



City Council Meeting Minutes

March 27, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Mayor: Carolyn Caiharr
Councilmember Chuck Adams Mark Bishop Garrett Mellott
Greg Scott Margaret Shriver

1. Consider adoption of the proposed agenda

- **Motion:** Councilmember Scott made the motion to adopt the proposed agenda
- **Second:** Councilmember Shriver seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Fails, 2-3, with Councilmembers Adams, Bishop, and Mellott dissenting
- There was additional discussion regarding the way to move forward, with discussion centering around the appropriate way to remove item #4 from the approved agenda.
- The Council waited for the arrival of City Attorney Josh Ney for additional guidance.
- When he arrived, Mr. Ney confirmed that an alternate motion could be made, noting approval of the agenda less item #4
- **Motion:** Councilmember Mellott made the motion to adopt the proposed agenda, removing item #4 from consideration.
- **Second:** Councilmember Bishop seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Passes, 5-0

2. Requests or Comments from the public

- No public comments were offered.

3. Consider approval of consent agenda items

a) Approve minutes of March 13, 2023

b) Statement of bills paid in the amount of \$542,446.10

- **Motion:** Councilmember Mellott made the motion to approve the consent agenda
- **Second:** Councilmember Scott seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Passes, 4-0-1, with Councilmember Bishop abstaining

~~4. Consider Resolution 202302 adopting a City Council Agenda Development Policy~~

- This item was removed from the evening's adopted agenda

5. Hear presentation from Wyandotte County appraiser related to 2023 property valuations

- Wyandotte County Appraiser Matt Willard addressed the Council and provided data related to the ongoing property tax valuation calculation process.
- Mr. Willard reviewed the taxation process and where the valuations occur in that process.
- Factors were discussed which will lead to value changes from year-to-year, including demands on the housing market, new construction, inspections, and other variables.
- Mr. Willard noted that commercial property makes up 62% of the taxable assessed valuation in the City of Edwardsville, with residential properties only making up 35% of the total.

- There was some discussion on how a property is counted as agricultural vs. residential.
- Mr. Willard noted that there will be an expected 10% increase in real estate assessments this year.
- Mr. Willard reminded the group of the April 10 deadline to file a property tax appeal and provided resources on how to start that process.
- City Manager Michael Webb noted that Mr. Willard has been a good resource for the City, as his department is very responsive to questions and inquiries related to valuations.
- No formal action was requested related to this item.

6. Consider one-year extension of the following service contracts:

a. City-Wide Mowing Contract with Supreme Green LLC

b. Cemetery Mowing Contract with White Lawn & Landscape

- Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel reviewed this item, noting that the current contract for both firms allows for three on-year extensions. If approved, this would represent the first extension for both contracts.
- Mr. Daniel noted that there was no change in the rates from either firm for the proposed extension.
- Mayor Caiharr had questions about mowing of right-of-way that may be privately owned. Mr. Daniel noted different areas of rights-of-way that the City currently maintains, noting that if there is a public improvement (trail, sidewalks, etc.) then contract crews will maintain. He also noted that areas where visibility is a concern, the City will take care of.
- Forced mows were discussed, but are not included in either agreement.
- Additional discussion was had about different strategies to maintain state-owned medians and rights-of-way.
- City Manager Michael Webb noted that staff will review ways to engage the state on a solution for these areas.
- **Motion:** Councilmember Scott made the motion to approve the one-year extension for both agreements
- **Second:** Councilmember Shriver seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Passes, 5-0

7. Consider Resolution 2023-03 authorizing the reimbursement of funds for preliminary and final design, right-of-way acquisition, and other related expenses for the Towne Center connector Project

- Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel reviewed this item, noting that is similar to the 98th St. design development process. The proposed resolution would authorize the reimbursement of funds for the Towne Center Connector project with future bond funds.
- The proposed resolution allows for any fuds expended for the purpose of this project up to \$1,175,000 to be eligible for refunding.
- Mr. Daniel reviewed the scope of the Towne Center connector project, which would result in a significant expansion to the city's trail/sidewalk system.
- The project will be covered by federal CMAQ/STP funds at 80% of the total project cost, with the remaining \$331,000 to be covered by the City with future bond funds.
- **Motion:** Councilmember Adams made the motion to adopt Resolution 2023-03
- **Second:** Councilmember Bishop seconded the motion
- **Vote:** Passes, 5-0

8. **Consider authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with BHC for preliminary and final design work for the Towne Center Connector Project**
 - Mr. Daniel referred the map of the project once more, noting that this agreement would enable the City's engineering partner at BHC to move forward with design work for the project, the cost of which to be reimbursed pursuant to the night's earlier resolution.
 - The only item Mr. Daniel added as it related to the motion was the addition of a 5% contingency for potential ROW acquisition, which was not included in the original agreement. It is anticipated that the majority of the work will take place in existing City ROW.
 - **Motion:** Councilmember Adams made the motion to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with BHC for this project, allowing for an up to 5% contingency
 - **Second:** Councilmember Mellott seconded the motion.
 - **Vote:** Passes, 5-0

9. **Hear presentation regarding Edwardsville Police Department 2022 activity**
 - Police Chief Mathies reviewed the EPD 2022 activity report.
 - Data points that were reviewed included the 2022 crime index, incident reports, and more.
 - There was discussion about potential amendments to the City's code of ordinances related to violations of theft less than \$1,000.
 - No formal action was requested for this item.

10. **Discussion regarding priorities for the FY24 Annual Budget**
 - Mayor Caiharr noted this item was meant for the Council to prioritize potential bonded projects.
 - Broad discussion was held regarding the 98th Street project, the Towne Center Connector project, construction of public facilities, and the River Front Park redevelopment project.
 - City Manager Michael Webb noted that the original action was related to approval of an addendum to the Fogel Anderson CM agreement, detailing the cost for developing cost estimates for construction of phase one of the River Front Park project.
 - Councilmembers weighed with their priorities, with 98th Street and public facilities generally topping the list of priorities.
 - Councilmember Adams noted he appreciated the efforts of the CPPS Board in management of the River Front Park project, noting that moving forward on phase one would keep momentum for the effort.
 - Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel reviewed the items which would currently fall within phase one of the River Front project.
 - Additional discussion was had on the timing of certain projects.
 - No official action was taken as a result of this item.

11. **Hear staff presentation related to the planned 2023 Street Maintenance project scope**
 - Public Works Director C.E. Goodall reviewed the planned scope for street maintenance projects this year.
 - Currently included on the list are improvements on Speaker Road, Richland Avenue, Kansas Avenue, and 2nd Street.
 - Total cost for these projects are estimated at \$555,000, which would come from a variety of sources, including the Special Street fund, Special Sales Tax fund, anticipated CiFi awards, and bond money related to drainage improvements.

- This works will go on along with planned routine maintenance.
- No formal action was requested as part of this agenda item.

12. City Manager Report

- Mayor Caiharr provided an update on the Evergy variance request, which is not moving forward at this time. City Manager Michael Webb noted that the status of other projects in the region indicate that the substation issue is not time-sensitive at this time.
- Assistant City Manager Zack Daniel noted that the MPR Board of Directors, on which he serves, recently approved a 0% increase in contributions related to employee health insurance. He anticipates that City employees will not see an increase in their health rates for the 2023-2024 coverage period.
- Mr. Daniel also noted that interviews to fill vacant staff positions is ongoing and he expects both the Customer Service Clerk and part-time Deputy Court Clerk position will be filled imminently.

13. Council and Mayor Comments

Mayor Caiharr provided comments related to her original intention with the agenda development policy, noting it was originally meant to keep items from being added on an agenda after it had been published. She noted that the process behind this evening's agenda shows the need to be flexible in the period before public distribution of the agenda. She then noted that she felt that the current policy as proposed would cut the mayor out of the agenda setting process, allowing members to force items on an agenda without mayoral input.

Councilmember Mellott noted he felt the agenda development discussion has been a distraction for more important items. He asked about the process to fill the City Manager's position as well as stressed the need for a full-time finance position. Mr. Webb provided an update on the recruitment for an Accounting Manager.

Councilmember Bishop stated he was recently robbed of a yellow go-cart. He noted that he felt the Mayor made efforts to subvert the consensus reached at the last meeting regarding the agenda development process, which was inappropriate. He pointed out different areas in the proposed policy that he felt were not appropriate. He noted that he was not informed on the changes made to the proposed policy prior to this meeting and emphasized that the it had not been a transparent process.

There was additional discussion involving the City Manager and City Attorney related to the agenda development process.

Councilmember Adams noted that the agenda development process has predictably become too complicated, which is often the case with legislative policies. He pointed out different areas that would need to be changed to avoid being in violation of the City's own policies. Additional discussion was held regarding the voting threshold for certain items. He noted that the City's professional staff should be taking the lead on the agenda development, due to their expertise in the various subject matters.

Councilmember Scott stressed that he felt official action needed to be taken regarding the search for a new City Manager with Mr. Webb's pending retirement. He asked what an estimated cost would be for a search firm for this position, which Mr. Webb estimated at between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Councilmember Scott noted he felt there were strong internal candidates that should be considered as well.

Councilmember Scott then noted that he felt that agenda development process was not broken prior to the discussion on a new procedure.

Councilmember Shriver thanked staff for their presentations and noted a positive interaction she had with the EPD recently, with an officer reminding her about her open garage door.

Mayor Caiharr thanked Public Works staff for recent litter clean up efforts. She noted there was a new County Administrator selected, and she noted he was excited to start collaborating with western Wyandotte communities. Councilmember Adams requested that the new Administrator be invited to address the Council at a later date. She also provided an updated regarding her review of the City Manager job description.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Zachary Daniel
City Clerk