

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
July 8, 2024

The July 8, 2024, the City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Blvd. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderwoman Jennifer Methvin, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also Present were: Interim Administrator Tony Graff, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Finance Director Carron Johnson, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer, Attorney Alex Boyd.

Absent were: Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz, Police Chief Ed Clark, Interim City Planner Maura Rigoni, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

**TOPIC: Approval of Amended Agenda**

Mayor Soliman commented that there was an error in the agenda, which was a duplicate agenda item on number nine and ten. The agenda was amended, and everyone was notified. Mayor Soliman then commented that he needed a motion for the amended agenda.

(#1) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal for the Approval of the Amended Agenda as stated for July 8, 2024.

Alderman Dyke asked if it was all right to do this since it was after the forty-eight-hour notice. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that it is all right if two-thirds of the Council agree to it. Alderman Cipiti asked if this amendment was just removing a duplication. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that one item was added and to remove the duplication. Alderman Cipiti commented that he did not think an addition can be made the day of the meeting. Attorney Alex Boyd commented that this was discussed before the meeting and if two-thirds of the Council approves the agenda before acting on it then it is okay. Alderwoman Gazal asked if she wanted to add something to the agenda at the last minute that it would be fine if she has the vote. Attorney Boyd commented that it is possible if it is this type of scenario.

Alderman Cipiti commented that he is concerned when an addition is made on the same day of the meeting since he is not checking his email all the time, he wouldn't know there was an addition. Attorney Boyd commented that this is exactly why they do a motion and vote prior to acting on the agenda so the Council can vote if they want that or not. If the Council does not reach a two-thirds majority vote on the additional item on the agenda, then the previous agenda would remain, and the additional item will not be discussed or voted on.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Methvin, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

**TOPIC: Liquor License – 20631 W. Renwick Road (Jitterhead Brunch LLC)**

Mayor Soliman commented that Jitterhead Brunch LLC located at 20631 W. Renwick Road has been approved for a Class H restaurant liquor license. The owner is Megan Diaz and they met on June 28, 2024, and everything was in order for the license which is Mayor's Choice.

Megan approached the podium and introduced herself. She commented that she owns and operates the restaurant with her husband, Jose Diaz. They will be having breakfast and lunch. They also make specialty coffees and would like to start making cocktails and beer with the liquor license added. They are open every day from 7:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. They will also have private events in the side room that has a separate entrance. These events will be baby showers, bridal showers, birthday parties, and any small events.

Alderman Cipiti asked what type of liquor they would be selling. Megan commented that beer since they have a draft system, Mimosas, Bloody Mary's, and a few breakfast cocktails.

Treasurer Conklin asked if they have registered for the Places for Eating Tax. Megan responded stating they are registered.

Alderdwoman Gazal congratulated Jitterheads Brunch and commented that their Facebook is amazing and very professional looking.

**TOPIC: Old City Hall Phase 2 Study Results**

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that Phase I was completed and it identified four locations that needed additional underground testing.

- A gasoline release incident was reported in 2002 following the removal of a 2,000-gallon underground storage tank located in the Police Department parking lot.
- At the site of an existing 10,000-gallon underground storage tank located at the existing east side loading docks.
- Since the property was used as a bottling plant from 1947-1976 an additional assessment was needed to determine if there was any presence of chlorinated solvents detected on site.
- Since the site was used as an automotive maintenance shop for the city additional assessment was needed to determine if there was any presence of vehicular fluids or hydraulic fluids.

Phase 2 included the following:

- Collection of thirteen samples of soil from ten boring locations.
- They drilled ten borings to a depth of twenty feet.

- Installation of One (1) temporary ground water monitoring well installed behind the building in the old Police Department driveway.
- Installation of four (4) soil/gas sample collection points at a depth of three (3) feet.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that all samples taken were sent to a certified lab to be analyzed for Volatile Organic compounds, Polynuclear Aromatics, Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds, Metals, Lead, and PH levels and the levels were at nothing to be worried about and simple fixes.

Alderman Cipiti asked if this study was just to do with the ground and nothing to do with the building and was told that was correct.

Alderwoman Gazal asked who handles this from this point on. Engineer Wiedeman commented that this should be handled by the developer. She then asked if the developer was aware of this. Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that the developer is aware of the study but does not have a copy of it and they will not be provided a copy until we have an executed contract which would be presented to the Council at the next meeting.

Interim City Administrator Anton Graff commented that there is due diligence in the contract and part of the due diligence is that we must disclose this by law.

**TOPIC: Reza's Auto Repair – Flagpole Variation Fee Refund Request**

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that last September Reza Auto Repair applied for a setback variance for a flagpole on their property which is commercially zoned and by the fee schedule a variation required a \$1,000.00 application fee, which was paid by Reza Auto Repair. The owner had submitted a written request to the city stating that the \$1,000.00 variance fee be waived or reduced since it was for the flagpole. The Council had discussed this at a work session meeting and had directed staff and attorney to adjust the fee schedule to institute a new fee schedule for a flagpole and that revised fee schedule was adopted in December of 2023. The new fee is \$250.00 for a commercial setback variance for a flagpole. Interim Director Mentzer requested a motion to authorize staff to issue the \$750.00 flagpole refund to Reza Auto Repair.

Alderman Cipiti commented that he feels we should waive all fees for a veteran who wants to put a flag on their property. Alderwoman Methvin commented that she would support that as well.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to refund Reza Auto Repair \$750.00 for the flagpole variation application.

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Methvin, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to waive a flagpole variance fee for any veteran applying.

Aldersperson Oberlin commented that she is not comfortable making a split decision on something without discussing it. Alderman Albert agreed and would like to see a copy of the current ordinance.

Mayor Soliman asked Interim Director Mentzer if he could have this on a future work session.

**TOPIC: Plan Commission Zoning Variation Recommendation for Protection Bollards at 2378 Plainfield Road Property**

Administrative Clerk Zoe Gates commented that this is a variation recommendation for protection bollards at 2378 Plainfield Road. The applicant is Amitoj Singh Mehta, and he is a dentist, and the location is the dental office. Mr. Mehta received a permit to install bollards around the Plainfield Roadside of the property. This property has been hit by a vehicle and in the past that property was hit by a vehicle twice before Mr. Mehta owned the property. Mr. Mehta would like to place the bollards along the Caton Farm Roadside of the building and that side of the building is within five feet of the property line and that distance from the property line does not fit the zoning ordinance. Mr. Mehta is asking for this variation to get closer than what is normally allowed to the property line.

Administrative Clerk Gates commented that the Plan Commission did approve this variation unanimously on July 27, 2024.

Aldersperson Oberlin commented that having the bollards so close to the road causes her some concern since there are so many accidents there and if someone veers off just a little, they will hit a bollard.

Administrative Clerk Gates commented that the city engineer reviewed the drawings and went onsite to check and make sure the bollards would not be in the clear zone for Caton Farm Road and it was decided they will not be in the clear zone.

Plan Commission Chair Bill Thomas commented that there is a curb along Caton Farm Road.

Alderman Albert commented that he would not even classify the bollards as being fence-like, but this is for safety and an easy decision.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to approve the variation for the bollards at 2378 Plainfield Road.

AYES: Ald. Kubal, Albert, Cipiti, Oberlin, Gazal, Jefferson, Methvin, Dyke.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

**TOPIC: Plan Commission Zoning Variation Recommendation on MIF Planned Unit Development Special Use Permit and Zoning Variation Requests for Lot 17 in the Crest Hill Industrial Park**

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that at the May 13 Work Session meeting this proposed project was presented and their request is for a development cost sharing agreement and the Council was receptive to both of those proposals. This has gone to the Plan Commission where a Public Hearing was held for the request of two variations and a special use request. The two variation requests are for a reduced front yard setback at the southern edge of Advantage Drive reducing the setback from thirty feet that is normally required to fifteen feet and the second setback was a variation for pavement parking lot along the south rear property line adjacent to a retention facility reducing setback from the required five feet to zero feet. This is all in relationship to a 150,000 square foot speculative industrial warehouse office building that MIF is proposing to build on lot seventeen in the Crest Hill Industrial Park. MIF is also the developer of the 577,000 square foot warehouse that is similar in design and currently under construction.

Interim Director Mentzer commented that the Plan Commission held the Public Hearing, and the Plan Commission recommended a unanimous conditional approval of the special use permit and zoning variations.

Alderman Jefferson commented that he is concerned about the width of the roadway if trucks are going through there and wonders if that will be wide enough and safe enough for passing. Interim Director Mentzer commented that the way it was designed meets general standards for this type of development and this is another justification for this variance.

Patrick Swisczc, the Development Manager for Midwest Industrial Funds approached the podium and introduced himself. He commented that the roadway on the west is dedicated for trucks and the width is thirty feet and the Crest Hill code requires twenty-four feet and after assessing the traffic turns there is enough roadway for two trucks and trailers making turns and passing each other. The western road will be dedicated for trucks and all vehicular traffic, and pedestrians will be using the eastern drive isle. He commented that they are trying to avoid mixing trucks and vehicles which is why they have three access points.

Alderwoman Methvin asked if it has been looked at how it will affect traffic on Weber Road. Patrick commented that the traffic study was done to accommodate all the developments in the business park including the projections for the thirty-seven-acre development next door and there will be enough capacity for the roadway system.

Steve Gulden, a consultant for MIF, commented that a good aspect for a smaller building gives potential manufacturing which would bring higher paying jobs and less trucks since it is a smaller building.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote for a Variation recommendation on MIF Planned Unit Development Special Use Permit and Zoning Variation Requests for Lot 17 in the Crest Hill Industrial Park.

AYES: Ald. Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Methvin, Jefferson, Gazal.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

**TOPIC: Cost Sharing Agreement Midwest Industrial Funds Lot 17 – Crest Hill Business Park**

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that on the May 13<sup>th</sup> Work Session Meeting the Council had a discussion regarding the proposed development and cost sharing agreement.

The developer is proposing a \$125,000.00 contribution that the city would be able to use towards the design/development/implementation of roadway improvements that the city felt was necessary to implement for the plan adopting for that community. There is a provision of the agreement that allows the Council to potentially reduce that \$125,000.00 contribution should MIF be able to negotiate a type of access/easement across the TLC property to allow traffic generated by this project to exit onto Lidice Parkway.

There is also a reduction in the city utility tap-on fees of 50%. The standard requirement would be \$44,000.00 for their site and this would be reduced to \$22,000.00.

Mayor Soliman asked for comments from the Council and there were none.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote for the approval of the cost sharing agreement between Midwest Industrial Funds and the City of Crest Hill for Lot 17 in Crest Hill Business Park.

AYES: Ald. Gazal, Jefferson, Methvin, Dyke, Kubal, Albert, Cipiti, Oberlin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

**TOPIC: Proposed City Council Policy for Processing Plan Commission Recommendations**

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that there is no clear policy direction of what Plan Commission recommendations will go forward to the City Council for consideration and discussion at a work session meeting. He commented that no matter how simple the recommendation is it would go to a work session meeting for discussion and to the Council for final discussion and doing it this way can create additional work and slow the process down.

Interim Director Mentzer recommended a new proposed policy that all Plan Commission recommendations involving preliminary Planned Unit Development, Special Use Permit and all zoning administration appeal applications, regardless of the Plan Commission recommendation would have to come to the City Council Work Session Meeting for discussion prior to being on a Council Meeting agenda for final approval. He then commented any other recommendation that comes out of the Plan Commission with a unanimous vote would go straight to a Council meeting for final approval and skip a work session meeting.

This does not prevent the Council from hearing about the case, it just provides for a system that expedites cases smoother and quicker.

The process was further explained from start to finish once the application was submitted. More complex projects will be brought to the Work Session Meeting for discussion before

going to the Council for final approval. Such as larger projects, Special Use, Planned Unit Development, and any appeals. He then gave an example of how the two cases on the agenda tonight were Plan Commission cases the one was the bollard case which was unanimously recommended and could have went straight to the Council saving time but on the other hand the Planned Unit Development for MIF request was a unanimous recommendation but because of the complexity and it being a Planned Unit Development it would still have needed to go to a Work Session Meeting for discussion before going on a City Council agenda for final approval.

Alderwoman Methvin commented that it is a streamlining of the process so we do not have to do it twice if it is something that will typically be passed.

Mayor Soliman commented that in the past Plan Commission Meetings were on the second Wednesday of the month and they would go to the next Council Meeting, which was five days later, for a vote and this worked out well. If there were controversy items, then it was all aired at a Council meeting. It was then moved to the first Monday of the month so that it could go to a work session if needed before going to the Council for approval.

Alderman Albert commented that he does not like surprises, and they were not getting the packets for Plan Commission until about three or four months ago. He then commented that he wants to know why the Plan Commission packets are not online like the City Council packets are.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she is not comfortable with this process and would still like the recommendations to come through a work session, she does not want surprises.

Alderman Cipiti commented that he still wants all recommendations no matter how the Plan Commission votes, to come through the Council for discussion.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that she does not understand why it is so difficult to get the minutes and outcome to the Council by the next Work Session Meeting.

City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall commented that the Plan Commission Meeting is on the Thursday of each month and then there is just Friday to complete the minutes and the Council meeting is then that following Monday and there is really no time to type the minutes.

Alderwoman Methvin asked if there has been negative feedback from business owners about the length of the process. Interim Director Mentzer commented that the type of feedback is usually the applicant asking how many more weeks and how many more meetings they must attend.

Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that there is no work session meeting in between the Plan Commission meeting and the regular Council meeting since the Plan Commission meeting is on the second Thursday of the month. She also commented that the Court Reporter requires two weeks before submitting the city their transcript of the meeting.

Bill Thomas, Plan Commission Chair, approached the podium and commented that the meeting date was just changed from the second Wednesday to the second Thursday of the

month. He then commented that he never has seen when the Council did not have the Plan Commission minutes and stated that they do a great job.

Alderman Albert commented that he is disappointed that the Plan Commission had to cancel the meeting and have a special meeting because there was not enough Commissioners to conduct the meeting, which slows down the process, as well.

Bill Thomas commented that he apologized to both applicants at the beginning of the meeting for having to reschedule the Public Hearing. He also commented that we had a commissioner retire and if anyone knew someone who would like to join the Plan Commission and fill the vacant spot that would be great. He also commented that he will talk to the Commissioners and explain that cannot ever happen again.

Alderpersn Oberlin commented that she understands both sides of the situation, but she would like to know who will be determining what is controversial and what is not controversial and needs to go to the Council since there has been lack of transparency in the past.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to approve the recommended policy process for the Plan Commission recommendations.

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Methvin, Albert, Kubal, Jefferson.

NAYES: Ald. Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor Soliman commented that this will be on the agenda Monday, July 15, 2024.

Alderman Albert commented that he would like to see the Plan Commission packets on Municode.

Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that the minutes are not in the packet for tonight's meeting.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she does not understand why no one respects what the Clerk's Office manages and there are only two employees in the Clerk's Office.

Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that she would love to see the Plan Commission packets on Municode, but they would need to have a computer/laptop to view the packets.

Alderpersn Oberlin asked why the Plan Commissioners would get a laptop and the Council does not get that. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that tablets are harder to read plats and maps and she feels that everyone should have a laptop and not a tablet. Alderman Cipiti commented that the tablets are not hard to read, you can blow the font up if needed.

Alderpersn Oberlin commented that they will be viewing the same thing the Commissioners will be viewing and they have tablets. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that the Council needed to keep in mind that even though they have tablets, four Council members still request a paper copy of the packet.

Bill Thomas commented that they have talked about this before and the Plan Commission would like to go electronic, and they are fine with going on Municode.



**TOPIC: Impact and Applicability of City Resolution #360 on Crest Hill's Potential Annexation of the Vacant Lot at the Northwest Corner of Caton Farm Road and Plum Street**

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that the lot owned by a family at the northwest corner of Caton Farm Road and Plum Street are interested in annexing their lot into the City of Crest Hill. They would like to build their family home on the property. In 1991 the City adopted an approved resolution that requires before any properties are annexed into the City of Crest Hill and located in the Plainfield Fire Protection District that they would need to apply for that property to be disconnected from the Plainfield Fire Protection District and then apply to the Lockport Fire Protection District.

Interim Director Mentzer commented that no one at city hall was aware of this resolution and the Lockport Fire District Protection pointed this out to the city and we then notified the property owner that they would need to comply with the resolution and all that is needed is to apply. The owner had applied, and the Plainfield Fire Protection District had denied the disconnect of their property and Lockport Fire Protection District stated that they still need to apply to Lockport even if Plainfield denied the disconnect.

The applicant stated they would take more steps other than applying and hire an attorney and file a lawsuit to compel Plainfield Fire Protection District to allow them out of their district. The applicant is just wanting to build their home.

It was stated that the property owner does not want to pay the city's \$5,000.00 annexation application fee if the City Council is going to say you must do more than what is in the resolution. Interim Director Mentzer commented that he was looking for clarification from the Council on this so the property owner can make an informed decision if they will apply and pay the \$5,000.00 application fee.

Alderperson Oberlin asked if we could amend the resolution to be more precise since it is our resolution. Interim Director Mentzer commented that we can amend the resolution. She also commented that we need to do whatever we can to help the property owner.

Attorney Alex Boyd commented that the resolution states they need to apply for annexation and the property owners have met every burden they needed to and to take it further it is just a resolution and not a binding ordinance. The resolution also states that it shall be the policy of the Crest Hill City Council and Plan Commission and not necessarily a requirement just a policy and the board can waive the policy however they see fit. He also commented that the property owners have fulfilled their duties as the resolution stands.

The Fire Protection Districts are meeting on July 11, 2024. Mayor Soliman asked if Interim Director Mentzer could update us on what they decided at the next meeting if they came to some type of agreement.

**TOPIC: Potential Organization Chart and City Code Revisions to Reflect Current Community Development Staffing and Operational Responsibilities**

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that this is informational and stated that the city staff has been working doing a thorough review of the city code to identify sections and provisions that either refer to staff positions that no

longer exist and/or allocate responsibilities to individuals and/or departments in a manner that is consistent in how the city operates. He commented that he wanted to make aware that over the next several months you will see a variety of these types of code amendments being brought to the City Council.

### **TOPIC: Employee Manual Review & Revisions**

Interim Human Resources Manager Dave Strahl commented that he had put together some items primarily for clarifications of policies and modifications for current trends and consistency. These are:

DRIVER'S LICENSE – Adding language that the city will periodically perform driver's license confirmation check to make sure the license is valid.

ANTI-NEPOTISM – Adding language to clarify regarding immediate family members working in the same department.

APPOINTMENTS – Suggesting that we modify that the City Council direction on appointments be focused on the management level and not the individual positions such as building inspectors, or clerical positions. The ordinance will need to be amended if this is approved.

Alderman Gazal and Alderperson Oberlin do not think this should be modified because of the series of missteps that have happened in the past.

COMPENSATORY TIME OFF – Adding language that a supervisor must approve the additional work time past the normal time.

Alderman Cipiti asked how the compensatory time is recorded in the system. Interim Manager Strahl commented that the payroll system tracks the time logged and used. The problem here is the employee is logging overtime/compensatory time without supervisor approval and with this new language one would have supervisor and employee approval before it is worked.

Alderman Cipiti asked if it is required for the compensatory time taken to be used within the time period it is earned. Interim Manager Strahl commented that you cannot limit the use of the compensatory time to be within the same payroll. Alderman Cipiti asked who says that the compensatory time cannot be used within that payroll. Union Attorney John Kelly commented that the United States Department of Labor states that and they oversee compensatory time rules relative to the use of compensatory time. Alderman Cipiti then asked if an organization can decide how compensatory time is used. Attorney Kelly said you can but there are specific guidelines as to when you could deny the use of compensatory time and there is nothing in the rules or statute that speaks to a mandatory use during the same period of time. Alderman Cipiti commented that not mandate it but we, the city, could. Attorney Kelly commented that you cannot, it is a federal law that you can give greater benefits than what the law states, but you cannot give less. Attorney Kelly continued to explain that compensatory time is a creation of overtime, effectively overtime but only taken in time off as opposed to pay and you are under those rules. There are certain employees who are not covered by overtime requirements and their employer will allow

those employees to take time off when they work past their regular work hours, and these employers may call it compensatory time, but it is not compensatory time.

Alderwoman Methvin asked if there is a minimum requirement for time being requested before it can be taken off. Attorney Kelly commented that that is a policy decision per employer.

Treasurer Conklin commented that compensatory time is just a conversion of overtime hours. He then commented that if the employee is made to take it in the same pay period you could have an employee earn compensatory time on the last day of the pay period.

Interim Manager Strahl commented that if you require people to use the compensatory time in the same period it is earned you would have an operational issue and would be creating more of a challenge keeping operations running smoothly.

Alderman Oberlin asked who determines if they receive compensatory time or overtime. Interim Manager Strahl commented that it is up to the employee. Interim Administrator Graff commented as it is written now, it is the employees' option to take monetary compensation or compensatory time compensation for overtime worked and all Interim Manager Strahl is doing is adding another layer of supervision over overtime.

Interim Administrator Graff commented that every quarter an employee is allowed to collect up to sixty hours and after that it automatically switches to monetary. He then commented that under the Federal Labor Act it is the employee's choice how they would like to receive the overtime worked.

CALL BACK - Adding language that states the individual employees not covered under the Collective Bargaining Agreement should not fall under the Collective Bargaining Agreement Call Back language. The individuals not falling under the agreement should be paid on an hour-for-hour basis for overtime.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that we have paid someone like a union employee for fifteen years that is not a union employee.

Alderman Jefferson asked if there was a payroll clerk that oversees this. Interim Finance Director Carron Johnson commented that there is a payroll individual but there needs to be more oversight. She also commented that she has told her staff that if they need to work overtime, they will need to inform her the morning of and not at 4:25 p.m. She also stated that more attention needs to be given when reviewing timecards and feels we need to be comparing what the payroll system states compared to the timecard and this is her intent to start doing.

Treasurer Conklin commented that Interim Director Johnson has noticed a lack of control in the Payroll Department and has been working on suggestions on how we can oversee this.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if staff are clocking in and out when they go to lunch. Interim Administrator Graff commented that staff clock in and out when going to lunch.

Clerk Vershay-Hall asked when her staff attends the Plan Commission Meetings and the Council Meetings afterhours, does she have to preapprove them for these meetings. She was told she will need to have documentation before attending the meetings and ask the employee if they want compensatory time or overtime.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY – Added language that an employee may not use their position or represent themselves as an employee of the city to influence or recommend any political candidate or cause.

VACATION – Added a carryover vacation request form, since vacation time can be carried over if necessary. There was a policy stating that you can carry-over vacation time in the handbook but no standard form.

EMERGENCY/BEREAVEMENT – There is language regarding three-day emergency time off and three-day bereavement time if needed and they are combined but Interim Manager Strahl commented that it concerned him that they were mixed. The new language would clarify what that time would be. He commented that an emergency should be treated different then bereavement.

Aldersperson Oberlin asked if the three days are per year. Interim Manager Strahl commented that per event, since you can have more than one death and more than one emergency as well, but the new policy would clarify that. She then asked what if someone comes monthly with an emergency event. Interim Manager Strahl commented that we would need more documentation to clarify the emergency.

MILITARY LEAVE – Added language stating any military leave must be requested through providing written orders detailing the length of the deployment for training for the city to keep paying the employee wages while deployed.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT – Added language that if the city approves the course, they are not obligated to approve a course of study for the future. This is on a case-by-case basis and a course-by-course basis and if there is no money they are not obligated to fund the class.

Aldersperson Oberlin asked for further discussion on this topic since in the past we have been in lawsuits over this because employees think this is a training ground here and we pay for their education and then they leave with no ramifications.

Interim Manager Strahl commented that this policy mirrors what is in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Alderwoman Gazal commented that she is tired of hearing that we must match what the union does, there is a reason some employees are not in the union.

Interim Manager Strahl commented that he understands but tuition reimbursement is more of a benefit for the employee in terms of working here or somewhere else.

Alderwoman Methvin commented that most employers have a cap on this per year.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE POLICY – Added more information regarding the use of city provided technology and this added information was run by the I.T. advisors and were told this was a good change from an operational standpoint and would help them as well.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that this will stop the google searches and shopping. Interim Manager Strahl commented that this policy spells out that there is no privacy if doing this and if we do a search and find the employee is not actually working there will be potential discipline. He also commented that the employee will need to sign off on this policy that they have read and understand the policy.

Alderman Oberlin would like employees to sign on a yearly basis.

**EMPLOYEE TRANSFER POLICY** – This was an added policy that the Council approved an employee transfer placement policy this past fall and this is just codifying this in the personnel manual.

**MEAL REIMBURSEMENT** – There are terms that are being used interchangeably that do not mean the same thing regarding meal reimbursement and per diem. This language is being added to clarify meal reimbursement. This will also be included in a separate discussion with tuition reimbursement.

Alderman Jefferson asked if we could add in the political activity section that an employee should not be wearing their city issued uniform while doing any political campaigning. It was stated that could be added.

**TOPIC: Honorary Street Sign**

Mayor Soliman commented that he would like to have an honorary street sign after a couple of individuals. He also commented that he purposely left the names of the individuals off the memo, since many know them, and he would like to keep it a secret at this time, since it will be a surprise to them at an event. This would be a brown honorary street sign located at Root Street and Crestwood Drive.

Many Council members are having a problem with keeping the names secret and asked if we should go into executive session to discuss this.

Mayor Soliman commented that these people ran the organization at Crestwood and Root Street for forty-five years and he was at a party last week and a request was made to the mayor asking to change the street of Crestwood to their name. Mayor Soliman informed the person requesting this that it is not in the policy and could not be done since the street names are only named after mayors. Mayor Soliman then suggested that we put up a brown honorary street sign, which is just ceremonial, at the intersection of Crestwood Drive and Root Street leading into the facilities with the two individuals' names on that sign. The price for this sign is \$58.54.

Mayor Soliman asked for the Council's concurrence. He then commented that he would give them the sign at their party in August and have it placed on the telephone pole above the Crestwood Street sign.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she would like to go into executive session, since they are voting on something that does not have a name. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he does not believe we can go into executive session for the naming of a street. He then commented that we should have a policy discussion regarding this since in the future you could have someone wanting to do this and keep it a secret from the person.

The policy discussion should be regarding how a mayor can make ceremonial/honorary street signs that would go to a committee or the City Council.

Many Council members were not comfortable taking a vote on something they do not know the names of the individuals.

Alderman Dyke commented that the honorary sign for George Mikan that was on Broadway Street is missing and he contacted the Public Works Director and asked him if they knew where the sign was and he was told it is long gone. Alderman Dyke asked if we should get a replacement sign for George Mikan.

Alderman Oberlin commented that this will open an entire issue and more people wanting to honor people in the city.

Mayor Soliman took the request off the table. He commented that if we did this it would open more and then we would have a picking and choosing issue.

Alderman Dyke asked if we could do an honorary sign for Alderman John Vershay since he is the longest to serve the City of Crest Hill in history of forty-five years and feel he deserves a sign.

Alderman Albert commented that he agrees with Alderman Dyke, but we need to produce a policy first.

Alderman Methvin asked if we could do a key to the city to honor these people for their commitment.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Linda Dyke, a resident, commented that she had done an honorary street sign for a pastor of a church in the City of Joliet. She then commented that it took her ten months to follow the process and if they would like to see the paperwork, she has it.

#### **MAYOR'S UPDATES:**

There were no mayor updates.

#### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:**

Interim Administrator Tony Graff commented that he wanted the Council to think about the location of the monument sign and if it should be on a pillar or a different location. He also commented that we received a price of \$3,600.00 to install.

Interim Director Graff commented that we still do not have applicants for the Public Works Director position. He then commented that he received the proposal from GovHR, and they would charge \$7,000.00 to do the professional outreach.

Interim Director Graff also commented that the City Administrator proposal came on Saturday, and it was \$25,000.00 with a \$1,000.00 discount, for a total of \$24,000.00 and

we need to have further discussion in the executive session on this topic. It was discussed to place this item on the next agenda.

**COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:**

Alderman Dyke commented that he had given everyone documents about fraud, and someone will be coming to discuss this with them.

Alderman Dyke also commented that in the year of 2023, he noticed how much money we have spent on coffee and how it is continually rising, and he wondered how Council would like to discuss the coffee expense, since it was \$4,000.00 last year.

Mayor Soliman asked for a motion to go into executive session on 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

(#1) Motion by Alderwoman Gazal seconded by Alderman Cipiti, to go into an executive session on 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Methvin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Executive Session 9:39 p.m.

(#2) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal to reconvene from the executive session on 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Methvin, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Reconvened at 10:32 p.m.

There being no further business before the Council, and no action needed from the executive session, the meeting is adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 p.m.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.  
As presented \_\_\_\_\_  
As amended \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR

DRAFT