

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF THE CITY
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS HELD MONDAY,
DECEMBER 8, 2014 IN THE COUNCIL ROOM OF CITY HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ebersohl called the Committee of the Whole 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, Mathews, Reis and Holtkamp. Mayor Hutchinson was also present.

Absent: None.

Quorum Present.

Administrative Staff Present: City Administrator James Morani, Director of Community and Economic Development Paul Ellis (left at 7:16 P.M.) and Deputy Clerk Donna Mehaffey.

Guests Present: None.

Chairman Ebersohl stated the meeting was called for the purpose of discussing: (1) Approval of Minutes from November 24, 2014 Committee of the Whole Meeting; (2) MOU with Columbia Khoury League and Columbia Athletic Association (3) Ameren Illinois Settlement Agreement (Municipal Utility Taxes); (4) Placement Agent for Bond Issue; (5) Proposed Personnel Policy Regarding Operation of City Vehicles and Heavy Equipment; (6) Non-Home Rule Sales Tax; (7) Other items to be considered or discussed and (8) Executive Session: To discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employee(s) of the public body.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - NOVEMBER 24, 2014 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The minutes of the November 24, 2014 Committee of the Whole committee meeting were submitted for approval.

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Holtkamp and seconded by Alderman Huch, to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2014 Committee of the Whole committee meeting. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Mathews, Reis and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

III. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH COLUMBIA KHOURY LEAGUE (CKL) AND COLUMBIA ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (CAA)

Director of Community and Economic Development Paul Ellis addressed the Mayor and Committee on the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the Columbia Khoury League and the Columbia Athletic Association; all of which had a copy of the proposed document. Mr. Ellis added that it is similar to the MOU with the CKL from a few months prior. Mr. Ellis will ask for some inserted guidelines to get thru the document more easily.

There was a discussion about other entities using the Bolm-Schuhkraft City Park's baseball field and that the Columbia Community Unit School District No. 4 has first choice on the field with the Columbia Khoury League second. It was also mentioned that it needs to be spelled out who maintains the field and schedules the field. It was noted that the dugouts need to be painted and that the baseball field infield grass and pitching mound are gone. It was stated that the Blue Jay Football Organization also uses the baseball field for their practices in late summer and fall. The names of the officers of the CAA were questioned and on page 3 of the agreement, there was a question if the Columbia Police Department could enforce the rules at the Legion Park.

Mr. Ellis confirmed that the proposed MOU needs to have more research completed and he will be getting back to the Committee on this issue.

IV. AMEREN ILLINOIS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (MUNICIPAL UTILITY TAXES)

City Administrator James Morani addressed the Mayor and Committee on the Ameren Illinois Settlement Agreement (Municipal Utility Taxes). Mr. Morani gave a history of the agreement and that the process had started prior to him becoming City Administrator. Administrator Morani explained that Ameren Illinois can go back four (4) years for the uncollected Municipal Utility Taxes and that the dollar amount is still to be determined. Mayor Hutchinson stated that he was of the understanding that Ameren Illinois was to pay for the settlement and not the Ameren Illinois customer. Mr. Morani stated that the City could forget about the uncollected taxes and not proceed with it or could just start collecting in the future, but there are a lot of uncollected monies due the City. Previous Administrator Al Hudzik and City Attorney Terry Bruckert already reviewed the agreement and it was stated that the City does have a contract to fulfill. Mr. Morani stressed that this agreement will get the audit started. The agreement will be considered at an upcoming City Council meeting.

V. PLACEMENT AGENT FOR BOND ISSUE

Administrator Morani updated the Mayor and Committee members on the bond issuance costs. Mr. Morani said that it should not cost \$70,000 as previously reported, since there is no underwriting involved. Mr. Morani and Accounting Manager Linda Sharp have met with several firms for assistance in soliciting and analyzing the terms of the bids. A RFP (Request for Proposal) will be advertised. Mr. Morani added that the City has Bond

Counsel and the City just needs help on the financial side with the bids as some of the bids may be at a fixed or variable rate. It was noted that the placement agent will be totally independent of the Bond Counsel. Mr. Morani added that the public hearing notices have gone out and that the public hearing will be held at the January 12, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting at 6:45 P.M.

VI. PROPOSED PERSONNEL POLICY REGARDING OPERATION OF CITY VEHICLES AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT

Administrator Morani reviewed the proposed personnel policy regarding the operation of City Vehicles and Heavy Equipment. Mr. Morani added that he worked with City Attorney Terry Bruckert on this proposed policy and added that it is to protect the City in the future if any employee would receive a DUI (Driving Under the Influence – drugs and/or alcohol). Mr. Morani added the term “heavy equipment” does not have to be defined. Alderman Holtkamp recommended using the term “motorized equipment” since that term would include lawn mowers. Mr. Morani also stated that if it is in an employee’s job description to drive, then if a DUI is received, the employee will be discharged. All in attendance were given the opportunity to ask questions, make comments and offer their opinions.

It was the consensus of the Mayor and Committee members to move forward to adopt the proposed policy.

VII. NON-HOME RULE SALES TAX

City Administrator Morani stated that he wanted the Mayor and Committee members to see the official canvass from the November 4, 2014 General Election on the City of Columbia Retailers’ & Service Tax question. Mr. Morani then distributed a three (3) page document to the Mayor and Committee members showing the Village of New Baden Sales Tax Rates for General Merchandise – Current and Proposed and with some of the other area municipalities sales tax rates; Non-Home Rules Sales Tax Referendum – Frequently Asked Questions and Non-Home Rule Sales Tax Referendum Projects Completed and Planned. The purpose of the document was to show the City Council what type of information could be distributed to the public for informational purposes. The Mayor and Committee Members were all given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. Mr. Morani added that if the City wanted to place a question on the ballot, the City has until January 20, 2015 which would mean that an ordinance would have to be adopted at the first City Council meeting in January, 2015.

VIII. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED OR DISCUSSED

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mayor Hutchinson updated the Committee and Administrator on pending legislation before the Illinois General Assembly.

Mayor Hutchinson added that the State of Illinois is now looking to allow municipalities to bundle gas bills on behalf of residents to mirror the electricity aggregation recently done.

The Mayor also reported that the minimum manning bill passed and that the legislature should not be into city management rights; the City of Columbia should be the ones deciding the number of employees the city needs, not the State of Illinois.

Mayor Hutchinson also updated the committee on the Public Safety Employee Benefits Act (PSEBA) reform legislation that they are still fighting for. Mayor Hutchinson explained that if a police officer or fire fighter is catastrophically injured in the line of duty, they would get health benefits paid for the rest of their lives by the city for which he/she is employed and the argument is the definition of catastrophically injured. Mayor Hutchinson gave an example how an injury may not be catastrophic and the employee may be able to secure another job in another field and would not need health benefits from the new company because they were getting health benefits for the rest of their lives from the municipality for which he/she worked.

DECEMBER 22ND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mayor Hutchinson suggested that there may not be any Committee Meetings on Monday, December 22nd.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Ebersohl entertained a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employee(s) of the public body.

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz and seconded by Alderman Holtkamp to go into Executive Session at 7:59 P.M. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employee(s) of the public body. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Mathews, Reis and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

X. REGULAR SESSION

MOTION:

It was moved by Alderman Holtkamp and seconded by Alderman Huch to return to the Regular Session of the Committee of the Whole Meeting at 8:40 P.M. Upon Roll Call

vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Mathews, Reis and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Upon return to the Regular Session of the Committee of the Whole Meeting, Mayor Hutchinson and the following Committee Members were present: Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Mathews, Reis and Holtkamp.

Chairman Ebersohl asked if there was any action to be taken as a result of the Executive Session of the Committee of the Whole Meeting. There was none.

XI. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED OR DISCUSSED (CONTINUED)

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Mr. Morani discussed with the Mayor and Committee members the possibility of hiring outside consulting engineers for projects. There was dialogue about contacting other cities Columbia's size, getting numbers and additional information. All in attendance commented and asked questions regarding this item.

It was the consensus of the Committee of the Whole to move forward to advertise for a Public Works Director/City Engineer and have Mr. Morani obtain consulting engineer(s) proposals for review at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

SPRINGBROOK SOFTWARE

Administrator Morani reported that the late charges for the water and sewer bills (not compounding) will work with the City's Springbrook Software and will have the ordinance ready for the next City Council meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

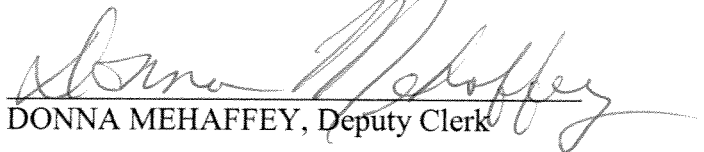
It was moved by Alderman Reis and seconded by Alderman Huch to adjourn the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, December 8, 2014 at 8:52 P.M. Upon voice vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Mathews, Reis and Holtkamp voted yea.

MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes taken by:



GENE EBERSOHL, Chairman
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE



DONNA MEHAFFEY, Deputy Clerk