

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
July 22, 2024

The July 22, 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, Alderwoman Jennifer Methvin, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert.

Absent Council Members: Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also Present were: Interim City Administrator Tony Graff, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Police Chief Ed Clark, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer, Interim Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl, Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni.

Mayor Soliman excused Alderman Dyke and Alderman Kubal from attending tonight's meeting.

Mayor Soliman also commented that he received a text from John Evans asking if he could address the City Council and speak at the beginning of tonight's meeting since he has another commitment tonight.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

John Evans, a resident, approached the podium and requested that the City Council waive the tap-on fee for the property at 1916 Cora Street. He stated he purchased the land in 2000 and there is currently a B-Box located there. He commented that he cannot remember exactly when he paid, and the city cannot prove that he did not pay. John also commented that after talking to a previous Superintendent it was stated that the only way there would be a hook-up at that location is either it was paid or there was an existing B-Box at the location.

John stated that he is planning to build a home on this lot in the late fall or next year. He had a survey done and it is a building lot that is conformed.

Mayor Soliman took an informal vote to waive the tap-on fee for 1916 Cora Street.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Dyke.

City Attorney Mike Stiff commented that the Council could not act on this tonight, but it could be put on the agenda. He stated that he can draft a resolution, or the Council can vote on it and a formal resolution would not be needed.

It was stated that the Clerk's Office would need to review files and see if there is a resolution or ordinance that was created on another property a few years back and let the attorney know.

Mayor Soliman commented that this will be on the August 5, 2024, agenda.

TOPIC: Presentation by Charlene Stevens, GovHR – Recruitment Services

Charlene Stevens the Executive Vice President with GovHR USA gave a presentation.

Charlene commented that she joined GOV HR USA in 2019 and has conducted over seventy (70) executive recruitments across the country. She gave a brief background to herself and her experience and how the process would work.

Alderwoman Gazal asked why Crest Hill is not getting good leads or the elite candidates and asked if it is because it is Crest Hill. She then asked to explain how GovHR advertises Crest Hill and why Crest Hill does not get good candidates with good resumes.

Charlene commented that GovHR takes the standard procedure as they do for other communities and advertise the position locally and in the State of Illinois and actively reach out to the candidates. She then commented that sometimes when they are not successful in receiving good candidates there possibly could be a history of transition or a history of turnover that would make the candidates concerned, and it could be the upcoming election that could create changes on the governing body. She recommended starting the search in the Springtime for a candidate when there is more clarity which gives the candidates a clearer direction and helps overcome the candidates concerns.

Alderwoman Gazal asked Charlene to explain more why Crest Hill does not get good leads. Charlene commented that when a candidate sense there are stability concerns or if the candidate has concerns that there is a stronger candidate those candidates would not put their name forward.

Alderperson Methvin commented that she understands someone taking on this role in an upcoming election but asked if Charlene believes there will be better leads after the election has taken place. Charlene commented that she would believe that there would be better candidates since there is more clarity. Alderwoman Methvin asked what the working pool currently is for this type of position, and how many people are looking for this type of role. Charlene commented that they are seeing anywhere from 15-20 applicants for the size of Crest Hill.

Alderwoman Methvin asked if Crest Hill is competitive for their compensation package. Charlene stated that our compensation package is competitive.

Mayor Soliman asked how long the contract is good for and if the contract pricing would be honored if we waited until February or March of 2025 to start the search. Charlene commented that GovHR would honor the current pricing.

Aldерwoman Gazal asked if what she was saying was to wait to start the search for a candidate. Charlene stated that she would recommend waiting until the spring when there is more clarity after the elections. Aldерwoman Gazal commented that she agrees with them to a point but most of the Council will be remaining, and a good candidate can apply and prove themselves.

Aldерman Jefferson asked once the post is posted, is Crest Hill posted with other municipalities or exclusively Crest Hill. Charlene commented that they have candidates who are looking for a certain position and they are grouped together, and they would notify them of the posting, and it would be posted on social media sites and other sources.

Aldерwoman Gazal asked if Charlene had received feedback from Ryan Cotton, our previous GovHR representative, that Crest Hill is slow on the hiring process. Charlene commented that she realizes that sometimes you cannot speed the process up but that would help and most people in the public spectrum realize that there is a 90 – 120-day process.

Aldерwoman Gazal asked if this is for the permanent City Administrator or Interim, and she was told it was for a permanent City Administrator.

Mayor Soliman commented that GovHR will honor the contract with the verbiage and the cost through March and recommends starting the process in February or early March. Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

AYES: Ald. Methvin, Albert, Jefferson.

NAYES: Ald. Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti.

ABSENT: Ald. Dyke, Kubal.

Mayor Soliman commented that there is a tie, but we have two absences, and we will need to hear their thoughts on the recommendation of waiting. He also informed Charlene that once we hear from the absent aldermen, we will let her know how to proceed.

Aldерwoman Methvin commented that she believes that most people looking for this level of a position are not going to walk into the uncertainty of an impending election and if we do get someone now to accept the position it makes her wonder how invested they would be knowing there could be changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were none.

MAYOR UPDATES:

There were none.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:

There were none.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

There were none.

Alderwoman Gazal asked Interim Administrator Graff if she could get an answer to the questions that she emailed him. Interim Administrator Graff commented that we are still doing research and receiving quotes. There is a quote from Concrete by Wagner, but we are trying to find someone who can do the work quickly.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she understands all of that and knows since she talked to the Building Commissioner Don Seeman, but she wanted to know when the interim administrator can reply to her concerns she sent in the email. Interim Administrator Graff stated that as soon as he receives the answers he will reply.

Alderperson Oberlin asked how long the situation has been going on with the water above the electrical box and she also commented that she does not feel Visqueen over electrical components was not a great idea and alarms her.

Interim Administrator Graff commented that the way it was explained to him is that this has been happening since we started operating in the building. When the pipes were put in for the electrical to come through, the grouting was on the inside only and not on the outside and Concrete by Wagner believes that is what has caused the deterioration. When the dirt and stone get sucked out, we will be able to verify that is what was causing this.

Alderperson Oberlin commented again that this is unacceptable that it was not important enough to bring it to light and had they not had to go into the basement for a tornado they might have never known. Interim Administrator Graff commented that they have been trying to get contractors to look at this issue, but it has been hard this time of year.

Alderman Cipiti commented that this has been going on for over a year and the process getting it fixed should have been taking place when it was first discovered and not put up plastic sheeting. He then asked Interim Administrator Graff when he first became aware of this issue. Interim Administrator Graff commented that it was late June when he was told they are going to start getting proposals for the work to fix it. Alderman Cipiti then asked when Interim Administrator Graff started, and it was stated in February. Alderman Cipiti then asked why he did not feel this was serious enough to bring this to the Council. Interim Administrator Graff commented that he felt this is a maintenance issue and said that the Council needed to understand that this has been going on for over a year and he did not start here until February 2024.

Alderman Cipiti asked Mayor Soliman when he was made aware of the leak. Mayor Soliman commented that he was not aware of it until they went in the basement for the tornado.

It was then asked who does the inspection of the building and it was said that Tony in Building Maintenance does, and he reports to the Public Works Director. Alderwoman Gazal asked why the Public Works Director has anything to do with the City Center and stated that she feels there should be a walk-through inspection of the building every day.

Alderwoman Gazal asked who does the walk-through and checks the safety of this building. Interim Administrator Graff stated that Tony in Building Maintenance does the walk-throughs. Alderwoman Gazal commented that Tony needs to have more communication regarding these issues and once again she stated that a labor employee

should not be making decisions for the city. Interim Administrator Graff commented that that is his job.

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 Alderperson Oberlin 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, Methvin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Dyke.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Executive Session 7:51 p.m.

(#2) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Methvin 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. Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Methvin, Jefferson.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Kubal, Dyke.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Reconvened at 9:52 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 9:52 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2024.

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR