

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
May 10, 2021

The May 10, 2021 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 Vicki Hackney, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman John Vershay, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderwoman Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: City Administrator Heather McGuire, Interim Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, (Police Chief Ed Clark, Deputy Chief Hertzman Deputy Chief Rossetti arrived at 8:00 p.m.).

Absent was: None.

TOPIC: Plan Commission Recommendation

Mayor Soliman presented a request for a recommendation for a vacancy in the Plan Commission. Jeffrey Peterson who is retired from the Will County Highway Department submitted an application. Mr. Peterson was in attendance and addressed the Council. Mayor Soliman asked for comments or questions from the Council. Alderwoman Gazal felt that Mr. Peterson will be a good fit for the Plan Commission. The Mayor explained that this appointment would be to finish out the term of Linda Strysik. This would be for one year and would expire on May 1, 2022.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Plan Commission Recommendation for the appointment of Jeff Peterson as presented. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Liquor License Recommendation-2424 Plainfield Road

Mayor Soliman presented a request for a Liquor License Recommendation for Russo's Deli at 2424 Plainfield Road. Zack and Sarah who are the owners of Russo's Deli are in attendance. Their background check is in order. Zack and Sarah gave a presentation on the business. They would eventually like to get a video gaming license. Mayor Soliman went over the liquor license procedure.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Liquor License Recommendation-2424 Plainfield Road. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Liquor License Recommendation-20631 W. Renwick Road

Mayor Soliman presented a request for a Liquor License Recommendation-20631 W Renwick Road for Burger Rebellion. Dale and Pamela, the owners of Burger Rebellion are in attendance. The background check was in order. Dale gave a presentation on the business. Alderwoman Gazal commended Dale on their menu. Alderman Albert also commended them. Dale explained that they try to purchase their ingredients locally from small businesses in the area. Discussion followed on the hours of operation.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on a Liquor License Recommendation-20631 W. Renwick Road. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Regional Water Presentation

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the Regional Water Presentation. Chris Ulm from Strand & Associates were in attendance. Administrator McGuire gave a brief presentation. Interim Public Works Director Mark Siefert gave a slide presentation. The City currently has 8 wells and are proposing an additional one. The depth of the wells is between 300 to 400 feet with a water pumpage of 200-500 gallons per minute. There are seven water treatment facilities (well houses) with iron filtration at 5 of the facilities and pump-to-waste at 2 facilities. There are currently 3 city owned water towers. The Gaylord and Oakland Avenue tanks hold 333,000 galls. The Division Street tank holds 1.5 million gallons. There is also a tank at Stateville Prison that holds 750,000 gallons. Interim Director Siefert informed the Council that there is currently an emergency connect with Joliet. We also provide water to another public water supply which is Stateville. Some of the current obstacles in providing new wells is the Emerald Dragonfly and elevated chloride levels due to salting and industrial contamination. Chris Ulm from Strand & Associates addressed the Council. He went over some of the areas in the City where a future well could be located. Mr. Ulm discussed the impact that chlorides has on water facilities. We are currently running under the limit allowed in the water. Discussion continued on PFAS levels that have been detected in some area shallow wells. The EPA is still collecting data on contaminants that are currently not well known. Those in industry anticipate that these unregulated contaminants will eventually become regulated and need treatment. Mr. Ulm went over several options that would be available such as deep wells, or become members of the Regional Water Commission, DuPage Water Commission, or the Illinois American Water Company (Plainfield) Des Plaines. Also, would water from the Des Plaines River, Illinois River, or Kankakee Rivers be viable. One of the questions that comes up is the increased cost. Discussion followed on the potential processing and disposal of P-Phos. Alderwoman Oberlin asked about the process and how it affects the environment. Another treatment would be by reverse osmosis which could be very costly. Discussion followed on Lake Michigan water versus well water. Discussion followed on a centralized treatment site versus individual ones. Timing is a big factor in determining a solution to the shortage of water. With a regional water commission, you have to determine how much water you think you will be needing. If a large manufacturer would move in that requires additional water above what you are allotted, you would not have a sufficient water supply for them. Discussion followed on residential users versus commercial users. Mr. Ulm went over the cost study and the regional water study. The more members that join, the lower the cost to each member. Alderman Albert asked if anyone has committed to becoming a member. They had not. The numbers and proposed agreements are still being worked on. Discussion followed on the various communities that pull their water from shallow wells. Alderman Albert asked for an explanation of the blending of water from shallow and deep wells. The City is going to have to make some decisions about the future of the water supply and what option we would like to take. Mr. Ulm presented three options for a water study and what the costs would be. Alderman Albert questioned some neighboring communities that are digging deep wells. Discussion followed on how the proposed Joliet water shortage will affect other communities. Alderman Albert likes the idea of us being in charge of our own facilities. He is concerned that once you start working with other municipalities you are going to see the fees going up. Administrator McGuire explained that staff thought that it would be best to bring all of the information to the Council so that we can make the best decision for the residents and the City. Alderwoman Gazal said that

we need to let the residents know what our options are and what the cost increase is going to be on their water bills based on the final decision. Interim Public Works Director Mark Siefert explained that the City of Joliet reached out to the residents through social media, mailings, and surveys. They only received 300 surveys back out of the thousands they sent out. Administrator McGuire explained that before we do a notification to the public, we would like to find out what the impact is going to be to our water rates. Discussion followed on the water source and the infrastructure that is currently in place. Administrator McGuire informed the Council that Joliet is looking for some kind of answer by the end of this year. The Mayor was in favor of the three options that have been presented so that we can make a decision that would be best for the City. We need to find out what the impact is going to be on water rates. Mr. Ulm explained how the study would work and how we would use the results from it. Alderman Cipiti questioned the proposed Sunnyland well on Gaylord Road. Interim Director Siefert gave a presentation on the proposed well site and its impact on the current City wells. Alderwoman Oberlin asked what will happen to the current wells if we go with Lake Michigan water. We would keep them maintained as an emergency backup system. Alderman Cipiti asked if there was a possibility of renting wells from Joliet. Mr. Ulm explained that this could be a part of the study. Alderman Jefferson was in favor of the studies as this would give us the information we need to educate the residents. Alderwoman Gazal would like to see us do a study. Mr. Ulm explained that Joliet is in year three of their studies. Discussion followed. Joliet is looking for some type of input by the end of the year from the surrounding communities. Alderwoman Gazal asked if Joliet can afford to go with an alternate water source. Mr. Ulm explained that they can, but it would be more feasible if other communities joined them.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Regional Water Presentation and a study to be conducted by Strand & Associates. All members present were in agreement. Alderman Vershay questioned the deep wells that are located east of Theodore Street. Discussion followed. Alderman Albert questioned the Gaylord site. Administrator McGuire explained that we are looking into alternate sites that would not impact the residents in that area.

TOPIC: Police Administration Retirement Insurance

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the Police Administration Retirement insurance per the memo dated May 7, 2021. Administrator McGuire explained per the last Police contract we added a new provision to allow for retirement coverage for Police until they are eligible for Medicare. The City would pay 75% of the cost of HMO+1 or 90% of HMO single as long as they retire with a minimum of 20 years of service and are at least 55 years of age. This was done in exchange for the education pay. This request would cover anyone that would step into the position of Deputy Chief or Police Chief since this benefit is not currently offered to them. Alderman Jefferson asked if this would be their primary insurance until Medicare kicks in, then would it become secondary at the retiree's expense. Administrator McGuire said that she would like this agreement to mirror the contract in case there are changes in the future. Discussion followed on the two tiers that are in place and the benefits that are provided. This is for retirees that attain the age of 55 and have 20 years with the Crest Hill Police Department. Deputy Chief Hertzmann gave a brief speech. Administrator McGuire informed the Council that this would be put in the form of a resolution.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote Police Administration Retirement Insurance. All members present were in agreement.

TOPIC: Temporary Outdoor Dining Permit-Ordinance #1842

Mayor Soliman presented the Temporary Outdoor Permits per Ordinance #1842. The Mayor went over the ordinance with the new Council members. He would like to extend the outdoor seating with the same rules and regulations as last year which was 30 patrons in an outdoor area. We had 7 liquor establishments and 1 restaurant that took advantage of the outdoor seating. There were two establishments that have contacted the Mayor to see if the City would consider extending the outdoor seating. Alderwoman Gazal asked why we are setting the number at 30 with the CDC extending capacity. Alderman Cipiti asked if the ordinance has an end date on it. It did not. Alderwoman Oberlin felt that we need to do what is necessary to help out our businesses. Discussion followed on the amount of seating that would be allowed per business. Dale from Burger Rebellion said that they would be starting with 25 to 30 seats and their maximum would be 60 seats. The Mayor said that he does not have a problem increasing it to 50. Outdoor patios in the summer are a popular option for patrons who are uncomfortable being indoors. The Mayor suggested limiting the number of patrons to 50 where permissible and extending the outdoor seating until Labor Day. This time frame can be reevaluated in the future.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on Temporary Outdoor Permits per Ordinance #1842 to extend the number of patrons to 50 and the date until Labor Day. All members present were in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

MAYORS UPDATES: Mayor Soliman informed the Council that we will be honoring Joe Pesavento on his retirement which took place in May of 2020. This has been delayed due to the Covid outbreak of last year. Mayor Soliman informed the Council that representatives from the Italian Club will be in attendance at the next work session to discuss the annual Festa. They would like to increase it to 3 days. There are a number of items that will need to be worked out as far as Covid protocol. Alderman Kubal asked if we know what some of the other communities are doing for outdoor festivals. The Mayor said that the State is being restrictive on the issuance of outdoor liquor license. Alderman Cipiti said that he is with the understanding that some of the organizations are doing a limited number of ticket pre-sales for their events.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES: Alderman Albert asked if we had any word from the Czech Republic group as far as the annual Lidice ceremony. Alderwoman Oberlin said that she has been in contact with them. It appears that they will not be holding the ceremony this year, but she is waiting for a final decision from them.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES: Administrator McGuire informed the Council that we have had a delay with the tablets but hopes to get them to the Council as quickly as possible. Administrator McGuire informed the Council that we are getting ready to order the new business cards with the updated logo. Please let her know if there were any changes they would like to make before we send them to be printed. Alderwoman Oberlin said that she is having some problems with her email. Administrator McGuire said that she would contact the IT department.

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

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

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.

The executive session began at 9:02 p.m.

(#2) Motion by Alderwoman Oberlin, seconded by Alderman Jefferson, to reconvene from an executive session on personnel (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)).

On roll call, the vote was:

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

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

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

The meeting was reconvened at 9:32 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Approved this 17th day of May, 2021.

As presented _____

As amended ✓

Christine Vershay-Hall By [Signature]
CHRISTINE VESHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK

Raymond R. Soliman
RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR