2021. The low bid was Henke Excavating and they recommend to award the project to Henke Excavating.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Garmer, and seconded by Alderman Martens, to pass and approve the Motion to Award 2021 Concrete Replacement Program to Henke Excavating, Inc. in the Amount of \$76,937.50

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

3. Ordinance No. 3587 Establishing Rules for Public Input During Meetings of the City Council or City Council Committees of the City of Columbia, Illinois

Mr. Brimm explained that in 2012, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2926 which updated the policy for public input at Council meetings. This ordinance contained obsolete references to State Statutes contained in the Open Meetings Act where the public must notify the City Clerk's office by 2:00pm on the date of the meeting if they want to address the City Council. The proposed ordinance removes the requirement for advance notice and formalizes the process which City Council will receive public input. This Ordinance includes the nine rules which would be attached to the agendas provided at City Council meetings.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz, and seconded by Alderman Khoury, to pass and approve Ordinance No. 3587 Establishing Rules for Public Input During Meetings of the City Council or City Council Committees of the City of Columbia, Illinois

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

4. Discussion of Leaf Pickup Program

Mr. Brimm explained that at the last Council meeting Mr. Smith provided an overview of the City's leaf and limb pickup program. The Department of Public Works (DOPW) completed the limb pickup in the Spring with success. DOPW advertised for the Leaf pickup program which resulted in one bid. The first year would be \$90,000 with the second year being \$95,000. With these numbers in mind, a discussion should be completed with DOPW staffing levels and the next item under New Business for the Titan Spartan Pro Plus Vacuum. The Titan Spartan Pro Plus Vacuum would be purchased for \$89,634.04. Instead of spending money with contractors, it might be better investing in DOPW. There has been questions brought up in the past regarding DOPW and available manpower. In 2011-2012, there were 17 DOPW employees and currently there are 13. There is an additional vacancy after Mr. Mueller retired which is currently being advertised. There is an opportunity to expand DOPW to meet the needs of the community, not only with leaf and limb pickup, but with our parks and adopting a proactive approach with water and sewer infrastructure. Our water and sewer infrastructure is the most noticeable infrastructure with residents. The proactive approach wouldn't be just responding to breaks but to get ahead of the breaks and identify areas of concern prior to breaks occurring. When reviewing staffing levels from 2011-2012 compared to today, the City of Columbia has increased in size. The City has also annexed additional territory with additional infrastructure due to new subdivisions. Between the Leaf and Limb programs, there is a combined \$120,000 budgeted for fiscal year 2022. For \$89,634.04, the City could purchase a Leaf Vacuum which could be used for this year and future years in addition to having other applications of cleaning out ditches and helping maintain the parks. Adding three new individuals and the vacancy would add a cost of \$202,086.36. With that cost in mind, the City can bring DOPW up to the same level of staffing from 2011-2012. This would allow for dedicated personal for Park Maintenance and to consider future expansion. Another option would be to bring in seasonal laborers for the Leaf and Limb pickup. This would cost \$22,939.20. The Vacuum's original cost would be offset after the first year compared to contractor costs. Knowing there are needs with the Parks and other areas, it is Staff's recommendation to proceed to expand the DOPW to 2011-2012 staffing levels.

Alderman Roessler questioned if the DOPW has a place to store the suggested new machinery to prevent deterioration.

Assistant City Engineer Tim Ahrens confirmed they have place to store it on Monroe Street and they don't like storing machinery outside.

Mr. Smith brought up for consideration that out of the 13 employees in DOPW, 5 will be gone within 5 years. The contact time between new employees and seasoned employees would be beneficial.

Mayor Hill asked if there is a reason why the staff hasn't been filled since 2011/2012.

Mr. Smith stated that since he has been there the City hadn't hired for 15+ years and in 2019 they hired additional employees but there has also been employees which retired from DOPW. With the two tier system, they are able to replace two tier one employees with three tier two employees. When this was put out for bid, there are usually three companies which provide bids but this year some of the companies were having labor shortages. Keeping everything in house, would help eliminate these issues.

Mayor Hill asked if this would eliminate the summer help.

Mr. Brimm stated to start out with, it would be likely to still bring in one or two summer helpers for Park Maintenance. It would be nice to still have the flexibility.

Alderman Garmer asked if the City had trouble finding seasonal help in the past.

Mr. Smith confirmed and said they would like 5 positions for seasonal help but this past year only had 2 full time and 1 part time. Hiring full time employees would be a contingency plan if contractors are facing labor shortages. Currently they have not received any seasonal applications.

Alderman Martens asked if the leaf machine would be available to be received right away.

Mr. Ahrens confirmed that it is a brand new machine and we would be able to receive right away. The distributor was intending to use as part of their rental fleet but they would be willing to sell to the City.

Mr. Brimm also wanted to point out that machinery availability for this type of equipment isn't readily available. Renting this type of equipment would be \$12,000 per month would result in \$24,000 for the year. If we would purchase for \$89,634.04, we would also have this available for Park maintenance and cleaning ditches.

Alderman Garmer asked if Key Equipment & Supply Co. would provide a warranty.

Mr. Ahrens stated it is usually either 1 or 3 years but can looking into further.

Alderman Niemiets asked if the City would keep in mind and consider outsourcing for one of the parks in the summer if the cost makes sense while other workers are busy catching up on other areas.

Mr. Brimm stated he isn't opposed to outsourcing but insourcing would have a higher value and control. When the Limb pickup was completed by DOPW, there were less complaints by citizens. Employees have more vested interest. Adding personnel also provides DOPW with more flexibility especially with future development.

Alderman Niemietz stated it makes sense to have the accountability and ownership within our own organization.

Alderman Khoury questioned that with proper maintenance how long would the machine life last.

Mr. Ahrens stated he has seen these machines selling after 15 years of use and depends upon the number of hours it is used per year. It has a good engine and should be reliable.

City Treasurer Linda Sharp explained why some of the DOPW were not replaced. The meter readings were more labor intensive years ago.

Alderman Garmer asked how everything ties together.

Mr. Brimm explained the leaf and limb discussion pickup program ties in with the next agenda item if the Council would want to purchase the machinery. Providing the Council with the background on DOPW staffing will help them make a more educated decision if they would want to purchase the Titan Vacuum equipment.

Alderman Garmer stated owning the equipment for \$89,634.04 when we would have to pay \$90,000 to outsource would make sense.

Mr. Brimm explained he currently sees three possible options. The first is to outsource for \$90,000 in year one and \$95,000 in year two. The second would be to authorize the purchase of the leaf vacuum and staff with seasonal laborers. The third would be to authorize the purchase of the leaf vacuum and fill Mr. Mueller's vacancy in addition to hiring three full time positions for DOPW.

Mayor Hill stated for options two and three the first step would be to purchase the equipment and then review the applications received. The next meeting the Council can discuss if they would prefer option two or three. Buying the equipment could save the City money.

Alderman Garmer stated they might want to purchase the equipment before someone else buys it.

Mr. Brimm stated that the practice is not to vote on items the first night it is brought in front of the City Council but with this situation we would need to provide an answer quick and with scarcity of this equipment it's prudent to bring to action since it would be allowed within the budget.

5. Motion to Approve Purchase of Titan Spartan Pro Plus Vacuum from Key Equipment & Supply Co. in the Amount of \$89,634.04

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Martens, and seconded by Alderman Garmer, to pass and approve the Motion to Approve Purchase of Titan Spartan Pro Plus Vacuum from Key Equipment & Supply Co. in the Amount of \$89,634.04

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

Mr. Brimm stated at the September 20, 2021 meeting an update will be provided to the Council on the applications received and asked if there is any additional information which should be provided.

Mayor Hill requested that the Council would be provided the total cost per employee for the two different options.

L. Closed Session

Mayor Hill informed the Council that he would entertain a motion to go into Closed Session to discuss 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective Bargaining.

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz, and seconded by Alderman Martens, to direct the Mayor to go into Closed Session at 7:47 PM to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective Bargaining

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:

Mayor Hill called the Regular Session of the City Council back to order at 8:03 PM. Upon return to Regular Session, Aldermen Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer, Khoury, and Mayor Hill were present.

M. Announcements

There were no announcements.

N. Adjournment

Motion:

It was moved by Alderman Khoury, and seconded by Alderman Roessler, to adjourn the Regular City Council meeting held Tuesday, September 07, 2021 at 8:04 PM.

Motion Passed.

Roll Call Vote results:

7 Aye: Niemietz, Roessler, Holtkamp, Martens, Riddle, Garmer and Khoury

0 Nay:

1 Absent: Huch

0 Abstain:



ANDREW HITZEMANN, CITY CLERK



MAYOR BOB HILL