



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 04, 2025 at 6:35 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Roll Call

Mayor Hammer called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. Members present included: Council President Amy Roelke (via Zoom), Mayor Joe Hammer, Alderperson Sarah Motiff, Alderperson Trina Reid, Alderperson Michael Lawson, Alderperson Ryan Rostad and Alderperson Molly Finkler.

Notice of Open Meeting

Noted as posted.

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Alderperson Rostad, Seconded by Alderperson Finkler to approve the agenda. Alderperson Rostad asked if any information was received regarding Item #2: Consider request from Columbus Fire Department to recognize March 20th as Fred Dartt Day annually in Columbus. Administrator Amundson said he had not.

Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Committee Minutes for File included Beautification (11/2024), Beautification (12/2024), and PFC (12/11/2024).

Public Comment: None.

New Business

2. Consider request from Columbus Fire Department to recognize March 20th as Fred Dartt Day annually in Columbus:

Matt Ehrke was unable to be present to lead the discussion of this request from the Columbus Fire Department. Chief Hazeltine shared that the department would like to have the City declare March 20th as Fred Dartt Day, an annual day of recognition for 50 years served by Fred Dartt in the Columbus Fire Department. Currently, those who retire from the unit receive a plaque of Honorary Proclamation. Committee agreed to move forward to the February 4, 2025, regular Common Council meeting.

3. Discussion of Façade Grant Application for 152 and 152 1/2 W. James St.- Columbus Historical Society:

Community and Economic Development Director, Mike Kornmann, shared that this application meets the Grant requirements. The Columbus Historical Society is planning on installing a sign, adding storm windows, and painting. This includes the rear façade as well, which is visible to the public. The taxes have been paid and there are no outstanding balances. The renovation is the type of work we want to see in downtown and complies with the requirements of the façade program. The CDA is recommending approval. Alderperson Motiff questioned if the requested amount is below the necessary limit required to receive approval from Council. Staff will check on

that amount. Committee agreed to move forward to the February 4, 2025, Common Council meeting, if Council needs to approve per ordinance.

4. Discussion of Façade Grant Application for 135 N. Ludington St. – John Dagnon (Midwestern LLC):

CED Director, Mike Kornmann, shared that this application meets the Grant requirements. CDA recommends approval of this façade grant in the amount requested. The project is moving forward for a new business in downtown. It includes new windows/trim on both the upper and lower levels. The awning and sign will be removed. A new sign (not requested with this application) will be added in place of the old Black Kettle sign. The project provides needed attention to the building on both stories of the building. The owner is also currently in good financial standing with the city. Committee agreed to move forward to the February 4, 2025, Common Council meeting if Council needs to approve per ordinance guidelines.

5. Discussion regarding purchase of Pickup Truck for Public Works:

There is \$35,000 currently budgeted for the purchase of a new 3/4-ton pickup for Public Works. The cost of a new truck will be offset by any monies received on the truck being replaced, the 2003 GMC Sierra. Treasurer Larson shared that there is funding available within the budget. The new vehicle will be red like the other department trucks. Committee agreed to move forward to the February 19, 2025 Common Council meeting.

6. Discussion regarding Committees, Committee Structure and Meeting Dates:

Administrator Amundson shared this follow-up from the January 21, 2025 Committee discussion. Amundson, along with the City Attorney, would like to confirm the following be included in a revised committee ordinance:

Align committees similarly in role, design, and function.

Committee appointments will be made at the first Council meeting in May, vacancies will be dealt with throughout the year.

Each Committee should have a Council appointment and a staff liaison. The Council appointment is a voting member of the body that should not serve as the Chair of the Committee, the staff liaison serves as the secretary and works with the Chair to create the agendas. The staff member is a non-voting member of the Committee.

Each Committee should hold an organization meeting in May to Identify Chair & Vice Chair as well as any appointments to other committees.

Items going to Council should first go to a Committee (there are some items that will not be required to go to a Committee as determined by the Mayor, Council President & Administrator prior to being placed on a Council agenda). The Council agenda will identify the committee and date that the item went to a Committee, i.e. (Plan Commission, 1/9/2025).

Eliminate the Ordinance Review Ad Hoc Committee, Investment Board, and the Street Light Committee (duties to Utility Commission).

They would also like Committee Members thoughts on the following options:

Create a Public Works Committee and/or Personnel/Finance Committee – need to determine make up of committee and day/time of meeting -or-

Items that do not go to a Committee (public works projects, finance/personnel, etc) be placed on a Committee of the Whole agenda; meeting held following Council. He also asked if it should be the goal to have, except if state statute requires otherwise, each committee have the same length of member term and number of members?

Committee did not move forward to Council at this time, preferring to have further discussion when all members can be present at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

7. Discussion regarding an Ordinance to Repeal and Recreate Section 102-86 related to the Appointment of the Utility Director:

Amundson shared that the current ordinance is not clear on the day-to-day role of the Utility Director in regards to supervision of Utility staff, and needs to have the inconsistencies cleaned up. This update would also define a grievance process for employees. After discussion, Committee members agreed to move forward to Common Council when the ordinance is ready for consideration.

Adjourn

Motion made by Alderperson Finkler, Seconded by Alderperson Motiff to adjourn at 7:22pm. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.