



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 10, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.

Five Points Washington, 360 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, IL 61571

Mayor Manier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., with a quorum present.

Present: Alderpersons Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Martin, McIntyre, Smith and Stevens

Also Present: Planning & Development Director Oliphant, City Engineer Carr, Finance Director Baxter, Public Works Director Rittenhouse, Police Chief McCoy, City Treasurer Carol Crocker, City Clerk Brod, Attorney Derek Schryer

1. ALDERPERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Alderperson Smith shared that she voted not to release the conflict-of-interest information because she thought she was following the advice of the city attorney. She does not favor the amphitheater as presented. She noted a new mayor will be seated in May and all conflicts of interest will be resolved.
2. CITIZENS WISHING TO BE HEARD: Jeff Giebelhausen, owner of the Peak on Summit, requested that Council approve more gaming licenses and allow the maximum of six terminals. He noted different manufacturers provide machines with different games, making it more attractive. He projects a May 1st activation date and feels they will be a strong addition to Washington.
A Washington resident who identified herself as “The Crazy Chicken Lady” shared her support for allowing chickens. She noted egg shortages. She feels chickens make less noise and waste than dogs. She feels coyotes are already in town and rats will come only if people don’t clean up. She suggested a bigger fee for poorly maintained coops. She shared that chickens help with insect removal.
Jona Bigalow, owner of Blue Ox, has remodeled his business and started paperwork for gaming. He wants to give back to the community and would like consideration by Council to allow another gaming license. He will be approved by the State in the next month or two.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Alderperson Smith motioned to accept the February 10, 2025, minutes; Alderperson Stevens seconded.
Alderperson Stevens asked to confirm accuracy in the minutes. She shared that Planning and Development Director Oliphant stated that the City is only responsible for infrastructure and basin. Planning and Development Director Oliphant confirmed. She shared that the mayor and attorney clarified that the letter of intent is non-binding. Attorney Schryer shared that he provided the letter of intent and it stated that it was non-binding.
Passed by voice vote.
4. NEW BUSINESS:
 - A. *Washington Police Department - Introduction of New Officer and Updates* – Police Chief McCoy introduced new officer Trevor Weiss. He previously did security at Walmart, and they were impressed. He completed his training while at North Pekin Police Department. His field training officer, Joe Dubois speaks highly of him. Council welcomed Officer Weiss.
 - B. *Washington Police Department Request for Leasing of Two (2) Vehicles* – Police Chief McCoy clarified that all but one police vehicle is leased. It costs \$10,000-\$15,000 to outfit each vehicle. Alderperson McIntyre concurred with the estimate. City Engineer Carr noted they are replaced every 5-6 years. The City has six pool cars and there will be four cars on the street during each shift. Police Chief McCoy shared that some cars are driven three shifts for five days. The addition of an officer would require another pool car, which the new detective doesn’t use. Alderperson McIntyre was surprised that we only have six pool cars, he is familiar with industry, and noted that cars need a break.
 - C. *Municipal Noise Regulations Review* – Planning and Development Director Oliphant explained that this was a council request. He noted that Aurora and Bloomington adopted a permit system that is overseen

by their Police Department event-by-event making it enforceable. He shared that the City code states quiet hours are "between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday and between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday." The current code only regulates decibels on industrial lots but there could be exceptions put into place. He noted Ottawa has regulations to direct sound. Liquor licenses can also be a consideration. He noted that there are no specific regulations for an outdoor event center. Alderperson Butler favors addressing the noise in an ordinance that is specific for the operation of an amphitheater. They could assess greater fines and it could allow for greater control of permitting events. Traffic concerns could also be addressed, as well as litter, trash, safety, security and crowd control. He is not yet ready to vote. He feels the foundation can make communication improvements and Council could be more proactive with defining issues. He feels there could be better council discussion, not just expressing opinions. He noted that Jim Hengst has read the feasibility study and knows that they will have to cover a shortfall. Council has let it appear that the City will have to cover it. Alderperson Martin favors creating a unique ordinance for an amphitheater. Alderpersons Blundy, McIntyre, Adams, and Stevens agreed as well. Alderperson Brownfield would like to consider other venues if needed. Alderperson Stevens noted the feasibility study says it doesn't meet state regulations. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that state regulations are specific on noise types and it provides a considerable amount of detail. Alderperson Stevens referenced the factory that makes train wheels is zoned I-1 which is the only place that decibels are an issue. Mayor Manier highlighted that everyone agreed. City Engineer Carr clarified that the noise study in feasibility study didn't show any mitigation. He also noted that they would like further directions on the details. Alderperson Stevens suggested decibel ratings similar to the City of Ottawa and she has more concern for evening hours. Alderperson Butler noted that decibels could vary depending on time of day and a radius could be considered. Planning and Development Director Oliphant noted the enforcement of specific decibel levels would require the purchase of equipment and training would be needed. Mayor Manier shared that Countryside used to get calls for noise from a resident and he wouldn't want to limit the marching band or Five Points events. City Engineer Carr asked if they could establish a radius using roads and undeveloped property to protect the citizens in surrounding areas. Alderperson Martin also suggested using current houses as a limit. Alderperson McIntyre agreed with using the roads and specific hours. He is also good with keeping venue hours. City Engineer Carr noted regulations for lighting could be considered. Alderpersons Martin, Blundy and McIntyre agreed with specifying times. Alderperson Butler said the venue has to attract acts and hours might need to be flexible. City Engineer Carr noted a permitting system that might allow occasional flexibility. Alderperson Brownfield noted minimal lighting will be needed for safety and Alderperson Stevens noted lighting can be directed down. She further noted the state's process and complainant's compensation. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared while the state is equipped, they are not active, but local law enforcement can do it on the state's behalf. City Engineer Carr shared that concert lighting would turn off after an event, but parking lots will have lights. He also shared that 70 decibels is about the volume of a washing machine. Alderperson Stevens noted that Ottawa has regulations affected by liquor licenses. Alderperson Butler shared that sound doubles with every three decibels and Council doesn't have the expertise to make that decision. Alderperson McIntyre noted decibels measured at the roadway not at the concert. Alderperson Martin feels it would be a good idea to hear what it sounds like, possibly from the closest house.

- D. *Residential Poultry Consideration Discussion* – Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that this is for a possible readoption of the chicken ordinance. It was previously brought to Council and repealed less than a year later with varying opinions. Alderperson Stevens shared that she was the only person to vote no to the repeal. Alderperson Martin is in favor of allowing chickens but noted that this council will change, and wisdom will be lost. He wonders about the authority to tell someone they can't have a chicken. He noted most of the concerns are addressed with rules, including lot sizes. He noted large dogs are allowed but not chickens and wondered about a limit on bird feeders. Planning and Development Director Oliphant explained that the issue came down to the subjectivity of approving or denying the permits. He shared that Council would turn it down if there was an objection and it was set up through a special use process through the Planning and Zoning Commission before Council consideration. He noted a stricter permit process might help. Alderpersons Blundy and McIntyre referenced other communities. Alderperson McIntyre favors the permitting process instead of special use with the addition of lot size and fencing considerations. He noted you can have parrots inside but not chickens outside. Alderperson Brownfield shared that he initially supported chickens but voted no because of the increased burden on staff. He shared that disagreeing neighbors made it difficult but would consider it with more guidelines. Mayor Manier noted previous issues with chickens running loose. Alderperson Smith favors allowance on a half-acre or more lots and not a special use process, to help ease staff burden. Alderperson Adams shared that he voted to rescind the ordinance because it didn't feel fair, and it shouldn't be a special use. Alderperson McIntyre is more concerned with fencing than lot size. He

favors a coop and a property fence. Alderperson Martin feels it should specify the setback from a neighbor an lot size considerations based on the number of chickens. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared the previous set back was 10 feet from property lines and 25 feet from any neighbors. The consensus is to move forward for further consideration. Alderperson Butler doesn't favor chickens and worries about coyotes. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that there may be one original permit existing but it is unlikely.

- E. *Consideration of Ordinance Amendment Allowing Increase in Video Gaming Terminals* – City Engineer Carr shared that the Peak and Blue Ox would like video gaming. We currently provide 53 terminal stickers and 10 establishment licenses. Our code allows 57 terminal stickers and 11 licenses. Alderperson Brownfield favors allowing the additional gaming licenses with the maximum of six terminals. City Clerk Brod explained that this is brought forward because the two establishments are now facing similar timelines for licensing. Alderperson Stevens favors granting the request, noting that they have operated like the previous businesses. Alderperson Adams agreed but doesn't favor gaming parlors. He feels the establishments are operating correctly. Alderperson Smith agreed. Alderperson McIntyre also supports both businesses. Alderperson Blundy agreed. He would like future consideration to waive the waiting period. Alderperson Martin also agreed. Mayor Manier explained that when gaming started it was contested, then Tazewell County adopted it and now it has helped keep small business successful. Police Chief McCoy noted that both businesses meet all qualifications. He feels current restrictions should be kept to keep cafes from lining the streets.
- F. *Discussion - Jetter Truck Replacement* – Public Works Director Rittenhouse shared that the current truck is six years old and the estimated wait time for a replacement truck is 8-12 months. The estimate is \$391,000. This truck is used every day and it is vital. IEPA mandates sanitary sewer cleaning and staff also inspects and cleans storm sewers using this truck. Alderperson Martin feels that the quotes are within 3%. Either option is good because different options on the truck can skew the price. He recommends choosing the truck with the best service and options. He also feels it is wise to not wait until there is an issue, which could affect the trade in value. Alderperson McIntyre agreed and feels this is best for the crew, noting the cost to rent if the current truck breaks. Public Works Director Rittenhouse shared that they currently use the truck when they are working around fiber utilities. This allows staff to be proactive when reviewing stormwater concerns and if there was an emergency, they would hire Hoerr. Hoerr would charge \$300 per hour, plus overtime, to do the work of this truck. We have the funding. Alderperson Stevens asked about leasing one for routine use and using this for emergencies. She doesn't support this purchase now because there are no issues with it. Finance Director Baxter explained that we would need to budget the full amount and put the trade towards the next purchase. City Engineer Carr explained how MERF works, sharing that the \$391,000 has accumulated and a trade-in will more than cover the cost. Finance Director Baxter explained that is budgeted because we don't know the trade in. Public Works Director Rittenhouse shared that the City has spent \$40,000 in the past six years for repairs on normal wear-and-tear items. Alderperson Brownfield noted that there was no hesitation to approve the purchase of a new ladder truck that isn't used very often, but we are hesitating for something that is used every day. Finance Director Baxter explained the process of budgeting for the fire truck so that we don't have one large payment. Payment will be made on delivery. Public Works Director Rittenhouse explained that it is used every day except in freezing conditions. It helps with water leaks, sewer backups, sink holes, service lines, and tank cleaning. Alderperson Martin supports the purchase and noted benefits with new warranties. Alderperson Adams supports the replacement and trusts Alderperson Martin's expertise. Alderperson Smith supports the replacement due to possible price increases and current trade in values. Public Works Director Rittenhouse explained that jobsites are harder to dig and he is trying to be fiscally responsible by keeping something in warranty. City Engineer Carr shared that it was a 2017 that failed after two years. Public Works Director Rittenhouse explained that the City hires Hoerr for some services and used their pricing of \$300 per hour as well as using lineage and time estimates. Alderperson Blundy suggested keeping this for emergencies and outsourcing the services. Public Works Director Rittenhouse noted that outsourcing would replace 80-90% of the staff's work. City Engineer Carr shared that it would be paying someone else to do exactly what we do. He further noted that it would pay for itself in three years and clarified that staff cuts would eliminate the staff who take service calls at night, plows streets, etc., which he doesn't feel would be safe for the community. Public Works Director Rittenhouse explained that high cost of outsourcing. City Engineer Carr asked if a majority of Council would like staff to perform the analysis? Alderperson Brownfield said no, he trusts the professionals and encourages Council to allow them to do their job. He is concerned about taking staff's time away from City projects to complete all the studies. Alderperson Adams expressed disfavor and noted that staff brought information, provided the goal and the cost. He is frustrated with Council's reaction when staff gives all the information, then they ask for more information, and if it isn't what they want, they ask for more information after that. He noted that this is someone who knows trade in values, knows the work. He also

noted that Alderperson Martin has provided his expertise. He noted that staff will work in pouring rain to fix watermain with this machine. He is in favor of moving forward with the replacement. Alderperson Butler doesn't feel staff has the expertise to evaluate their own replacements. He feels staff time can be better utilized. Mayor Manier clarified that the majority of Council would like to move forward with the proposed replacement. Alderperson Stevens noted routine cleaning and would like a map of what is lined and still needs to be done.

G. *FY2026 Budget Review - Group 4* – City Engineer Carr shared the following:

- This includes the Water Fund and Sewer Fund
- Operations decreased \$22,000
- LSLI replacement was under budget and they want to budget an additional \$5,000
- Electricity costs keep rising and has increased \$40,000
- R&M System Commodities increased \$20,000
- They will replace 2-4 fire hydrants
- Solar farm electrical savings starts this fall
- They will need updates to the HVAC Unit in WTP#1 and Chlorine SCADA
- Capital, Purchase System increased \$45,000
- Capital, Purchase System Engineering increased \$40,000
- It includes Catherine Street Reconstruction, the IEPA Project Plan and the Bondurant Street Engineering
- They project a surplus in the water fund due to additional income from Illinois American Water
- Capital came in under budget
- Beck's has paid for itself already
- A water rate study is ongoing
- The Water Tower Reserve will require topcoat and metal work for \$325,000 with \$150,000 required transferred from Sewer Fund and \$175,000 from accumulated funds in the Reserve
- After a generator project is complete, they will have two doors in need of repair
- They show sludge hauling
- They are budgeting the televising of the Farm Creek trunkline
- In the Sewer Fund, Capital, Purchase System, they saw a \$40,000 increase which includes Wastewater SCADA Migration, CIPP Sewer Lining, Spruce Harvey Sewer, WWTP Concrete Effluent Trough, Sewer Lift stations Improvements and Catherine Street Reconstruction

Alderperson Stevens asked about the spreading of sludge on farms, Public Works Director Rittenhouse explained that it is hauled away to the landfill because it is the safest and easiest way and spreading comes with a lot of IEPA tracking. Regarding Ancillary Funds, Finance Director Baxter shared that the Sewer Subdivision and Development has no funds this year and IEPA loan payments are made.

Regarding Phase 2B, City Engineer Carr shared that it budgeted similar to last year and includes land acquisition and \$150,000 for engineering.

5. OTHER BUSINESS: None provided.
6. ADJOURNMENT: At 8:42 p.m. Alderperson McIntyre moved to adjourn; Alderperson Brownfield seconded. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk