

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
April 11, 2022

The April 11, 2022 City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 1610 Plainfield Road Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman John Vershay, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert.

Also present were: Administrator Jim Marino, Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Police Chief Ed Clark, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Economic Developer Steve Gulden, IT Director Tim Stinnett

Absent were: Alderman Joe Kubal, Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, City Attorney Mike Stiff

TOPIC: Old Pueblo Grocery & Food LLC-2222 Plainfield Road Unit A-Liquor License
Mayor Soliman informed the Council that the Old Pueblo Grocery & Food LLC would like to get a package liquor license. The Mayor, Liquor Commissioners and Police Chief met with the owners. They are currently looking to do beer sales only. Everything is prepackaged, and she also sells produce and dairy. The owner gave a brief presentation on the business. She would like to see how beer sales are, then will move to hard liquor. The beer is to go only, nothing consumed in the store. Alderwoman Gazal asked when the store opened. It was in December.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Old Pueblo Grocery & Food LLC-2222 Plainfield Road Unit A-Liquor License. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Divine Petroleum LLC-20755 W. Renwick Road-Liquor License
Mayor Soliman informed the Council that the potential buyer is applying for a package liquor license. This is currently a Shell Gas station. The current license expires in April. Everything is in order with the new applicant. They are trying to coordinate the closing and have the license in place for the grand opening. The proposed owner gave a brief presentation on the business. Alderwoman Gazal asked if this was primarily just a transfer of the license. Mayor Soliman explained that we are not creating a new license. He had to apply for a license and go through the background check. Alderwoman Gazal asked if they are going to keep the car wash. They are.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Divine Petroleum LLC-20755 W. Renwick Road-Liquor License. All members present were in agreement. Mayor Soliman did not think we had to vote on this since there is a license in place, but he would check with the Attorney.

TOPIC: Commission Re-Appointment
Mayor Soliman presented a request for the re-appointment of Frank Blaskey to a three year term on the Civil Service Commissioner per the memo dated April 11, 2022. Mr. Blaskey has agreed to serve another 3yr. term, which will expire on May 1, 2025. Alderman

Jefferson asked how the appointment process worked. He had a several residents ask about the Commissions and how you can become a part of them. Mayor Soliman explained the process.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the re-appointment of Frank Blaskey to a three year term on the Civil Service Commissioner per the memo dated April 11, 2022. All members present were in agreement.

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the re-appointment of John Stanton to the Plan Commission per the memo dated April 11, 2022. Mr. Stanton has agreed to serve another 3yr. term, which will expire on May 1, 2025.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the re-appointment of John Stanton to a three year term on the Plan Commission per the memo dated April 11, 2022. All members present were in agreement.

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the re-appointment of Jeff Peterson to the Plan Commission per the memo dated April 11, 2022. Mr. Peterson has agreed to serve another 3yr. term, which will expire on May 1, 2025.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the re-appointment of Jeff Peterson to a three year term on the Plan Commissioner per the memo dated April 11, 2022. All members present were in agreement.

Mayor Soliman presented the re-appointment to the Police Pension Board per the memo dated April 11, 2022. Roger Kramp has chosen to submit his resignation from the Pension Board. Since there is now a vacancy for this position, anyone who is interested is welcome to fill out an application. There are 3 officers and 2 Mayoral appointments that sit on the board. Treasurer Conklin asked the Mayor to check with the Attorney to see if he could serve on the Pension Board.

TOPIC: Audio Visual Proposal

Mayor Soliman presented the Audio Visual Proposal per the memo dated April 11, 2022. Administrator Marino explained that LVS and AVI met to discuss how they can streamline the proposal. Some of the changes would be to use the existing microphones and video cameras. Hard-wire the microphones from the dais to the AV control room. Use wireless microphones at the podium and at the staff tables. Revise and scale back the audio-visual equipment in the conference rooms and remove this equipment from two rooms where it is necessary. Reduce the number of video displays from 17 to 9. Mr. Burns from AVI addressed the Council. Two years ago AVI did some work in the cable room, and they are familiar with the existing system. Their proposal will be to move the current system to the new location and install the cameras. They would work with LVS to ensure that there is interconnectivity between the systems. Mr. Burns explained how this would work. Alderperson Oberlin asked if we will be cutting floors and walls since this will add an increase to the cost. The wiring will be outside the wall, coming through the executive session room, up to the ceiling and into the cable room. Alderperson Oberlin commented that we have a new building, she doesn't want to see wires running across the floor. Eric from LVS stated it will be a clean installation and the wiring will be concealed. He went over the scope of work that they would be undertaking. Alderwoman Gazal would like to make sure that we have in writing what portion of the project each company is going to be responsible for. Alderman Vershay asked about putting in jacks. Mr. Burns explained that the microphones will be wireless so that would not be a problem. Alderperson Oberlin

questioned the system support agreement. Discussion followed on the language and who would cover the different equipment and support. Alderman Cipiti is glad that they found a solution with wireless microphones. He would like to know how much the savings would be using the microphones along with the existing cameras. Ron Romero explained that the plan is to replace the necessary equipment in 5 years. Tech support will start with Ron Romero and IT Director Stinnett. Alderwoman Gazal asked about a time frame. They will get the work done that they can until the equipment comes in which could be 8 weeks. Ron Romero addressed the Council regarding the broadcast portion of the project.

Alderman Cipiti asked Ron Romero if he is comfortable with moving the equipment that can be used. Mr. Romero was. We will then need to look to the future as to what equipment will need to be replaced or upgraded. Director Gulden commented that the Council is in a good position with the team that they have working on this. He also commended Alderperson Oberlin, and Alderwoman Gazal for their questions and comments. Alderman Albert thanked Mr. Soifer for his input. Alderperson Oberlin thanked the Council as a whole for their comments and concerns.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Audio Visual Proposal. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Budget Discussion

Mayor Soliman presented the Draft 2022-2023 Budget per the memo dated April 11, 2022. Mayor Soliman commented that there is a lot of information in the packet to discuss regarding the budget. Mayor Soliman went over the budget topics that will be discussed tonight. He commended everyone who has worked on the budget.

Administrator Marino commented that the budget is a work in progress, and we are trying to put together the best one that we can. On April 25th we will discuss the operating accounts, water and sewer and capital funds. If everything is in order, we can pass the budget in May. Administrator Marino explained that we are currently facing a deficit and need to figure out on how to get more revenue coming in. He has met with Director Banovetz and City Staff to draft an outline of the budget. Treasurer Conklin stated that he hasn't seen an amount of professionalism as he has seen today. The Administrator and Finance Director have presented possible new sources of income for the City. Treasurer Conklin went over some items that were in the revenue stream last year that will not occur again. Administrator Marino explained that the rough budget that is being presented does not include any proposed new sources of income or updated staffing. Director Banovetz presented the Police special assets fund. She explained that they should have separate funds for forfeiture and seizure funding with the Police Department. This would not be part of the general fund, it is a separate fund on its own. The Chief explained how these funds can be used. The Police Pension Fund is 35% funded through property tax, participating employees contribute 9.91%. As of April 30, 2021, this account is 75.44% funded. The plan includes the City adding \$150,000.00 to the fund annually. Alderman Jefferson asked what the benchmark for the funds is. Treasurer Conklin gave an explanation. We have a goal of being at 90% funding by 2040.

The refuse contract is with Republic Services and is a 7 year contract. The contract has a 3.5% rate increase each year. If a resident has an issue and they call us and in turn we call Republic Services, and the problem is not responded within a certain time frame we can remove a dollar amount on the monthly bill we pay to Republic. Director Banovetz doesn't think that we have had to resort to using this in the past. Alderman Cipiti asked for an explanation on how this would work. This is a penalty on Republic Services if they don't follow through with a request.

Director Banovetz presented the TIF-Larkin/30 Fund. There is 1 active TIF in the City currently. There is nothing available at this time for the TIF area. The only property that may be coming is the sale of the current City building. Administrator Marino informed the Council that we met with the Attorney and prospective developer to go over the sale agreement and covenants for the existing property. Director Gulden explained that the funds from the sale of the property do not have to go into the TIF fund.

Engineer Wiedeman went over the Motor Fuel Tax and Federal Transportation funds. Currently the Build Illinois project is out for bidding. Engineer Wiedeman presented a resolution appropriating \$855,000.00 in MFT funds that will be received between May 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023. We have an MFT agreement with Christopher B. Burke Engineering. Alderperson Oberlin questioned the \$872,000.00. Engineer Wiedeman explained the difference in the dollar amounts. He also presented an estimate of maintenance costs which shows the expenditures for 2022/2023 fund year. He went over the material, supplies and maintenance projects that are proposed. Material and supply items include the salt purchase, de-icing solution, the retro-reflectivity sign program, and city-wide pavement marking. Roadway maintenance items include, crack control, and traffic signal upgrades. MFT capital construction includes Arbor Lane, Marlboro Lane, Rock Run Drive and Bicentennial Roadway resurfacing. The sidewalk and concrete program and the Chaney and Caton Farm Road patching. Alderperson Oberlin explained that where they did work on Ardaugh the pavement may be sinking. Engineer Wiedeman would look into this. Alderman Cipiti talked about the property where the stream is at Theodore and Gaylord Road that has overgrowth is Forest Preserve property. Engineer Wiedeman explained that they have no funding to clean this ditch and they commented if the city wants to clean it out, they can. This is something that we don't want to do, in case of erosion. Alderman Cipiti explained that during rainfall, the water overflows onto the street and private property. Engineer Weideman explained that he is waiting to see if there is any Corp. of Engineer funding to the County that would be available. Alderperson Oberlin explained that we used to have a cleanup committee that would go along in the spring and pull the debris out of the creek. Alderwoman Gazal commented that we need to start being proactive with the upkeep of the streets. The goal is to use MFT money on the streets that are not the worse. Chaney and Center will be ready to go out to bids soon for repair starting next year. Alderman Albert questioned the patching that is being done on Chaney Avenue. This is to get us through until the street can be redone. There are some other streets that need attention, and we are looking at how we can budget to get these done. Alderman Albert suggested to not advertise street projects that are not going to be done 2 or more years in the future. The resolution, estimate and agreement for the projects will be before the Council at the next meeting.

Director Banovetz went over the Revenue Sources which are as follows. Sales Tax 29% State Income Tax 24%. Property Tax 17%. Franchise Tax 12%. The top 5 vendors we derive the most sales tax from are Menards, Food 4 Less, William Meyer, Super Mercado El Guero and Thorntons. Last year the video gaming brought in \$145,000. Director Banovetz went over monies received from Covid, Duke Realty and the Police levy.

Administrator Marino informed the Council that we would like to do a survey with area communities regarding business license fees and building permit fees. The building permit fees are low and should be raised. A new fee structure would bring in additional revenue. Director Gulden explained that the last time we had a fee increase for building fees was in 2002. He went over the costs for processing a building permit. We are looking at doubling some of the fees. Discussion followed on the proposed fee structure, what permits it would

affect and the fees charged by surrounding communities. Administrator Marino felt that we need to review the fees on a yearly basis.

Administrator Marino presented the liquor license fees. Mayor Soliman went over some of the fees that we currently charge. He commented that we are a little higher than some of the surrounding communities for liquor license fees. We are a little higher with restaurant/liquor fees also. Mayor Soliman suggested raising the video gaming fees rather than the liquor license fees. Alderwoman Gazal suggested to not raise the rates since we are looking to bring businesses into the City.

Administrator Marino presented the tobacco license fee. Mayor Soliman informed the Council that the last time the tobacco fee was raised was in 2008. We did a survey of the surrounding communities and are on the higher end of these fees. The Mayor feels that this is one of the fees that we could raise. He believes we currently have 20 tobacco licenses. After discussion, the Council decided to increase the fee to \$750.00. Alderman Albert asked going back to the liquor fees, do we have any research on the packaged liquor. This is a license that we could potentially increase.

Administrator Marino presented the false (burglar) alarm fees. We do not charge for the first offense. We then charge \$10.00 for the second offense and then \$25.00 for the next one. It was suggested that we raise the fee for the second offense to \$50.00 and the next offense \$100.00. Chief Clark said that we did a survey of surrounding communities, and this is in line with their fees. Our false alarm fees are on a quarterly basis. Alderperson Oberlin asked if the increased fees would cover the cost to respond to the false alarms. They would. Alderman Cipiti asked if we can raise the commercial fee. Chief Clark explained that the fee is the same for business and residential. Alderman Albert asked if this is an ongoing problem. Discussion followed on the user fee. Alderman Vershay asked what would happen if the alarm were set off due to a storm. It would be the same fee.

Administrator Marino presented the bus bench advertising. We have 17 benches. We discussed going with a company that would manage the benches. The fee would be \$300.00 per bench per the agreement. The Attorney is working on the agreement.

Administrator Marino presented the solicitor fees (door to door). He suggested raising the fee from to \$10.00 from \$50.00. Not for profit groups would be exempt from the fee.

Administrator Marino presented the burglar alarm registration fee. He suggested the fee be raised to \$100.00 across the board, whether it's new or a renewal. It is currently \$50.00 for the initial registration and \$20.00 to renew the permit every year. Alderperson Oberlin asked if this is just for monitored alarms, not the "Ring" type. It was. Alderman Cipiti asked if there is a time frame that the owner has to disarm the alarm before the Police come. Discussion followed on the procedure and which alarms need permits. Since we don't have our own fire department, we do not require an alarm permit for a fire alarm. Alderwoman Gazal felt that there are other license fees that could also be increased. Chief Clark went over the fines and administration fees that we currently charge for various violations. He also explained at what point a ticket would go to an Administration hearing.

Administrator Marino presented the need for new sources of revenue. One tax that the State allows non-home rule communities is called Public Places for Eating tax. The proposed fee would be 2%. This could be for carry-out and dine in establishments as long as they have a table to eat at. Alderperson Oberlin asked if this is for a dine in establishment only. As long as they offer sit down dining along with carry out, the tax can be imposed. Based on

the sales tax we could bring in \$500,000.00. This is a locally imposed fee that the State would not collect. It is up to the City to collect the tax. The establishment would have to report the monthly sales to the City and pay the 2% tax. Discussion followed on how this could be handled by the restaurants. Alderman Albert asked if there is a different tax a home rule community is charging to take the place of this eating tax. Home rule communities can impose their own sales tax. Director Gulden went over the additional taxes a community near here charges. Even if we impose the 2%, we would still be lower than several of the surrounding communities. Director Gulden suggested charging a late fee if they don't do it on a monthly basis. Alderman Vershay did not feel this was a good decision as a majority of the restaurants are still struggling. Mayor Soliman asked if this shows up separately on a receipt. Director Gulden explained that when this was done in a surrounding community a number of residents complained about it.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Public Places for Eating tax. Seven members voted yes. Alderman Vershay voted no.

Administrator Marino presented the Comptroller Debt Recovery Program. In a case where someone has an unpaid debt to a Municipality, the State came up with a program that when they file their taxes they will be garnished. This program is currently on hold due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Once this is lifted, we will apply for the program. Alderperson asked if the debt is larger than the refund, we will continue to garnish the refund until it is paid. The garnishment would continue until the debt was paid. Once we register we will upload the tickets to the Comptroller. Alderperson Oberlin asked how we found out about this program. Administrator Marino received the information from the Police Chief in Homewood. Alderman Jefferson thought you could go back as far as your records indicate.

Administrator Marino presented the Gaming Machine License. The state allows non-home rule communities to charge \$25.00 per machine. We have 107 machines. The State is now allowing non-home communities to charge \$250.00 per machine. Alderperson Oberlin asked why we weren't charging the \$25.00 fee before. Mayor Soliman explained that it was the decision of the Council to not charge the fee in the past. Alderman Albert asked who is required to pay the fee. Is it the owner or the operator of the machine. Discussion followed. Each business is allowed 6 machines each.

Administrator Marino presented the IPBC Reserve Fund which is the health insurance provider. We pay a premium to them. If we overpay on the account, it goes into a reserve fund. You can pull this money back. There is \$300,000.00 in reserves. He suggested taking \$200,000.00 out and return it to the general fund.

Administrator Marino presented Ticket Amnesty. This is another way to collect debt that is owed to the City. This would give the person a discount if they pay the ticket off. There will be time frame to pay this off. Alderperson Oberlin asked how this would work in conjunction with the Comptroller Recovery program. Chief Clark explained how we would handle it. Discussion followed on how this can be implemented.

Administrator Marino presented the LGDF Increase. Over the years the State has reduced the amount of monies that come back to the Municipalities from sales tax. The State had a recommendation before them to increase the tax from 6% to 8% and it was not included in the vote that took place on Friday. Therefore, it has not been changed.

Administrator Marino presented the Cannabis Tax. If we did want to allow a dispensary in the city it could bring in about \$250,000. After discussion, several members of the Council would like to re-visit this. The Chief gave a brief presentation. Director Gulden said that this is a type of business that you can put in a manufacturing district versus a business district.

Administrator Marino presented the Video Advertising Billboards. If we were to allow this, the sign company would put it up and we could get \$500.00 per sign, per side each month. Director Siefert explained how the fee would work. We will be meeting with the sign company to get more information on this. Director Gulden also suggested that you negotiate landscaping into the initial construction of the sign.

Administrator Marino presented the Overweight Truck permit. We currently issue just a permit. We can now charge a fee for it. Chief Clark would get information to bring to Council. There is a company that handles this process. The fees start out at \$75.00. Discussion followed on how the trucks would be weighed and licensed. Alderman Vershay asked if we could weight trucks on County or State roads. We can if it's in our jurisdiction. Engineer Weideman explained that they have to give use the route that the vehicle would be using.

Administrator Marino presented the future staffing needs. In regard to the Police Department, we are considering the hiring of 2 additional Officers. We currently have 21 on patrol and we should have 23. Chief Clark gave a presentation. This would bring the number up to 32 officers and is what the Council previously approved. Discussion followed on the needs of the Police Department. Alderperson Oberlin questioned the Community Service Officer versus the Crime Prevention Officer. Discussion followed on the different responsibilities. The CSO is not a sworn officer where the Crime Prevention Officer is. Alderman Dyke asked if the Council could get a list of vehicles and abandoned property that have had citations written on them.

Administrator Marino presented the PT Building Inspector. Director Gulden explained that we currently have a full time and a part time inspector. One of the goals is to get aggressive on property maintenance issues. They would be cross trained for building enforcement and property maintenance. Alderwoman Gazal commented that we currently have 2 full time inspectors with one of them working on the City Center. She does not see a need for hiring another person since this inspector will be going back to doing inspections once the new building is done. Discussion followed on the duties of the inspector and the hours that are being worked. Director Gulden explained his reasons for requesting additional staff. Alderwoman Gazal expressed her concerns regarding code enforcement. Alderman Albert does not see a problem with hiring another person since we are getting more rental properties that need inspections. Alderperson Oberlin commented that when we hired the last inspector they were supposed to work on the weekends, and this hasn't been done. Administrator Marino would like to see them also working evenings. Alderperson Oberlin feels we need to get the inspectors that we have now to follow through with the complaints then hiring another person. Director Gulden would like to see the manhours for code enforcement increased. Lengthy discussion followed on code violations in the City. One of the problems is following up on violations and tickets. Administrator Marino said that we don't have to make a decision on these positions right now. He suggested a seasonal code enforcement person for summertime only. Administrator Marino with the upcoming move to the new City Center he suggested we wait until we get into the new building and then re-assess our needs.

Administrator Marino presented the Combined HR duties. He suggested we hire a full time person that does HR and other duties as required. They can take on social media, communication program, coordinating events. This would be similar to the position that Administrator Marino had in Homewood. Alderwoman Gazal explained that we had that position before. It was title Assistant City Administrator/HR Director. She suggested renaming it Administrator Assistant. We need to stop using the words HR. Alderman Jefferson asked if this position is affordable at this time. Discussion followed.

Alderwoman Gazal asked a few meetings ago for a flow chart from each department. This will help make future decision easier.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

MAYORS UPDATES:

There was no Mayor's update.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:

Alderman Albert commented that we need to decide if we are going to do a city picnic this year at St. Joes Park. As of today the contract has not arrived at the city. Alderwoman Gaza said that she was with the understanding that we weren't going to do one this year. Alderman Albert explained that he wanted to do an event at the new City Center, but that won't be feasible this year. The alternative would be to have one last picnic at the park. The only person who offered to help was Alderman Cipiti. Alderwoman Gazal suggested we should hold off this year. She feels that we should wait to do something on our own property at the new building. The events money was turned back to the city, and the check was written to the City of Crest Hill. Alderman Cipiti would be the co-chair for the Events Committee since he is the only one that showed interest.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the City picnic. Council is divided. Three members votes yes. Two members voted no, Two members abstained.

Administrator Marino commented if there is not full support from the Council it should be held off this year. Mayor commented that as the way the votes stands that it should be cancelled and wait for next year.

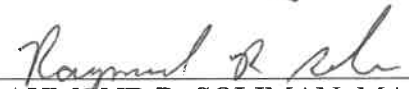
CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

City Administrator Marino had no further updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 p.m.

Approved this 18 day of April, 2022
As presented
As amended


CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR