

**SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SESSION  
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF  
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017; 5:30 P.M.**

1. Call to Order

The Council convened in Committee of the Whole Session in the Council Chambers, City Hall Building, at 5:30 p.m., Monday, September 18, 2017. Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt called the meeting to order and directed the City Clerk to call the roll.

2. Roll Call

Aldermen Present: Mboka Mwilambwe, Amelia Buragas, Joni Painter, Karen Schmidt, Scott Black, Diana Hauman, Jamie Mathy, Kim Bray and Mayor Tari Renner (Absent).

Staff Present: David Hales, City Manager (Absent); Steve Rasmussen, Assistant City Manager; Jeffrey Jurgens, Corporation Counsel; Cherry Lawson Clerk; Brendan Heffner, Police Chief; Scott Sprouls, Information Services Director; and other City staff were present.

3. Public Comment

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt opened the meeting to receive Public Comment. One comment card was received.

Donna Bolen

4. Consideration of approving the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2017.

**Motion by Alderman Bray, second by Alderman Painter, that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of August 21, 2017 be approved and dispensed with noted corrections.**

**Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt directed the Clerk to call the roll which resulted in the following:**

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

**Nays: None.**

**Motion carried.**

5. Presentation and discussion on unfunded general capital projects and available and alternative funding sources. (*Presentation by Steve Rasmussen Assistant City Manager and Finance Director Patti-Lynn Silva, 15 minutes. City Council discussion, 30 minutes.*)

Ms. Silva presented a refresher on both the unfunded and funded parts of the Capital Budget. There are the Enterprise and Non-enterprise and the specific projects that belong in each. On unfunded, the Water Department would like to do more and sanitary sewer is the maintenance that we are not quite hitting right now. The focus will be on the Non-enterprise Fund Capital Projects. Staff has identified specific projects and stated that these are nothing that Council has decided but needs that are out there. The question is if we do not have a specific user fee for these types of capital needs, where do you look. Those areas are where you get into your general taxation, and a lot of that has been earmarked for some capital projects like streets and funding mental health. We also have some deficit issues that we have been dealing with.

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt asked Ms. Silva if she could put a dollar amount on the structural deficit.

Ms. Silva stated that roughly for 2019, it is about \$1.6 million; the question is if it is \$1.6 without having any Capital Maintenance in it. The policy decision is Capital Maintenance going to be a discretionary part of the budget or not. If not then how can we maybe get something going for not just basic infrastructure but also building the tax base.

Alderman Buragas inquired as to the numbers on sanitary/sewer, and whether they include any projections based on what we may or may not do with fees. If any narrowing of projects had been done off the master list received. Is staff making any recommendation yet in terms of what a full CIP budget might look?

Alderman Mathy stated he had not seen an update yet of where we are with funding of Police and Fire Pensions. He stated we were on an accelerated payment schedule to try to get ahead of those payments, and whether we were still on track with that.

Alderman Mwilambwe asked where the General Fund Reserve stands.

Ms. Silva stated at the end of April, we had about 15% Fund Balance and finished the year with a modest surplus.

Alderman Black stated that looking at fee increases for sewers, storm water and other things we were talking about, it is just pieces of the puzzle and would prefer when we do the full vote in March that it includes all of those things at once.

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt asked Ms. Silva to speak about the sales tax increase.

Ms. Silva then explained the various areas that profited from the sales tax increase.

6. Presentation and discussion on proposed sanitary/storm sewer rates. (Presentation by City Manager David Hales, Public Works Director Jim Karch, and Finance Director Patti-Lynn Silva, 5 minutes. City Council discussion, 25 minutes.)

Mr. Karch noted that the Sewer Master Plan was approved by Council two years ago, and it recommended funding levels. We are suggesting that the Council move forward with action on the Enterprise Fund for both the storm and sanitary. He presented two options of a five (5)-year roll-out of 11.6% a year for sanitary sewer rates and an 8.2% increase over five (5) years for storm water rates. Staff is presenting a modified rate that would allow for year 1 for those rates to be put into place, and then we would have that same ongoing 3% moving forward.

Alderman Sage asked what the ultimate ask that would be suggested that Council would have to make on the taxpayers to cover infrastructural deficit.

Alderman Hauman asked if we wait three to four (3 to 4) months for a more strategic view, what would happen to the plan going forward.

Mr. Karch stated that there would not be a decision in three or four (3-4) months and the real concern from the staff perspective is that there are needs right now. Even for this rate increase, we are suggesting May 1, 2018.

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt added that we are still talking about May of 2018 whether we would vote next week or a month from now.

Alderman Black stated his worst case scenario would be that we pass something in October, November or December and then we do not have the capital to handle some of the other things that are coming along with the whole budget for next year and the next capital improvement projects, and would like to do it as part of the budget adoption.

Alderman Buragas asked whether it was correct that no matter what was done with the General Fund, those decisions will have zero impact on this Fund and our ability to begin chipping away at our sewer/storm water needs. She stated the need is so apparent, and this decision needed to be addressed as soon as possible.

Alderman Mathy agreed with Alderman Buragas and stated if we cannot fix the foundation, how we talk about everything else on top of it.

Alderman Painter stated she would like to move on aggressively, as well, and wondered if we paid for it in three (3) years, maybe tacking the fee on a sliding scale and get all the money in three (3) years and just do it.

Alderman Sage stated, it was concerning to him to hear that this was going to be done a piece at a time because at the end of all of those pieces, it is a significant total increase on the tax burden that we put on our citizens.

Alderman Mwilambwe stated, he recognized the importance of the issues and any other time would be for a very aggressive plan, but at the same time when it is other peoples' money, he is very cautious about that. He also considered the fact that we are not the only body that is going to increase fees, so looking at the totality of property tax bills, sales taxes and other fees; he wanted to be sure that people feel like they can meet all their obligations without too much frustration.

Alderman Bray stated this issue involves public health and our infrastructure, which are two top priorities for her. For that reason, she does not see this as something that we bargain away later. When looking at the numbers, the typical residential bill will go up \$6 a month, which is nominal.

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt asked for a consensus vote at that time and if those in favor of having this on the agenda next week would please indicate whether they were looking at the larger increase or the longer increase.

Alderman Bray - Next week, immediate.

Alderman Hauman – Next week, immediate.

Alderman Black – Budget process, immediate.

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt - Budget process, immediate.

Alderman Painter - Next week, immediate.

Alderman Buragas - Next week, immediate.

Alderman Mwilambwe - Next week, both.

Alderman Sage – Not next week.

Alderman Mathy - Next week, both.

7. Presentation and discussion on the Budget Calendars for the FY2019 Operating Budget and 5-Year CIP Budget. (Presentation by City Manager David Hales and Finance Director Patti-Lynn Silva, 5 minutes. City Council discussion, 10 minutes.)

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt stated when we make some of these critical decisions, we have not prioritized a lot of our capital improvement wish list and asked Mr. Rasmussen and Ms. Silva to speak about this.

Ms. Silva stated everyone had a handout on our normal proposed budget cycle and if anyone had preferences of what they might like to see modified, they would like to hear that. She spoke about the pre-budget presentation and stated going over the major parts of budget, filling everyone in on the condition of all parts of the budget; and make sure everybody has the facts before the fall retreat, and leave enough time before the tax levy should you want to act on that.

Alderman Hauman asked how we can talk about the tax levy when we do not have a budget.

Ms. Silva responded that she hoped to set the stage prior to the discussion of the tax levy.

Alderman Black suggested that we carve out every Committee of the Whole a half hour, pick a topic, and talk about the budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Schmidt stated we need to figure out a process for prioritizing the capital projects.

8. Adjournment.

**Motion by Alderman Mwilambwe, seconded by Alderman Hauman, to adjourn the Committee of the Whole Session. Time: 6:45 p.m.**

**Motion carried. (Viva voce)**

**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON**

**ATTEST**

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Karen Schmidt, Mayor Pro Tem

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Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk