

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
January 23, 2023

The January 23, 2023 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 Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Administrator Jim Marino, Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Attorney Mike Stiff, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz

Absent were: Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Police Chief Ed Clark, Alderman Nate Albert

TOPIC: Lobbyist Update

Josh Hassert updated the Council regarding Brett Hassert. Josh Hassert explained redistricting maps were not updated by the spring session. Veto session was dominated by the safety act, and the lame duck session was on assault weapon issues. They were hoping last year to get a license for Michigan Water. In August, City staff met for the land transfer of the twenty (20) acres on Caton Farm Road and Oakland Avenue. A new bill will be introduced with co-sponsors. There is discussion to come regarding the two hundred (200) acres on Weber Road that was stopped by the Department of Corrections, it is believed the proceeds were to go to Department of Corrections instead of Illinois Department of Transportation. Statesville Prison should be brought back to full capacity of inmates soon. Alderperson Oberlin asked if there is anything the City can do to help expedite where the funds will go. Josh Hassert explained that will be in the discussions and have those ideas proposed. Alderwoman Gazal asked if there is anyway to release the funds for Kelly Road. Josh Hassert stated he would look into that. City Treasurer Conklin asked if there is anything on the past due water bills. It was stated not at this time. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we could get a quarterly update on what is going on pertaining to the City. Josh Hassert stated that would be doable. Council discussed having an update more than once a year.

TOPIC: Richland School District Intergovernmental Agreement

Administrator Marino commented that there was a drafted Intergovernmental Agreement in their packets with Richland School District. Administrator Marino explained that the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) will declare an annual surplus in sharing the revenue with the school district and all the school districts bordering. The City proposed the reasonable amount for the City to declare a surplus would be 10% in years 8, 9, and 10 and then increase to 15% in years 11 to 23, when the TIF expires. Administrator Marino informed the Council that Superintendent of Richland School District, Joe Simpkins, had discussed the IGA with his board at their meeting on January 18, 2023. Joe Simpkins

informed Administrator Marino that the Richland School District Board was in favor of the IGA terms. If Council approves this it will be on the February 6th Council Meeting. Alderman Jefferson asked if this is comparable to other districts at the high end or the low end? Attorney Dave Silverman explained that it is mid-range in comparison and a residential TIF.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote. All members present were in agreement to declare the surplus of 10% in years 8, 9 and 10 and a surplus of 15% in years 11 through 23.

TOPIC: Concept Review ACI Development – Weber Hill Business Park

Interim Planner Maura Rigoni discussed the concept plan for about forty (40) acres that stands between Weber Road extending all the way east to Sak Drive. This concept plan would propose an industrial manufacturing business park of six individual lots. The applicant would propose to rezone the entire business park from three different zoning classifications to a M-2 district. Any property over five (5) acres would be a Planned Unit Development (PUD), and would need a final plat. There is a lot of flooding in this area.

Mayor Soliman asked if this would be a public road? Interim Planner Rigoni stated it would be a public road with a sixty-six (66) foot right of way. The buses will be able to use this road, as well and is a good thing. Mayor Soliman commented that he feels we are at a max with truck repair facilities within the City. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we know what kind of traffic will be generated. Interim Planner Rigoni stated there has not been a traffic study at this time, yet. City Engineer Wiedeman stated there will be a right in, right out, the County cannot deny them this right of way. Alderwoman Gazal stated this is part of Ward 1 and Ward 2. She also asked if the residents have been reached out to so they are aware of what is planned? Interim Planner Rigoni stated as they move forward and know more of what the actual uses are, we will then inform the residents. Alderwoman Gazal stated she believes it is a good plan for that area, as long as we are protecting the residents as well.

Rolf Anderson the Managing Partner for ACI Development further discussed the property and the benefits.

Steve Gulden also addressed the Council regarding this property and the TIF District. He stated how this will get the buses moving and not stopped by the train tracks any longer. Alderperson Oberlin remarked how this will also provide through access for fire, police and ambulance. This would be a big asset to our City.

Alderman Cipiti asked about the development of this area and how it would affect the water flow. It was explained that it will all be handled through the onsite engineering and held within the pond. Alderwoman Gazal asked about a time frame for this. It was commented the timing should be around 6 months and they would like to move quickly.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote. All members present were in agreement on the proposed land use for Weber Hill Business Park.

TOPIC: City Owned Roadway Condition and Funding Discussion

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman reminded Council back in 2020 there was a pavement condition study done and presented to Council in 2021. City Engineer Wiedeman informed Council in their packets is parts of the report with estimates to bring the City owned streets up to a servable condition. He informed Council that 67% of the roads are in poor condition. The city has 50.2 miles of roads with:

- 8.1 miles in good condition
- 3.3 miles in satisfactory condition
- 5.4 miles in fair condition
- 14.1 miles in poor condition
- 10.9 miles in very poor condition
- 7.8 miles in serious condition
- 0.06 miles in failed condition

He stated the grand total to keep the roadways up to a servable condition is \$115,727,636.00.

He also discussed what roads to move forward with, and projects for the future years including funding.

For the 2023/2024 budget staff is proposing the following:

- Roadway Projects:
 - Prairie – Theodore to Raynor (Roadway Rehabilitation)
 - Parkrose/Gaylord – to Sweetbriar St. (Rehabilitation and Water main replacement)
 - Theodore – West of Rock Run to Thomas Ct (Roadway Rehabilitation)
 - Borio/Randich – to Essex Ct. (Roadway Rehabilitation)
 - Ingalls/Cedarwood – to bike trail East of Rock Run (Roadway Rehabilitation), looking to partner with the City of Joliet

Engineer Wiedeman also stated the construction and engineering cost to complete the roadway work not including the water main replacement is estimated at 2.85 million dollars for 1.9 lane miles and the cost of the water main replacement along Parkrose is estimated at \$875,000.00. This water main work will be funded out of the water fund.

He continued to explain how he proposes to fund each project as follows:

Prairie project would be funded with remaining Rebuild Illinois Funds (\$182K), for the Parkrose, Theodore, Borio and Ingalls project would be funded through anticipated DCEO reimbursement of 2 million dollars submitted for 2022 with the remaining coming from the general fund.

He continued to discuss funding requirements with Council and gave some potential solutions to consider. He informed the Council of bond scenarios, which are as follows:

1. A bond with 1.5-million-bond annual payment will provide 5.6 million in funding for a 3-year period.
2. A bond with 2-million-bond annual payment will provide 7.5 million in funding for a 3-year period.
3. A bond with 2.4-million-bond annual payment will provide 9 million in funding for a 3-year period.

Bob with PMA Securities addressed the Council regarding different bond scenarios to understand the process and how they work.

Finance Director Lisa Banovetz added that Council will need to triage how we should spend that money and not to deficit the budget. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we (the City) can handle another loan? City Treasurer Conklin stated we would have to dedicate specifics to the repayment of that bond and the Council will need to decide what is your priorities and how do you choose to address them. He stated this is a lot of borrowing.

Mayor Soliman commented that he would like everyone to remember the promise made to the residents for a tax rebate. He also stated he doesn't feel that the roadways have been neglected and every year money was allocated to do road projects. He stated we have come a long way with our roadways and that is something we should be proud of.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that it is not negativity on the road ways condition report, that it is more of a notification on the road conditions we are facing right now. She stated that we did promise the residents a tax rebate but maybe we need to consider the difference for a tax rebate or using that money to repair roadways.

Alderman Cipiti commented on what we spend where we can get some money back and prioritizing. We should consider this discussion during budget talks.

Alderman Oberlin commented that we need to prioritize on what we are going to do with taxpayer dollars.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that maybe we can increase the sales tax, but it was stated that we are at the maximum amount that we can charge.

Administrator Marino asked if we looked into what the impact would be on residents if we go for a bond. Looking at an illustration on a \$10 million dollar bond that would impact over 20 years that bond would be an approximate \$99.00 increase to the tax payer.

Lengthy discussion followed regarding paying interest on bonds instead of paying directly towards the roadways and how are we going to reprioritize and where the revenue will come from.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if we could continue this discussion at another time since there is so much that needs to be discussed.

City Engineer Wiedeman stated he will need direction from staff on the list of projects for the 2024 budget year and direction on looking at cutting or coming back at a later date and making this part of the budget discussion. Mayor Soliman asks Council if anybody has any objection as to what Engineer Wiedeman stated, and coming back at a later date when the budget is discussed. There was no objection by Council.

Council thanked City Engineer Wiedeman for his time and explanation. This can be discussed during the budget talks.

TOPIC: Business Plan – 1700 Plainfield Road

Mayor Soliman informed the Council there is a business plan for 1700 Plainfield Road in their packets regarding the purchase of said property by Nick Patel. Attorney Greg Steadman addressed the Council regarding the property. Nick Patel is purchasing the property and would like to open a liquor store with an adjoining Bistro. This property would have package liquor and video gaming. A business plan was supplied in the packet. The property consists of 40,000 square feet and in a B-2 district. The buyers have met with the current owners of Gallery 1700, and they have agreed to stay on as a tenant and occupy 10,000 square feet of the first floor. The other 10,000 square feet would be occupied by the liquor store and bistro. The bistro would be using 2,000 square feet and the liquor store using 8,000 square feet of the first floor. The basement will only be used for storage. The primary operator of the liquor store would be Nick Patel, who owns several liquor store businesses in Illinois.

Alderwoman Gazal asked what kind of food the Bistro would have? Nick Patel explained they have not decided on the food choices yet. Alderwoman Gazal wants to know if this is prepared food, frozen food, or restaurant type food. Nick explained some foods will be prepared in the store. Alderwoman Gazal asked if the Bistro idea, is more of a gambling establishment with finger foods? Attorney Gregory Steadman responded stating it is all a proposed idea as for now, but they will work with the Council with any suggestions.

Mayor Soliman stated we have no Bistro licenses available at the moment; we are at the limit of seven (7) Bistro licenses. Mayor Soliman stated the Bistro's are very popular and are very well funded and they do create a good source of revenue for the municipality. At this time, we do not have a Bistro license available, and the City Council would have to create another Bistro license in the City of Crest Hill. Nick Patel explained without the Bistro license he would not proceed with the liquor store and sale of the property; they would look at another municipality.

Alderman Oberlin asked how many handicap positions in the parking lot would be needed? City Engineer Ron Wiedeman stated it is believed to be four (4); two (2) in the front parking lot and two (2) in the rear parking lot.

Mayor Soliman commented he believes this would be an asset to the City and he is in support of this business plan. Mayor Soliman also stated this would benefit the City. He noted Nick Patel's other establishments in Chicago are high end liquor stores and not grab-n-go establishments.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to add a Bistro license. The informal vote was four (4) yes votes, one (1) no vote and two undecided votes.

TOPIC: Theodore Street & Gaylord.Cedarwood Eastbound Left Turn Signal Addition

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman explained at this intersection we have existing signalization. Three (3) legs of this intersection have left hand turn arrows, but if heading eastbound it does not. The existing condition provides a reduced amount of green time for traffic heading eastbound. If future traffic volumes increase this condition will increase delay times for eastbound traffic.

Engineer Wiedeman stated some solutions to this issue are:

- Do nothing.

- Use the existing pavement width to create a protected left turn lane for both eastbound and westbound traffic and install a new eastbound left turn signal. This solution will create a single through lane for both east and westbound traffic.
- Widen the existing pavement to provide for two through lanes and a single left turn lanes for both the eastbound and westbound traffic.

Engineer Wiedeman explained the staff hired Christopher Burke Engineering to complete a traffic analysis study to review solution one (1) and two (2). He also stated from the study it was found that solution two (2) is the best solution since there will be no change in delay time and provides protection for the left hand turns and is the best solution to move forward with.

The construction cost for this work is estimated between \$120,000 and \$150,000 which would come out of the 2023/2024 MFT program. Also, there is a Construction Engineering Agreement with Christopher Burke Engineering in the amount of \$29,500. This will include a left hand turn lane and the signalized work for that intersection; which would likely start this summer.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote. All members present were in agreement for solution two (2) for the Theodore Street & Gaylord/Cedarwood Eastbound Left Turn Signal Addition.

TOPIC: Consideration to incur legal fees to adopt an annual budget system of financial planning and management in lieu of a budget appropriation ordinance

City Treasurer Glen Conklin commented they would like the Council to consider changing the process in the finance department. If we were to adopt a budget system of financial planning and management this would allow department heads and the finance department to make changes.

Finance Director Lisa Banovetz explained the pros and cons to the City Council with the City Attorney. She stated we currently have an ordinance way of budgeting, which means by line item we are held to that line item; we cannot go above that. If we do have to go above that then we must go to Council and make changes to the budget and amend the ordinance, which cost money. This would avoid an amendment change in the budget. Each department would be held to a total dollar amount and can be moved within that department if needed. If ever needed to move between that department we would still bring that movement to Council but not have to do a formal budget amendment.

Alderman Vershay asked if this would help with the budget? Lisa commented that this would prevent coming to the Council for amendment appropriations. City Treasurer Conklin explained it gives more department heads flexibility but does not take away any transparency from what would be in front of the Council. It would make the mechanics of the process easier on the department heads.

Finance Director Banovetz explained a disadvantage to the new budget system is it would need to be finalized by April 30th, 2023, published in the paper, and on display for the public inspection ten (10) days prior to Council inspection.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote. All members present were in agreement to adopt an annual budget system.

TOPIC: Request approval to have AIS on site for 3 days a week at no price change

Director of Public Works Mark Siefert commented that he and the Police Department have been working with AIS, Eric Montgomery to change the days AIS is in house. AIS is currently in-house two (2) days a week, Mondays, and Thursdays. After discussing with AIS, we can have IT in-house three (3) days a week with no increased costs. The days they are not in-house they would be available remotely. Our contract states we pay for 150 hours of IT; so we are just allocating them differently this way they are on site instead of remotely.

Finance Director Lisa Banovetz commented that she is uncomfortable with AIS billing. When the City prepaid for five (5) days a week and went down to two (2) days a week we had never received a credit. Director Banovetz stated she reached out to the company and never received a response back. Director Banovetz also stated finance has rejected some billing since the billing was not worded correctly.

AIS would be asked to be here Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Monday, Wednesday, Thursday. Director Siefert also explained when we move into the new building it would be beneficial to have them 4 days a week for 2 months.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote. All members present were in agreement for AIS to be on site three days a week.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Stuart Soifer commented that streets are very sensitive to him and he is extremely impressed with the graphs that were supplied. He also commented about the pricing, it was commented that we need to use prevailing wages.

MAYORS UPDATES:

TOPIC 1: Crest Hill Pony Baseball Ad Donation

All members present were in agreement for a City donation of \$65.00 to Crest Hill City Pony Baseball Ad.

TOPIC2: Lockport Township High School 2023 Late Night Donation

Alderman Vershay suggested to donate \$100.00. This was then retracted. Mayor Soliman commented that if we approve this, it will open up to other organizations wanting donations. He also stated he will bring all organizations requesting donations to Council. City Treasurer Conklin commented that the events committee does not have a budget. City Attorney Mike Stiff commented he would like to think about this.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:

Alderman Scott Dyke commented about the rate for the IML and Route 66 books. He also asked the Council if they would like to advertise in a third magazine. If we advertise in a third book it would be a cheaper rate. Council agreed to go with 3 magazines and use the new logo. This will be put on the next Council Agenda.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

Administrator Marino had no comment at tonight's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2023

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR

DRAFT