



# ***COMMITTEE of the WHOLE***

## ***CITY COUNCIL***

**MINUTES**  
**December 14, 2009**  
**5:00 P.M.**

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

### **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, C. Younger, C. Kanezo, D. Reed, C. Weidel, C. Geffken

Mr. Spencer called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

### **I. Information Systems Action Plan**

Mr. Geffken and Ms. Weidel distributed the action plan and an information systems assessment.

Mr. Geffken stated that these items are based on the information found in the Blue Ribbon Panel report relating to IT issues. He suggested that Council read the assessment and forward questions to him for discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Mayor McMahon arrived at this time.

Mr. Geffken reviewed the action plan. He noted that the plan mirrors the needs found in the Blue Ribbon Panel report.

Mr. Acosta arrived at this time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that she had questions but that they would be rather detailed. She questioned if this item could be discussed further at next week's Council work session. Mr. Geffken noted his willingness to discuss these items at the work session.

Mr. Sterner noted that it was unfortunate that it has taken the Administration six years to work on this action plan. Mr. Geffken expressed his agreement and stated that the plan should have been in place prior to the implementation of Hansen. This has caused problems ever since.

Mr. Sterner noted that he was pleased this issue is moving forward. Mr. Geffken noted that this will be a focus of the Business Analyst.

Mr. Spencer suggested Council review these documents for further discussion at the work session.

Mr. Waltman noted that IT is a critical service group. He noted that IT should be a tool used to reach defined goals. He noted that IT must be held accountable moving forward.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted her hope that the development of Standard Operating Procedures would be tied to job responsibilities and accountability. Mr. Geffken stated that this has been a goal and is glad it is moving forward.

Mr. Spencer questioned how many employees were in the IT Department. Mr. Geffken noted that there are eight employees.

Mr. Spencer questioned how many positions were added in 2009. Mr. Geffken stated that there has been employee turnover but no new positions added.

Mr. Spencer noted that a problem described in the past is that the IT manager was not delegating enough responsibility to others so there would be knowledge sharing. Mr. Geffken noted that the IT manager is delegating responsibility to others and is holding staff accountable for their responsibilities. He also noted that the IT manager is working to cross train staff.

Mr. Spencer noted the past concern that the IT Manager was the only one who knew the responsibilities of all the IT positions. Mr. Geffken noted that the largest gap is those who know Hansen as power users. Mr. Tangredi is currently the only power user.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that as the action plan contains timelines that Council needs to receive regular updates. Mr. Geffken noted his willingness to present updates on the action plan at Council's monthly Finance Committee meetings.

Mr. Spencer questioned progress with online bill pay abilities. Mr. Geffken noted the high cost of this service if outsourced and that the fee was not customer friendly. He also noted issues with merging this program with Hansen. He noted that the data in Hansen must be cleaned

first or current issues would be exacerbated. He noted that the data cleaning is part of the Capital budget.

## **II. Review Proposed Amendments to 2010 Budget**

Mr. Geffken and Ms. Weidel distributed an updated budget spreadsheet noting the amendments.

There was discussion of the need for specific amendments since the concessions were not approved.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the amendments would be introduced this evening. Mr. Geffken noted that they could be as all the amendments are included in the spreadsheet.

Mr. Waltman noted his willingness to meet with Mr. Geffken prior to adoption of the amendments to clarify the specific line items and amounts.

Mr. Geffken noted his willingness to supply the necessary information to Council next week.

## **III. Agenda Review**

Mr. Spencer noted the need to add two ordinances for introduction – the 2010 budget amendments and adopting the 2009 Uniform Commercial Codes.

Mr. Kanezo requested that the general obligation note regarding the projects at the Reading Municipal Stadium be moved from the pending box for action at the December 28 regular meeting. He noted that funding has been obtained and that Mr. Vind would be available to answer questions during the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted concern that the UCC amendment may not be feasible to the housing stock in an aging City. She requested further discussion before the passage of the ordinance.

Mr. Spencer noted that this is necessary due to State action on the UCCs.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need to address the issue without jeopardizing public safety. Mayor McMahon suggested that Mr. Franco attend the December 28 Committee of the Whole to discuss this issue.

Council reviewed this evening's agenda, including the following:

- Ordinance amending animal control

Mr. Sterner explained that this amendment is necessary to bring the City's animal control ordinance into compliance with State law.

Ms. Kelleher added that the amendment also adds an exotic pet permit fee of \$75 for the first year and \$40 for subsequent years. She noted that the fee is per household, not per animal.

There was a discussion about exotic animals.

Mr. Waltman questioned how many exotic animals are in the City. Ms. Katzenmoyer noted that the current number is unknown as the information was not disclosed to the Animal Rescue League when they became the animal control agent of the City.

Mr. Waltman noted that these are City records and that the Law Department should take action. Mr. Younger noted that he will follow up.

Mr. Waltman questioned why the City received 50% of the exotic animal permit fee. Mr. Sterner noted that the animal control agency and Police Department can enforce the ordinance. This would help cover those costs.

Mr. Waltman questioned if the animal control agency would share this information with the City. Mr. Marmarou noted that it was his understanding that they would.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that the amendment be tabled this evening to allow for the inclusion of the definition of exotic animal.

- Ordinance allowing the revocation of business licenses

Mr. Waltman noted the need to table this ordinance as he is waiting for an operations and implementation plan from Mr. Hottenstein.

Mr. Spencer also requested that research be done to determine how the revocation is implemented.

Ms. Kelleher noted the need to add enforcement powers to Police, Codes, and Zoning.

- Resolution approving the City's withdrawal from BARTA

Mr. Spencer noted the need for this resolution is due to the City discontinuing funding for BARTA. He noted that BARTA needs to have this resolution in place by year end due to funding issues.

Dennis Louwerse, Executive Director of BARTA, joined the meeting at this time. He noted his understanding of the difficult financial situation of the City. He noted that the City funds

allowed BARTA to apply for other funding. He noted his hope that the County Commissioners will pass a resolution for additional funding. He noted that the future of BARTA is bright as projects such as the R-6 rail line and Franklin Street Station move forward. He thanked the City for their past and future support.

- Resolution approving a conditional use for a student home at 1524 Palm St

Mr. Spencer explained that this resolution is being considered for action this evening because the last vote resulted in a tie.

Mr. Marmarou noted that this is a good family who followed all the procedures set forth by the City. He noted his hope that this conditional use be approved so that the enforcement of other non-permitted homes begins.

Ms. Kelleher noted that one of the conditions placed on the permit is that the student home use would end in May 2011. She noted that she worked closely with the Zoning Administrator and the Law Department on this issue.

Mr. Waltman noted that this permit does not need to be issued in order to enforce the other non-permitted student homes.

Mr. Waltman noted that the use is not guaranteed when the application is made. Mr. Younger noted that the non-permitted homes are already operating and will appeal enforcement actions to remain open.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to resolve these types of issues.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that these property owners have gone through the process where the others have not. She noted her hope that this would set a new standard for student homes.

Mr. Spencer questioned if there was case law regarding student homes. Mr. Younger noted that students are not a protected class and that restrictions are allowable. He noted that if the application meets all the requirements set forth by the City that the permit must be issued.

Mr. Spencer requested that all consider the conditions set forth.

- Resolution regarding the disposition of records

Mr. Spencer called Council's attention to the memo from Ms. Katzenmoyer outlining the changes to the retention schedule.

- Resolution affirming the certification of blight for certain properties

Mr. Waltman noted his hope that this would lead to further improvement in these neighborhoods.

Mr. Spencer questioned who would oversee the eminent domain process. Mr. Younger noted that the Redevelopment Authority would oversee this process.

Mr. Spencer questioned how long a typical eminent domain proceeding could take. Ms. Kelleher replied that it would be 12 – 18 months.

Ms. Kelleher noted that this is not a complete list. She stated that other properties are still being considered by the Planning Commission. She also noted that the Blighted Property Review Committee is considering 32 properties for 2010.

Mr. Spencer noted that the inauguration would take place on Monday, January 4 at 7 pm in Council Chambers. He noted that food donations from area restaurants are being solicited to decrease the cost of this event. He also noted that invitations would be sent via email when possible.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted  
*Linda A. Kelleher, CMC*  
City Clerk