

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

Monday, August 31, 2020

On Monday, August 31, 2020 the City Council of the City of Decatur, Illinois, met in a Study Session at 5:30 p.m., in the Decatur Civic Center Theater, One Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, Illinois.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe presided, together with her being Council members Lisa Gregory, David Horn, Pat McDaniel, and Rodney Walker. Councilman Chuck Kuhle participated through electronic attendance pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(2) and a determination made by Mayor Moore Wolfe that an in-person meeting of all members of the City Council is not practical or prudent because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Councilman Bill Faber was absent. Mayor Moore Wolfe declared a quorum present.

City Manager Scot Wrighton attended the meeting as well.

Mayor Moore Wolfe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Moore Wolfe called for a Study Session on a status report for the Brush College/Faries Parkway project.

City Manager Wrighton provided a brief history on the Brush College/Faires Parkway project and introduced Ms. Ann Schneider, Transportation Consultant for the City of Decatur who provided an update on the Brush College/Faries Parkway project.

Ms. Schneider presented a PowerPoint presentation that included a map and timeline of the project. Ms. Schneider explained why the project is over budget and ways that staff has sought to reduce costs and increase external funding to close the gap. Ms. Schneider explained that the city has expressed interest to IDOT for additional funding through the Illinois Competitive Freight Program and applied to the ICC for additional funding for the grade separation. In addition, the city has requested that AECOM research other design alternatives. Ms. Schneider added that the city has approached Congressional delegation for additional assistance.

Mayor Moore Wolfe noted that the railroad crossing at Brush College/Faries Parkway is the busiest railroad crossing in the city and it's been estimated that the crossing is closed 17 hours a week due to train traffic and in the very near future this will increase to 24 hours a week.

Ms. Schneider answered questions from Council regarding funding sources.

With no other discussion on the Brush College/Faries Parkway project, Mayor Moore Wolfe called for a Study Session on COVID-19 Related Financial and Budget Planning.

City Manager Wrighton gave an overview on the current status of the budget and reported that efficiency and cost reduction measures implemented are estimated to reduce originally budgeted expenses in the General Fund by between \$3.0 and \$3.3 million. City

Manager Wrighton reported that no layoffs or involuntary furloughs will occur in 2020 and the city has continued with limited hiring as needs and service demands require. City Manager Wrighton explained that the 2021 budget will likely be more disciplined to balance the FY 2021 budget and that staff is looking at different strategies to reduce expenditures without reducing services.

Councilman Bill Faber who was absent during Roll Call participated through electronic attendance at 6:47pm.

Council members addressed whether the financial course set forth in the 9-point plan as it pertains to the rest of FY 2020 is acceptable, whether the FY 2021 budget should be balanced using cash reserves, whether the city should, to the greatest extent possible, avoid tax increases in the FY 2021 budget, whether the city should attempt to seek out service mergers and consolidations with other units of local government that could reduce the cost of government for all participating governments; whether the FY 2021 budget should be prepared with different levels of potential service deliveries so that the budget can be amended more readily based on changing conditions as FY 2021 proceeds, and whether the City Council would like to continue close monitoring of its financial conditions every other month in 2021, as it has done in 2020 since the start of the pandemic.

With no other discussion on the budget, Mayor Moore Wolfe called for Appearance of Citizens and the following citizens provided comments to Council: John Phillips Sr., and Karl Coleman.

With no other Appearance of Citizens, Mayor Moore Wolfe reported that the Closed Executive Session following the Study Session was cancelled.

With no other discussion, Mayor Moore Wolfe called for adjournment. Councilman Pat McDaniel moved the Study Session be adjourned; seconded by Councilwoman Lisa Gregory and on call of the roll, Council members Chuck Kuhle, Rodney Walker, Bill Faber, Lisa Gregory, David Horn, Pat McDaniel and Mayor Moore Wolfe voted aye. Mayor Moore Wolfe declared the motion carried.

Mayor Moore Wolfe declared the Study Session adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Approved September 21, 2020
Kim Althoff
City Clerk