

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
September 26, 2022

The September 26, 2022 City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 1610 Plainfield Road 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, Alderman John Vershay, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Administrator Jim Marino, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Economic Developer Tony Budzikowski, IT Director Tim Stinnett

TOPIC: Liquor License Approval – 20631 Renwick Rd.

Mayor Soliman presented a Liquor License Approval -20631 Renwick Road per the memo dated September 12, 2022. This is for the Crusade Burger Bar. The owners are currently not in attendance so we will continue on with the agenda.

TOPIC: Digital Advertising Draft Lease Agreement and Sign Ordinance Discussion.

Mayor Soliman presented the Digital Advertising Sign Locations & Lease Agreement per the memo dated September 26, 2022. Engineer Wiedeman informed the Council that we had discussion in July on the new city signage. We have been working with Community Digital Displays (CDD) for the installation of digital message boards. Staff was directed to do the following items. Finalize the initial locations. Prepare concept exhibits of digital signs. Prepare and present a draft agreement. Review section 15.12 of the sign code for potential revisions. We are still doing a review of the current sign code so this will be discussed at a future work session. Engineer Wiedeman would like to get concurrence from the Council on the four locations. They are as follows. The SE corner of Weber and City Center Rd – Double sided sign. The NE corner of Theodore and Gaylord – Single face sign. The NW corner of Caton Farm and Kubinski – Double sided sign and Renwick (before the entrance of the golf course) – Double sided sign. These are the locations that the sign company would like to start with, and they are ready to sign a lease. Alderwoman Gazal asked where the location on Renwick is. Engineer Wiedeman explained where it would be located. Also, this a high traffic area and would be a good place for a sign. On location 1 and 4 we will need to secure an easement agreement or land acquisition. Location 2 would require a special use permit from the Will County Forest Preserve. Alderperson Oberlin thanked the engineer for providing a copy of the correspondence to the Council. Bill Cota gave a presentation on the proposed signage and locations. Each sign is specifically designed for its location. Engineer Wiedeman explained that these drawings that were submitted are concepts. The landscaping is proposed to be done by Hitchcock so that all locations will be uniform. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we are going to be charged for the landscape design. This cost is included in the welcome sign agreement.

Alderson Oberlin questioned the 20 year agreement. It begins on the commencement date of the agreement and shall continue until the date of completion and full operation. Is this for all of the signs, or just the first one. Mr. Cota said it is typically after the last location is done. Right now it's 8 to 10 weeks production time. Alderson Oberlin asked if there are other sites added, would this agreement restart from then. Typically it does. Mr. Cota explained that we are looking at long term because in 10 years, some of the signs will need to be refaced. The wording can be updated in the lease as to how the 20-year agreement works. Alderson Gazal asked will the City be able to advertise on the sign. The City will have 1 slot to put their advertising on the boards. Mr. Cota went over how the advertising board works. Alderson Oberlin asked if an additional slot is needed by the City, will it be at a cost. She was told that each slot holds multiple advertisements which are 10 seconds long. Alderman Albert asked if we could share our space with another government entity such as the library. You could not. They would be charged the not-for-profit rate. Alderson Gazal asked what if we were doing a joint event with the library. The event would have to be City sponsored. Discussion followed on various City items that could go on the sign. Alderman Albert questioned the sizing of the signs. Mr. Cota went over the size of the proposed signage according to the locations. Alderman Albert brought up the placement of the sign on Renwick Road. Discussion followed on how this location was chosen. It was originally Forest Preserve property but was split up and a portion of it given to Lewis University. Engineer Wiedeman is not sure that the school knows that this property now belongs to them. Alderman Albert questioned a power source for the sign. There is electricity at the site. Mr. Cota explained that there is good visibility at this location. Alderman Cipiti questioned the location on Route 30 and Route 53. This was unavailable as these are State roads. Alderman Cipiti asked who would be scheduling when different things are posted on the signs as far as the City. Administrator Marino explained that we would post items in conjunction with the website and social media. Alderman Vershay asked how long during the day and night would the sign be lit. It is active 24 hours per day. Alderman Vershay questioned the stability of the sign during a storm with high winds. Mr. Cota explained that it is affixed to steel poles that is covered by the façade and is rated to withstand 110 mph winds. Alderson Oberlin asked if the Attorney reviewed the documents and found them to be in order. Attorney Stiff was in agreement with the documents.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Digital Advertising Draft Lease Agreement and Sign Ordinance Discussion (including the 20 year agreement and additional signage in the future). All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Discussion of Amendments to Chapter 2.22 (City Administrator)

Mayor Soliman presented the Amendment to City Administrator Ordinance per the memo from Spesia & Taylor dated September 26, 2022. Alderson Oberlin asked the Attorney in regard to the copy of the 65 ILCS 5/31.1-30-5 that was provided to the Council, can he clarify that if the Mayor requested the removal of the Administrator, would it require 2/3's of Council approval. Attorney Stiff explained that one section is on appointments and the other is on removal. Alderson Oberlin asked if the Mayor wanted to dismiss someone, but the Council voted by 2/3'rds to retain them, the person would remain as a staff member.

Alderman Vershay questioned section C in the ordinance. Attorney Stiff explained that he is not sure why this was put in the ordinance. His thought was that any information that needs to go to Civil Service comes from the City through the Administrator. Alderson

Oberlin asked if the potential candidates for City jobs go through testing prior to notification to Civil Service. Once a potential candidate goes through testing and interviews we generate the hiring list, and it is approved by Civil Service. Alderman Vershay asked if a department needs to hire, do they go through the Civil Service list to fill the vacancy. Administrator Marino explained that an offer would be made to the first person on the list. Alderman Cipiti asked if most municipalities utilize a Civil Service for the hiring of staff. Administrator Marino said that very few go through a Civil Service. The only way that you can dissolve the Civil Service is through a referendum put before the voters of the City. Alderman Vershay explained that the Civil Service was created so that you don't show favoritism to relatives or friends when filling vacancies. Alderman Vershay feels that the Civil Service is good to have in place. The Attorney went over the verbiage in the ordinance that was relined for the Council's on how the Administrator's position relates to Civil Service. He reminded the Council that the Administrator does not do the hiring. The Attorney read the amended verbiage which was "to facilitate the facts and evidence to the Civil Service for creation of a list for hiring, promotions, discipline of any non-department heads, except for Police Department employees) unless otherwise provided by the Statutes". Alderman Jefferson said that the majority of the hires coming in would be a part of a bargaining unit and is in favor of how the Attorney has written the section. Alderman Cipiti questioned the performance evaluation being done annually. Can we put a date on this so that we know when it is coming up. Administrator Marino explained that this may not work due to the hiring date of the employee. Alderman Cipiti thought that it was in the employment agreement for May of the calendar year. The Attorney asked if we want to do the evaluation on the anniversary date or a specific date. Mayor Soliman thought they were done around May 1st. Alderman Dyke felt that we should go with the date that is stated in the individual's contract. Treasurer Conklin said that there is a time and process during the year that evaluations are done. Attorney Stiff said that you can have it state, on or before the anniversary date. In regard to section C, the Department Head along with the Administrator would work together in presenting the information to the Civil Service. Alderman Vershay does not agree with the wording "facts and evidence" in section C. Alderman Oberlin thought that by facts and evidence, they are referring to the testing that is done. Lengthy discussion followed on the wording. Alderman Vershay said that in the past the Civil Service reviewed the tests, did the interviews, created the lists, and notified the candidates that they were being hired. Alderman Jefferson said that he thinks that was in the past and some things have changed since then. Administrator Marino explained that the staff does the work, and the Civil Service is the approving body. It works the same with the Council. Staff does the legwork and brings it to Council for their review and approval. Administrator Marino explained that we provide the information to Civil Service, similar to what we do with information that is forwarded to the Council. Alderman Jefferson suggested putting the discussion on Civil Service for another meeting.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Discussion of Amendments to Chapter 2.22 (City Administrator), Section C change and to accept the red line changes as discussed.

The vote was as follows:

No -Alderman Albert, Jefferson, Kubal, Vershay, Mayor Soliman.

Yes – Alderman Dyke, Cipiti, Alderwoman Gazal, Alderperson Oberlin.

Alderperson Oberlin asked that this still be on the Council agenda for a formal vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

MAYORS UPDATES: Mayor Soliman had no items for discussion.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES: There were no committee/liaison updates for discussion.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES: Administrator Marino informed the Council that the new phone system was installed, and training was done with staff. Alderwoman Gazal asked what was the purpose of getting new phones now. Administrator Marino explained that they are plug and play and be taken to the new facility and plugged in. With IT Director Stinnett working with the phone company, we are able to save a significant amount of money. We also have a new voice mail system to take the place of the existing one that cease to function. In regard to the City Center, Public Works will be doing some of the landscaping. The dais is framed out and we are waiting to hear from PT Ferro on the concrete work and blacktop. We will be contacting GovHR to post the ad for the Economic Developer position. Alderperson Oberlin asked if there was something in the agreement with GovHR that if an individual leaves within a certain amount of time from the date of hiring, don't they advertise the position for free. Administrator Marino would look into this and report back to Council. Maura Rigoni will be stepping in as Interim Planner. We met with her to go over some of the projects that are currently in place. Alderman Albert asked why the recommendations from the Plan Commission are being discussed at the work session versus the first meeting of the month. Administrator Marino said that we were following the schedule of work sessions. Alderman Albert said that we normally bring it to the first meeting and in this case the items have already been discussed at a prior work session. Alderperson Oberlin questioned the return of a city issued cellphone from an employee who is no longer with the City. Administrator Marino said that it wasn't returned and the service to the phone was deactivated. He did not see the employee on his last day and any contact we have tried to make has been ignored. Attorney Stiff said that he would discuss this situation with the Police Chief and see what our next step might be. Alderperson Oberlin felt that when someone is no longer employed by the City they should turn in their keys, phones, or other City property before they get their final paycheck. Alderman Dyke said that other places he worked required that everything be turned in or you were responsible to reimburse the company for it. Alderwoman Gazal informed the Council that the gentleman that owns Forza has been trying to contact the City and asked that the Mayor respond to him. Mayor Soliman explained that Director Budzikowski has reached out to him. They would like to reopen as a restaurant only. The Mayor indicated that he reached to out a gentleman who left his phone number but has gotten no response back. The restaurant owner still has a lease on the property. He was told that he could be open as a restaurant, but not be afforded a liquor license. The owner declined the offer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2022

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR

DRAFT