



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES
August 10, 2015
5:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

S. Marmarou, D. Sterner, J. Waltman, D. Reed, C. Daubert

OTHERS PRESENT:

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, C. Younger, D. Cituk, R. Johnson, C. Snyder, S. Price, P. Mulligan, A. Chambers, F. Denbowski

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm by Mr. Waltman.

I. Agenda Review

Mr. Waltman stated that there will be additional resolutions considered by Council this evening.

Ms. Snyder stated that the grant application for the Skyline Dr project will not be deemed complete until each of the three participating municipalities earmark the matching funds. She stated that this is approximately \$97,000 for the City. She stated that she will work with the Capital Improvement Project Committee to ensure that these funds are included in the 2016 capital budget and suggested that this resolution be added to the consent agenda.

Ms. Snyder explained that the resolution will also authorize the Chair of the Lower Alsace Board of Supervisors to process the grant application and to proceed with the project. Any changes will be reviewed with all entities before action is taken.

Mr. Marmarou noted his support of the resolution. He stated that these improvements have been needed for many years. He stated that there has been increased traffic on Skyline Dr. He suggested that reflectors be placed in the ditch to prevent accidents. Ms. Kelleher stated that the ditch that Mr. Marmarou is referring to is on Oak Lane.

Ms. Reed noted the importance of showing that other municipalities are willing to work with and cooperate with the City. She stated that this will be funds well spent.

Mr. Marmarou stated that the project is moving along due to the constant complaints about the condition of Oak Lane.

Ms. Snyder stated that this has also been a priority for staff in Lower Alsace.

Mr. Waltman stated that this resolution will be added to the consent agenda.

Council reviewed this evening's agenda including:

- Resolution requesting EPA work with DEP on the Clean Power Plan

Mr. Sterner stated that he does not support this resolution as the Clean Power Plan will kill the PA coal industry.

- Ordinances amending parking meters and establishing a maximum parking rate

Mr. Mulligan stated that the amendment to Chapter 576 will allow payment other than by coin. He stated that this will make payment by the mobile app and the kiosks official. He described several situations in which this would have been helpful in the past and stated that it will be positive for the Parking Authority and for the City. He expressed the belief that it would reduce the number of tickets issued erroneously. He stated that the mobile app and kiosks are also in use in Allentown and Bethlehem.

Mr. Daubert questioned if the meter zones would be expanding. Mr. Mulligan stated that they would not.

Mr. Mulligan stated that the ordinance setting the maximum parking rate would allow the parking authority to have flexibility to set rates based on usage. He stated that the Parking Authority has no intention of changing the rates at this time. He explained that the rates would be changed by resolution of the Parking Authority and if the Parking Authority wanted to exceed the maximum rate it would need action by City Council.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the maintenance of the kiosks. Mr. Mulligan explained that the mobile app and kiosks are web based. He stated that the kiosks have interchangeable parts and are much easier to repair than parking meters. He stated that the web based systems allows him to track specific situations and prevents potential abuses.

Mr. Daubert expressed the belief that moving away from coins will be much more efficient. He stated that Parking Authority employees will be able to spend less time emptying coins from meters. Mr. Mulligan agreed and stated that employee time can now be used much more efficiently. He stated that the Parking Authority does not plan to reduce staff. He explained that people generally don't carry coins.

Mr. Waltman questioned if this was the last remaining issue to move the additional funding to the City. Mr. Mulligan stated that it is.

Mr. Sterner noted the need to educate the public. Mr. Mulligan stated that the mobile app and kiosks are very user friendly. He stated that he used symbols on the kiosks to address the City's language issues.

Mr. Price questioned if these ordinances were eligible for a vote this evening. Mr. Waltman stated that they are.

- Appointments/Reappointments

Mr. Waltman suggested that the appointments and reappointments be handled together. Council agreed.

The representatives from the Parking Authority left the meeting at this time.

II. Appointment of Interim Council President

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz joined the meeting via speaker phone.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to fill the Council President seat through the end of the year.

Mr. Marmarou stated that Council has 30 days to appoint someone. He suggested waiting. Mr. Waltman disagreed with waiting to appoint the Council President. He stated this appointment is temporary.

Ms. Reed stated that the ballot issues are outside the control of this body.

Mr. Waltman stated that he would appreciate Council's support as the interim Council President. He stated that he would work diligently through the budget season and prepare Council for the next administration.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he was not admitted to a meeting being held between the City Clerk, the City Solicitor and Ms. Reed. He expressed the belief that as an elected official he should have been admitted.

Ms. Reed stated that she requested a private meeting with the City Solicitor. She stated that when Mr. Marmarou arrived, she was in the middle of that meeting. She stated that all Councilors have the right to meet privately with the Solicitor as needed and that she has apologized to Mr. Marmarou several times.

Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that he should have been allowed to attend.

Mr. Waltman stated that each Council member has the right to meet with the Solicitor and Council staff as needed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that Councilors speak up when they feel uncomfortable in or with a situation. She noted the need to not assign blame and not to let emotions interfere with the work of the City.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that all Councilors are under a great deal of stress at this time. He stated that the key to moving forward is for Council to show it is a strong and productive body. He stated that he is appreciative of Council's support.

Ms. Snyder questioned how the temporary appointment affects the election ballot. Mr. Waltman explained that Council will accept applications for a District 6 Councilor to fill the seat through the end of the year. He stated that he will also be working with the Democratic Committee to be placed on the ballot for Council President. He stated that should he win both seats, he would need to resign one. That would mean another appointment to the vacant seat through the next municipal election.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that this process be summarized in a bullet point list to help with public understanding. She stated that this is a complicated process. She explained that the parties will be placing candidates on the November ballot for Council President since the primary election has already passed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the County Democratic Committee chooses the candidate. Mr. Waltman stated that they do but hopes that they will consider the recommendation of the City Committee.

Mr. Waltman suggested Ms. Reed to be appointed to Vice President. He stated that she has two years remaining on her term and that they work well together. He noted his hope that all Councilors become more involved.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with Mr. Waltman's suggestion.

Ms. Reed expressed her disappointment and noted the need for open discussion. She stated that all of Council has been impacted by this situation but that forward movement is needed.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that Council has always been an ethical body. He commended Mr. Acosta for taking responsibility for his actions. He noted the need to reserve judgment and to work toward forgiveness.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he feels for the family.

Mr. Sterner stated that it is a shame about the entire intrigue. He stated that it is easy to make mistakes and that all must be careful.

Mr. Waltman stated that he never questioned Mr. Acosta's ethics.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that people make choices. She stated that this choice was unethical. She noted the need for Councilors to speak up when they see red flags. She noted the need to regain the public's trust. She stated that these are difficult times politically with the issues at the local, State, and Federal levels.

Resolutions to appoint the President and Vice President will also be added to this evening's agenda.

III. Executive Session

Mr. Marmarou requested a review of a legal settlement agreement.

Mr. Younger noted the need for this review to be in executive session as it pertains to legal matters.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz left the meeting at this time.

Council entered executive session at 5:41 pm and exited at 5:46 pm.

IV. Vacant Council BAC positions

Mr. Waltman stated that Mr. Acosta held positions on the Diversity Board, the Local Redevelopment Authority and RATS. He stated that he will need others to step forward for these positions.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:48 pm.

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