



# WHITEHALL

## CITY COUNCIL

### WORK SESSION MINUTES

Council Chambers

February 13, 2024

**PRESENT** Scott Brown, Tanya Cabala, Jeff Holmstrom, Stephen Sikkenga, Steve Salter, and Tom Ziemer

**ABSENT** Debi Hillebrand

**ALSO PRESENT** Scott Huebler, Brenda Bourdon, Will Meier, and Brandon Mahoney

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Mayor Salter called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **Grant Applications**

City Manager Huebler initiated the discussion by presenting the proposed projects for grant submission. Projects include Funnell Field - restrooms and play structure; Gee Park - play structure, fencing, parking; and Goodrich Park - swing set, fencing for splash pad, and cameras. Huebler sought input from the council regarding project prioritization and whether any projects should be excluded from the grant application. The consensus among the council was to apply for grants for all three projects. Some council members expressed a preference for prioritizing ① Goodrich Park, ② Funnell Field, and ③ Gee Park.

##### **Deer Culling**

Council member Holmstrom proposed reducing the acreage limit for properties eligible for deer hunting. He suggested lowering the limit to three or four acres from six to include more properties in the hunting program. Additionally, Holmstrom requested that city-owned properties be considered for future updates to the deer culling ordinance. The consensus was to decrease the acreage limit to three acres for eligible properties. Huebler will discuss city-owned properties with the appropriate staff.

##### **School Drop-Off/Pick-Up**

Council member Holmstrom raised concerns about the safety/site issues surrounding the school pickup at Ealy Elementary. He highlighted that the current lineup for pickup starts up to 40 minutes before students are released, posing potential traffic hazards. Holmstrom proposed exploring alternative pick-up locations, such as the VAC parking lot or using the area in front of the school on Sophia Street. After discussion, it was requested to have staff communicate with the school administration to address the safety concerns and explore potential solutions.

##### **Senior Millage**

Council member Cabala proposed investigating the needs of seniors in the area to determine service gaps. Cabala volunteered to lead this effort with an advisory committee. Ziemer agreed to collaborate with Cabala to create a survey, which would be distributed with an upcoming water bill.

**Board & Commissions**

Council member Brown proposed addressing appointment terms in June/July and suggested setting a maximum number of boards an individual can serve on. Brown also advocated for increasing attendance criteria to 70%. Salter expressed a preference for each board to determine what is unacceptable and voiced concerns about the council's potential micromanagement of boards after years of smooth operation. Ziemer believed that more opinions would benefit boards. Cabala emphasized that every council member should have the opportunity to serve on a board of their choice. She opposed setting an arbitrary attendance requirement and stressed the importance of providing City government 101 to residents.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mark Nienhouse provided comments on deer culling, bathroom availability, and appointments. Tamara Horne encouraged the use of solar panels when making improvements in parks. Pat Taylor commented on the school traffic blocking business drives.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:59 P.M.**

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Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Bourdon, City Clerk



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Mayor Salter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion by Cabala, seconded by Holmstrom to approve the agenda.

Voice Vote: All yeses

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of the January 23, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Accounts Payable - \$365,479.59
- C. Communications: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, Solid Waste Planning Meeting Minutes

Motion by Holmstrom, seconded by Sikkenga to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voice Vote: Yes – 5; No – 1, Brown; Absent – Hillebrand

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **MESSAGES FROM THE MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND CITY MANAGER**

Messages were received from the Mayor, Council members, and the City Manager

Motion by Cabala, seconded by Holmstrom to excuse Ziemer from Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

**MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Cabala, seconded by Ziemer to excuse Salter from Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kim Hardy is not in favor of spending \$330K on a pocket park.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. FY 24/25 Budget Schedule**

Motion by Sikkenga, seconded by Brown to approve Monday, May 20 as a budget work session; Wednesday, May 22 as a tentative budget work session and Tuesday, May 28 as a public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2024/25 budget, all to commence at 6 pm.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

**MOTION CARRIED**

**B. Resolution 24-07 Spruce Pointe Dr. Addition**

Motion by Holmstrom, seconded by Brown to approve acceptance of Spruce Pointe Drive, confirm the location is within the city limits, use as a public street and for public street purposes, and accept into the municipal street system and open to public use on November 21, 2023.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Holmstrom, Brown Sikkenga, Cabala, Ziemer, and Salter; No – None; Absent – Hillebrand

**MOTION CARRIED**

**C. Resolution 24-08 Community Fund Request**

Motion by Sikkenga, seconded by Holmstrom to authorize a request of \$11,920 from the Blomdahl Fund at the Community Foundation to eliminate the negative cash flow for the month of January.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Sikkenga, Holmstrom, Ziemer, Cabala, and Salter; No – Brown; Absent – Hillebrand

**MOTION CARRIED**

**D. Resolution 24-09 Legal Services**

Motion by Brown, seconded by Ziemer to retain Parmenter Law for Professional Legal Services in accordance with the letter of engagement as presented. This outlines a four-year period ending December 2027 with an hourly rate of \$185, \$190, \$195, and \$200.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Brown, Ziemer, Cabala, Sikkenga, Holmstrom, and Salter; No – None; Absent – Hillebrand

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kim Cyr commented on the loss of local control on renewable energy decisions.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Salter adjourned the Council Meeting at 6:38 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Bourdon, City Clerk