

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
May 24, 2021

The May 24, 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 Christine Vershay-Hall, 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, Director of Public Works Mark Siefert, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Financial Advisor Nick Narducci, City Mechanic Brian Semplinski, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman.

Absent were: Police Chief Ed Clark.

**TOPIC: Plan Commission Recommendation**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for a Plan Commission Recommendation per the application dated May 13, 2021. Cheryl Slabozeski submitted an application for a current vacancy in the Plan Commission. This would be a for a three year term. Mayor Soliman went over Ms. Slabozewski's resume. Ms. Slabozeski gave a brief speech. Alderman Albert felt that Ms. Slabozeski would be an asset to the Plan Commission. Alderman Cipiti asked what the process is for submitting an application to become a Plan Commission member. Discussion followed on how a position is posted. Alderman Cipiti asked Ms. Slabozeski how she was made aware of the vacancy. She explained that the Mayor contacted her and asked if she would be interested in the position.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Plan Commission Recommendation. All members present were in agreement.

**TOPIC: Festa Italiana**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for discussion on the upcoming Festa Italiana. Alli, Dan and Dave from the American Italian Club were in attendance. They would like to expand the annual Festa from a one day event to a three day event. This was discussed with the Council at a previous work session. Alli addressed the Council. They are seeking a two to three day liquor license. They are looking at serving beer, pizza, and having a small band on Friday. Saturday and Sunday the hours would be longer. Alderman Albert asked why they are requesting the extended days. They explained that they could spread out the attendance and have more for the younger crowd on Friday. Alli explained that in the past they have had the facility ready for the Festa by Friday and would like to take advantage of it. Alderman Albert asked if the set up will be the same as in the past. They are trying to follow the CDC guidelines as to how to space the seating out. They are proposing to put more seating along the driveway towards the street. Alderman Albert questioned the proposed use of the union hall parking lot for entertainment. This could a possibility for the future. The club does carry insurance on any of the properties that they utilize for the Festa. They are also trying to streamline the people that are just coming to

pick up carry outs during the Festa. Alderman Albert supports the Festa but feels like they are getting to the point where they are outgrowing the property. He would be in favor of the three day event but with stipulations. He felt that we should not allow parking along the curve on Don Maur onto Crestwood due to traffic concerns. He would also like to see parking on one side of Leness Lane only to eliminate traffic congestion and again for safety. The neighbors in this area have been patient with the traffic and parking situation during the Festa, but things could change in the future, and we may start to get complaints. Alderwoman Gazal asked if Alderman Albert received complaints from the neighbors. Discussion followed. The club has had very few instances when they have needed Police assistance during the Festa. Alderman Dyke asked how are you going to limit the number of attendees. Alli explained that there will be a designated entrance and exit. There would also be a separate area where people could come to just pick up food. Discussion followed on the CDC guidelines, the State guidelines and how this affects the sale of food, baked goods, and alcohol. The Mayor would like to see the Festa be a success, but also wants everyone to be safe. He would like to see a certificate of liability insurance in place for anything outside of the building. It was explained that the club gets insurance for their property and the surrounding property that they utilize. The Mayor would need a copy of a signed hold harmless agreement for any of the other property involved. Alderwoman Oberlin questioned the liability of the City as far as a possible spread of Covid if we allow the Festa to happen. Administrator McGuire explained the reasons why this would not be a City liability. Alderman Cipiti would like to see the Festa continue, and it appears that they are trying to address all of the concerns. If for some reason the guidelines change, the club would like to do a small Festa for members only on that Sunday. Alderwoman Gazal feels that the Festa would be good for the community as long as the guidelines are followed. The hours of the Festa would be on Friday from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Saturday from 2:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Mayor Soliman informed the Council that we have waived the liquor license fee and the sign fee in the past for the Festa and also provided a Police escort for the parade on Sunday.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on a three day Festa with a waiver of the liquor license and sign fee per the request of the American Italian Club along with any additional stipulations from the Council. All members present were in agreement.

**TOPIC: Ordinance Authorizing IEPA Loans and IEPA Loan Signature**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for discussion on an Ordinance Authorizing IEPA Loans and IEPA Loan Signature per the memo dated May 18, 2021. Public Works Director Mark Siefert informed the Council that there are two items that are required to proceed with obtaining a low interest loan from the IEPA to fund the East Sewage Treatment Plant Phosphorus Improvements Project. The first item would be a resolution authorizing City Administrator McGuire to be the signatory for all IEP loan related documents.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on a resolution authorizing City Administrator McGuire to be the signatory for all IEP loan related documents. All members present were in agreement.

The second action requires issuing a certified ordinance authorizing the City to borrow funds from the IEPA. City Staff worked with City Attorney Spesia and Strand & Associates to develop the ordinance in accordance with the IEPA requirements. The borrowing limit established within the ordinance is \$6 million, which is sufficient to fund the project. The actual loan amount will be determined once bidding has been completed,

the low bid certified, and the loan agreement issued by the IEPA. City Staff has worked with PMA to verify the water and sewer fund and current water and sewer rates are sufficient to cover the anticipated debt service for this loan without a rate increase.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to approve an ordinance authorizing the City to borrow funds from the IEPA in the amount of 6 million dollars. All members present were in agreement.

**TOPIC: Professional Engineering Agreement for 1906 Plainfield Road-Floodway Violation.**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for a Professional Engineering Agreement for 1906 Plainfield Road-Floodway Violation per the letter from Robinson Engineering dated February 24, 2021. Engineer Wiedeman presented a proposal for engineering services related to the resolution of the floodway violation at 1906 Plainfield Road. Administrator McGuire explained that the storage units at this property were constructed in a floodway which should not have been done. The City has been working with FEMA on this and we are hoping to resolve the issue between the City and property owner. The City and property owner would split the cost of the engineering fees. The total cost of the study would be \$69,100.00. Alderman Vershay asked how we allowed these structures to be built. Engineer Wiedeman said that the developer may not have known the correct location of the floodplain prior to the construction of the buildings. Administrator McGuire explained that several of the structures were built prior to the city being incorporated. Alderwoman Oberlin asked who was responsible for reviewing the plans. It would have been the Building Department and Engineer. The dates that the structures were built were prior to current staff being with the City. Alderman Albert asked if this affects the commercial building next door. The floodplain basically runs along the property's to where the wetlands are along Larkin Ave. Discussion followed on how the violation could be resolved. Engineer Wiedeman explained that one of the measures to resolve the issue is to redirect the floodway. Alderman Cipiti asked if this would help to alleviate the water issue that occurs on Plainfield Road. Administrator McGuire explained that the storage buildings have no impact on the water issue on Plainfield Road. She explained that if we do nothing about the situation with the floodplain we could start to receive fines. Treasurer Conklin asked if this were something that insurance would cover. Administrator McGuire would look into it. Discussion followed on how to prevent a situation like this from occurring in the future.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Professional Engineering Agreement for 1906 Plainfield Road-Floodway Violation. All members present were in agreement.

**TOPIC: Traffic Signal IGA Discussion**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the Traffic Signal IGA Discussion per the letter from IDOT dated April 27, 2021. Engineer Weideman informed the Council that IDOT has compiled all of their traffic signals into one agreement instead of multiple ones. The State would be responsible for maintenance of the signals. The City will be responsible for energy costs. This was in the original agreement. Alderman Albert questioned the signals at Rte. 7 and Larkin Avenue. Three of the signals are actually in the City of Joliet. Discussion followed. Treasurer Conklin asked if this was billed quarterly. It is, with the cost being paid out of the MFT fund.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Traffic Signal IGA. All members present were in agreement.

**TOPIC: Public Works Salt and Brine Facility Award and Change Order No 1**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the Public Works Salt and Brine Facility Award and Change Order #1 per the memo dated May 18, 2021. Engineer Wiedeman informed the Council that we went out to bid for the Salt and Brine Facility. The project as bid came in over budget. To bring the cost of the project within the budgeted amount, the contract will be revised to remove the construction of the brine building. The building was originally proposed to house the equipment needed to make the brine solution. The removal of the building was made after discussion with City staff members. The City will still need to construct the salt dome with the conveyor to load the salt into the building. The low bidder for the project was Construction by Camco, Inc. The City would need to approve change order #1 for the reduction in the contract amount from \$1,070,620.00 to \$553,265.00. This will need to be done as a resolution. Director Siefert explained that we currently purchase the brine solution already made. We currently have the equipment in house if we need to make the solution. He went over the cost of the construction of the proposed brine building, the extension of the water lines and garage doors. Alderman Cipiti asked what we were going to do with the existing equipment. Director Siefert explained that we can have discussion in the future and decide if we want to construct some type of building to house it or not.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote Public Works Salt and Brine Facility Award and Change Order No 1. All members present were in agreement.

**TOPIC: Trailer Storage-2207 Broadway Street**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for discussion on 2207 Broadway Street-Trailer Storage per the memo dated May 24, 2021. Interim Planner Maura Rigoni informed the Council that the property at 2207 Broadway is currently zoned B-3. The petitioner Mr. Navichis was in attendance. He is proposing to rezone the property to M-1. Since the site is larger than 5 acres, it would have to be approved as a Planned Unit Development. The applicant is proposing to store 10 to 15 trucks on site. The peak storage would occur on the weekend when the trucks are not in use. A truck will remain on the site an average of 24 to 48 hours. The maximum daily number of trucks entering and exiting the facility would be about 15. The trucks are refrigerated, but the applicant has indicated they are rarely running when stored as they most likely will be empty. If a truck has a load it would only be parked at the facility for a few hours running. Improvements to the site will be subject to zoning and engineering review. Roadway access will be reviewed and approved by IDOT. Proposed improvements include landscaping, berms, and the paving of parking areas. The applicant does not intend to construct any buildings on the property. The applicant has indicated the expansion of parking to the property at 2207 Broadway will lead to the orderly operation of the business at 2250 Broadway which he currently owns. Alderman Dyke asked what would happen to the trucks and trailers that are currently housed on this property. Planner Rigoni explained that those vehicles are in violation and would have to be removed. Alderman Vershay asked if the trucking school that was located on the property is still there. Administrator McGuire explained that they have moved out. Alderman Vershay questioned the sewer pipe that runs through the property. Administrator McGuire explained that this would be addressed during the engineering phase of the project. Alderman Cipiti asked if Mr. Navichis was the owner. He is the contract purchaser of the property. Alderwoman Oberlin asked if a contract purchaser of a property can

request a zoning change. Planner Rigoni explained that during the application process the owner has to sign off stating that they are aware that the buyer is seeking a rezoning. Administrator McGuire said that typically we have a potential buyer apply for a zoning change before they close on the property. Alderman Cipiti asked if the purchase falls through what would happen with the zoning change. Administrator McGuire explained that because it's more than five acres we can set parameters that they would have to follow for anyone to use the property. Planner Rigoni explained that whatever we outline for the PUD would stay with the property. If the next person wants to make any changes they would have to go before the Plan Commission and Council for approval. Alderman Cipiti asked if this request is going to have to go before the Plan Commission. It would. Alderman Vershay asked where the vehicles will be parked on the property. The vehicles would be parked on pavement. They will need to have engineering done on the site to determine if a detention area is needed at the rear of the property. All setbacks and regulations will be followed. Alderman Jefferson asked if the entire site would have to be paved. The only area that will be paved is where the parking is going to be. Administrator McGuire explained that this same company came in about 10 years ago and has a facility at 2050 Broadway. Originally there were concerns about the traffic coming in and out of that facility. There have been no real issues with the traffic. Alderman Albert asked if they are going to move the business from the current location at 2050 Broadway. They would not as this proposed property would only be used to house the vehicles. Alderman Albert questioned the number of vehicles they are proposing for this property. During the week there would be roughly 15 trailers and on the weekend about 50. Mayor Soliman asked what direction the vehicles would be traveling when they turn out of the property as it is next to the railroad track. Engineer Weideman explained that this property will be a right-in, right-out only and this is determined by IDOT. The Mayor asked if we could coordinate the entrance regulations with IDOT. Engineer Weideman said that we can look into this. Alderman Vershay asked if all of the trailers would belong to the property owner. They would. Alderman Cipiti asked if we rezone the property to M-1 and it is sold, what could the property be used for. Planner Rigoni explained that the majority of the uses would have to come back to the City for a special use. She went over some examples of what would require a special use. If this property were closer to the residential area, we may want to place more restrictions on it. Once the PUD zoning is approved, they will have to adhere to the provisions in it. If they wanted to add a building for example they would have to come back for City approval. Mayor Soliman questioned the storage of hazardous materials on the property. This would not be allowed. Mr. Navichis explained that this property would be used for overflow storage of trailers. He does not anticipate more than 50 vehicles being on the property. Alderman Cipiti asked if we can put a limit on the number of vehicles allowed on the property. Alderwoman Oberlin said that the number of parking spaces would depend on how large the paved area is going to be. If they want to add more in the future, they will have to come back before the city. Mayor Soliman said that he was concerned when the trucking business moved into 2250 Broadway many years ago, but we have had minimal problems with it. Alderman Albert would like to have some type of screening along Rte. 53. Alderman Albert asked if we have an update on the property in front of this. Administrator McGuire said that we have not had any progress on it. Planner Rigoni explained that they are going to contact the owner to see if we can coordinate the development of the properties.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on the Trailer Storage-2207 Broadway Street. All members present were in agreement. Alderman Albert had some concerns and would like to make sure that everything that was discussed is taken into consideration.

**TOPIC: Firearms Sale in Residential**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the Sale of Firearms in a Residential District per the memo dated May 24, 2021. Planner Rigoni explained that this came about due to a request for a business license. As part of the permitting process through the ATF, zoning verification is required. Since firearms are not a listed use, and there is no similar or compatible use, before the consideration of the use, the City must consider a text amendment. This request is unique because it is in a residential district. As part of the discussion process, we looked into firearms restriction in neighboring communities. In the City of Joliet firearms dealers and gunsmiths are a special use in specific business or manufacturing districts. There are a number of regulations that would apply. The Village of Romeoville and the City of Lockport allow firearms sales as a special use in specific commercial and manufacturing zoning districts. The zoning ordinances for the three surrounding communities do not permit firearms sales in residential areas. Planner Rigoni went over the home occupation restrictions and what is allowed. There is one community that does allow firearms businesses, but in an agricultural zoning with a special use with restrictions. We need to focus on how this request is going to impact the residential and the home use rules. Administrator McGuire explained that currently we do not allow firearms sales in a residential district because of the retail aspect of it. We don't have anything that addresses this use. It is up to the Council to decide if they want to allow this use in a residential district and also dealing with it in a commercial setting. Alderwoman Gazal asked how the firearms would be sold. Mr. Lampkin the resident who is requesting the license is in attendance. Mr. Lampkin explained that he is on call 24/7 for his job. The type of license that he is applying for is regulated through the ATF. Mr. Lampkin went over this background in the Army and his experience with firearms. He explained that he has an alarm system, will provide a gun safe, and file for a background check. Alderwoman Gazal asked if the firearms will be displayed in the residence. They would not. There will be no customer traffic. Sales would be done through a website and word of mouth. A potential customer would have to indicate that they are interested in a particular firearm. If Mr. Lampkin has it, they would have the opportunity to look at the merchandise. He explained that there are very strict records that have to be kept for the sale of firearms. There is a three day waiting period, so a potential customer would make a deposit and once they are cleared by the ATF be allowed to finalize the transaction. Alderwoman Gazal asked how a buyer would view the firearms. Administrator McGuire explained that Mr. Lampkin would have the merchandise in his safe. Once someone makes an inquiry, makes a deposit, and goes through the waiting period they could then pick up the firearm. Alderman Jefferson asked, if he had a gun that he wanted to sell to someone, could he do it. Administrator McGuire said that he could because it wouldn't be a home occupation. A person selling one item they own would not be considered a home business. The issue before us tonight is that this would be an actual business with retail sales. As our ordinances are written, you cannot have retail sales in a residential district. Alderwoman Gazal asked what type of weapons could be sold. Mr. Lampkin explained what he could and could not sell. Alderman Vershay asked how many weapons could he have at one time. Mr. Lampkin explained how many he would be allowed to have. Mayor Soliman asked if Mr. Lampkin was aware of anyone else who had this type of business in their home. Mr. Lampkin did not know of anyone in the area. He explained that he would like to retire from his current job in several years and open up a business similar to this outside of his home. Mayor Soliman asked if he considered opening up that type of business now. Mr. Lampkin explained that he is on call and that would not currently be possible. Alderwoman Oberlin does not feel that this type of business belongs in a residential setting.

Alderwoman Gazal said that we support small businesses but is not comfortable with a firearm business in a residential district. Alderman Albert said that we had a gunsmith on Caton Farm Road many years ago. Treasurer Conklin thought that there was one year's ago on Leness Lane and another on Rte. 30. Alderman Jefferson said that he lived in another community where his neighbor had this type of business. Because we don't allow for this in our ordinances, it might be hard to get it approved.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote on a text amendment to allow Firearms Sale in Residential. Six members present were not in agreement with the text amendment. Alderman Jefferson voted yes. Alderman Vershay was undecided.

### **TOPIC: City Center Recreation Plan**

Mayor Soliman presented a request for the City Center Recreation Plan per the memo dated May 24, 2021. Financial Advisor Narducci informed the Council that there is a request to consider a cooperative agreement with the Lockport Park District, Will County Forest Preserve District and the White Oak Library at the new City Center. The most frequent comments per a survey involved the need for a City Center in the center of town near the library. This would include walking and bike trails. Advisor Narducci went over the layout of the proposal. We would have the opportunity to connect this proposed trail to the current trail system. Currently there is grant funding available for bike trails, which could fund up to 80% of the project. Eventually, if the trails are connected you could ride out to Houbolt Road. Advisor Narducci informed the Council that the Park District hired Hitchcock to design a park that would be located on three acres between the City Center and Library. He went over the major features of the park. Negotiations so far include the Park District maintaining park and recreation areas, open space and managing the events. The Hitchcock cost estimate is over \$2,000,000. However, if the city acts as general contractor the estimated cost is just over \$1,000,000.00. This would require the same procedure as was followed for the construction of the Public Works and City Center. With \$200,000 from the construction fund, using TIF funds for the public areas, donations, and some General Fund consideration the City could fund about 50%. Advisor Narducci explained that we would still maintain some of the property along Patrick Drive as potential commercial/residential uses. Discussion followed on how the park and potential development would flow together. The proposed park would not have basketball courts or baseball fields. Advisor Narducci explained what the features of the park would be and how it would connect the City Center and Library together. Discussion followed. Advisor Narducci feels that this is a good idea for the City. Alderman Albert feels that we should move ahead with this project. We have nowhere else in the City where we can have gatherings. This is something that he feels would excite the residents. Advisor Narducci went over the proposed timeline for the park. Alderwoman Gazal felt that this is one of our goals. This has been one of the things that she has always been in favor of. Alderwoman Gazal asked how much the Park District paid for the study. Also, she is in favor of them maintaining the park. The only problem she sees is that it takes them awhile to fulfill their promises regarding the City parks. Are they going to put any money into the park. Advisor Narducci explained that they have budgeted \$200,000 to put into the park. Alderman Kubal explained what the Park District is planning to do. Alderwoman Gazal asked where the remainder of the funds would come from. Advisor Narducci explained how the TIF funds money could be used and how the construction schedule would play out. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we can get everything in writing. Administrator McGuire

explained that this would be done through an intergovernmental agreement. Alderwoman Oberlin is in favor of the idea but wants to make sure that we have control of the property, and that maintenance is more than grass cutting. Alderwoman Oberlin asked what the dimensions of the property were. It was determined that the grass area was roughly 1 acre. Administrator McGuire would get the dimensions. Alderman Jefferson asked if there is any private funding for the park. He is concerned that down the line it's going to cost the taxpayers more money. Administrator McGuire discussed the issues that you could potentially run into when private funds are used. Discussion followed. Alderman Kubal thanked everyone who was involved with this process for all of their hard work. Mechanic Semplinski informed the Council that the property dimensions were 560' by 220'. Alderwoman Oberlin thanked him for the information. Mayor Soliman felt that this park will be an asset to the City. The Mayor then talked about some of the facilities that the Park District has in the City besides playgrounds. Discussion followed on the promises that were made in regard to the parks and facilities. Alderman Kubal asked if we have a list of what was going to be constructed as far as the parks. Administrator McGuire would look into it. Mayor Soliman said that we were given a concept plan and what the Park District would like to do from north to south. Treasurer Conklin brought up the golf course and how it does not add to our tax roles. Alderwoman Oberlin commented about the parking and how City Center and Library lots could help with overflow during an event. Alderman Cipiti asked if the park will have certain operating hours and will it be gated. Administrator McGuire said it would have operating hours and a benefit is that it is next to the Police Department. Discussion followed on the Park District contribution and what is going to be maintained. Alderwoman Oberlin wants to make sure that we get everything in writing as far as upkeep and maintenance. Alderman Cipiti questioned who would handle the bookings for the park. Administrator McGuire explained that we would pick dates that we would like for our uses and then let them book it for other uses. Alderman Cipiti asked who would handle the activities at the park. Administrator McGuire explained that we would have the Park District handle the events as they are familiar with scheduling events. Alderwoman Gazal asked if we would get any revenue from the bookings. Administrator McGuire explained that we would. Alderman Kubal feels that the golf course and Hassert Park are well used by the residents.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote City Center Recreation Plan concept only. Seven members present were in agreement. Alderman Vershay was not in agreement. He is concerned about the funding for the project and where the additional money is going to come from.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

**MAYORS UPDATES:** Mayor Soliman informed the Council that in regard to outdoor dining we have four businesses that are approved for it. The Mayor informed the Council that Title Max on Plainfield Road is closed, and we have had discussion with a gentleman from Beggars Pizza to possibly fill the space. This business would have delivery, carry out and indoor dining. They are also looking to secure a liquor license. Mayor Soliman informed the Council that we are in receipt of a letter from Will County Community Concerns requesting a donation. The usual donation would be \$100.00.

**COMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES:** There were no committee/liason updates.



**CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:** Administrator McGuire announced that we will not have a work session next week due to Memorial Day. We had two new Public Works Laborers start last week to replace the retirees. One of the new hires has already resigned. We will be working to fill that vacancy. We currently have 33 applicants for the Finance Director. GovHR informed us that 15 of the applicants are very qualified.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Approved this 7<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021  
As presented ✓  
As amended \_\_\_\_\_

  
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CHRISTINE VERSHAY HALL, CITY CLERK  
  
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RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR