

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS HELD MONDAY,
JANUARY 25, 2016 IN THE COUNCIL ROOM OF CITY HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ebersohl called the Committee of the Whole committee meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois to order at 7:00 P.M.

Upon Roll Call, the following members were:

Present: Chairman Ebersohl and Committee Members - Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, Holtkamp and Martens. Mayor Hutchinson was also present.

Absent: None.

Quorum Present.

Administrative Staff Present: City Administrator James Morani, City Attorney Terry Bruckert, City Engineer Chris Smith, Accounting Manager Linda Sharp, Building Inspector Justin Osterhage, Interim EMS Chief Shannon Bound and Accounting/Clerical Assistant Sandy Garmer.

Guests Present: Andy Hrdlicka and Jon Palmer representing Faith Lutheran Church and Shaun Williamson and Jamey Bridges representing Life Community Church.

Chairman Ebersohl stated the meeting was called for the purpose of discussing: (1) Approval of minutes from the January 11, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting; (2) EMS Mutual Aid Agreements; (3) Faith Lutheran Church Sign Variance Request; (4) Life Community Church Sign Variance Request; (5) Main Street Resurfacing - Phase 2; (6) STP and CMAQ Grants; (7) Notice Procedures for Water Service Disconnection; (8) FY 2016-2017 Budget Schedule; (9) Other items to be considered; (10) Citizen Comments; and (11) Executive Session – 5 ILCS 120/2(c).

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 11, 2016 COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The minutes of the January 11, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting were submitted for approval.

Committee of the Whole Meeting –January 25, 2016
EMS Mutual Aid Agreements
Faith Lutheran Church Sign Variance Request
Life Community Church Sign Variance Request
Main Street Resurfacing - Phase 2
STP and CMAQ Grants
Notice Procedures for Water Service Disconnection
FY 2016-2017 Budget Schedule

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MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz and seconded by Alderman Reis, to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, Holtkamp and Martens voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

III. EMS MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS

Interim EMS Chief Shannon Bound addressed the committee on the Mutual Aid Agreements between City of Columbia Ambulance Service and Dupo, Millstadt and Monroe County explaining the agreement provides assistance when ambulance service is unavailable and the Columbia EMS reciprocates. Mrs. Bound explained the Mutual Aid Agreements have not been updated for many years and she is requesting to add an agency now licensed at the ALS (Advanced Life Support) level which will provide three Mutual Aid Agreements for our district. Mrs. Bound answered a question concerning critical response time clarifying they would call the closest agency to respond to the emergency. It was the consensus of the committee to approve the Mutual Aid Agreements at the next City Council meeting on Monday, February 1.

IV. FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH SIGN VARIANCE REQUEST

Building Inspector Justin Osterhage addressed the committee by explaining Faith Lutheran Church has applied for a sign variance to allow two hundred fourteen (214) square feet of signage to be displayed at 600 Columbia Centre, which on the original application requested to exceed the allowable square feet by approximately one hundred fourteen (114) square feet. With the acceptance of the Columbia Centre roadway last week, Mr. Osterhage explained that it gave the church two (2) street frontages which would permit the allowance of two hundred (200) square feet total – one hundred (100) square feet for each street front. Mr. Osterhage went on to explain it had been brought to his attention the church currently has two (2) free standing signs totaling forty-two (42) square feet in their parking lots (on Route 3 and along Columbia Centre).

Andy Hrdlicka, contractor from Summit Signs and Graphics, addressed the committee by apologizing for his installation of signage that exceeded regulations and briefly made the following comments: (a) in his opinion the size of the sign is appropriate from a visibility standpoint from Route 3; (b) Summit Sign has been a good steward of the City of Columbia for the last (10) ten years and this is the first time requesting a sign variance and (c) the signs have been overwhelmingly accepted by the community as being tasteful and appropriate. Mr. Hrdlicka also explained that the two free standing signs located in the parking lot will be removed.

Mayor Hutchinson stated within the last few years there have been previous discussions of revising the signage regulations to distinguish three (3) distinct commercial areas of the city (i.e., Main Street; Route 3 corridor and I-255 corridor). The Mayor explained that our code was written for Main Street businesses and unfortunately we haven't had the staff, time or resources to revise the signage regulations, but he suggested that consideration be taken, keeping in mind the economy of scale when considering the sign location, the lot size and visibility from roadways.

During this presentation, all in attendance were given the opportunity to make comments, ask questions and express their opinions, which included: (a) clarification and interpretation of the current signage regulations; (b) questions on the variance footage requested; and (c) inquiry about an existing sign which meets signage regulations.

In conclusion, Mr. Osterhage stated that the revised variance request is to permit a total of one hundred twenty-three (123) square feet of signage along Admiral Parkway consisting of one (1) wall mounted sign exceeding the total allotment of one hundred (100) square feet.

It was the consensus of the committee that city staff will prepare the ordinance to be submitted at the next City Council meeting.

V.

LIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH SIGN VARIANCE REQUEST

Building Inspector Justin Osterhage stated Life Community Church is requesting a sign variance for a total of one hundred twenty (120) square feet, which exceeds the allowable amount of twenty-four (24) square feet according to Section 15.44.170(I). The variance request includes three (3) signs: an existing monument sign (24 square feet), a new additional free standing banner sign (24 square feet) and a wall sign (72 square feet). Life Community Church is located at 626 W. Bottom Avenue which is in a R-6 One Family District.

There was a brief discussion comparing the signage on other local churches and businesses in residential districts, reviewing of Standards for Variance verbiage on the sign variance permit and questioning the reason for the variance. It was noted that the variance requested by Life Community Church was significantly greater than Faith Lutheran Church's request and that Life Community Church is in a residential zoning district, where a maximum of 24 square feet of signage is permitted.

It was the consensus of the committee that city staff will prepare the ordinance to be submitted at the next City Council meeting.

VI.

MAIN STREET RESURFACING - PHASE 2

City Engineer Chris Smith reviewed the resurfacing project on North Main Street from Crestview Drive to IL Route 3 (Phase 2) by briefly covering the potential scheduling, background and budget impact. City Engineer Smith then referred to the "IDOT Local Agency Agreement" division of cost section and the "North Main Resurfacing Phase 2 Summary" worksheet covering in detail each item and difference in expenses from proposed budget items. City Engineer Smith explained if additional funding sources were needed that the general maintenance expenses projected will be significantly less than anticipated and potential expense items have been identified that could be removed if needed.

It was the consensus of the committee to present the North Main Street – Phase 2 ordinance and resolution at next City Council meeting.

VII.

STP AND CMAQ GRANTS

City Engineer Chris Smith began by briefly reviewing the background information for the East West Gateway application for grants for the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation Program (CMP), which included a "STS and CMAQ Grants Highlights" and "Functional Classification" map. There was a brief discussion concerning the eligible projects, funding commitment, future and current developments and due date of grants.

During his documentation review, all in attendance were given the opportunity to make comments, ask questions and express their opinions, which included: (a) whether Ghent Road would be a viable STP project; (b) questioning deficit of grant funding projections and possible solutions; (c) emphasis of submitting bid for grant in timely manner; (d) explanation on how grant funding is allocated and (e) the desire to keep grant funding in Monroe County. It was the consensus of the committee to review the projects and provide feedback at the next committee meeting.

VIII.

NOTICE PROCEDURES FOR WATER SERVICE DISCONNECTION

City Administrator Jimmy Morani reviewed the notice procedures for water service disconnection by referring to Section 13.12.020, the Notice of Termination and an email from Accounting Specialist Michelle Brown regarding the certified letter process. Mr. Morani explained that staff is requesting a simple change to our current procedure by eliminating the certified mailing from water disconnection process. He went on to explain there would be no change in the number of notices since the certified mailing would be

mailed with standard postage resulting in saving postage cost and preparation time, as well as, saving the customer from the additional certified letter charges applied to their past due bill. It was the consensus of the committee to present the ordinance to amend the notification procedures at the next City Council meeting.

IX. FY 2016-2017 BUDGET SCHEDULE

Accounting Manager Linda Sharp informed the committee the FY 2016-2017 Budget Schedule has been prepared, budget discussions have begun and the budget hearing will be on April 18, 2016.

X. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED

Accounting Manager Linda Sharp informed the committee there were two interesting articles regarding Finance in the February 2016 Illinois Municipal Review magazine, "How Healthy are Local Governments in Illinois? A Fiscal Responsibility Report" (page 6) and "Financing Options Using Bonds for Illinois Cities and Villages" (page 13).

Chairman Ebersohl informed the committee of another article of interest in the February 2016 Illinois Municipal Review magazine regarding "Expansion of Home Rule Eligibility".

XI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5 ILCS 120/2(C)

There was no call for Executive Session.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Agne and seconded by Alderman Reis to adjourn the Committee of the Whole committee meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, January 25, 2016 at 8:50 P.M. Upon voice vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, Holtkamp and Martens voted yea.

MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes taken by:

Gene Ebersole

GENE EBERSOLE, Chairman
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Sandy Garmer

Sandy Garmer, Accounting/Clerical Assistant

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