



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Roll Call

President Finkler called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Members present included Mayor Joe Hammer, Council President Molly Finkler, Alderperson Michael Lawson, Alderperson Marcus Meier, Alderperson Trina Reid and Alderperson Amy Roelke.

ABSENT

Alderperson Ryan Rostad was excused.

Notice of Open Meeting

Noted as posted.

Open Public Hearing for the 2025 Street and Utility Improvements – Brookside Lane Project (Please Note: City residents can speak for up to three minutes.)

President Finkler opened the Public Hearing at 6:31pm and asked if anyone present would like to speak about the 2025 Street and Utility Improvements Brookside Lane Preliminary Report. The following residents spoke:

Ronald Durst - 403 Brookside Lane - asked about the project start date and possible tree removal if there is significant root damage that kills the tree in his front yard.

Rob Pratt - 305 Brookside Lane - asked about sidewalks, utility boxes, and would like his front maple tree saved, if possible.

James First - 301 Brookside Lane - asked about disruption of traffic flow, trash collection and mail delivery throughout the project. Would like to know if they will be receiving notifications ahead of time.

Brian Toczyski with Ruekert-Mielke was present to answer any questions. The project is due to start in mid to late July and be completed by mid to late September. Electrical and Gas work may have already begun. He made note of the residents' concerns and shared that he has already been in conversation with Department of Public Works and City Staff regarding most of these items.

Close Public Hearing

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:40pm.

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Alderperson Roelke, Seconded by Alderperson Meier to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Public Comment (Please Note: City residents can address the Committee of the Whole members on one or more topics for up to three minutes.)

None.

New Business

- 2. Discussion of "Class A" Alcohol License Applications for Licensing period of July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 which include: Jose Roberto Alvarado, Owner dba Blanca's Mexican Store; Chestor Bandits Store Inc dba Chestor Bandits Store; Columbus Market LLC; Dolgencorp, LLC dba Dollar General Store #10422; Kwik Trip, Inc. dba Kwik Trip #808; Liberty Square Gas Station, Inc. dba Refuel Pantry – Columbus West; Ultra Mart Foods, LLC dba Pick 'n Save #392; and Walgreen Co dba Walgreens #10396:**

Council President Finkler shared that these applications and the "Class B", Class "B", and Cigarette, Tobacco and Electronic Vaping Device Retail license applications have been mostly completed through the process and Clerk Caine is awaiting final checks on just a couple of items so they could be approved at the Council Meeting pending final City Clerk approval once through process. All businesses are currently licensed through June 30, 2025. Committee members agreed to move forward to the June 17, 2025 Common Council meeting.

- 3. Discussion of "Class B" Alcohol License Applications for the Licensing period of July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 which include: Jamesco, Inc dba Cardinal Cage; Columbus Country Club, Inc. dba Columbus Country Club; Columbus Family Restaurant, LLC dba Columbus Family Restaurant; Hui Yang, Agent dba Hachi Hachi Sushi & Hibachi; Kestrel Golf Properties, LLC dba Kestrel Ridge Golf Course; Magnolia I. Fuentes, Owner dba Magnolia's Grill and Bar; MP's Town Tap. LLC dba MP's Town Tap; Tequilas Bar & Grill, LLC dba Tequilas Bar & Grill; and Wisco Cheese & Cheers Bistro dba Cheese & Cheers Bistro:**

All businesses are currently licensed through June 30, 2025. Committee members agreed to move forward to the June 17, 2025 Common Council meeting.

- 4. Discussion of Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage License Application for Licensing period of July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026, for Columbus Transport Co., Inc. dba Kurth Brewery:**

Kurth Brewery is currently licensed through June 30, 2025. Committee members agreed to move forward to the June 17, 2025 Common Council meeting.

- 5. Discussion of Cigarette, Tobacco and Electronic Vaping Device Retail License Applications for the Licensing period of July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 for Chestor Bandits Store, Inc.; Columbus Market, LLC, Dolgencorp, LLC dba Dollar General Store #10422; Jamesco, Inc. dba The Cardinal Cage; Kestrel Golf Properties, LLC dba Kestrel Ridge Golf Course; Kwik Trip #808; Last Minute Vape; Liberty Square Gas Station, LLC dba Refuel Pantry - Columbus West; Tobacco and Vape Marketplace, LLC dba Smoke World Vape; and Walgreens #10396:**

All businesses are currently licensed through June 30, 2025. Alder Meier asked if these businesses have received the updated City ordinance information regarding concerning the regulation of electronic smoking devices and electronic smoking device paraphernalia. Clerk Caine shared that the information would be included along with the issuance of their new license. Committee members agreed to move forward to the June 17, 2025 Common Council meeting.

- 6. Discussion regarding ordinance amendments related to the appointment of Zoning Administrator and Weed Commissioner:**

Members discussed referring the ordinance amendment related to the appointment of Zoning Administrator to the Plan Commission for a Public Hearing, and referring the amendment to allow the City Administrator to appoint the Weed Commissioner to Paul Johnson, City Attorney for review and to clarify if this position could be included in a city department job description to come back to a future Committee of the Whole Meeting.

7. Discussion and consideration of the purchase of four used, partially equipped Police Squad Vehicles to be paid for with existing LESO (Law Enforcement Support Office) funding:

Lieutenant Darrell Ward shared the background of the LESO funding system and reminded Committee Members that when it was approved in May by Council that he was to continue moving forward with this program with the intent it would be utilized as part of the city retention program for new officers. Purchasing these four vehicles would be a step in the process.

The vehicles have moderate miles on them and are partially equipped saving the city money versus buying stock vehicles that would have to be fully equipped. It is thought that these vehicles will be in service for the department by late 2025, or early 2026 and there is considerable life span left on each. The current agreement would be that we pay B&B Motorcar \$10,000/squad for a total of \$40,000. This deal includes the trade in of the 1998 Hummer XLC2 that we currently have in our possession, that is available for disposal, for an immediate and guaranteed value of \$15,000. This vehicle would then be taken to auction to try and sell it for greater than the guaranteed amount. Should the vehicle auction for more than the \$15,000 B&B would return the excess funds, minus their auction/processing fees. The net payment amount to B&B would be approximately \$25,000.

Members questioned Ward on various aspects of the purchase including the effect on our city insurance policy with take-home vehicles, additional cost to complete the outfitting of each vehicle, and interim storage of the additional vehicles. Ward is guesstimating it would cost an additional \$7,000 - 10,000/vehicle depending on the cost of equipment needed, and hopefully with the take-home policy in place for officers, there should not be a huge need for additional storage, however the department has several options available for that. The insurance would cost approximately an additional \$3,200 to add the four vehicles. The take-home squad program does not have any effect on our current insurance coverage or costs.

Adjourn

Motion made by Alderperson Roelke, Seconded by Alderperson Meier to adjourn at 7:12pm. 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.