

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS
MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2017; 5:00 PM**

The Council convened in Special Session in the Council Chambers, City Hall Building at 5:00 p.m., Monday, October 9, 2017. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Renner.

The Meeting was called to order by Mayor Renner who directed City Clerk Cherry Lawson to call the roll and the following members of Council answered present:

Aldermen Joni Painter, Diana Hauman, Mboka Mwilambwe, Jamie Mathy, Scott Black, Kim Bray, Karen Schmidt, David Sage, Amelia Buragas and Mayor Tari Renner.

Staff present: David Hales, City Manager; Steve Rasmussen; Assistant City Manager; Jeffrey Jurgens, Corporation Counsel; and Cherry Lawson, City Clerk, Nicole Albertson, Human Resource Director.

Public Comment

Donna Bolen

Carol Ringer

Consideration of approving the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 25, and August 14, 2017. (*Recommend the Minutes be approved and dispensed as presented.*)

Mayor Renner asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion by Alderman Mwilambwe second by Alderman Hauman to approve the minutes.

Ayes: Aldermen, Painter, Schmidt, Black, Mwilambwe, Buragas, Mathy, Sage and Bray.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Closed Special Meeting

Mayor Renner requested a motion to go into Closed Session per Section 2(c) (21) of 5 ILCS120 and Section 2(c) (1) of 5 ILCS120.

Motion by Alderman Hauman second by Alderman Schmidt to enter into Closed Session Meeting per Section 2(c) (15) of 5 ILCS120, and Section 2(c) (1) of 5 ILCS 120/2.

Ayes: Aldermen, Painter, Sage, Mathy, Schmidt, Buragas, Black, Mwilambwe, and Bray.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

- A. Review of Minutes - Section 2(c) (21) of 5 ILCS 120/2) (5 minutes)
- B. Personnel - Section 2 (c) (1) of 5 ILCS 120/2) (30 minutes)

Adjourn Closed Session

Mayor Renner requested a motion to adjourn the Closed Session Meeting.

Motion by Alderman Mwilambwe second by Alderman Hauman to enter adjourn the Closed Session Meeting.

Motion carried (Viva Voce).

Return to Open Session

Mayor Renner asked for a motion to return to the Open Session Meeting.

Motion by Alderman Painter seconded by Alderman Black to return to the Open Session Meeting.

Ayes: Aldermen, Painter, Sage, Black, Mathy, Schmidt, Buragas, Mwilambwe and Bray.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Proposal for the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts Management. (*Presentation by David Hales, City Manager and Steven L. Peters, President, VenuWorks 15 minutes, Council discussion 30 minutes.*)

Mr. Hales asked for consideration in this work session to hear from Steve Peters, President of VenuWorks, submitted at my request an official proposal for management of the Bloomington Center for Performing Arts. Among many of the reasons why consideration should be given to this proposal is we have seen an increasing subsidy that has had to be sent to or at least helped to off-set the financial situation at the BCPA. It has become apparent that one of the great strengths that someone like VenuWorks can bring is their deep comprehensive knowledge of the industry. We have a lot of vacancies over there right now at the BCPA including the BCPA manager position, which lends itself to be an opportune time to consider this.

Mr. Peters gave a Power Point presentation detailing some of the theatres they currently manage, their operations, financial administration, HR programming, catering and concessions, marketing and sales.

Mayor Renner commented on the importance of transparency in the operations of the BCPA and asked within what period of time will we provided with anything we want to know.

Mr. Peters commented almost overnight. Mayor Renner responded certainly within 30 days.

Mr. Peters responded yes and explained that they have monthly report that is due by the 20th of the month for the month that just closed and you how we are doing against budget, both expense and revenues and then explained how the budget works.

Mr. Hales asked Mr. Peters to comment on why the Creativity Center is not part of this proposal and there have been some questions about the bookings and this fall has been a little dry on that.

Mr. Peters stated there is nothing they can bring to the Creativity Center. The sorts of programming going on at the Creativity Center are not in their wheelhouse and they are not prepared to do that. In terms of programming, we are in the process of repositioning the arena so that we are not overpaying for events. We want to have that risk assessment and we want to mitigate the risk. We are looking at six, maybe seven, good strong events that are in our pipeline that should happen between now and April and we are getting there in terms of turning the corner and bringing those.

Mr. Hales added regarding the Creativity Center, our highest priority has been, is there Council desire to continue to consider this proposal from VenuWorks. If there is, then what he would propose is that in two weeks, we bring to you what is really going to be an amendment to the master agreement. If the answer is yes, we will also bring back to you what is the plan for the Creativity Center going forward.

Mayor Renner stated we want to note that we have about \$1 million in private money for the Creativity Center. Mr. Hales stated they would come back with a report on that, too.

Alderman Mathy stated that in terms of the Creativity Center, we have a group of folks in town, private residents, who have been trying to help and they have already raised a million dollars in private money and we have been the slow down on that. We have been waiting on an approval of a Memorandum of Understanding for nine months at this point to move forward with that. He then asked how we have fundraising at the BPCA and is that different from fundraising for the Creativity Center. How does that all play together with the Friends of the BCPA group and fundraising?

Alderman Mathy stated that he liked to see the ongoing continuous Capital Improvements of those buildings so we do not have issues. He stated there was a reference several times to the

CMMS system for keeping up with the maintenance, and he did not think we have one right now.

Mr. Peters commented that you would not be subjected to that. We bring some elements of that anyway so that that would come along with us. We are not so tied with that as we are having a strict regimen that we know that we are keeping the maintenance.

Alderman Mathy asked what becomes of our current volunteer docent program.

Mr. Peters stated, hopefully we would be working with them for many years. We have those similar sorts of programs everywhere.

Alderman Mathy stated one of the other things that your proposal talked about is that you have a private group of citizens in each area to get public feedback from regarding programming and stuff of that nature.

Mr. Peters replied particularly we have some advisory board apparatus of some sort.

Alderman Mathy asked if we already have that in Bloomington for the arena.

Mr. Peters stated it is probably more common with the performing arts. Very often we have advisory boards and we are used to working with boards. Whatever a city would set up and want us to work with, we would be happy to work with them.

Alderman Mathy asked whether any conversations with the communities where VenuWorks provides a multi-venue contract to find out how that is going between the various venues.

Mr. Hales replied not since we brought VenuWorks in a year and a half ago when we initially reached out. Even at that early stage, we knew that they had experience in managing multiple venues so the outreach we did at that time received a lot of very positive feedback.

Mayor Renner stated that we are over time, so we are going to have make one of two decisions and that is either we only do part of or we postpone item 9 until the next meeting. City Manager Hales and I wanted to come out as soon as possible, but that is going to have to be a tragic choice that we make shortly.

Mr. Hales stated we could take up item 9 after the regular meeting.

Alderman Painter stated that the Illinois Symphony Orchestra has longstanding dates at the BCPA and so do the Barbershoppers and asked if the rent would be raised on them.

Mr. Peters stated no, that would be the Council's decision.

Alderman Painter asked if they would come to the Council any time there is a concern about that or the ticket prices. Mr. Peters stated they will set their own ticket prices. Alderman Painter then asked if they would ever bump any longstanding shows if you got another show to come in.

Mr. Peters stated no. The difference between what I am talking about in terms of added programming and what these seasons represent is that these are booked months and months in advance. The kinds of shows we are talking about book on a much shorter cycle so 3, 4, or 5 months

Alderman Black stated he was not inclined to move forward with this due to concerns with the Marketing Overview stated in the proposal. At this point in time, he stated he was not interested in proceeding but that is not for a lack of detail or looking at the numbers because we appreciate your diligence, and I look forward to future conversations if this Council decides to go down that road.

Alderman Hauman commented to Mr. Peters about the subject of new revenue streams. Streams and stated that Friends of the BCPA is already doing fundraising, so she was concerned.

Mr. Peters stated that fundraising for them is really sponsorship development more than it is the kind of fundraising that was talked about by Alderman Mathy.

Alderman Hauman stated we do already have some event sponsorships in place and premium seating. My concern is similar to Alderman Black's about marketing of the BCPA, and she has not seen a lot. She then asked what was considered a major event.

Mr. Peters stated he was not happy, either, with where we are at in the arena and thinks we are getting to it, but we are not there yet.

Alderman Buragas stated she felt that a major event depends on what the appeal is, but in general, there is value in continuing this conversation. What you are hearing is how much the community really values this facility.

Alderman Mwilambwe stated he was curious what other communities have to say about this specific arrangement. You did a reference check a while back when it was only about the arena, but I think it would be nice to investigate that a little bit further to see what exactly their experience is. He stated the other thing that he was concerned about was he felt there is a lot of competition for entertainment dollars in the area and he was curious how you are going to make that work while preserving the character of the BCPA that has been so dear to a lot of people because we definitely want to preserve that.

Alderman Sage stated he was in favor of continuing the conversation and that additional due diligence will help us make a better-informed decision. We are quickly approaching a million dollar plus, perhaps higher, structural deficit as we look at next year's budget. These conversations and these decisions will not get any easier.

Alderman Schmidt commented there are many things in this proposal that she liked and there are some things in here that she had some deep questions about.

Mayor Renner stated, we are interested in continuing this conversation, and with specific reference to the cultural district commission itself that it will be meeting this Thursday and getting some of their feedback and continuing obviously our due diligence and obviously the cost factor moving forward with particular emphasis on the role of the Creativity Center.

9. Presentation and Discussion on Potential Ordinance Enacting Procedures for Elected Official Reimbursements. (*Council discussion 30 minutes.*)

Alderman Sage stated over the recent past as he had begun to better understand the process for reimbursable expenses, it seemed that probably our policies needed to be revisited and perhaps, specifically for us as elected officials, that we might be willing to hold ourselves to a higher standard related to that. He had had some very general conversations with individual Aldermen and there seemed to be a consensus from those that I spoke with that this was a topic worth visiting more about. He stated he had then approached Mr. Jurgens and said here are some things that I think we need to look at and perhaps lay out more detail around so that we all have a clear understanding of what would constitute reimbursable expenses for elected officials, and then a process for how we might administer that.

Mr. Jurgens presented some improvements and progress made around the existing policies and explained that we currently have a number of policies but not one that specifically addresses elected officials for reimbursements or for their expenses.

Alderman Hauman stated, under applicability, it says the city's elected officials namely the Mayor and Aldermen and asked who else would there be.

Mr. Jurgens stated just the Mayor and Aldermen, yes.

Alderman Hauman stated she felt as for mileage, parking and other transportation costs, if it is ground transportation and multiple people are traveling to the same place, we should be coordinating those rather than having four people driving to the same place paying separate mileage and parking, etc.

Mr. Jurgens remarked that at the very least you could encourage that to the extent that all of your schedules will match up where that is possible to consolidate travel.

Alderman Hauman stated for community luncheons and dinners, she would like to see something in there about repayment if we do not attend.

Alderman Mwilambwe asked a question about remote attendance policy.

Mr. Jurgens stated he believed a remote attendance policy addresses that separately.

Alderman Sage commented that he hoped that the conversation could be finished tonight and then looking at putting us on the agenda for two weeks on the 23rd for a vote.

Mayor Renner added that he did not have a problem with that. Alderman Schmidt stated that she like the ordinance and felt that it made sense.

Alderman Bray thanked Mr. Jurgens and the other Aldermen for their work on this and stated that everyone was amazed at the speed with which they were able to put things together and also the thoroughness and the idea that this is a going-forward practice, a guidepost and a guideline for all of us to have some predictability about how we can manage our expenses.

10. Adjourn

Motion by Alderman Hauman seconded by Alderman Black to adjourn. Time: 6:55 PM.

Motion carried (Viva Voce).

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

ATTEST

Tari Renner, Mayor

Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk