

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
February 12, 2024

The February 12, 2024 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, Alderman John Vershay, 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, Police Chief Ed Clark, Deputy Jason Opiola, Deputy Ryan Dobczyk, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz, Director of Community Development Ron Mentzer, Building Commissioner Don Seeman, Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Interim City Planner Maura Rigoni.

TOPIC: DCEO Grants Discussion

City Engineer Ron Weideman discussed the application process. He discussed the DCEO grants that the city is eligible to apply for and explained page four spreadsheet about the grants.

The first grant project is for Well Drilling, and we have received the application but have not filled it out just yet, but the money will be assigned to the raw water line being installed on Caton Farm Road from Kubinski to Oakland.

The second grant project is the Highland and Cora Retaining Wall Replacement which we have completed and paid for, and we have submitted the application and are waiting for the award of the grant to get paid.

The third grant project is the Old City Hall Demo, the plan was to use this for knocking down the old City Hall when ready and we have the application but are not in the position to bid out at this time.

The fourth and fifth grant projects are for City Hall Electrical and Concrete Work. These projects were submitted back in 2022 and in December we received information from DCEO stating that these projects needed to have BEP guidelines, which is for disadvantaged, or woman owned enterprises. He stated the city completed these projects prior to knowing the BEP requirement. Since the DCEO cannot waive this, we will need to find another project to assign this to.

The sixth grant project is for the Kelly Water Main and Josh Hassert, our Lobbyist, is trying to help us get this reappropriated.

He stated that the fourth grant project was more complicated since it is cost associated with capital improvements and staff recommended to pull this application and use the \$1,000,000.00 on two different projects. He commented that they could use \$250,000.00 towards the Old City Hall to help tear down the building and improve the property to make it more attractive for selling. He also commented that we could use the remainder of the money to help start the City Park.

Engineer Wiedeman recommended pulling the application for Grant #5 and resubmitting it for the purchase of City Center property and this way we would not have to follow any BEP requirements since it is a purchase.

Alderman Jefferson commented that he feels we should move in the direction of grant #4 and #5 as Engineer Wiedeman suggested.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that there are costs associated with tearing down the building and this would help. If a developer must tear down the building, he will decrease the sales price on the property but if there is a clean piece of property, it would be more attractive to sell to a developer.

He also commented that at this point we are just submitting applications and will not be bidding on anything.

Alderman Gazal commented that she agreed with making the property more attractive to a developer and we would not have to keep maintaining the building.

Alderman Gazal asked how long the reimbursement takes. Engineer Wiedeman commented that he does not know at this time but grant project #2 is submitted and he is using it as an example to learn how long this will take. Alderman Gazal asked what would happen if we received an offer for the property at the Old City Hall before receiving the reimbursement. Engineer Wiedeman commented that he would just pull the application and inform DCEO we need to reassign it to a new project.

Engineer Wiedeman explained that we received the grant requirements late because the DCEO was shut down through Covid. They just started getting back from Covid late last year, which is why we are receiving the requirements now.

Josh Hassert, Lobbyist, explained that the DCEO staff was staying home during Covid which created a halt in the process. (Inaudible)

Alderman Cipiti asked if we apply for the grant for the Old City Hall demolition that would be the \$250,000.00 and is that the maximum. Engineer Wiedeman stated that that is the amount we will be awarded and is the maximum. Alderman Cipiti commented that the estimated cost of demolition of the Old City Hall building would be \$500,000.00. Engineer Wiedeman stated that that is why he was proposing to use the \$1,000,000.00 grant, which would be item #4 split between the demolition and the City Park, but we are not ready for bid, and this will be brought before the Council before finalizing this.

Mayor Soliman asked for a straw vote to provide staff direction on proposed projects for DCEO grants that did not meet all the DCEO requirements.

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal.
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Alderswoman Gazal asked Josh Hassert if he seen the article in the patch regarding the \$1.2 Million for tourism and how they dedicated \$180,000.00 to Route 66 and wondered what we can do. Josh Hassert commented that he believed that was awarded through DCEO through the Heritage Corridor Destinations Tourism Convention Bureau. He stated that would have gone through them directly and then reached out to their members/communities and he does not know why Crest Hill was not made aware of that. She then asked if he could look into that. He informed her that this was outside his scope, and it was through the Tourism Bureau, and they are their own entity.

TOPIC: Discuss Iron Filter Emergency Repair Work

Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz is requesting that this item be tabled and brought back to discuss on February 26th. He commented that they had done an initial inspection of the iron filter and thought they could patch it but upon further investigation it may be a little more complicated, and further inspection will be done and then we can discuss this in two weeks.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to table this until February 26, 2024.

AYES: Ald. Kubal, Albert, Cipiti, Oberlin, Gazal, Jefferson, Vershay, Dyke.
NAYES: None.
ABSENT: None.

Aldersperson Oberlin asked if something was missing from the original estimate or did someone had dropped the ball. Interim Director Eulitz commented that until you take the water out of there you really cannot tell what it looks like and its more guess work and additional money was put in there, but it is not enough. He also commented that this is the worst one and it was leaking, and we were on range to get a fine from the EPA if not repaired.

Alderman Cipiti asked if this is affecting the function. Interim Director Eulitz commented that it is affecting the quality of water that we were delivering, and it is shut down at this time. Alderman Cipiti also commented that he was getting calls from residents regarding orange water and would this be a reason for this orange water. Interim Director Eulitz commented that this would be one of the reasons and it is shut down and should not affect anyone now.

TOPIC: Fiscal Year 2023 & 2024 Sidewalk

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that last fall he came to the Council about a sidewalk program with Ward Two and the program was completed, and he would like to discuss moving forward. He commented that we spent \$36,360.00 of MFT funds to do a survey, set up a program, and saw cutting. He stated of the 9.24 miles that we identified for the budget 7.6 miles were evaluated to bring the sidewalk into compliance. The soft cut repairs were performed on 376 sidewalks panels to bring back into compliance.

Engineer Wiedeman reviewed the chart on page 19 and stated that we did \$33,078.00 in repairs which covered 7.6 miles of sidewalk that equated to 70 5x5 panels if removed and replaced but we did 376 with this program.

Alderman Albert asked if there is any warranty on these panels since tree roots can move the panels. Engineer Wiedeman commented that it usually is 'one and done' but that was part of the evaluation criteria if they need to repair or replace to take care of the tree roots.

Alderman Vershay asked if we would be putting back the section of sidewalk on Nicholson Street in the alley off Theodore Street. Engineer Wiedeman commented that he would look at that and see what the cost would be and bring that back to the Council.

Alderwoman Gazal asked to not forget about the property on Pleasant, where a person with disabilities lives. Engineer Wiedeman commented that it will be done this year.

Alderman Jefferson commented if they are doing driveways only in ward two will they have any plans to come back through and make them ADA. Engineer Wiedeman commented that the pilot program was done in ward two the first year and next year we will do all four wards but do a different location in ward two and expand off that until the entire city is looked at.

Mayor Soliman asked for a straw vote to execute a proposal with Safe Step, LLC for the 2024 sidewalk cutting program to evaluate only the areas discussed above for a cost of \$60,000.00.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Old City Hall Phase 1 Study Results

Engineer Wiedeman commented that we have received back the Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment on the Old City Hall. He commented that the assessment shows there was asbestos found in the building, but no additional testing is needed. He commented that we do need to let a contractor or developer know there is asbestos in the building.

He also stated that the assessment stated there is lead paint that was found in the building and no follow-up studies need to be done but just need identified and noted to the contractor.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that we will need to do more work on the underground gasoline tank. He commented that it was removed in 2002 and there is record of gas spilled but there was no follow up testing to record if that was ever cleaned up, and further testing will be needed to confirm if it was ever cleaned up.

He also stated that there is no record of a heat oil tank or record that it has been removed. There needs to be underground work to see if there is and then remediation will need to be done.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that since the building was used for vehicle repair and a bottling company will need to be testing for things that have seeped into the soil.

Engineer Wiedeman stated Phase 2 is recommended to complete those four items only at a cost of \$15,635.00. This proposal is just for the testing and not any removal of anything.

Treasurer Conklin asked how a tank is pulled without having State records and/or Fire Marshall reports about this being done from either agency. Engineer Wiedeman commented that the paperwork talked about a spill and nothing us, no remediation or testing in 2002.

Alderman Gazal said there should be state records. Engineer Wiedeman commented that that is who they checked with, the fire marshal and the state records, and the records are incomplete.

Alderman Vershay asked if the well is a problem. Engineer Wiedeman commented that the well is not a problem, it is the tanks.

Mayor Soliman asked for a straw vote to complete Phase 2 Assessment with ESC Midwest, LLC for the Old City Hall building costing \$15,635.00.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

TOPIC: Discussion of Meeting held with Republic on Jan. 22, 2024

City Treasurer Glen Conklin commented that the garbage and recycling pickup from a couple of neighborhoods was not picked up due to weather and safety which we referred this to canceling and they referred this as delaying. He stated that they had a meeting with a representative from Republic Services and informed them we felt there should be a reasonable rebate to the city. They ended up coming back and offering approximately \$2,500.00 rebate which they felt was the cost for that base pick up that was missed, or they would offer a \$3,000.00 credit which would be applied to whatever we chose, for a storm cleanup or a city event where we would need trash removal. Treasurer Conklin then figured to give a rebate to the 1200 residents affected would result in a \$2.00 rebate with 1200 entries on the accounts. Treasurer Conklin then suggested keeping the \$3,000.00 credit for future work as needed.

Alderman Gazal commented that she felt it would be best to keep the money within the city. Treasurer Conklin commented that if it were more than \$2.00, he would have thought it would be great to give it back to those affected.

Alderman Kubal asked what the issue would have been to give a refund to Renwick Club and to Carillon Lakes. Treasurer Conklin commented that taking public money and giving it to a Homeowners Association and they would have to figuring out how to allocate the money would not be the best situation. Alderman Kubal wondered if we asked the Homeowners Association. Treasurer Conklin commented that we did not ask the homeowners associations, he is just using that as an excuse to not bring that back and take the public money and give it to the homeowner's associations. Alderman Kubal

commented that only the two homeowners' associations were impacted by this cancellation, and he does not seem it to be an issue for the homeowners' associations to receive that money and figure out what to do with it.

Alderman Cipiti asked how hard it would be to give a credit on the affected residents water bill since we know what the areas are that were affected. Treasurer Conklin commented that it would be 1200 households and not be the easiest to do.

It was stated we would like to keep a relationship with the garbage company and stay at a good standing.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote for a credit for the January 12 & 13th garbage service days.

Director Banovetz commented that she wanted to make sure that we understand it is not a monetary credit but a credit for services in-kind.

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert.

NAYES: Ald. Kubal.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Draft Budget Review

Finance Director Lisa Banovetz thanked all the department heads and staff for their help. She informed the Council that this is the first draft she is bringing forward and another draft will be brought to the Council on the 26th of February. She commented that the draft budget will be voted on by the Council on March 4, 2024 and will need to be published by April 30, 2024 and put on display for thirty (30) days. During the thirty (30) days the Council is allowed to make recommendations to changes in these thirty (30) days, after that the Public Hearing would be on April 8, 2024 and ten (10) days after that we would like a final vote on April 18, 2024.

Director Banovetz commented that currently there is a budget deficit of **(\$7,846,414.00)**.

Director Banovetz commented that the City's General Fund is currently showing a budget deficit of **(\$441,854.00)**. She explained how the Illinois Municipal League will provide projections for what the shared revenue for each state per capita is. She explained that it is the amount of state income taxes that flows back to the city, and it is based on the number of residents you have in the city. This did bring our original deficit down since it was **(\$800,000.00)**. She commented that the contributing factors to the deficit of the budget is the split between the property tax levy that was split between the police pension fund and the general fund but the actuarial amount that came back this year had the city contribute an additional \$250,000.00 to the Police Pension Fund and that was due to the poor investments rate in the market. We are making a higher payment to the Police Pension Fund, hopefully next year the interest rates will go up and the amount we contribute to the Police Pension Fund will go down.

Director Banovetz explained that there is a 5% placeholder in the draft budget for non-union salaries which it was thought that would be high but Council at some point will have to decide about the non-union salaries.

Treasurer Conklin commented that when the sampling was done it was done at a poor time where that Police Pension Fund balance was, but the market has improved remarkably since then. Director Banovetz commented that the police contribute 9.1% of their own salary and the city makes up the difference of the unfunded amount.

Director Banovetz commented that the union 150 employees' salaries increased by 4% from the previous year and the salaries for all MAP union employees increased by 3.5%. She also commented that the City's property and casualty, worker's compensation, and medical insurance premiums are expected to increase by 5%. She also commented that she spoke to our insurance representative and was told that Crest Hill might receive an increase of higher than 5% and once she finds this out, she will bring it back to the Council.

Last year there was a contribution of \$741,800.00 transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Projects Fund to cover road improvements throughout the city and this is not in the budget this year.

She also commented that the \$2,000,000.00 reimbursement from fiscal year 2023 – 2024 that DCEO was to reimburse for capital expenditures incurred related to the City Center building was not received. This has been paid from the General Fund balance.

Director Banovetz commented that we pay a lot for our I.T. services, which were to be temporary, and we are still using them. She commented that it is 68% more of what we have paid to the past company VirTek. Alderman Cipiti asked what the actual dollar amount would be. Director Banovetz commented that we had paid VirTek \$10,200.00 monthly for the same I.T. services and amount of time we receive from AIS, and we pay AIS \$17,200.00 monthly, which amounts to \$7,000.00 more a month.

Director Banovetz stated from the staff perspective, to remain fiscally responsible, staff would like approval from the Council to place the current vendor legal services and I.T. services out for RFP during fiscal year 2024-2025 to make sure the city is receiving the best services at the lowest competitive price.

Director Banovetz also stated that the staff is recommending the property Tax Rebate not be administered for the next fiscal year which would be fiscal year 2025. This would be \$250,000.00 that would come back to the city to be used for streets, and other capital projects. Treasurer Conklin commented that there are substantial costs to administer this program.

Mayor Soliman commented that this was a promise made to our residents back in 2012 and several of the current City Council agreed with this. He commented that \$250,000.00 will give you about one block of street repairs. He also commented that we could look at eliminating the property tax rebate from the businesses and rental property.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that the rental properties are still paying taxes, and the businesses are still struggling.

Director Banovetz commented that the city is still expecting reimbursement of \$923,000.00 from Stateville. She stated that this is money owed from 2009 through 2021, which is eleven (11) years they owe, and we cannot shut their water off.

Director Banovetz mentioned that the eating tax was a great idea and was brought to the city by the past city administrator Jim Marino. She also commented that partnering with LocalGov was great and we have reached almost \$800,000.00 in revenue which just gets deposited into our bank account.

Director Banovetz asked the Building Commissioner Don Seeman what revenue was brought in through building permits. Commissioner Seeman commented around \$1,000,000.00.

Director Banovetz commented that she had to increase the Council travel by \$2,000.00 since the Council's travel expenses have increased.

Police

She also commented that the police budget increased by \$300,000.00 or 5%, most of this is salaries. Police Chief Ed Clark mentioned that the new specialist position and administrative clerk position that was budgeted last year have been filled and currently this year there will not be any additional hiring. He also commented that we have thirty-four sworn officers authorized but only thirty-two working. He explained that they will be close in overtime, but we need to keep in mind that there are refunds from the high intensity drug trafficking areas program and the traffic safety program. There was a decrease in Wescom expenses but increasing from \$280,000 to \$300,000 for any other expenses throughout the year dealing with our dispatch services and we will be able to account for this.

Chief Clark mentioned that he added \$3,000.00 to the training budget which is for the Illinois Chief of Police Association Program which is the process to become credited through the Illinois Chief of Police Association which is an assessment program that looks through our policy and procedures, and our facility that he would like to achieve for the department, and it will pay for the assessment and the travel.

Alderman Albert asked if the chief could elaborate on how the service works for Wescom. Chief Clark commented that it is calls for service and there are fees we are paying for this service.

Chief Clark commented that this year he would like to replace the pistols the officers use since they are currently eleven (11) years old. He also commented that he would like to move towards a nine-millimeter platform.

Chief Clark commented that he would like to talk to Mr. Graff more on our vehicles since we have not replaced a vehicle in three years and there has been talk about going to a leasing program, but he would like to stay with some sort of replacement program. He commented that there are five vehicles that will need to be replaced looking at the mechanical parameters that include miles and run time.

Alderwoman Gazal asked how many vehicles we have total. Chief Clark commented that we have seventeen vehicles which we have been hanging on to some of them since they were getting older, and we would have something when another vehicle is down. Treasurer Conklin mentioned that a new vehicle for the police department would be around \$60,000.00 and we need to be mindful that a vehicle replacement is not in the budget currently. Director Banovetz commented that each program we have has to be funded by some revenue source and people are under the assumption that money has been set aside

for the vehicle program and there has not been. She also commented that each year we should start putting money aside for vehicle replacement when needed.

Alderman Dyke asked if we could get a report on what vehicles need replaced and the mileage on them. Chief Clark commented that he can get that report. He also commented that when he says five vehicles it is not that they need replaced tomorrow, he just means that it is getting near the time of replacement.

Alderman Jefferson asked if we can also get a maintenance report on the vehicles. Alderman Jefferson also asked about the body cameras and vehicle cameras. Chief Clark commented that those were purchased last year through a grant.

Streets

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that there is an increase in the budget to \$448,500.00 but wanted the Council to know that \$280,000.00 is being funded by the Midwest Funds to do the study of the truck route for which we have Burke under contract.

Engineer Wiedeman commented that he does have standard items in the budget for design fees for Wilcox to update the plans, \$25,000.00 is there in case he has to do legals or design plans for Phase 2 of welcome signs, \$25,000.00 for Phase 2 of the Old City Hall and bid documents, and we are still working with Robinson on Crest Hill Storage on flooding which has been on the books for three years.

Facility Maintenance

Building Commissioner Don Seeman commented that this is for facility maintenance for the new building. Commissioner Seeman commented that there was never a budget line for this building. He also commented that we have put money in for this for maintenance repair that was never added into last year's budget. He also commented that there is money to hire another maintenance worker.

Alderman Cipiti asked if Commissioner Seeman is recommending a line item for preventative maintenance. Commissioner Seeman commented there was no money put in for any maintenance and what we have done has come out of our General Fund and we will need it for preventative maintenance as well.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if we are considering if part of the budget includes any of the work that needs done at the Public Work building. Engineer Wideman commented that he knows there is work to be done there like the repair work to the gate but does not know if the past Public Works Director had put that in the budget. Alderwoman Gazal commented that there are also leaks in walls and a window problem that needs to be looked at before it gets worse.

I.T.

Director Banovetz commented that the I.T. budget has increased \$141,000.00 from last year because there is a bunch of new software, security systems with our doors and locks.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that we are paying \$84,000.00 for I.T. services. Director Banovetz commented that she already mentioned this, and we will be looking for RFP for this and an employee position to manage this.

Fleet Maintenance

Director Banovetz commented that this has increased \$56,000.00 which is 11% that is union salaries, and materials for working on vehicles.

Administration

Director Banovetz commented that this has decreased from last year.

Clerk

Director Banovetz commented that there is a small increase due to salary.

Treasurer Department

Director Banovetz commented that there was an increase of \$111,000.00 which was 52% and they have hired an additional account disbursement clerk with benefits, and it went from single to family coverage.

Community Development

Interim Director of Community Development Ron Mentzer commented that the proposed budget assumes the city is looking to fill the three full time positions that need to be filled. He also commented that engineering costs are now going to be budgeted in the Community Development department.

He also mentioned that there are contractual services in the budget and feels that it is about \$60,000.00 short. Director Mentzer commented that he proposes we budget \$164,000.00. This would be to help set up the potential third TIF District, and outside consulting for building permit review specialists. He also commented that they need to include in the budget the carryover from the grass and weed cutting vendor which is approximately \$20,000.00. He also commented that they need to add consulting services for the Senior Planner for Maura Rigoni to continue to provide planning support services.

Alderman Gazal commented that she thought that we already included the Planner salary in the budget and asked if it is still budgeted for a full-time planner and the position is still being published. Director Mentzer commented that the position is posted but we have not really received many applications and Human Resource Manager Dave Strahl will be closing the position at the end of this month and reviewing the applicants.

Alderman Gazal asked if the fines for the grass and weed cutting eventually overtime pay for themselves. Director Mentzer commented that there has not been a detailed study, but we often have to lien the properties for this since they do not pay their fine.

Alderman Jefferson asked have we posted the Planner position. Director Mentzer commented that it is posted in several places, and we do have four to five applications.

Director Mentzer commented that they proposed more money in the budget for training for certain certifications.

MFT

Engineer Wiedeman went over the MFT budget items and stated that some of the add ins are the design engineering services for the traffic signal at Weber and McGilvray, they are

still doing crack filling and patching, and the sidewalk cutting program. He commented that he is seeing a decrease in the MFT revenues.

Non-Home Rule Revenue

Director Banovetz commented that she looked at last year's revenue which was \$2,200,000.00 and this year she only budgeted \$2,000,000.00 which they could talk about if they would like her to increase that. She also commented that we have an economic incentive that we pay to Food4Less that is \$50,000.00.

Water & Sewer Revenue

Engineer Wiedeman commented that customer meter sales are reflecting new rate study up around one million and the only increase is for the tap on fee

Water/Sewer Capital Projects

Ron Wiedeman commented that the customer meter sales and the Stateville charges are reflecting the new rate study, and this has bumped up the revenues in the water and sewer fund. He stated that the three water projects to do this coming year are Parkrose, Circle and Green.

Engineer Wiedeman stated that our salt barn is draining into our storm sewer, and we need to do some corrective work so that it drains into our sanitary sewer, which is approximately \$125,000.00 worth of work and is in the budget to be done next year.

Capital Project Funds

Engineer Wiedeman explained the Capital Project Funds. He stated he has budgeted \$1,100,000.00 million for resurfacing, also there is money for Phase 2 entrance signs. He further explained that there is \$650,000.00 for the Wilcox storm sewer project and he included \$475,000.00 for the Theodore retaining wall for Cora and Kelly. He then mentioned that there is \$325,000.00 for Weber and Knapp and the bidding opens next Tuesday. We are obligated to pay a percentage of that project which he will not know the true numbers until next week but have budgeted approximately \$325,000.00. He also included in the budget the money for the playground equipment with the Park District.

Alderman Gazal asked if we are going to negotiate something with the Park District regarding this. Engineer Wiedeman commented that if we do a park this year it would be a 50-50 split. Some Council would like to see more coming from the Park District.

Director Banovetz reminded everyone that we are starting off with a \$7.8 million budget deficit. She then stated that in the General Fund there is an investment of \$7.4 million dollars, Water/Sewer is \$11.4 million dollars, and we calculated what a 6-, 4-, and 3-month reserve would be for cash on hand for emergencies.

Alderman Gazal asked if anyone reached out to Cable about the microphones and the portable microphones should only be used at the floor tables and podium. Commissioner Seeman commented that he is meeting with the audio company tomorrow.

Alderman Albert commented that the microphones should have never been brought to the new City Center to begin with. City Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that the biggest concern is when they talk and turn their heads there is no audio.

Alderwoman Gazal then asked when they will be discussing salaries for non-union staff. Director Banovetz commented that there is a 2-6% increase possibility. Alderwoman Gazal commented that now that there is a city administrator the department heads should be collaborating with him and then come to an executive session and ask for what you are asking for. Treasurer Conklin commented that the salaries are budgeted already and once it is decided then that will change the budget as well.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that last year there were salaries given without reviews and this year she wants to make sure everyone gets a review.

Alderman Dyke asked if we could look at the lease agreement for the copiers. Director Banovetz commented that we are in the lease agreement until 2025 but if you can buy it then do that because it is much better than paying monthly.

Public Comment:

Stuart Soifer, a resident, commented that he wanted to circle back to the garbage company and stated that it sounds like the city is taking the money that the residents have paid for the service and now the city will use the funds for anything the city sees fit. He stated the residents paid for it, the residents had the loss and does not understand why it would go to anybody in the city.

Stuart also commented that he saw streets being patched today and they are patching outside of the city limits. Engineer Wiedeman commented that we usually go all the way to Renwick, he knows the city stops north of there but in the past, they have always gone to Renwick. Engineer Wiedeman commented that it has always been a handshake deal with the other municipality directors.

He then commented about the removal of the tax rebate, and he addressed the mayor that when he was running for mayor his response was if they had to remove this rebate it would have to go back to referendum, since it was passed in a referendum.

Alderman Oberlin commented that the sales tax was a referendum and not the distribution of the rebate. Stuart commented that in order to get the sales tax increase it was said that if it passes the rebate would be brought back to the taxpayers and this is how he remembered it. Treasurer Conklin commented that a mayor cannot make a promise for the City Council all the time, but he can be committed to maintaining it.

Stuart also offered to consult pertaining to the audio for free and the mayor did not want that. Mayor Soliman commented that we were working with vendors at that time.

Mayor's Update:

No mayor updates.

Committee/Liaison Updates:

No committee/liaison updates.

City Administrator Updates:

Interim City Administrator Tony Graff commented that this is a very efficient way to start the budget process, now it needs to be decided on what to leave in and what to take out. He also commented that if we pass a deficit budget, with a plan attached we need to know where the money is coming from.

Director Banovetz commented that if there is anything specific that will need to be changed that we talked about tonight we will have that laid out for the meeting on the 26th.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09ppm.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2024

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR