

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
August 10, 2022

The August 10, 2022 City Council work session was called to order by City Clerk Christine Vershay Hall at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Works Building, 2090 Oakland Ave. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman John Vershay, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert.

Also present were: City Attorney Mike Stiff

Absent were: Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Economic Developer Tony Budzikowski, IT Director Tim Stinnett, Mayor Raymond Soliman, Administrator Jim Marino, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman Joe Kubal.

In the absent of the Mayor, City Clerk Christine Vershay Hall asked for a motion for a Mayor Pro Tem for tonight's meeting.

(#1) Motion by Alderman Vershay, seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to appoint Alderperson Oberlin as Mayor Pro-Tem for tonight's work session.

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Dyke, Kubal.

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

TOPIC: Discussion of the Hiring of an Interim HR Consultant with GovHR

Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin presented a request for Discussion on the Hiring of an Interim HR Consultant with GovHR. Alderwoman Gazal explained that we received an email regarding the hiring of an Interim HR Consultant. This position was approved by the Council. In the email it states that the Interim HR Consultant would start employment on August 15, 2022 and work until a permanent employee is in place. Her concern is that the Council was not consulted in regard to this position. The Council has no information on who this person is, how much they will be paid, and according to the ordinance, the Administrator can approve an item under \$20,000.00. Are we paying the person \$1.00 an hour. Alderwoman Gazal cited resolution #1030, purchasing policy for the City. This was put in place for emergency purposes only. There is a lack of communication between the Council and Staff on this subject. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin felt that this resolution does not pertain to hiring and the HR position was eliminated. How can you hire someone for a position that has been eliminated. Attorney Stiff cited section 3.5 of the ordinance. Alderwoman Gazal said that the Attorney did his homework and looked into this ahead of time. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin said that the Council voted to eliminated the HR position, so wouldn't we have to vote to hire someone even on a temporary basis.

At the Monday night meeting the Mayor asked if the Administrator had anything to report. He stated no, but then sent an email to the Council that he was hiring. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin commented that we did away with the HR position so how can we hire a person in that position. Attorney Stiff stated he looked at the \$20,000.00 limit ordinance when it came to the Building Commissioner. Alderwoman Gazal also commented that we have to be careful on hiring a person since we eliminated the HR position. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin commented if we voted to eliminate the position we would need to make a vote to recreate the position. Attorney referred to section 3.5 of ordinance #1030, professional services. He is not sure if GovHR has been used before. Treasurer Conklin commented that no one was notified regarding the hiring. Attorney is not sure what the exact contract is. Alderwoman Gazal commented that we wanted this meeting so it's not being put on television at a public meeting. Alderman Cipiti commented that the email is the hiring of people for up to \$20,000.00. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin commented that this ordinance was created for Public Works in case of an emergency. Attorney Stiff commented that the ordinance doesn't just pertain to Public Works. It also goes for Department Heads. He has other clients that have something similar to this email and it doesn't just pertain to Public Works. Alderman Vershay stated that we gave the STP permission to go up to 20,000.00 without Council permission in advance when there is an emergency. The Council was told that the HR position was being eliminated and questioned the \$20,000.00 limit. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin asked the Attorney if we should amend the ordinance on the purchasing procedures. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin asked for an informal vote on the Discussion of the Hiring of an Interim HR Consultant with GovHR. Five of the members presented would like to see Ordinance #1030 changed. Alderman Albert disagreed. Members of the Council felt that the emergency spending should be limited to Police, STP and Public works only. Alderman Albert explained that he is against this. He commented that at the end of the day aren't we trying to get someone to do the HR work. He also commented that it is presumed we are not going to fill the Assistant Administrator position. Treasurer Conklin commented that the email reads that the position for filling the HR position is being used as a hostage until he gets his Assistance Administrator. Alderman Albert commented that instead of changing the policy we should figure out how to fill these positions that we eliminated and move forward. Alderman Jefferson commented that \$20,000.00 will not get you the qualified help that is needed. This Council has been prohibited from talking to a Department Head without approval, but the Administrator can go ahead and hire without Council approval. In his personal opinion this is a way of bullying his way as the City Administrator. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin commented that it was a different time when the ordinance was created. We need to amend it and she doesn't feel that the word transparency is understood. Alderwoman Gazal commented that it is not personal with him and how do we address a person who does not want to listen. The point is the moral has diminished and we have an Administrator who doesn't talk to anyone. We want to be proactive and get the job done the right way. Alderman Albert commented that we need to think about the job and how to relieve the additional work that was put on some of the employees. Treasurer Conklin commented that the policy needs to be changed due to the damage that the Mayor and the Administrator are doing, such as not giving information to Council and being courteous to others. Alderman Albert looks at it as he is part time and never tells a manager how to do their job. Alderman Vershay commented that the \$20,000.00 was supposed to be used to protect the health and welfare of the residents of the city, not to hire employees. Treasurer Conklin asked the Attorney if he has seen the agreement. He had and he believes the agreement goes through December. Currently the HR work is being done by Lindsey, Kim and Lisa and is not sure what the Administrator is doing. Alderwoman Gazal asked if a full time assistant is needed and would like to know what is being assigned to Marybel.

She asked if we could recreate the position of HR. The Attorney commented that we would need to get a release from the former HR employee. Treasurer Conklin commented that we have an employee that has a degree in HR. She doesn't want her degree to be used for HR work without the proper pay. Attorney Stiff explained that the agreement goes up to October and can be extended in 2 week increments through December. The hourly rate of pay of 91.00 per hour. Alderman Cipiti asked if we are using the services of GovHR does the \$20,000.00 go to them. The Attorney explained that GovHR covers the taxes and pays the person. Alderman Albert commented that we have the void in HR for 6 months and that we all can agree we didn't need a full time HR person. Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that the original policy was given to STP to do emergency work then come to the Council for approval. The Attorney believes that the \$20,000.00 is a common policy for emergency use. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin asked if the Attorney could have this policy change done. Attorney Stiff explained that he hopes to have it completed for Monday night's meeting. Five of the six Council members present would like the policy changed. Alderman Albert disagreed. Mayor Pro-Tem Oberlin commented that we really don't need to have a full time person for HR. The Attorney commented that he will red line the policy with changes requested by the Council. Alderman Cipiti commented that the temporary employment is going to go through according to the current policy. The Attorney commented that he is not sure if the contract for the HR person has been signed. It was stated that the Administrator put in his email that the person will start employment on August 15th. Alderman Jefferson asked if there is any city business that can be done without council knowledge or approval?

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

MAYORS UPDATES: There were no updates.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES: There were no updates.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES: There were no updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2022

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

TINA OBERLIN, MAYOR PRO-TEM.