

MINUTES OF THE RULES COMMITTEE
Monday, October 6, 2014
6:00 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
Council Chambers

Present: Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl, Ald. Peter Braithwaite, Melissa Wynne, Donald Wilson, Delores Holmes, Mark Tendam, Jane Grover, and Ann Rainey

Presiding: Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl

Absent: Ald. Judy Fiske and Coleen Burrus

Staff Present: Wally Bobkiewicz, City Manager; Marty Lyons Assistant to the City Manager/ Director of Administrative Services, Johanna Nyden, Director of Economic Development , Dave Stoneback, Director of Utilities, Suzette Robinson, Director of Public Works, and Evonda Thomas-Smith, Director of Health

Guest:

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM:

Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:10p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT:

None

Ald. Rainey reminded all that tomorrow is the last day to register to vote. Also residents with an Illinois drive r's license can register online.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 3, 2014:

Ald. Grover moved approval of the September 3, 2014 minutes. Ald. Wynne seconded. Minutes approved.

REPORT ON FY 2015 CITY COUNCIL GOALS:

City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz outlined the current City Council Goals for 2014 which are city facilities, city streets, economic development, financial policies and city debt, services for at risk families and water and sewer issues. He stated that staff would be presenting tonight on the progress made toward each goal.

Suzette Robinson, Director of Public Works stated the evaluation for street resurfacing took place at the end of 2013. Staff was asked to prepare a three year CIP of poor and very poor streets. All streets with a score of 40 or less (very poor) will be repaired by the end of 2015. Staff recommends, for 2016 and beyond, that the City focuses on repairing poor streets (with a score of between 40 and 50).

Ald. Rainey requested a copy of the presentation. City Manager Bobkiewicz replied that the presentation can be found online for all who wish to view it.

Ms. Robinson provided locations and dollar amounts for the six streets proposed to be fixed in 2015. She stated that the water mains would also be replaced at several streets including Dempster, Dodge, Hastings, Main, and Pitner. Lake is the only street that doesn't require water main repair and the State will pay the resurfacing cost for Dempster. Ms. Robinson provided the budget for CIP and noted that

there was \$150,000 additional CIP dollars that can be used to repair streets not included in the original plan. MFT street locations and budgets were listed. Redistributed money will cover repair to Ridge Avenue which needs repair in two sections; between Emerson and Isabella and from Emerson to Lincoln. Ald. Rainey clarified that Ridge north of Emerson wasn't part of the reconstruction. Ms. Robinson confirmed and stated that the Ridge/Emerson intersection was a priority for 2016, and that the street between Foster and Lincoln would be repaired. Ald. Rainey asked about plans for Chicago between Main and Howard. Ms. Robinson replied that in 2016 Chicago Avenue would be repaired from South Boulevard to Howard. In 2017 it would be repaired the rest of the way. A water main was patched at the south end and funds to repair it are coming from a TIF. \$300k MFT was available to address resurfacing. The Howard street project includes the TIF at the west end of Howard although repairs will continue to Dodge. She then listed 11 facilities projects for 2015 including the Civic Center parking lot. Funds for that project include NWRD in the amount of \$750k and the parking fund would provide \$500k. Ms. Robinson closed by talking about the sustainable elements included in the new designs and the educational and information boards that will be present and will provide information on the infrastructure, bios wales, native species of plants and the permeable asphalt that would also be part of the design.

Ald. Tendam asked for a map and more information. Mayor Tisdahl requested a list of all project costs. City Manager Bobkiewicz stated that more information would be provided in the Capital Budget and that the presentations tonight were meant as a preview of information to come. Ald. Holmes asked if the parking lot improvements would interfere with the south side avenue. Ms. Robinson replied that the improvements would not obstruct traffic.

There was some discussion about plans for the items stored at the Recycling Center.

Johanna Nyden, Director of Economic Development opened by stating that the department was on track to exceed goals; as of the third quarter, 40 new businesses opened, over 300 new jobs were created, the staff visited over 150 businesses, commercial construction activity is high and office and retail vacancies have been low. There are two vacancies lowering the rate, 1007 Church and the Dempster/Dodge plaza. The unemployment rate (5.3%) is the lowest it has been in Evanston since 2006. Ms. Nyden went on to discuss new and completed projects including the Main/Chicago project that is moving forward, the reutilization of the former Dominick's stores, the anticipated opening of Little Beans at Oakton/Asbury, the expansion of Autobarn, and the retention of FEW Spirits.

Ald. Rainey clarified that the projects listed were ones that City staff and Council took part in.

Ms. Nyden confirmed and moved on to discuss the business districts and the merchant grants. Nine grants between \$8k and \$10k were distributed. Successes of that program included the Main/Chicago/Dempster merchants deciding to create a Special Service Area; they decided to tax themselves in order to provide special services.

There was discussion about the unique nature of the program and its successes.

Mr. Bobkiewicz pointed out the number created in the last few years including Noyes and Howard. He asked about West Evanston. Ms. Nyden listed other neighborhood revitalization cites including the Dr. Hill group, Central Evanston, Church and Dodge, West Main, West Village, West End, Noyes/ Foster and Howard Street. She closed by discussing entrepreneurship in Evanston and Paul Zalmezak's role in supporting entrepreneurs. She outlined Next Chapter and the successes of that program, Evanston Start-Up Showcase, and Now We're Cookin' and the businesses launched through that program.

Ald. Tendam asked if vacancies were listed by Ward. Ms. Nyden replied that staff could produce that information. Mayor Tisdahl asked about retaining Pivot Point. Ms. Nyden agreed that it was still a goal.

Evonda Thomas-Smith, Director of Health reported on City's intention to address at-risk families from a comprehensive standpoint in order to be most impactful. Several departments got together to discuss services including Fire & Life-Safety, Community Development, Health, the City Manager's Office, Police and the Library. The at-risk population was divided into categories by age: birth – 16 years, 17 years – 24 years, 25 years – 54 years, 55 years and older. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that across all demographics staff found a lack of intentional case management. In order to provide more effective services, the City needs to deepen partnerships and have a central point of intake – a central intake software and method. Her goal is to be intentional about including internal and external partners and outreaching and providing services to all. She called for questions.

Marty Lyons, Assistant City Manager/CFO introduced several slides, the first reviewed fund reserve policies and the debt policy. Both will be included in the 2015 Budget. Ald. Rainey asked about Robert Crown. Mr. Lyons stated that the committees discussed a limit on the amount of City contributions whether it was for a renovation or a new structure. Other moneys will come from grants, donations and a major fundraiser all to happen in 2015. Final designs will be available mid-2015. This project is not an ongoing infrastructure; it will increase the debt, but it is a one-time expense. The City is taking steps to minimize the debt even with the \$800,000 earmarked for design. The City is under the amount of G.O. Debt compared to last year. Mayor Tisdahl asked about the total projected total cost of the project. Mr. Lyons responded that \$18 million was projected for renovation and stated that the design options were exciting. Ald. Rainey asked if expansion was a part of the plan. Mr. Lyons indicated that expansion was part of the plan. He moved on to discuss new actions taken in 2014 including a \$310,000 increase in pension funding for Police, the Debt Service Levy being held flat with a transfer of funds from the General Fund, and the 2015 Capital Improvements Plan with less G.O. Debt than last year. Mr. Lyons stated that no Pay as you Go revenue identified yet, but there is a proposal from the Parking Fund to pay for resurfacing and reduce issued bonds.

Dave Stoneback, Director of Utilities provided an update on water and sewer projects. He stated the goal is to rehab or replace 1% of the City's water and sewer mains; this translates to 1.5 miles of water mains and 1.4 miles of sewer mains. In 2014, working with the Public Works Department, the 1.5 miles of water mains were replaced on nine different streets. Additionally a water main on Washington Street was relined – this is the first time the lining process was used and it was successful. No residents complained and the process was less disruptive and less expensive. In 2014, 2.9 miles of sewer mains were rehabilitated; double the goal. 1.4 miles of sewer were rehabilitated using annual maintenance funds and .4 miles in the downtown area were rehabilitated using Washington National TIF funds. Additionally, the City was successful getting a loan from IEPA to rehabilitate 1.1 miles. Mr. Stoneback stated that it was a very good year for sewer rehabilitation. Additional projects include working with Public Works to complete storm water management projects using green infrastructure and resurfacing streets on Oak and Ingleside; they now include some porous pavement to help absorb rainwater. Mr. Stoneback closed by discussing future projects including the rehabilitation of 1.5 miles of water mains in 6 different locations and plans for Sheridan Road. He also discussed whole sale water sales and the districts interested in working with Evanston including Des Plaines. Water sales are projected to bring in \$.5 million in revenue in 2015.

Ald. Rainey asked about the specific communities interested in purchasing water. Mr. Stoneback listed the communities and provided more information on the negotiations. Ald. Holmes asked about the specific location for the water main work on Pitner. Mr. Stoneback stated that he was aware of the

work being done to the sidewalk and addressed the concerns. Future plans included the streets and would be minimally invasive. Mr. Stoneback closed when there were no further questions.

City Manager Bobkiewicz concluded stating he hoped the presentations reflected Council goals. He listed several key dates including the release of the proposed budget on Friday, October 10, presentation on Monday, October 20, public hearing on Saturday, October 25 and then budget deliberations. He expects to be done before Thanksgiving. He expressed excitement over the upcoming plans across all departments. Residents were surveyed and it was found that streets were the biggest concern. In response, the city is spending as much as it can to repair streets and change the focus of Economic Development to further support the existing businesses in Evanston

Mayor Tisdahl congratulated the City Manager and the Director of Utilities. .

NEW BUSINESS:

Ald. Wilson said he believes the Liquor Commission has been looking at the issue of the taxes. He would like to make a reference to Administration and Public Works to have staff look into whether or not the 6% liquor tax is comparable to other cities or if it is putting retailers at a competitive disadvantage. Ald. Rainey noted that as a member of A&PW they will research it, but noted that Evanston's bars and restaurants are doing well.

City Manager Bobkiewicz mentioned that the joint meeting between Human Services, Mental Health Board and Housing & Community Development Act Committee will take place on November 3, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Francellno

A video of this meeting is available at www.cityofevanston.org/government/agendas-minutes/agendas-minutes--rules-committee.