

ROLLING MEADOWS CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
November 17, 2009

COUNCIL IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Ken Nelson, Aldermen John Pitzafarro, Barb Lusk, Larry Buske, Brad Judd, Glenn Adams, John D' Astice, Jim Larsen

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: City Manager Sarah Phillips, Public Works Director Fred Vogt, Finance Director Jim Egeberg, Community Development Director Valerie Dehner, Deputy Police Chief Dave Scanlan, Fire Chief Ron Stewart, City Attorney Jim Macholl, Assistant City Engineer Jason Souden, Assistant City Manager Barry Krumstok

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**1) "Great American Smokeout" Presentation – Dr. Goyal**

Alderman Lusk: A "Great American Smokeout" event will take place this Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, at City Hall. A guided imagery event will begin at 5:30pm. This event is free to everyone. Ten Honor Society students will be going out to some of the grade schools on Thursday to speak with the kids about the dangers of smoking. She presented Dr. Arvind Goyal, Clinical Associate Professor, Chicago Medical School.

Dr. Goyal: Gave a PowerPoint presentation on the dangers of smoking and noted many statistics.

**2) ComEd Update – Waverly Park and Barker Lake System Reliability**

Mr. Vogt: Reported that the Waverly Park transformer will be elevated at no cost to the City. The Barker Lake transformer is a more complicated issue. One option is to elevate the transformer 3-4 feet, a second option is to move the transformers that are currently in the backyards to the front yards. A number of easements would need to be acquired. There is also a cost issue. Also, overhead utility poles, aesthetics would most likely not be desirable. A third option would be to move the transformers 20 to 40 feet into the resident's yards. Easements would be required per location. At this point, all of the costs are not necessarily worth the benefit. We are still waiting for the final System Reliability report before making a final decision. A survey of the residents may be suggested.

Alderman D' Astice: He spoke with 1 resident. This resident indicated that the water only came above the transformer twice in 40 years. It does not seem to be a significant problem. Thinks we should just level them off and bring them to their original height. Should continue investigating.

Mayor Nelson: Will wait for report from ComEd.

**3) Brookwood Condo Drainage**

Mr. Vogt: A primary culprit was the fact the Palatine Township Highway Department had installed storm sewers without installing a weir. It was brought to their attention and a weir was put in. A couple of months later another large rainfall and waters barely got into the parking lot. It was noticed in older files the several inquiries were made by Brookwood to service or take responsibility. The requests were turned down because the pond is on private property. That being said, this detention basin does provide drainage to other nearby areas. Recently Staff is having talks with the Brookwood Association regarding improvements. The public is benefitted by having the detention pond there. Asked Council if they concur with continuing and is there some City responsibility and public benefit.

Alderman Lusk: She has also been dealing with Brookwood. The flooding in July destroyed 8 cars. Prior to the township issue they never had flooding issues. Conversations have been to the effect that they understand that there may be some monetary responsibility, but they do not believe that they should be fully responsible. She agrees with them.

Alderman Larsen: This issue needs to be addressed. One topic listed was a possible Special Service Area. He would absolutely be against that. He encourages Mr. Vogt to continue along the same path.

Alderman Lusk: With regards to Palatine Township, can we approach them?

Mr. Vogt: We would be remiss if we didn't approach them. Strongly suggested a maintenance agreement.

Mayor Nelson: Do we know how much impact there will be when Frontage Road is improved?

Mr. Souden: The overflow culvert is blocked off and that will be regraded. It would not affect the day-to-day operation of the pond.

Mayor Nelson: It will cost \$70,000 to repair and bring to standards. What would be the annual maintenance?

Mr. Vogt: \$2,000 - \$3,000.

Mayor Nelson: Is there an issue with sump pumps?

Mr. Vogt: There are some sump pump pipes that drain into the pond.

Mayor Nelson: Well worth continuing discussions.

Alderman Larsen: His sense has been that the general roadway improvements were step 1. Step 2 is being explored now.

Mr. Vogt: Clarified that there are concerns during the normal rains. There are a higher number of blockages.

Alderman Larsen: Is the \$2,000 - \$3,000 in annual maintenance costs the norm?

Mr. Vogt: Yes.

Mayor Nelson: Direction is to continue.

#### **4) Budget**

Ms. Phillips: Travel & Lodging, Professional Services, Professional Development, Dues & Subscriptions, Small Tools & Equipment – Staff was asked to look at those accounts (2009 projected). What is the minimal that they can get by with? Based on discussions the numbers have been reduced. Surplus has been brought to just under \$312,000. There is also a reduction in the Northwest Convention Bureau and Chamber of Commerce. As discussed, she still thinks that we should consider what the reduction in the proposed property tax will have on the residents.

Mayor Nelson: Clarified that the 28% increase in the Property Tax is there to cover the full funding for Police & Fire Pensions. If we were to transfer the \$1M dollars it would take it to about 18%.

Alderman Buske: Were would the \$1M be transferred to.

Ms. Phillips: The General Fund.

Alderman Buske: Why would that lower the levy from 28% to 18%.

Ms. Phillips: This levy is used for General Fund expenditures.

Alderman Buske: Why not move ½ to Police pension and ½ to Fire pension.

Ms. Phillips: Essentially that is what we would be doing. The Pensions are paid from the General Fund.

Alderman Buske: He would go along with that.

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Alderman Lusk: Thanked Staff. Felt they did a tremendous job looking at their budgets. Does not have a problem transferring the money.

Alderman Judd: Will not support the transfer. Should the economy take another downturn the money will be gone. He wants to make sure that we have this cash. This is not the prudent way to do business.

Alderman Pitzafarro: Concurred with Alderman Judd. The money is there for vehicle replacements. Now we just want to use it to pay our bills. Understands what Alderman Lusk is saying, that the tax hit will not be so bad this year, but it will be there next year. He will not support this transfer.

Alderman D'Astice: It shows a \$312,000 surplus in the General Fund. Can we be provided with the Fund balances after all this is said and done?

Ms. Phillips: Sure.

Alderman D'Astice: Thinks that based on that information he would preliminarily support transferring the money. From the onset, he thought the 28% levy was outrageous. Believes that we may have significantly overcharged ourselves in the vehicle replacements.

Alderman Larsen: He also supports transferring these funds. He appreciates the comments by Aldermen Judd and Pitzafarro. If we want to be sensitive to taxpayers, this is a viable way to do it. This \$1M did come from the taxpayers.

Alderman Pitzafarro: We will be contemplating the purchase of a couple vehicles later and funding through the Vehicle Replacement Fund.

Ms. Phillips: It is projected that there would be fund balance of \$2.1M in the Vehicle Replacement Fund.

Mr. Egeberg: There would be a fund balance at the end of 2010 of \$65,000 with the transfer and the purchase of all proposed vehicle purchases.

Alderman Lusk: We are not doing any vehicle chargebacks? She thought we were continuing with the Police chargebacks?

Ms. Phillips: Staff was directed to eliminate all chargebacks.

Alderman Lusk: Believes we need to consider the police chargebacks for the squads.

Alderman Adams: That transfer will drop the increase in the levy to 18%. Next year we will be looking at a 10% increase.

Ms. Phillips: She cannot say it will be exactly 10%, but does not believe it will be that far off. This would be a one year fix for this year. It would be a relief to the residents this year.

Mayor Nelson: Thinks that is the issue right now. We don't know what will happen at the end of 2010.

Alderman Judd: Read a statement to residents clarifying what he is trying to do with the budget.

Alderman Lusk: She takes offense that we have a bloated entity. Feels that the City is run very efficiently. Good for the unions for the concessions they made. Yes, it was a one year wash. There was never a promise that it would only last 2 years. The sunset clause was just to make sure that we looked at it.

Alderman Buske: Believes that he understands what Alderman Judd is trying to do. Believes that eliminating staff just by looking at the staffing plan is outrageous. You need to see what that employee does. Laying off people without that knowledge is offensive. He should talk with the department heads.

Mayor Nelson: Two issues. 1) Do we accept additional cuts by Staff?

Alderman D'Astice: Wants to incorporate the cuts.

Mayor Nelson: Incorporate cuts and bring back numbers for the three squads for the police department?

Mayor Nelson: 2) incorporate \$1M transfer and make necessary adjustments to the tax levy.

Alderman Larsen: Agrees with what Alderman Judd is trying to do, but has a difficult time going back to residents with a 28% property tax increase. He is willing to go along with the transfer to alleviate the burden on the taxpayers.

Alderman D'Astice: Preliminarily yes.

Alderman Judd: Entire \$1M to pensions?

Ms. Phillips: Correct. She pointed out that papers handed out last week only moved \$800,000. Transferring \$1M could reduce the levy to 15%.

Alderman Buske: That \$1M could be used for other purposes. We need to verify that it is only used for the pensions.

Show of hands:

Transfer: 5

No Transfer: 2

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa M. Hinman, City Clerk

November 17, 2009 Committee of the Whole Minutes approved by Council on December 1, 2009

  
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Lisa M. Hinman, City Clerk