

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
November 13, 2023

The November 13, 2023 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, Alderperson Scott Dyke, Alderperson John Vershay, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderperson Mark Cipiti, Alderperson Nate Albert, Alderperson Joe Kubal.

Also present were: City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Deputy Chief Jason Opiola, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Alderperson Darrell Jefferson, Police Chief Ed Clark, Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Interim Employee Relations Manager Dave Strahl, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer.

TOPIC: Liquor License Approval 1827 Knapp Drive

Mayor Raymond Soliman commented that he had a meeting with Clarissa Ramirez, Cynthia Mayorga, and Johnny from El Primo Restaurant #2 on November 1, 2023. He wanted to inform the Council that everything came back for their background check and fingerprinting. He commented that they will close at 10:00 p.m. most nights. Mayor Soliman also explained violations to them if any issues were to occur and they agreed. Since everything is in order the mayor stated he was prepared to issue a liquor license to the restaurant but as part of the process they are in the audience today to introduce themselves and answer any questions the City Council may have.

Maria Valenciano, Clarissa's mother, thanked everyone who helped with the process. She commented that it has taken a very long time, and some customers were getting upset and wanted to start up a petition. Mayor Soliman informed Maria that part of the process was the background check which normally takes 6-8 weeks and yours took 10 weeks, which we do not have control over that.

Mayor Soliman welcomed El Primo to the City of Crest Hill.

Maria informed the Council that they had been in business for about sixteen years. She stated that she also works at Will County for twenty-one years.

Alderwoman Gazal welcomed El Primo to Crest Hill and commented that they have been working together a long time.

Mayor Soliman commented for the record that he received a text from Alderman Jefferson, and he is excused from the meeting.

TOPIC: Requesting to upgrade Police Department Scheduling Program

Deputy Chief Opiola commented that there is a memo in the packet from the Chief. He commented that they have a scheduling system called Telestaff from Kronos which is now known as UKG. They would like to upgrade from an on-premises database to a cloud-based system. This system will allow them to upgrade to the current versions and keeps them upgraded without spending any resources internally. There is a drop-dead date for the on-premises system in a couple years and we will have to migrate to a cloud-based system eventually. He stated that he had spoken to the Finance Director Lisa Banovetz about streamlining this which will make payroll more efficient on the Police Department side on how they calculate payroll.

Alderperson Oberlin asked Treasurer Glen Conklin if he had reviewed this, and he stated he has not.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Ald. Jefferson

Mayor Soliman commented that this will be on the November 20, 2023 meeting agenda.

TOPIC: Execution of a professional services agreement with Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. to perform Phase A-Site Investigation engineering services for the future Crest Hill Business Park truck route for a not to exceed amount of \$56,180.00

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman requested approval from the City council to move forward with collecting survey work for a new truck route that can be used later. Since we do not own all the property, some property owners might not give us permission to access their property. Engineer Wiedeman suggested that we use a combination of a conventional survey, a drone, and Will County survey information because this area is relatively flat. This will be accurate enough and would be Phase B of Christopher Burke's proposal.

This work would be paid for from the funds of Midwest Industrial Funds which was agreed with the city.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Ald. Jefferson

Mayor Soliman commented that this will be on November 20, 2023 meeting agenda.

TOPIC: Emergency Repair – Hillcrest Shopping Center – Fire Line

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that during the construction they had a contract with Abe Katz to relocate and put in a new waterline at Hillcrest Shopping Center and as they were putting the line in, they came across a parallel fire line that all the services were being connected off and it also supplied fire suppression to each one of the buildings. When the new line went in it was discovered they had no water pressure for the fire suppression system. Engineer Wiedeman commented that at that time they had a meeting with the City Administrator Jim Marino and the Fire Department, and they told us the businesses would have to shut down immediately until this was addressed. He commented that work was authorized in the amount between \$10,000.00 and \$20,000.00 to fix and the final bill has come in for that. He commented that he is looking for approval for this work which totals \$18,735.67.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Ald. Jefferson

Mayor Soliman commented that this will be on November 20, 2023 meeting agenda.

TOPIC: Section 15-04-050 Letters of Credit and Other Surety Requirements

City Engineer Ron Wiedeman commented that he is looking at revising and updating the city codes and ordinances, so it is more in line with other municipalities regarding surety protection for site developments. The changes would be as follows:

- Deletion of surety bond to be used as project guarantee or warranty.
- Revise ordinance on who holds the surety paperwork from the Clerk to the City Engineer.
- Update the section on As-built plans to provide final plans on a flash drive or other approved medium and 2 PDF copies of the drawing (1 full size and 1 11x17).
- Minor clean-up of typos and consistency issues.

Alderman Oberlin asked if Attorney Mike Stiff has reviewed it and approved everything. Attorney Stiff commented that he always recommends using Letter of Credit instead of bonds since every bond claim he has had they fight. Attorney Stiff commented to reduce a bond or release a bond would have to come before the Council and the red line corrections are his corrections.

Alderman Oberlin asked if there is an issue with the City Engineer holding the documents and if they will be available if the engineer is not around. Attorney Stiff said there isn't an issue with the engineer holding the letters and they are available if anyone needs them through FOIA. Engineer Wiedeman commented that they will be held in his office and available if someone needs to see them. Attorney Stiff commented that he feels that an administrative assistant should know where it is located.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote.

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Jefferson.

Mayor Soliman commented that this will be on November 20, 2023 meeting agenda.

Engineer Wiedeman informed the City Council that the Weber Road and Knapp Road Project received approval, and this will be going on the January 2024 bid opening. This project should happen sometime next year depending on the bid opening.

Alderman Albert asked the engineer if there will be lane closures with this project. Engineer Wiedeman commented that there will be lane shifts but not closures.

TOPIC: Discussion about copy machines

Alderwoman Gazal commented that it was brought to her attention that some staff are printing a lot of private/personal information on the city copier. She commented that she feels the copy machines should be strictly for city business only and she would like a memo sent to staff that this needs to be stopped. She also commented that the copy machines have dates, and the information can be retrieved and printed.

Alderman Cipiti asked if this is a policy already in place in the employee handbook regarding use of copy machines. Attorney Stiff commented that he does not know if there is but would expect there to be.

Mayor Soliman asked which copier. Alderwoman Gazal commented that it is the big copier in the mailroom/storage room. She also commented that she has not received any complaints from the Police Department regarding their copier.

City Treasurer Glen Conklin commented that the bottom line is personal use would be theft.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that if there is not a policy in the handbook, could one be placed in the handbook. Attorney Stiff commented that it should be added if there is not a policy in the handbook.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that it is no different than going in the closet and taking home a case of toilet paper.

Mayor Soliman stated that he was not aware of it, and no one had brought it to his attention, and he asked the City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall if anyone had brought this to her attention. City Clerk Vershay-Hall commented that she is not aware of it. Alderwoman Gazal commented that she can give you a specific date and we can print the information and see that there is personal stuff printed. Alderwoman Gazal asked Treasurer Conklin if he could retrieve what was printed on his copiers and he commented that he can if printed on his machine. He also stated that there should be a policy since it is city property and so

is the paper, toner, and the service contract of the copier. He commented that it might be easier to broadcast a memo before we start bringing staff up on theft charges.

Alderman Gazal commented for the record this is not just a one-time complaint, she was told many times, and they are continuously doing it.

Alderman Oberlin asked Attorney Stiff if he does not find a policy in the handbook, can we craft something to put in the handbook. Attorney Stiff commented that we can and some policies he has seen mention an honor system, where if an employee needed a couple of copies, they would tell the department head and they would just pay for the copies at whatever the going rate is. He asked if that was something the Council would like to do or band personal copies all together.

Alderman Albert said he did not believe we need the honor system since there are copy machines elsewhere and he stated that this is theft, and anything in the handbook related to theft would be the definition of this.

Treasurer Conklin commented that we need to draft a memo and state this is city equipment and to please be aware that this would be grounds for dismissal if you are abusing or stealing.

Alderman Cipiti asked who is going to write the memo, that way this issue is addressed in a timely fashion and not waiting until a policy is drafted.

Treasurer Conklin commented that if the Council would like he could ask the Interim Employer Relations Manager Dave Strahl to draft a memo.

Alderman Gazal stated that she would like the memo to read with the Council's direction.

TOPIC: Vacant City Administrator Position

Alderman Cipiti and Alderman Gazal asked for this to be on the agenda so discussion can proceed since there is no City Administrator.

Alderman Gazal commented that we should contact GovHR and start the process now.

Alderman Dyke asked if we are going to ask GovHR for an Interim until we have a permanent city administrator that we hire, since this may take at least six months.

Alderman Oberlin commented that we have wasted too much time already and the problem is not going to get better, it's only going to get worse.

Mayor Soliman commented that he has two possible candidates from GovHR for interims and he has a few names he has received on his own. He commented that he wants to speak to the Council regarding this but in an executive session.

Alderman Cipiti commented that this is exactly why he wanted the topic on the agenda. He also asked the mayor if he didn't have this on the agenda would he have shared this information with us tonight.

Mayor Soliman commented that he would share this information with the Council and in all fairness Consultant Gulden has only been gone two weeks. He stated that this doesn't happen overnight.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

MAYORS UPDATES:

There were no mayor updates.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:

Aldersperson Oberlin commented that an email was received about the Christmas Dinner from the Will County Governmental League and this needs to go on the agenda since it will need to be voted on.

Alderman Cipiti commented that this is the first he is hearing about this. Aldersperson Oberlin commented that this is every year. Alderwoman Gazal commented that we usually receive email and we have not received an email yet. Mayor Soliman commented that everyone should have received an email by now from the Will County Governmental League. He also commented that the city will pay for the elected official and if you would bring a guest you would pay for your guest to the City of Crest Hill, and they will make payment.

Mayor Soliman commented that it is held at the Jacob Henry Mansion on December 14, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Mayor Soliman commented that he will have this on the agenda.

Mayor Raymond Soliman asked to deviate from the regular agenda for an executive session on personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

(#1) Motion by Aldersperson Oberlin seconded by Alderwoman Gazal, to go into an executive session on Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Jefferson

There being seven (7) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Executive Session 7:31 p.m.

(#2) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin seconded by Alderman Cipiti to reconvene from the executive session on Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Ald. Jefferson

There being seven (7) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Reconvened 8:17 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2023

As presented _____

As amended _____

CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR