

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, ILLINOIS HELD MONDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 12, 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 and Holtkamp. Mayor Hutchinson was also present.

Absent: Alderman Martens.

Quorum Present.

Administrative Staff Present: City Administrator James Morani, City Attorney Terry Bruckert, City Clerk Wes Hoeffken, Chief of Police and Director of EMS Jerald Paul, Deputy Chief of Police Jason Donjon, City Engineer Chris Smith, Director of Community Development Emily Fultz, Building Official Justin Osterhage, Accounting Manager Linda Sharp, Interim EMS Chief Shannon Bound and Deputy Clerk Donna Mehaffey.

Guests Present: Mr. Paul Frierdich and Mr. Adam Frierdich representing Domex Properties.

Chairman Ebersohl stated the meeting was called for the purpose of discussing: (1) Approval of minutes from the August 22, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting; (2); Approval of Executive Session minutes from the August 22, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting; (3) Joy View Acres Phase IV Preliminary Plat; (4) Subdivision Text Amendment - Sidewalks; (5) Special Event Request - Halloween Hi-Jinks; (6) Ambulance Fees for Non-Residents; (7) Employee FSA/HRA Programs; (8) Other Items to be Considered; (9) Citizen Comments; and (10) Executive Session – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), (2), and (11).

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 22, 2016 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The minutes of the August 22, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting were submitted for approval.

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Reis and seconded by Alderman Niemietz, to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Huch, Reis, and Holtkamp voted yea. Alderman Roessler abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**III. APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 22, 2016 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The minutes of the Executive Session of the August 22, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting were submitted for approval.

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Reis and seconded by Alderman Huch, to approve the Executive Session minutes of the August 22, 2016 Committee of the Whole committee meeting. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Huch, Reis, and Holtkamp voted yea. Alderman Roessler abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**IV. JOY VIEW ACRES PHASE IV PRELIMINARY PLAT**

Building Official Justin Osterhage informed the committee that Domex Properties is requesting preliminary plat approval for Joy View Acres Phase IV (10 Residential Lots Zoned R-3 One Family Dwelling District) and the Plan Commission has already given the plat a positive recommendation. Mr. Osterhage pointed out a sidewalk is not shown on the plat but will be added along the entire length of Gall Road. For consideration at the next Council meeting, Mr. Osterhage will have the letter from IDOT acknowledging the development is located in the Gateway Connector Protective Corridor and that the State of Illinois is refusing at this time to purchase the property. Part of the property is in the Gateway Connector Protective Corridor and it was noted that if IDOT were to acquire the property, they would have to pay fair market value. Mr. Osterhage said the market value is well established in the letter. Alderman Holtkamp asked if there would be gravel under the sidewalks along Gall Road meeting the standard for the City of Columbia. Mr. Osterhage said gravel under sidewalks is not currently identified in the City's Subdivision Code. Alderman Agne questioned the present width for the sidewalks and Mr. Osterhage said they are four feet wide. City Engineer Chris Smith said most of the sidewalks are installed by the property owner. Mr. Osterhage also said the first six feet of a concrete driveway requires gravel underneath.

It was the consensus of the committee to move forward with the Joy View Acres Phase IV Preliminary Plat. It will be presented at the next City Council meeting for consideration.

**V. SUBDIVISION TEXT AMENDMENT - SIDEWALKS**

Director of Community Development Emily Fultz informed the committee that Mr. Morani, Mr. Smith and Mr. Osterhage have been discussing the sidewalk requirements in the City's Subdivision Code and thought this was the most important item to initiate prior to a more comprehensive review. Ms. Fultz said per ADA requirements, there now has to be a five foot bump out on sidewalks every 200 feet of four feet wide sidewalks. Driveway entrances can count as the five foot bump outs. Mr. Smith is recommending the City be pro-active and go to five feet wide sidewalks going forward and added IDOT constructed five feet sidewalks along the North Main Street resurfacing project. Alderman Reis wanted to know what other cities are doing and Alderman Agne was very concerned about more impervious surfaces. Mr. Smith said stormwater detention would be factored in with the five feet wide sidewalks. Alderman Holtkamp questioned where fire hydrants would be located when there is a five foot sidewalk and Mr. Smith said he would have to check into it. (Alderman Holtkamp has a fire hydrant in his yard and wondered if the fire hydrant would be moved back further into the resident's yard to accommodate the wider sidewalk.) Replacement sidewalks would still be four feet wide per Alderman Holtkamp's question. Mr. Smith added it would be easier to have five foot sidewalks going forward than to have the bump out every 200 feet of sidewalk. Per Mr. Morani's research, Glen Carbon, Highland, Troy, and Shiloh, Illinois all have five feet sidewalks required in their subdivision codes. Mayor Hutchinson questioned Mr. Paul Frierdich representing Domex Properties in the audience and he concurred that five feet sidewalks would be easier and added he felt a sidewalk on one side of the street would be sufficient, especially in a cul-de-sac.

It was the consensus of the committee to move forward on the Subdivision Text Amendment for sidewalks from four feet wide to five feet wide. Ms. Fultz said as they move forward on this amendment, they will also discuss sidewalks on only one side of the street. Ms. Fultz pointed out the amendment will go to the Plan Commission for discussion prior to council action.

**VI. SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST - HALLOWEEN HI-JINKS**

Mr. Morani reported to the Committee some of the downtown merchants would like to close part of Main Street for the Halloween Hi-Jinks Special Event to be held on Saturday, October 29 from 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. (The application is requesting Main Street be closed from Cherry Street to Koch Street, however the committee discussed closing Main Street from Cherry Street to Whiteside Street.) Mr. Morani stated the purpose of the street closure would be for enhanced public safety. Alderman Niemietz said that children should be accompanied by their family and asked if there have been any incidents reported to the Police Department. Chief of Police Jerry Paul said he was not aware of any incidents. Deputy Chief of Police Jason Donjon added there have not been any issues as he attends the event every year with his family. Alderman Niemietz added some merchants aren't happy when Main Street gets

closed down. Alderman Reis thought it was a good idea to close down Main Street for safety. Alderman Niemietz said if the majority of the merchants are for closing Main Street, it would be okay with her. There were questions about who takes care of the barricades and who notifies the businesses for the closure. Mr. Morani said there was the possibility of a fire truck at one end of the closure, but it may have to leave if there is a fire. City Clerk Wes Hoeffken added that EMA staff may be available to direct traffic. Mr. Morani said the City is partnering with Historic Main Street for this event and can put conditions on the street closure. Mr. Morani added the permit is not yet being considered for approval but is in planning stages. Mr. Morani will inform Community Relations and Tourism Coordinator Sue Spargo that volunteers are needed for the event to assist with the barricades for street closure to avoid costs for the City.

Alderman Niemietz said the Special Event Permit Application has always had approval from all departments and it listed if there were any costs involved they would be listed (none were noted on the application). It was the consensus of the committee to pass on the costs (if any) to the organization requesting the closing of Main Street between Cherry and Whiteside Streets. The City wants to be consistent and all organizations are to be treated the same way.

## **VII. AMBULANCE FEES FOR NON-RESIDENTS**

Interim EMS Chief Shannon Bound reported she should would like to establish ambulance service fees for non-residents of Monroe County by increasing the current rate by \$100.00. Non-Residents of Monroe County would include Belleville, St. Louis, Dupo, East Carondelet and others. Ms. Bound reviewed each category and said that mileage and records request would remain the same. The \$100.00 increases were for Basic Life Support Emergency and Non-Emergency, Advanced Life Support Emergency and Non-emergency, Advanced Life Support 2, and Transportation to Morgue. The Treat No Transport (Refusal) will be \$75.00 for non-residents and will remain no charge for Monroe County residents. Alderman Ebersohl said there are zip code 62236 addresses in Columbia, but are located in St. Clair County. Ms. Bound said she will still invoice zip code 62236 addresses as residents of Monroe County. Ms. Bound estimates the revenue for the increase will bring in \$10,000.00 per year. It was suggested by Mr. Morani to perform an export of city addresses from GIS for the EMS billing company. Mr. Hoeffken asked if the price increase for Non-Residents would affect the City's mutual aid agreements and Ms. Bound said it would not. Alderman Holtkamp asked what other cities and counties are doing and Ms. Bound said the Monroe County Ambulance Service invoices a higher price for Non-Residents. Alderman Holtkamp also questioned insurance companies inquiring about the \$100.00 increase and Mr. Morani said it should not be an issue for private insurance companies but it could be an issue for Medicare. Alderman Holtkamp also asked what happens if all of Columbia's ambulances are on calls and Ms. Bound said the Monroe County Ambulance Service would take the call and there would be no extra charge since it is in Monroe County. Alderman Niemietz asked what formula Ms. Bound used for the increase and Ms. Bound responded their billing company suggested \$75.00 to \$150.00 depending on the city's population.

It was the consensus of the committee to move forward with the new non-resident ambulance fees for outside of Monroe County and keep the resident fees for City of Columbia residents and Monroe County residents. It was noted the fee ordinance will have to be amended.

**VIII. EMPLOYEE FSA/HRA PROGRAMS**

Mr. Morani explained the history of the Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA), Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Vision Care Benefits with Quality Benefits. Mr. Morani said Quality Benefits has not met the level of service expected by the City of Columbia. Mr. Morani added the \$50.00 HRA urgent care visit will be eliminated as it is no longer needed due to most providers billing at the same level of physician co-pays (\$20) or specialists (\$40). The FSA and Vision Care will also be administered by BeneFlex HR Resources, Inc. Mr. Morani said the cost will be the same except BeneFlex will handle the COBRA administration for a nominal fee of \$16.00 per notice. Mr. Morani stated the \$16.00 per notice is worth it as COBRA laws change continuously and the City does not have the situations that often. Mr. Morani pointed out the company is owned and operated by Mr. James Schmersahl and his brother, Mr. Mark Schmersahl, who is a Columbia resident.

It was the consensus of the committee to move forward with the proposal for BeneFlex HR Resources, Inc.

**IX. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED**

A. Songs4Soldiers Event - September 10, 2016

Chief of Police and EMS Director Jerry Paul informed the committee the Police Department had only one noise complaint from the Songs4Soldiers event held at Bolm-Schuhkraft Memorial Park. He added there were no complaints of trash left at the school's parking lots which were used for the event.

**X. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were no citizen comments.

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) AND (2)**

Chairman Ebersohl entertained a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel and collective bargaining permitted under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and (2).

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz and seconded by Alderman Roessler to go into Executive Session at 8:07 P.M. to discuss personnel and collective bargaining as permitted under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and (2). Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**XII. REGULAR SESSION**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Reis and seconded by Alderman Niemietz to return to the regular session of the Committee of the Whole committee meeting at 8:43 P.M. Upon Roll Call vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Upon return to the regular session of the Committee of the Whole committee meeting, the following committee members were present: Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, Holtkamp and Mayor Hutchinson.

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

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Alderman Holtkamp and seconded by Alderman Niemietz to adjourn the Committee of the Whole committee meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois held Monday, September 12, 2016 at 8:44 P.M. Upon voice vote, Chairman Ebersohl and Aldermen Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Reis, and Holtkamp voted yea. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes taken by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
GENE EBERSOHL, Chairman  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna Mehaffey, Deputy Clerk