

SPECIAL SESSION CITY COUNCIL MEETING
City Hall Conference Room
109 E. Olive Street, Bloomington, IL 61701
Monday, February 19, 2018; 5:30 PM

Call to Order

The Council convened in Special Session Meeting in the Council Chambers, City Hall Building at 5:30 p.m., Monday, February 19, 2018. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Renner.

Roll Call

Mayor Renner directed City Clerk Cherry Lawson to call the roll and the following members of Council answered present:

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

Staff Present: Steve Rasmussen, Interim City Manager; Jeffrey Jurgens, Corporation Counsel; Jim Karch, Eric West, Nicole Albertson,

Public Comment

Mayor Renner opened the meeting to receive Public Comment. The following citizen offered comments.

Gary Lambert	Angela Scott	Donna Bolen
Bob Werkman	Tony Wargo	

Consideration, discussion, and direction on Downtown Task Force recommendations (non-catalyst projects) and potential opportunities, including specific direction on potential changes to parking, use of right-of-way for business purposes, support of Main Street Corridor Plan, installation of downtown public restrooms, installation of downtown recycling bins, evaluation of certain S-4 zoning designations on downtown buildings and potential other zoning changes. (Recommend various motions be made to direct staff on individual items within the recommendation and/or to show support on the various topics listed.) (Presentation by Tricia Stiller, Downtown Division Manager, 30 minutes, City Council discussion 30 minutes).

Mr. Rasmussen provided a brief overview of this item and introduced Tricia Stiller, Downtown Division Manager who provided a PowerPoint Presentation. The Task Force presented its Final Report to you in late October. Just a quick recap, the Task Force combed through The Bring It On Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, The Downtown Strategic Plan, The Main Street Transportation Feasibility Study, and The Downtown Streetscape Lighting Master Plan.

The three categories identified as revitalization priorities were Place Making, Supportive Projects,

and Catalyst Projects. The largest category was Place Making, which was then subdivided into two sub-categories, Beautification and Public Art, and Public Spaces and Walkability.

She stated, staff continues to discuss the recommendations presented by the Task Force and focus attention on those items that can be implemented in a shorter time span, and for relatively minimal cost.

Current items being reviewed by staff under beautification include increasing the number of outdoor planters, updating them to a self-watering model, which are really wonderful, and working with the Parks Department on a unified landscaping program as well as increasing the number of park public art installations and enhanced decorative lighting. That could include illuminating the existing murals so that they are more visible at night. This would not only enhance the aesthetic, it would also improve safety by increasing visibility.

Ms. Stiller also addressed in her PowerPoint the following areas:

Under Public Spaces and Walkability; Parking challenges; Areas of Opportunities; Downtown Signage Committee; Permanent Recycle Bins; Public Restrooms; and Public Gathering Spaces.

Alderman Black stated, he has come to the conclusion that many of the things that people are feeling out there, is that downtown is not as vibrant as they wished that it were. He spoke of the email to Council asking for some support or objection to moving forward on less controversial items outlined in the Downtown Task Force recommendations. People in the community are craving various types of events in the downtown, and he does not want to see road blocks to creating community events.

Alderman Hauman asked whether any of the projects were budgeted in the 2019 FY budget. Mr. Rasmussen stated no funds had been budgeted as staff is seeking direction from Council on the next steps.

Mayor Renner asked, what the cost differential be on a particular street that is slated resurfaced of scraping it off versus going back to the original brick. Mr. Karch responded it would depend on the condition of the bricks. There may be some patching that needs to occur.

Alderman Schmidt asked whether staff was seeking direction from Council to support moving forward with all of the recommendations. Some of the projects are a revenue neutral, and some are not. In this budget climate, she does not know where the funding will come from to support the recommendations.

Alderman Painter questioned the installation of public restrooms, as well as the funding for the various community events, asking how much of a monetary contribution does the City provide for each of those events. Ms. Stiller stated the City provides in-kind contributions, and service rather than dollars.

Alderman Mathy commented about the aesthetics and providing flexibility to property owners to added its own lighting of their property. He supports the Jefferson Street test project, stating now is the time to move forward.

Alderman Bray stated, she has been a supporter of the pedestrian plaza since conversations began and would be interested in seeing some numbers on that, as well as support allowing business owners some latitude to for planters and lighting.

Alderman Black asked whether it is Council's intent to provide direction to City staff is that we're directing staff to go back and take a look at these lower tier items and see what the numbers look like.

Alderman Sage asked for clarification as his understanding was to continue to support looking at some of these, not spending funds until Council has a cost associated with the recommended items.

Mayor Renner stated it could be a variety of types of reasons. He referenced dumping the recycling program and maybe the coliseum. He echoed Alderman Black's comments that Council may want to move deliberately, but try some of the recommendations without having to have a full analysis.

Consideration, discussion, and direction on FY2019 "Big Picture" Budget related to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects, including specifically:

- A. Review of Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). *(Presentation by Steve Rasmussen, Interim City Manager, 5 minutes, Council Discussion 5 minutes)*

Mr. Rasmussen provided a brief overview of this item and highlighted the calendar of meetings for Council's review, as well as provided a brief PowerPoint Presentation. The Capital Improvement Plan is approximately \$500 million of unfunded projects. When we divided that down into years, we came out with a Capital Improvement Plan for five years. This year appears to be \$74 million of projects. These are the ones that had risen to the top of the list. If you bonded for those, you still would have to do an annual payment of about six million dollars.

Another one that keeps rising to the top is fix our streets. When I come back to O'Neill pool and the street resurfacing, staff is neither advocating nor refuting those. It is just that is where these paths have kept leading us as to the capital improvement items that are on the top of the list.

He spoke of the potential funding options that the City has at its disposal. Property tax, Home Rule Sales Tax, Local Motor Fuel Tax, Utility Tax, and maybe with the gaming machine revenues.

If we talked about raising a utility tax 12% the estimated total bill of \$150, we're looking at the average house in the city, and an average total utility bill of \$150 a month. That would amount to nine dollars a year increase. If a utility bill were \$250 a month that would be an annual increase of \$15 a year. So that is the amount of money that would give us about \$475,000 if we were looking at using this source of revenue for the Aquatic Center at O'Neill Pool.

The other amount, \$125,000 could be made up by video gaming. We have 250 terminals. At \$500 a year, that would be \$125,000. That produces the \$600,000 that we necessary to pay the bond for about \$10 million for O'Neil Pool. So that is a way of rebuilding that pool.

- B. Discussion, direction and presentation on O'Neil Pool project and potential revenue and fee options, including specifically whether City staff should draft and bring back ordinances for City Council consideration initiating fees related to video gaming and increasing the utility tax as such increases will be necessary to offset costs to allow for necessary bonding. *(Presentation by Jay Tetzloff, Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts, 10 minutes, City Council discussion, 15 minutes).*

Mr. Tetzloff provided a brief overview of O'Neil Park and the possibility of rejuvenating that park into an Aquatic Center on the west side of town. The pool is aluminum, and are built to last about 25 years, and we are on our 44th year. We have put duct tape and Band-Aids for a long time. Last year the kiddie pool, we could not open it without spending lots of money. We chose to close it.

We're having major issues all the time, as there is a deck issue. One thing that we definitely have to deal with it is called the Virginia Graham Baker Act, and it is a drain issue. We have permission to open the pool this year. If we do not fix the pool anywhere between a \$10,000 to \$50,000 repair, we will not be able to open in 2019.

The Parks Department had public meetings with neighbors and listened to their ideas and thoughts as well as reviewed the surveys that were issued. He described the potential building of an Aquatic Center in the same location, and highlighted the amenities within it.

Mayor Renner inquired of the operational cost of an Aquatic Center.

Mr. Tetzloff stated, we estimate that we bring in approximately \$54,000 in revenue now to O'Neil. The projections show by \$431,000, expenses of \$170,000 going to up to \$506,000. It is a big increase, but the cost recovery abilities there.

Alderman Schmidt inquired about the seasonal pool pass and indicated the current amount is too low in comparison to other municipalities. Mr. Tetzloff stated, staff will begin to review the pricing and possibly make necessary adjustments to the pool pass.

Alderman Mathy questioned the amount of the consultants. Mr. Tetzloff responded, they had considered differing amounts for a pass, and it was suggested that the City consider \$150 pool pass; however, staff did not believe that amount would work in this community.

Alderman Bray commented on the possibility of having an indoor/outdoor pool and asked whether Mr. Tetzloff had conducted a study on that. Mr. Tetzloff stated that he had some brief conversations on the possibility of having an indoor/outdoor pool. However, thought it may be cost prohibitive. That he thought of an Aquatic Center instead.

Council discussed potential funding sources for the renovation of O'Neil Pool including implementing a fee for video gaming machines.

Mr. Jurgens stated, video gaming fees are on the agenda tonight. There's been a lot of different discussion, a lot of different ideas. The City is planning on bringing the discussion for video gaming fees at the next council meeting, and whether the Council decides to put a one year

moratorium on it. We could enact, very easily, regulations similar to what Normal has. They charge \$200 a terminal. This could be discuss at next Monday Council Meeting and whether to add a fee associated with that. As far as kind of discussing the video gaming, we were talking about bringing that back next Monday, recommending that we, give some staff some time, get some regulations enacted, then get staff some time to come back with some recommendations on where the fee should be, and whether or not you should lift the moratorium.

Mr. Rasmussen stated, for purposes of answering the question tonight and giving the staff some guidance as to where they should direct their resources, maybe what we could do is make this first motion say something like that city staff is directed to proceed with planning for the O'Neil full project within the FY2019 Capital improvement plan. Then we can answer some of these good questions you've been answered, and I can put the staff to work on that.

Mayor Renner stated, there was not a consensus of the Council on any of the proposed items, and suggested each Alderman state his/her recommendations.

- Alderman Bray indicated she was in favor of some study in regards to the pool for a year round pool.
- Alderman Hauman favored an outdoor pool; replacing the one that is currently there.
- Alderman Black favored either an indoor or outdoor pool as long as it can be an economic engine for the area that has been creating an investment for over 44 years.
- Alderman Schmidt suggested staff come back with a plan that can be shared with Council that provides some choices along with a monetarily value associated.
- Alderman Mwilambwe stated he is not ready to commit, but rather see a plan with cost associated.
- Alderman Sage recommended coming back with a plan with associated cost so as to not overburden staff's time.
- Alderman Mathy concurred with Alderman Black.

Mr. Rasmussen stated, the number one priority with Parks and Recreation is to replace the pool with some kind of a water activity.

Mr. Tetzloff stated, as we were going through the Park's Plan, we reviewed the standards across the country that were actually short pools, public pools in a side of our community. If we were to remove the pool that would actually drop below even a further deficit of having public pools here in our community.

Mayor Renner stated, the fees for video gaming would be discussed during the Council Meeting on February 26, as there was not a need to move forward this evening.

Alderman Black stated, he would be interested in knowing whether even a majority of the Council would are interested in considering a fee for video gaming in general, as it would be a moot issue to have spent that time and resources if this Council is not willing to raise the fees and all.

Mayor Renner asked each member of Council its thoughts on having a conversation to establish fees on video gaming. There was not a consensus of the Council to discuss establishing fees for video gaming in the City of Bloomington.

Motion 1: That City staff is directed to include the O'Neil Pool project within the FY2019 Capital Improvement Plan; and/or

Motion 2: That City staff draft an Ordinance initiating a fee on video gaming terminals and an Ordinance increasing the utility tax and to bring said ordinances back to the Council for final action within (3) three months.

- C. Discussion, direction and presentation on Street Resurfacing, including specifically whether City staff should draft and bring back an ordinance for City Council consideration to increase the Local Motor Fuel Tax by \$.04 to fund an increase in street resurfacing. *(Presentation by Jim Karch, Director of Public Works, 10 minutes, City Council discussion, 15 minutes).*

Mr. Karch provided a brief overview of this item highlighting the metrics and service levels of the Bloomington community streets, as well as providing historical information related to the preservation of streets, sidewalks and ramps.

He stated, if Council did implement that four cent Local Motor Fuel Tax, there is a mechanism in place of how the City captures that revenue. There is no extra needed staff for us to implement this. What we are trying to do is be able to provide that revenue adequacy, and we need to find some sort of funding. Staff is seeking input from Council on how do we turn that corner.

At our current level of funding for streets, we get about 4.9 centerline miles every year. So 4.19 centerline miles every year at our current funding level for resurfacing. If you look at that over, we have 324 centerline miles. That is a 66-year turnaround for us to hit every street in the community. It is just under where we need to be, and that's why we're staying just we haven't reached that tipping point yet.

Alderman Schmidt expressed concern over increasing the Local Motor Fuel Tax (LMFT) beyond the current amount. Mr. Karch stated there is some form of a federal proposal that address this; however, it is his opinion that it is a broken system.

Alderman Black concurred with Mr. Karch, he asked whether the City has more contractors now to manage the workload. Mr. Karch stated it is over a five year period. Alderman Black indicated that he is not in favor of an increase in the LMFT. However would be interested in exploring some form of a vehicle sticker program.

Mayor Renner asked for clarification restating Alderman Black's comments, the Council would establish a city-wide registration of vehicles.

Alderman Black confirmed, and added, he would welcome a conversation like that, and maybe see what that looks like. If you have a truck that tears up our roads, you should proportionally pay more than somebody who has, let's say a light hybrid.

Alderman Sage asked Mr. Karch for clarification by asking, whether he was coordinating the budget conversation or providing information on the streets and roads. Mr. Karch stated, he needs money for the streets, and is trying to find the best approach to get it.

Mayor Renner stated for the audience, the motion is the city staff's draft an ordinance increasing the local motor fuel tax by four cents to help increase in streets resurfacing, and to bring it back to the council for final action within three months. As Alderman Sage has noted, that's the core question.

Mr. Rasmussen stated, this is only for the Capital Improvement Plan portion of it. It's separate from the operational budget which the City will bring back to you on the February 26.

Mayor Renner stated, Council is responsible for establishing the budget and determining the funding levels for the Capital Improvement Plan as it is not City's staff responsibility to do so.

Alderman Hauman asked, if Council does not agree on the LMFT, what are the other options for Council and staff to pursue? Mayor Renner stated, property tax is an option; however, it cannot be done this tax year.

Alderman Hauman asked whether there is a mechanism whereby the City could recoup cost from the hybrids and electric vehicles that uses the roads in the City, as they do not necessarily purchase gasoline. Mr. Karch suggested a utility tax.

Alderman Bray asked whether the \$11.5 million included brick streets, as she did not recall Council voting to fund the Brick Street Plan. Mr. Karch stated it does not, that is, unless Council directs staff to include brick streets.

Alderman Painter indicated that she is not favor of raising the LMFT by four cents. Instead, may consider one or two cents increase.

Alderman Mwilambwe stated he is reluctant to establish a fee for hybrids or electrical vehicles. Because people feel that it's better for the environment, so the more, you know, I think if you start to impose a fee, then you provide a disincentive for people to use those sort of vehicles. Additionally, he is not in favor of an additional four cent increase for the LMFT.

Alderman Sage followed-up Alderman Bray's comments regarding brick streets. All that he sees is street resurfacing. I don't know if we need to do a little straw poll in order to finally get that done, but somehow, that seems to me to offer some guidance to staff going forward. He cannot confirm whether he would support the four cent increase; however, he is willing to continue conversation on the subject.

Alderman Mathy stated brick streets are just streets that needs to be resurfaced and should be placed on the same priority level as others. He would support the four cents increase in LMFT.

Mayor Renner stated it would be hard to believe that the Town of Normal doesn't have the same issues. But bottom line is Council passed the Capital Improvement Plan, and all agree on those things. Council has to figure out how to pay for them, and that has to happen soon. If there are cuts, those are policy decisions that this Council needs to make. What do we get rid of? Who do we fire?

Mayor Renner asked whether there was a consensus of the Council to move forward with a four cents Local Motor Fuel Tax. There was not a consensus of the Council at this time.

Motion 1: That City staff draft an Ordinance to increase the Local Motor Fuel Tax by \$.04 to help fund an increase in street resurfacing and to bring it back to the Council for final action within (3) three months.

Update on Emergency Response Times. (Presentation by Brian Mohr, Fire Chief, 5 minutes, Council discussion, 5 minutes)

Fire Chief Mohr provided a brief update on its emergency response time. Every month the department provide to the City Manager a monthly report, and they have shown a constant steady improvement on the response time based on changes that have been made to its operations over the last two years. A few of those key changes includes partnering with Public Works in improving the traffic pre-emption infrastructure; (2) Working with Bloomington Dispatch in upgrading its run cards and dispatching protocols; and (3) Realigning all of the departments apparatus for the most efficient deployment of those resources.

The presentation that he provide in December 2017 that compared the 2016 response to the 2017 response data. As you review the materials, there is a significant improvement between 2016 and 2017 data. The average EMS response call has improved by 16 seconds, and in the 90th percentile, they improved by 41 seconds on EMS calls. On fire response calls, they improved by 16 seconds on average; that on the 85th percentile, they improved by 11 seconds.

Adjournment (Approx. 7:40 p.m.)


Motioned by Alderman Hauman, seconded by Alderman Painter to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried: Viva Voce

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON


Tari Renner, Mayor

ATTEST

Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk