



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Roll Call

Council President Finkler called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The following members were present: Mayor Joe Hammer, Council President Molly Finkler, Alderperson Michael Lawson, Alderperson Marcus Meier, Alderperson Trina Reid, Alderperson Amy Roelke and Alderperson Ryan Rostad.

Interim Finance Director/HR Administrator Kendra Riddle took the minutes for Clerk Caine who was attending the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Association Conference.

Notice of Open Meeting

Noted as posted.

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Alderperson Rostad, Seconded by Alderperson Meier to approve the agenda with the correction to Item #2 to read "*Discussion regarding authorization to fill vacancies for Administrative and Billing Clerk, Human Resources Generalist, and Public Works Maintenance II positions*". Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Public Comment

None.

New Business

1. Discussion regarding job descriptions for Administrative and Billing Clerk, Deputy Treasurer, and Human Resources Generalist:

Riddle shared with Committee members the job descriptions and how they would formulate the Financial Department team in addition to the Financial Director and the Deputy Treasurer. The new Administrative and Billing Clerk will be replacing the DPW Admin. Assistant, bringing those duties back to City Hall, in addition to assisting in the Finance Department. The Deputy Treasurer job description is being updated and these duties will be handled by Aly Bushkie. The Human Resources Generalist will be handling everything the prior HR Administrator role covered along with the addition of Payroll. Alderperson Reid asked about the Bulk Drop-Off scheduling and who would be overseeing that service. The payment will be made at City Hall and DPW will continue to monitor the site. Mayor Hammer shared that the three spots where Water & Light are referenced in the Administrative and Billing Clerk job description which should read "Utilities", and one reference to the Sewer Utility Department in the Deputy Treasurer job description which should be deleted. Committee members agreed to move forward to the August 19, 2025 Common Council Meeting. with the changes discussed.

2. Discussion regarding authorization to fill vacancies for Administrative and Billing Clerk, Human Resources Generalist, and Public Works Maintenance II positions:

The new Administrative and Billing Clerk will be responsible for the former duties of the DPW Administrative Assistant. That position and the Human Resources Generalist position will be aligned under the Finance Director. The DPW Maintenance I vacancy is being replaced with a

DPW Maintenance II hire. Amundson shared that staff would like to develop criteria needed by staff to move from a Maintenance II position to a Maintenance I position in the future. Alderperson Meier asked what the current criteria has been used in the past for that position. He would support staff in their hiring decision if a candidate applied that is qualified for Maintenance I that they not be held back from the opportunity. Alderperson Rostad asked if we would hire above the midpoint of salary range listed. Amundson said that that has not been the current practice. Committee members agreed to move forward to the August 19, 2025 Common Council Meeting.

3. Discussion regarding amendments to provisions of Chapter 102 of the City Code of Ordinances Concerning the Columbus Utility Commission:

Administrator Amundson shared that these draft amendments are based on the relevant discussion at the Council Workshop of August 6, 2025. This includes aligning the Commission to May for its annual organizational meeting and aligning the hiring process for a Utility Director to that of the other Department Heads of the City. Also, aligning the compensation strategy that the Utility Commission can make recommendations that ultimately the Council has to approve. Alderperson Meier stated that the changes are needed in order for the City Administrator to be able to hold the Utility Director accountable and make decisions concerning the city Utilities. Mayor Hammer noted that Sec. 102-58 references the communication system which is going to be repealed at a future date and that should be removed from the final copy. Committee members agreed to move forward to the August 19, 2025 Common Council meeting.

4. Discussion regarding Task Order 2025-05 with Ruekert-Mielke, Inc for 2026 W. School Street Reconstruction in the amount of \$167,600:

Amundson shared that this is a large project which is included in the CIP. This Task Order is for the design work. City Engineer Jason Leitha then lead the discussion regarding the 2026 W. School Street reconstruction project. The pavement is rated a 3 on the scale of 1 - 10 and is about 100 years old. The project will include street reconstruction, aprons, storm sewer, water main upgrades and lead water service replacement, hydrants and sidewalks. They will be applying for an LRIP Grant in October, 2025 which if awarded will garner about \$450,000 towards this project. Also included will be updates to the drop-off/pickup traffic configurations around the middle school and burying some of the overhead electrical lines in that area. There will be two public information meetings offered. There are some Native American burial areas along this corridor that will have to be addressed, as well. Leitha introduced Sam Boman as the Project Lead. Committee members agreed to move forward to the August 19, 2025 Common Council meeting.

5. Discussion of bids received for asphalt work at Waterloo lift station, Meister Park lift station and parking lot, and Warner Park parking lot and infrastructure support of proposed park shelter:

Amundson lead the discussion regarding a current lack of specific funding for these projects in 2025 and initiated the idea that it perhaps could be combined into the 2026 W. School Street project in order to receive better pricing and reject these bids. Alderperson Lawson asked if there are any impacts that council should be aware of if it is deferred to next year. Leitha shared that to incorporate it into next year's project would not greatly impact the overall project. Committee members agreed to move the decision to the August 19, 2025 Common Council meeting.

6. Discussion of Capital Improvement Budget (CIP) and additional staffing requests:

Amundson reminded members that there will be changes over the next few weeks to what was presented in the packet. The budget is a working document. This is the current 10-year Capital Improvement Budget. Intern Luke Moore prepared a presentation of the 2026 plan. Items include: Fiber Optic Network, Engine 92 for the Fire Department, Jaws of Life replacement, Pavilion HVAC, Meister Park Netting, Kiwanis Fence Repair, Fireman's Park Pickleball Courts and Basketball Court, Community Center HVAC and door replacements, Lounge Chairs, Ventilation project, and Blue-Green repairs at the Aquatic Center, Police Squad Vehicle, replacement of five Tasers, Squad Computers (3), and Squad Cameras (3), School Street Repairs, Tower Drive (need to check allocations made), Public Works Parking Lot, DPW Plow Truck, Expansion of Salt Shed and the

Garage Doors. Amundson reminded members that these numbers are not final and he does not intend or expect all of these projects to be approved, but at a future meeting they will need to be prioritized and decided upon.

In addition to these listed items, there was one staffing request for the Fire Department for a full-time Fire Chief or a full-time Fire Inspector. Amundson also would like members to assist in the Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) discussion for 2026 payroll, in addition to considering a merit-based pay increase for employees. After committee discussion, it was decided for staff to present a follow up at a future meeting.

7. Discussion regarding ordering 2026 Ford Police Interceptor squad prior to budget approval due to limited ordering window:

Police Chief Weiner shared that the ordering window is available to order the next squad car. Napleton would be handling the ordering so as to keep the fleet the same. The vehicle would be received at the beginning of 2026 and so the expenditure would not happen until then. Alderperson Rostad asked if there would be a body change for the 2026 model year. Weiner answered that it occurred in 2025. Weiner presented two alternatives for outfitting. One would utilize the retired squad's equipment on the new vehicle and the other would be to install all new. The cost difference could be covered by the LESO funds, budgeting for about \$6,000 with the additional \$12,000 (approx.) needed coming from the LESO funds. Committee members agreed to move forward to the August 19, 2025 Common Council meeting.

8. Update on LESO program:

Chief Weiner shared an update on the LESO Program on behalf of Lt. Darrell Ward. Previously this year LESO funds were going to be used to purchase four used vehicles, but the purchase did not go through due to the mechanical condition of the vehicles. The seller took all of the vehicles back at no charge. Ward was able to purchase a used squad for \$8,500 which has about 100,000 miles on it. Plan to get it outfitted in the next couple of months. In the future, it would be more beneficial to have an increased spending limit with this program to allow more flexibility in purchases.

Adjourn

Motion made by Alderperson Lawson, Seconded by Alderperson Roelke to adjourn at 8:03pm. 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.

Respectfully Submitted by
Susan L. Caine, Clerk