

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
April 25, 2022

The April 25, 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, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Administrator Jim Marino, Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Finance Director Lisa Banovetz, Economic Developer Steve Gulden, Attorney Mike Stiff

Absent were: Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Police Chief Ed Clark, IT Director Tim Stinnett

TOPIC: 2022-2023 Draft Budget Presentation

Mayor Soliman presented the Draft 2022-2023 Budget per the memo dated April 25, 2022. The Mayor gave opening comments. Administrator Marino informed the Council that there were a few fees that he wanted to bring back before the Council. These are the liquor license fees and business license fees. City Staff conducted a survey on how we compare to surrounding communities. The liquor license fees are comparable to the surrounding communities. The Administrator does not feel that there is a need to increase the fees at this time. In regard to business license fees, we are at the lower end on some of them. This can be discussed, and a fee structure brought back before the Council at a later date. As far as the business license, we charge a flat fee and other communities have fees that vary depending on the square footage. Alderwoman Gazal feels that some of the businesses are still suffering and does not want to add more pressure to them at this time financially. Administrator Marino then moved on to the General Fund. The revenue is 10.8 million. The expenditures to date are 10.7 million which gives us a surplus of \$111,000.00. We have done some restructuring of the budget to make it easier to understand. We have consolidated Facilities Management, Information Technology and Fleet Maintenance into their own categories.

Finance Director Banovetz stated that the information provided is a little different than what the Council is used to. We have added 3 new divisions. We will also be discussing Home Rule, City Center Park, and the Department heads will go through their budgets. Regarding MFT funds, the way the account was handled in the past is if the money wasn't used it went into the Fund account. She went over the balance of the account. These dollars cannot be spent on anything other than what they are designated for.

Alderperson Oberlin questioned the line item of the officials. What is this. Director Banovetz explained it was the salaries and conference expenses of the Council, Plan Commission, etc. Director Banovetz presented the 3 new divisions that were created. They are, Fleet Vehicle Maintenance, Information Technology, and Facilities Management. Director Banovetz explained what items would be added to these new accounts.

Director Siefert explained what items would pertain to the city center, summer help, window washing, etc.

Director Banovetz presented the Police Department budget and the five year average. She gave the Council an update on the Police Pension fund.

Director Banovetz presented the Street Department. Director Siefert explained that we have been consolidating line items. We have a new line item, 5330 – Engineering. He explained what this line item was for. In regard to salaries, the employees were not placed where they needed to be in the past. Alderperson Oberlin asked if this would cause a deficit in another area. Director Siefert explained how this would work out. The number of employees has stayed the same, but the accounts where their pay comes from would be different. Alderwoman Gazal, asked about the meal expense. Director Siefert explained that after an employee works 12 hours they get a meal expense. An example would be snow plowing. They receive \$8.00 in reimbursement, and this is per the contract.

Director Banovetz then presented Facilities Management. Director Siefert went over the break down of the account and what the expenditures cover. Alderman Jefferson asked what IMRF (Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund) is. Director Banovetz explained it is a retirement pension plan for Municipal Employees. The City pays 7% of the salary which includes overtime. The employee also contributes to the fund.

Director Banovetz presented the Information Technology fund. She explained what expenditures are covered under this fund. Administrator Marino gave a presentation on some of the technology needs of the City. This also includes the software agreements that we are required to have. Alderwoman Gazal questioned Virtek. Administrator Marino explained that we have reduced this expense as our contract with them is done by the end of the month. We will be going to another firm to back up our network when Virtek is done. Treasurer Conklin questioned the insurance benefits. Director Banovetz would review the dollar amount.

Director Banovetz presented the Fleet Vehicle Maintenance fund. Director Siefert explained that we would like to have all the maintenance for the vehicles come from one area and use activity codes on what department the vehicle is from. Alderwoman Gazal asked if there is an increase since the price of fuel went up. Director Siefert commented that they don't pay all the taxes that the public pays so the price per gallon is cheaper. Alderperson Oberlin asked if we could run reports on the vehicles now that we have activity codes on them. Director Siefert explained how this would work. Alderman Jefferson questioned the \$20,000.00 line item for overtime. Director Siefert explained that this is a conservative amount and would like to see it lower in the future.

Director Banovetz presented the Administration Department. The salary includes a portion of the Administrators salary, the Administrative Assistant, and other employees. There is a line item for Municode which is the new software that we will be using for packets. Administrator Marino would like to use Municode to codify our ordinances in the future. Director Banovetz went over the legal portion of the fund. Administrator Marino commented that he would like the attorney at the council meetings and executive sessions. Director Banovetz then moved onto the insurance benefits. Discussion followed. The utilities includes natural gas, and we will be paying for 2 buildings for a while. We currently get electric at no charge. Treasurer Conklin questioned the cable and internet billing. We pay for internet, but not cable. Alderperson Oberlin questioned the line item for special

events. Administrator Marino explained that this has been set aside in case we want to hold some type of special event.

Director Banovetz presented the Clerk's budget. The part time clerical position is accounted for in the budget. Alderwoman Gazal asked if the part time position is the Deputy Clerk's former position. Clerk Vershay-Hall informed the Council that she asked about filling the part time position and was told that this may not be filled. We may need to increase the line item for the training of a new person taking over for the employee that will be retiring in 9 months. Alderwoman Gazal asked why the part time position is not being filled. She also suggested hiring a full time person that can be split between Water and Clerk's Office. Administrator Marino said that we can increase this line item due to training. Discussion followed.

Director Banovetz presented the Treasurer's budget. She explained how the salaries are divided between Water & Sewer and General fund. She went over contractual services. We will be dividing the fee for GovHR between 2 budgets and move it into 1 line item under administration. Discussion followed on GovHR and how it is divided. Alderman Cipiti asked for an explanation of the Food 4 Less incentive and the Menards incentive. The Food 4 Less incentive ends in 2024. Menards was finalized in 2020 or 2021.

Director Banovetz presented the Community Development budget. Director Gulden explained the salary and insurance are due to 7 salaries. He went through the remainder of the line items. Alderperson Oberlin questioned the overtime for clerical. Director Gulden explained that this is for when customers come in at 4:30 and for administration hearings. Alderman Jefferson questioned the visionary work sessions. Director Gulden went over this. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we have budgeted for the developer. This budget does include it. Alderman Albert hopes that we can have more interest in the façade program in the future.

Director Banovetz presented the Water & Sewer Revenue. Director Siefert went over the proposed Lake Michigan water usage. We conferred with several companies to come up with the amount of \$10,365,138.16. This does not include tap on fees as we don't know what type of development is coming in. Treasurer Conklin questioned meter sales. The meters are actually budgeted a little lower. Stateville money is decreased since they are not paying their bills on time. We cannot rely on Stateville for being a source of revenue as we are getting payments 7-10 months late. Director Siefert would like to come in higher than be under budget. Discussion followed. Director Siefert commented that we are behind over a million right now, and we are in a court case trying to get this money. Alderperson Oberlin would like some clarity on the Stateville account. Administrator Marino explained that we would re-evaluate the Stateville line item and get back with the Council with a more specific number. Director Siefert explained that Stateville is billed differently. Alderman Cipiti asked why there is no information for 2017, 2018, and 2019. Stateville only began to have its own category in 2020. We can go back through the records and see what we can find in previous billings. Director Banovetz explained that we also had a different accounting system in the past. Alderman Albert questioned the current usage. Discussion followed on Revenue Penalties Services.

Director Siefert presented the Water fund. You will see some changes because we took items related to Lake Michigan water and combined them. Contractual Services increased as this ties into the Lake Michigan studies, miscellaneous testing, and painting. Director Siefert then went over the meter testing. Treasurer Conklin questioned the water towers. This is part of a 10 year program.

Director Siefert present the Sewer fund. Under Sewer the clerical salaries have been removed and placed into another area. The utilities have increased slightly due to the addition of internet. The current rain barrel program is progressing well with over 50 being purchased so far.

Director Siefert presented the STP fund. The insurance increased slightly. The power purchase is expected to go down some this year. Waste removal did go due to the price of sludge removal increasing.

Director Siefert presented the Water Sewer Administration fund. The big expense is meters with a goal to get the rest of the city meters changed out by 2023. Another expense is switching over to an automatic reading system. This will allow for real time meter readings. This system will also allow the residents to monitor their water usage. The system will cost \$140,000.00. The remainder of the \$800,000.00 is for meter change outs. Currently there are about 1800 meters that have been changed out. Alderperson Oberlin asked how the residents will be able to access the meter readings. It could be with a phone, laptop, tablet, or computer. We would like to get as many residential done this year as possible. Alderman Vershay asked what affect the new meters have on the readings. The readings are coming in at a higher more accurate rate of usage. The new meters will capture even a small amount of water usage. Alderman Vershay asked if we get the new water source where will it be coming from, Lake Michigan or Oak Lawn. Director Siefert commented that it will be coming directly from Chicago. Director Banovetz explained the transfer in/transfer out funds.

Director Siefert presented the Water/Sewer Capital Projects. He went over the upgrades to the SCADA system. The proposed water main projects. Engineer Wiedeman went over the Theodore Street drainage project. Director Siefert then continued with the line items. Watermain Replacement will be for relining instead of open trench digging. This is a more cost effective way to do it. Alderperson Oberlin asked how long the replacement liner would last. It is estimated to last 50 years. Alderman Cipiti asked if there are any grants that could be used towards this project. Discussion followed. Director Siefert gave a presentation on Well #14. We are expected to spend approximately \$205,000.00 on this project. The City will still need to acquire from land Menards for this well. The State has appropriated \$400,000.00 for the City to do this project. That is why we have to show this project as a loss.

Director Siefert presented the West Plant Rehab. This is reimbursed through the IEPA loan. The contractor will bill the City. In turn we will pay them, and the State will reimburse us.

Director Banovetz presented the Capital Replacement Program. She explained that at this time we would like to put a hold on the program until the city center is completed. Administrator Marino would like to re-evaluate the program. Due to Covid we are off schedule on vehicle replacement. Administrator Marino was told that if you purchase a vehicle at this time, you are looking at delivery of 6 to 12 months. Some of the manufacturers are currently not accepting orders on new vehicles. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we recently ordered vehicles. Two vehicles were ordered in late December, but there is no delivery date for these. The Police cars that were ordered in early 2021 were received 2 weeks ago. The hybrid Police cars are not even available to order as of right now. Treasurer Conklin suggested that we put a hold on computer replacement program. Director Siefert explained that since Covid everyone received a new laptop. Administrator Marino explained the Director Stinnett is looking into a lease program for the laptops where they would all be replaced at the same time.

Director Banovetz presented the Non-Home Rule Tax Fund. This account funds the City Center and also funds the tax rebate program. Discussion followed on the expenditures for the account. Alderman Albert questioned the Food 4 Less expenditure and the cost this year. Director Banovetz would have to take a look at the contract and get back to the Council. Treasurer Conklin questioned the Tax Rebate line item. Director Banovetz explained that in the past we had to turn the unclaimed funds into the State. We have now passed a resolution that if the checks aren't cashed in 6 months those funds come back to the City.

Director Banovetz presented the Capital Construction Debt fund. There is still 3.2 million that needs to be paid to complete the City Center. Sean from Harbor is in attendance. Administrator Marino explained that there are 3 documents that were included which are for the City Center, Public Works, and the cost estimate for Hitchcock. Harbor has been going through all the files to reconcile what we have on file and what was paid out so far. Administrator Marino felt that we should be fine on paying this out on what is in the general fund. He went over some of the proposed revenue that we anticipate receiving but is not currently accounted for. There are currently grants that can be applied for and we are just waiting for the notification to proceed. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we could use the money from the General Fund and when we get the money from grants, then replace it in the General Fund. Administrator Marino explained that we are anticipating 5 million in funds from the State for the next fiscal year. We are just waiting for the State to release the funds. Administrator Marino informed the Council that he is going to have Harbor take over project management at the City Center in place of the 2 staff members that are currently working there. This will free up these employees, who will then return to their regular jobs with the city. Alderwoman Gazal asked what we are paying Harbor for the project to be completed. Discussion followed. She commented that she feels the 2 employees that have been working at the City Center are being punished since we are removing them from the project. They were still working while the majority of the staff were working from home. They dedicated a lot of time into this project. Mayor Soliman agreed that they did a fantastic job. At this point in a project, you would normally hand it over to a professional company to complete the final phase of work. He spoke with Kirk today and he was in agreement with the decision. Alderwoman Gazal said that we were lucky that we locked into the prices when this City Center was proposed. Otherwise we would have spent more money on the project. Treasurer Conklin asked Sean, out of the million in contingency funds, how much is being taken out outside of the audio/visual. Sean from Harbor gave a presentation on the City Center and the contingency funds. There are occasionally items that come up that are unexpected, and this is what the contingency is for. Alderwoman Gazal questioned the report and items that are not up to Harbors expectation. Have the companies that worked on this project been contacted. They have. Treasurer Conklin also commented that Kirk and Brian found some problems and addressed them. Sean commented that Kirk and Brian have done a wonderful job at the City Center. They did everything that they were asked of and are quite easy to work with. Treasurer Conklin questioned how we are being billed for Harbor's services. Sean went over their schedule. As of right now, we have an expected move in time of mid-July. We are still waiting for material and supplies that are tentatively scheduled for arrival in May or June. Alderperson Oberlin asked to have the report emailed to her. Administrator Marino updated the Council on the Public Works building and items that need to be addressed. We will have to budget for this. Alderperson Oberlin questioned any warranty's that may still be in place. Unfortunately, we have passed the year time frame on some of the items. Discussion followed. Alderman Cipiti questioned the inspection process that was on the Public Works Building. Sean explained that he does not have the documentation in the packets he has

received. Discussion followed. These are some of the questions that hopefully City staff can assist with. Administrator Marino explained that Harbor still needs to go through the paperwork for the Public Works building and do an evaluation.

Administrator Marino informed the Council that the City Center Park project is estimated at 3 million. He would like to put this project on hold and revisit it at another time and suggested doing the park in phases to get it completed. Director Gulden would like an estimate to put seed and topsoil down on the property to make it look presentable. Alderman Cipiti asked if prolonging the construction of the park will push the City picnic further into the future. This will be determined. Director Gulden explained that Hitchcock presented the plan for the park to be done in phases. He went over the phases of the project. Members of the Council felt that the washroom facility should be in one of the first phases of the park.

TOPIC: Water/Sewer Positions

Administrator Marino presented the proposed positions. The positions would be Project Coordinator, Lead Water Technician and Water Billing Clerk. Two of the positions can be discussed in open session and one in executive session. Director Siefert presented discussion on the Wastewater Lead Operator. Our current Wastewater Lead Operator is also our Water Lead Operator and staff electrician. The current staff member will be retiring in a couple of years. It takes 8 years for a top water operator to get their license as the test is difficult. Director Siefert is the only other person with a Class 1 license. Because of this the Director will have to run both of the plants. Wastewater is becoming more of a chemical process. The potential Wastewater Lead Operator would be responsible for the scientific work. He would like to get someone in now so that when the reconstruction of the west plant takes place, they are familiar with every phase of the project. This position would be non-union, non-civil service position. The pay would be \$130,000.00. Alderwoman Gazal asked for a job description for the position. This person will be responsible for keeping both plants running on a daily basis. Will this person be involved with the Lake Michigan water project. They would not. We currently have 3 licensed wastewater operator of which one is going to retire. We need to get someone in who has the correct license. Alderman Vershay asked if there is anyone on staff who could move into this position. There was not. Alderman Cipiti asked how will we find a qualified candidate. This position with the requirements would be posted, and we can also reach out to surrounding communities to see if they have any staff members that are ready to move up in a position. Alderman Vershay questioned one relative supervising another. Director Siefert would look into this. Discussion followed on staffing of the plants.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote the hiring of a Wastewater Lead Operator. All members present were in agreement.

Director Siefert presented discussion on a Project Manager. This person would manage contracts for plant construction, water tower maintenance, watermain construction and numerous other projects. They would also be responsible for making sure we are staying within our water allocation allotment as we move forward with Lake Michigan water. Alderperson Oberlin asked who is currently handling some of these responsibilities. Director Siefert said that he is splitting these duties with the Assistant Public Works Director. This would be a permanent position until 2030 and at that time it would be re-evaluated. Members of the Council asked if there will be enough work for the Director, Assistant Director, and Project Manager in the future. There would be. Alderwoman Gazal asked what duties does the Engineer have. Engineer Wiedeman went over his duties and responsibilities. Alderperson Oberlin hopes that the person we hire for the Project Manager

will have all of the necessary qualifications. Discussion followed on some of the qualifications that we may be looking for.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Project Manager. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Executive Session

Mayor Soliman announced that there is a need for an executive session on 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) litigation and personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).

(#1) Motion by Alderperson Oberlin, seconded by Alderwoman Gazal to go into an executive session on 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) litigation and personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Cipiti, Albert, Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Executive session 9:49 p.m.

Motion made by Alderperson Oberlin, seconded by Alderman Albert to reconvene from an executive session on 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) litigation and personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Ald. Kubal, Dyke, Vershay, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being eight (8) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was reconvened at 11:08 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

MAYORS UPDATES: Mayor Soliman received a call from the Administration Hearing Officer. He is stepping down and we will need to find a replacement. He has agreed to stay on for 2 more months. The Mayor has a candidate in mind and will keep the Council updated.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES: There were no committee/liaison updates.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES: There were no Administrator updates.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if we could get an update on the Police incident as we are being questioned about it. Mayor Soliman informed the Council that there is an investigation being done by the Will County Crimes Task Force. This is still an active investigation. If you have any questions, please contact the City Administrator.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11p.m.

Approved this 2 day of May, 2022
As presented ✓
As amended _____


CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR