



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at 6:40 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Roll Call

Council President Amy Roelke called the meeting to order at 7:15pm. The following members were present: Council President Amy Roelke, Mayor Joe Hammer, Alderperson Trina Reid, Alderperson Michael Lawson, Alderperson Ryan Rostad, and Alderperson Molly Finkler.

ABSENT

Alderperson Sarah Motiff was excused.

Notice of Open Meeting

Noted as posted.

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Alderperson Rostad, Seconded by Alderperson Finkler to approve the agenda minus the Pledge of Allegiance printed on the original agenda.

Voting Yea: Council President Roelke, Mayor Hammer, Alderperson Reid, Alderperson Lawson, Alderperson Rostad, and Alderperson Finkler. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Department Reports for File included Fire (09/2024, 10/2024), Library (10/2024), Lifestar (08/2024, 09/2024, 10/2024), Police (10/2024).

Public Comment

Resident Kelly Crombie shared that Columbus is a full-service community and as such, shared his support of Council considering what the City's needs are with stormwater utility, going into the future. He feels the last referendum discussion regarding stormwater was confusing to residents. Stormwater is an issue across the city.

New Business

2. Discussion and consideration of the 2025 Dodge County Humane Society Contract

Clerk Caine shared the details in the 2025 Dodge County Humane Society Contract presented. The annual fee has a \$300 increase over the 2024 contract, and a \$50 increase per animal in excess of five per year. After a brief discussion regarding choosing the lump sum payment of \$1,800 which covers up to five animals, and having the city approve any animals before they are accepted, Committee members agreed to move forward to the December 3, 2024, regular Council meeting agenda.

3. Discussion and consideration of Permitting Module by Civic Plus

CED Director Kornmann shared the details of the permitting module available through the City's current website software company, CivicPlus. This feature would allow residents and contractors the ability to submit their permit applications, plans and payments directly through our website, sending the information to staff for review. Property owners and contractors could also log in and track their permit status, as well. Customization of specific features is allowed. Additional costs could be absorbed through our fee schedule. Committee members agreed to move forward to the December 3, 2024, regular Council meeting agenda.

4. Discussion and Consideration of Proposal from Caselle for Cloud Based Upgrade to Financial Software

Administrator Amundson shared that the city is currently paying for two separate licenses, one for the city, and one for Utilities for the financial software. Combining the licenses into one would allow both entities to work within one financial system. There is an annual fee for the Cloud based system, but combining the licenses would give us a decrease in our total cost. It would also allow us to be more efficient utilizing our staff within the Financial Department. Committee members agreed to move forward to the December 3, 2024, regular Council meeting agenda.

5. Discussion and consideration regarding posting city buildings prohibiting firearms

Amundson reminded members that state law was updated in 2012 with the addition of conceal carry. Initially, the City of Columbus adopted State law, and then after subsequent discussions it was decided not to post our buildings. Alder Reid questioned the wording in our current ordinance regarding written notification. Attorney Johnson explained the history and background of how the city arrived at the decision not to post the buildings. Alder Lawson shared that there are specific directions for signage. He also asked how to move forward with allowing a Gun Show in the Pavilion as an event. Johnson stated you could decide to post the buildings, then issue a waiver for an event. There was further discussion by members as to whether or not to add signage to the city's buildings. Committee members agreed to move forward to the December 3, 2024, regular Council meeting agenda.

6. Discussion of potential 2025 Stormwater Referendum question for the Spring Election ballot.

Amundson led the discussion with committee members reminding them that there is a hard deadline of January 21, 2025, to have everything ready for the Spring Election ballot and submitted to county for print. If this is something council is wanting to move forward on, staff needs to start preparing the formal process. Engineer Leitha shared that 100 plus Stormwater referenda have gone to ballot in the state. Committee would like to see the last referendum language. Alder Lawson suggested that showing residents, in particular anyone who questioned how the project would be funded, would be important to invite to the discussion this time.

Alder Rostad asked if the school district is planning anything for spring. Amundson said he would follow up with the Superintendent and let members know. Amundson will bring back the former language and staff suggestion(s) for wording at a future Committee of the Whole meeting. A reminder that a Stormwater referendum will establish dedicated funds for stormwater utility. An Operational referendum does not allow for dedicated funding. There are nineteen priority projects which could be addressed over a five-to-ten-year timeline with successful passage of a Stormwater Utility referendum. Attorney Johnson read the last referendum question to members.

Adjourn

Motion made by Alderperson Finkler, Seconded by Alderperson Lawson to adjourn at 7:59pm.
Voting Yea: Council President Roelke, Mayor Hammer, Alderperson Reid, Alderperson Lawson, Alderperson Rostad, and Alderperson Finkler. Motion carried on a 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.