



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES
May 26, 2015
5:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

S. Marmarou, C. Daubert, J. Waltman, F. Acosta, C. Daubert

OTHERS PRESENT:

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, F. Lachat, C. Snyder, D. Cituk, F. Denbowski, R. Johnson

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 5:11 pm by Mr. Acosta. He apologized to all for his recent absence and noted the need for Council to prepare for the upcoming administrative transition.

I. Fiscal Provisions

Ms. Snyder stated that she has reviewed the amendment. She stated that the amendment has also been reviewed with the Finance Committee. She stated that she is comfortable with the amendment and recommends that it be enacted.

Ms. Reed arrived at this time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that Council must be clear with the public about all actions it takes. She noted the need for all to understand that ordinances are laws that must be followed and that the laws cannot be undermined without consequences.

Mr. Marmarou agreed.

Mr. Acosta agreed and stated that the laws must be explained in simple, understandable terms.

Mr. Sterner arrived at this time.

Ms. Snyder stated that purchasing flow charts are being prepared so all follow the same consistent process.

II. Council Resolution to address the Zoning Backlog

Ms. Snyder stated that this resolution will allow work on the backlog to proceed. She stated that the resolution contains a list of information for Council for consistency. She stated that one item requested is the business privilege license (BPL) and the BPL tax payment history. She explained that Council can request this information but that it cannot be used to base its decision. She stated that the decision must be based on zoning laws.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the zoning administrator has used unpaid housing permits as a condition to zoning in the past. She explained that Council can apply conditions to decisions and that this could be a condition.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that Council have a brief educational session on zoning.

Mr. Acosta agreed and suggested that Council not voice its opinions during hearings. Ms. Kelleher expressed the belief that Council has conducted themselves well during hearings.

Mr. Acosta suggested that Mr. Younger provide the educational session.

III. Agenda Review

Council reviewed this evening's agenda including the following:

- Award of Contract for the Penn St lighting project

Mr. Johnson explained that this is the third time this project has gone out for bid. He stated that the lighting plan remains the same and that it will make Penn St more pedestrian friendly. He stated that this project will be fully funded by PennDOT.

Ms. Reed questioned the timeline for work to begin. Mr. Johnson stated that there are additional approvals requested by PennDOT and estimated that the project would begin in the fall of 2015.

Mr. Acosta questioned when the installation of the traffic light at 5th & Bingaman would begin. Mr. Johnson stated that PennDOT packaged this project with the Buttonwood St Bridge project.

Mr. Waltman questioned what blocks of Penn St this lighting project includes. Mr. Johnson stated that it is from 2nd through 8th.

Mr. Waltman questioned if the design of the lights will match those installed from 8th through 11th. Mr. Johnson stated that they are not exact but that they are close.

Mr. Waltman questioned what drove the cost of the project so high. Mr. Johnson stated that it will be a challenging installation.

Mr. Waltman questioned if the Main Street Board had input on the design. Mr. Johnson stated that the original design preceded the Main Street designation. He explained that staff tried to stimulate extra bids but most contractors did not bid because of the challenge of the installation.

Ms. Reed questioned when the planter baskets would be installed. Mr. Johnson expressed the belief that the work would begin tomorrow.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Ms. Reed and Ms. Kaplan for their commitment to the downtown. She stated that they have done extensive weeding and will be working on the planter baskets.

Ms. Reed stated that the store owners should do better with maintenance of the downtown.

Ms. Snyder suggested that perhaps DID or the Clean City Coordinator could also assist with weeding. She stated that a clean city includes an attractive appearance.

Mr. Marmarou noted that the railroad bed at the top of N 13th St near the Expo Center in Muhlenberg Township is full of three year old trash. He stated that many residents believe that is part of the City. He questioned if Muhlenberg has been informed about this issue. Mr. Johnson stated that he will follow up with Muhlenberg.

Ms. Kelleher stated that there are no railroad tracks at this portion of N 13th St. She suggested that the trash may be under the bypass.

- Ordinance amending Police fees

Ms. Kelleher explained that this amendment adds two fees - certified copy of police report at \$20 and extensive case file duplication at actual cost.

Mr. Cituk stated that the City will also be purchasing a credit card machine to process the fees through the Police Department when the Treasury office is closed.

- Ordinances amending the Position Ordinance in the Human Relations Commission making a full time inspector a part time inspector and transferring the funds for the staff change

Mr. Acosta questioned if the Human Relations Commission could continue investigations with a part time inspector. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the position is currently vacant.

Ms. Snyder stated that these amendments were requested by the Human Relations Commission executive director.

- Ordinance transferring funds from Contingency to Trades for the demolition of fire damaged homes on East Laurel St

Ms. Snyder stated that if the City receives fire escrow proceeds from the properties it will be used to offset the costs.

IV. Executive Session

Mr. Acosta announced that Council would be entering executive session to discuss personnel matters. Council entered executive session at 5:49 pm and exited at 6:22 pm.

There was general discussion regarding the upcoming transition, the Community Development Corporation, and the proposed pump track at Pendera Park.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.

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