



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES
September 22, 2008
5:00 P.M.
Council Office

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, J. Waltman, D. Sterner, V. Spencer, S. Marmarou, M. Baez, S. Fuhs

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, R. Hottenstein, C. Younger, T. McMahon, C. Jones, D. Hoag, D. Binder

Vaughn Spencer, President of Council, called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

I. Executive Session

Council entered into executive session at 5:00 pm to discuss personnel and litigation issues. Council exited executive session at 6:05 pm.

II. WWTP – 19th Ward Pump Station

Mr. Binder introduced the issues surrounding this pump station. He indicated that the pump station should be updated and upgraded to handle additional capacity for the building projects in Spring Township.

Ms. Hoag reported that Public Works is monitoring the pump station to determine the current flow and calculate the future needs.

Mr. Binder questioned if the consent decree would affect this issue. Ms. Hoag noted that it does as the consent decree orders the entire system to be addressed. She indicated that if problems occur with this pump station or its force main, sewage would go directly into the Schuylkill River.

Mr. Binder also described a problem with the improper placement of a water meter that can be corrected when this pump station is upgraded.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz voiced her hope that the City be proactive with this issue to remain ahead of future development.

III. Memo of Understanding – WWTP

Mr. Spencer reviewed the draft document. He noted that he requested the Committee portion be added to the Council section.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted her work to clarify common practice in this document.

Mr. Fuhs questioned the timelines outlined in the Memo of Understanding. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that missing the timeline does not preclude Council from asking questions.

Mr. Fuhs questioned the formation of the Committee. Mr. Spencer indicated that Councilors could name members of the community who have special expertise in these areas. They could assist with questions and issues to be addressed. This would be an ad hoc committee.

Mr. Sterner questioned what interaction the Committee members would have with the technical aspects of the process. Mr. Spencer noted that they would be available to answer Council questions.

Mr. Sterner questioned since confidential information is discussed whether a written report could be made to Council. Ms. Hoag stated that they could report on the process only with no specifics. Mr. Spencer noted his belief that it could be discussed in executive session.

Mr. Hottenstein distributed the Administration's version of the Memo of Understanding. Ms. Katzenmoyer will edit this version into the Council version for review at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Mr. Spencer noted the availability of a Council representative on RFP committees. He requested that those who have time to serve should do so. Mr. Hottenstein stated that the Administration would like the Council representative to be fully involved in the process.

Mr. Waltman noted his respect for the document and also noted his belief that it is too lengthy and too constrictive. Mr. Spencer noted that it would be used as a guideline for the Administration and Council and requested that it not be formalized. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that the discussions have been helpful in clarifying roles.

IV. Zoning Amendment Committee

Mr. Spencer reviewed the issue. Ms. Kelleher explained that the consultant has recommended this process. She asked Council to consider being the driving force behind the amendment by being the Committee. She noted her concern that the consultant feels the City should loosen its zoning regulations and Council feels they should be tightened.

Mr. Spencer questioned the philosophy of the consultant. Ms. Kelleher noted his statement that if the City is receiving many requests for the same variance, it should become a permitted use. She described the problem this could create with day cares, bodegas and churches.

Mr. Waltman noted that the consultant's philosophy is not an issue. He should be amending the ordinances to the City's philosophy. He should be serving as a facilitator.

Mr. Spencer questioned if Council wished to set the standard for the amendments at the beginning of the process or at the end. Mr. Waltman voiced his belief that Council needs to set the standard at the beginning and allow the Committee (as drafted) to go through the process.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that a facilitator does not guide the process. She noted that care should be taken through this process.

V. Agenda Review

Council reviewed the agenda for the regular meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

By: _____
Linda A. Kelleher, City Clerk