

**CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS/STAFF RESPONSES REPROT
FOR APRIL 23, 2012 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AS OF APRIL 23, 2012 AT 7:30 AM**

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Item 6E: Consent Agenda - “Analysis of Bids for Replacing Carpet at City Hall in the Finance and Human Resources (HR) Department”

Question/Comment: “Appreciate using carpet squares for ease of partial replacement”

Staff Response: Using squares makes it easier to replace stains and other issues.

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Item 6H: Consent Agenda – “Analysis of Request for Proposals (RFP) for Replacement of Patrol Car In-Car Camera Recording System”

Question/Comment: “Good to see not taking lowest bid after investigation of service level and experience of other police departments.”

Staff Response: None.

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Item 6I: Consent Agenda – “Analysis of Bids for 2012 Drainage Improvements (City wide)”

Question/Comment: “Why was Stark so far under the Engineer’s estimate? Should we be concerned about being able to do the job properly for the bid amount? This reminds me of the DiPaolo bid several months ago that was so far below the other bids and the Engineer’s estimate, which did not turn out well for the City or DiPaolo.”

Staff Response: Staff estimates are based upon multiple factors including recent similar work, changes in market conditions, and amount of overall work to increase or decrease the costs. Bids can vary greatly as shown in the 2012 Drainage Improvements Project. The Staff estimate was \$215,973.00 with one of the contractors bidding \$216,597.00. One bid came in at \$166,216.20 and the other as high as \$344,669.20. This is not uncommon for construction related work.

Alderman: Mboka Mwilambwe

Item 6I: Consent Agenda – “Analysis of Bids for 2012 Drainage Improvements (City wide)”

Question/Comment: “While I realize this involves two different budget years, is there a possibility to use the savings for this item to apply to possible aeration of the lakes with algae issues? I looked at the extended forecast and it appears that at this moment, the summer will be cooler. This may be a good time to invest in aeration. This makes me think of erosion issues reported between Spring Ridge and GE Park. I was told that it would eventually be addressed. What is the status?”

Staff Response: The City Manager recommended FY2013 Budget includes \$15,000 to address algae concerns in various City owned bodies of water by using both chemical and non-chemical methods. These methods showed improvements during late 2011 and Staff is hopeful these improvements continue in 2012. If not, aeration and other methods could be considered in future years.

Alderwoman: Karen Schmidt

Item 6I: Consent Agenda – “Analysis of Bids for 2012 Drainage Improvements (City wide)”

Question/Comment: “Regarding the detention basin upkeep, does the City own all subdivision detention basins? Is there any obligation from the Developer to establish and maintain these basins? If part of land dedication, is the maintenance of these basins something we will include in future development fee contracts?”

Staff Response: The City does not own all of the detention basins within the City limits. The property owner, typically the Developer or Homeowners Association, are supposed to maintain private basins not owned by the City. As the City continues to evaluate our development impact fees, the inclusion of detention basin maintenance will be considered. However, in many cases some of the water flowing into the basins originates off site.

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Alderman: Jim Fruin

Item 6I: Consent Agenda – “Analysis of Bids for 2012 Drainage Improvements (City wide)”

Question/Comment: “With several questions from other Council Members, I suggest we pull for discussion to include the question of whether the \$50K in savings under the Engineer’s Estimate can be applied to other Drainage Improvement needs as determined by the Public Works Department.”

Staff Response: In regards to project savings, in order to address both savings and overages on projects (if that should occur), it is administrative policy and practice to look at the total Capital Project Program to assess whether or not this savings is needed in other projects that have already been approved. It is Staff’s experience that projects may, on occasion, finish off budget, both above and below. Staff routinely takes steps to balance funding for all currently approved projects to maintain an overall favorable fiscal result for the Capital Project Program approved at the beginning of the fiscal year. Staff recommends considering additional projects as a separate process with separate funding identified for those. Any net project savings in the Capital Project Program after the close of this fiscal year would be considered a funding source for future capital projects in a new period as they are prioritized. This approach strives to control costs overall and to prioritize projects to meet competing needs and limited resources.

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Item 6J: Consent Agenda – “Agreement with Sentinel Technologies, Inc. for City Voice over Internet Protocol Phone System and Network and Security Devices Hardware Maintenance”

Question/Comment: “Why are there two appendix A and appendix B?”

Staff Response: There were two (2) contracts provided by Sentinel Technologies: 1. Voiceover Internet Protocol Phone System and Network, 2. Security Devices Hardware Maintenance. The Firms boilerplate contracts are both labeled Appendix A & B. The amounts are different - \$30,342 and \$49,286 respectfully.

Alderman: Mboka Mwilambwe

Item 6K: Consent Agenda – “Amended Participant and Collocation Agreements for Central Regional Broadband (CIRBN) Project at Government Center”

Question/Comment: “Pulling this item since it involves ISU.”

Staff Response: None.

Alderwoman: Karen Schmidt

Item 6N: Consent Agenda – “Petition for Annexation and Rezoning for the Jeff Niepagen Subdivision, commonly located north of Fox Creek Road and east of I-55”

Question/Comment: “Please confirm that the City has no obligation for extending water, sewer, road or other infrastructure costs to this annexed piece?”

Staff Response: The Annexation Agreement does not bind the City to pay for additional infrastructure costs.

Alderman: Bernie Anderson

Item 6N: Consent Agenda – “Petition for Annexation and Rezoning for the Jeff Niepagen Subdivision, commonly located north of Fox Creek Road and east of I-55”

Question/Comment: “Again for verification, there is no cost involved in this annexation now or later to the COB; this includes water, sewer, roads, or any other infrastructure? Does this obligate the City for refuse pick up?”

Staff Response: The Annexation Agreement does not bind the City to paying for additional infrastructure costs. Once annexed into the City, refuse service will have to be provided at the curb along

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Fox Creek Road. City employees do not have to go back onto the private property of flag lots to provide refuse service.

Alderman: Bernie Anderson

Item 6O: “Petition from Charles Frank Niepagen and Katherine M. Niepagen, requesting approval of a Final Plat for the Jeff Niepagen Subdivision, commonly located north of Fox Creek Road and east of I-55”

Question/Comment: “Same questions as (6N)- Again for verification, there are not cost involved in this annexation now or later to the COB; this includes water, sewer, roads, or any other infrastructure? Does this obligate the City for refuse pick up?”

Staff Response: The Annexation Agreement does not bind the City to pay for additional infrastructure costs. Once annexed into the City, refuse service will have to be provided at the curb along Fox Creek Road. City employees do not have to go back onto the private property of flag lots to provide refuse service.

Alderwoman: Karen Schmidt

Item 6P: Consent Agenda – “Petition Requesting Approval of a Special Use Permit for an Additional Dwelling Unit for Property located at 811 W. Washington St.”

Question/Comment: “Thanks for sending this back to the ZBA, I agree there are many neighborhood questions and comments about this request!”

Staff Response: If the City Council approves staff’s recommendation, this matter will be sent back to the Zoning Board of Appeals for further public hearing.

Alderwoman: Judy Stearns

Item 7A: Regular Agenda – “Presentation of Main Street Feasibility Study”

Question/Comment: “A citizen or two wishes to speak on 7A, how do they do it? What was the dollar amount paid to the three consultant groups who did the study? I realize this may have been a County expense. Just as a reminder, when was the last vote on the Main Street Plan designed by Farr? What was the vote? What the total attendance at the Open Houses held in June and September of 2011? How many responded on line?”

Staff Response: A motion to suspend the rules must be passed by City Council. The McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) applied for two (2) grants from IDOT that totaled \$134,752.80 to have a Feasibility Study done before any improvements could be made. The study was done because the Town of Normal asked our local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to request IDOT to do a Phase I Engineering Plan Improvement Study. The Consultant’s contract is for \$134,752.80. MCRPC served as the Grant Administrators for this study. Due to City Staff shortage in the City Clerk’s Office today, Staff was not able to get the history on the vote for the Main Street: A Call for Investment document prepared by Farr Associates in November 2007, or the number of attendees at the Open Houses held in June 2011 and September 2011.

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Item 7C: Regular Agenda – “Text Amendment to Chapter 29, Raising Parking Fees for City Owned and/or Managed Parking Facilities in Downtown”

Question/Comment: “When will the negative \$1.3 million fund balance reach zero based on the fee increase recommended?”

Staff Response: The proposed fee increase in the Parking Fund is not designed to bring the net asset balance to zero. A full cost fee would price the City out of the parking business. The parking fees are designed to offset additional operational cost of the Parking Fund to minimize the fund from going further into a deficit. It is unlikely parking fees could sustain the operating and capital cost of the Parking Fund.

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Thus, in FY2014 Staff will recommend the Parking Fund be consolidated into the General Fund. Other area municipalities have followed a similar action.

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Item 7D: Regular Agenda – “Text Amendment to Section 301.6 of Chapter 21-Refuse Fee Increase from a Fourteen Dollar (\$14) to a Sixteen Dollar (\$16) Monthly Fee”

Question/Comment: “When will the annual \$1.4 million transfer from the General Fund be reduced and by what year will it be eliminated? What are the factors used to arrive at the answer to the previous question?”

Staff Response: The proposed \$18 monthly charge would have lowered the annual transfer from the General Fund to \$750,000. It is unknown when the General Fund Transfer will be eliminated. The Scope of Work prepared for the Refuse Fund will examine the revenue and expenses side of this fund to ascertain the financial operational position of this fund. Once this is complete the Council will be provided with a long term financial plan for the fund. This will include an analysis of any potential transfers to the General Fund.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Alderman: Robert Fazzini

Comment: “Good to see competitive bids and included in the budget on 6D, 6E, 6F, 6G, and 6J”

Alderman: Jim Fruin

Comment: “Can all Council Members have the educational benefit of knowing the Agenda issues of other Council Members who choose to verbally ask questions rather than putting them in writing?”

Alderman: David Sage

Comment: “Steve, I’ve confirmed the proposed budget does contain \$200K for gateways funding. I intend to offer a motion to reallocate this budget amount to city infrastructure. For awareness, I’m sharing this now to hopefully minimize confusion during tomorrow’s meeting.”

Prepared by: Barbara J. Adkins, Deputy City Manager