



MINUTES COMMITTEE AGENDA

Tuesday, January 3, 2012

City Council Chambers

5:30 p.m.

Ward 1	Frank Edwards	Ward 6	Cory Jobe
Ward 2	Gail Simpson (Vice Chair)	Ward 7	Joe McMenamain
Ward 3	Doris Turner (Chair)	Ward 8	Kris Theilen
Ward 4	Frank Lesko	Ward 9	Steve Dove
Ward 5	Sam Cahnman	Ward 10	Tim Griffin

Chairman Doris Turner called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Clerk Tumulty called the roll of members.

Present: Ald. Edwards☒, Simpson☒, Turner☒, Lesko☒, Cahnman☒, Jobe☒, McMenamain☒, Theilen☒, Dove☒ and Griffin☒ were all were present.

A motion was made by Alderman Simpson and seconded by Alderman Griffin to approve the December 13, 2011 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

Next, Chairman Turner read the ordinances tabled or remaining in Committee.

2010-158 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 1988 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED, BY ADDING CHAPTER 154: EROSION CONTROL REGULATIONS (**Requested By Mayor Timothy J. Davlin**) (**Remains In Committee 7/26/11**)

2011-104 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 100 OF THE 1988 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED, BY IMPOSING A 1.5% TAX ON THE PRIVILEGE OF PURCHASING ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR AND PREPARED FOOD ITEMS FOR IMMEDIATE CONSUMPTION (**Requested By Ald. Simpson**) (**Committee Of The Whole**) (**Remains In Committee 3/8/11**)

2011-224 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 1988 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED, BY AMENDING SECTION 36.04(A) TO CORRECT A TECHNICAL ERROR PERTAINING TO EXEMPTIONS UNDER CERTAIN JURISDICTIONS OF THE CITY PERSONNEL SYSTEM AND BY ADDING SECTION 36.65 REGARDING

SUSPENSIONS RESULTING FROM ARREST OR INDICTMENT, AS AMENDED (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston) (Remains in Committee 6/28/11)

2011-344 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING PAYMENT TO JAMES TAYLOR, AN OFFICE OF PUBLIC UTILITIES EMPLOYEE, FOR SETTLEMENT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIM NUMBER 10-WC-43534 (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston) (Remains in Committee 9/20/11)

2011-393 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 36, SECTION 36.05, OF THE 1988 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED, PERTAINING TO THE OBLIGATORY RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR EMPLOYEES HIRED ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 28, 2011, BY THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS (Requested by Alderman Joe McMenamin) (Remains in Committee 10/18/11)

Ordinances for Committee Consideration

2011-499 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN ADDITIONAL PAYMENT OF \$75,000.00 FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$150,000.00 TO LIVINGSTONE, MUELLER, O'BRIEN & DAVLIN, P.C. FOR DEFENSE OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS FROM MARCH 1, 2011, THROUGH FEBRUARY 29, 2012 (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-499 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-500 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$75,000.00 FROM UNBUDGETED, UNAPPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE FOR THE OFFICE OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-500 on the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-501 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT WITH FERRY AND ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS FOR CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR REPAIRS TO STATION #1, LOCATED AT 825 E. CAPITOL AVENUE, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$18,200.00 FOR THE SPRINGFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-501 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin.

Alderman McMenamin asked Fire Chief Fustin to describe the repairs that will be made on Fire Station #1. Chief Fustin stated that there need to be repairs made to the roof and the masonry on the building. Alderman McMenamin asked if the bids had gone out for the roof repair. Chief Fustin responded that the architect will oversee the construction with the assistance of the purchasing department. Alderman McMenamin asked if there was a cost estimate for the work. Chief Fustin responded that the estimate for the work is at roughly \$200,000.00.

The motion to place Agenda Item 2011-501 onto the consent agenda passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-502 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,090.00 FOR THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT, BUREAU OF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Lesko made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-502 onto the consent agenda. His motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-503 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$250,000.00 FROM UNBUDGETED, UNAPPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE FOR THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-503 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin.

Alderman Griffin asked if the supplemental appropriation is to carry the Police Department through the current fiscal year. Office of Budget and Management Director Bill McCarty responded that it was. He also added that the original amount was \$520,000.00. Alderman Griffin asked why there was a need for the additional money and if the initial estimation was bad. Director McCarty responded that the amount was lower than it should have been, especially compared with the previous year at \$618,000.00. He also added that the price of fuel has gone up 13% in compared with the previous fiscal year. Director McCarty also pointed out that this was one of the potential shortfalls that were brought to his attention when he first started with the City and he is working to address those shortfalls as they come up. Alderman Griffin asked if the fund was completely depleted. Director McCarty responded that the current fuel bill is at \$588,000.00.

Alderman Edwards pointed out that one of the considerations that were made for this year's budget was the fact that there are less police officers this year than there were last year. He went on to explain that another reason was the raise in gas prices and the police having to answer more calls this year than they did last year. Director McCarty echoed Alderman Edwards and explained that less police did not correlate to a drop in fuel costs because of the police officers responding to more calls.

Alderman Cahnman pointed out that the Police Department is doing more with less. He also asked for clarification on the number budgeted for fuel for FY11. Director McCarty clarified that the final number for FY11 was \$618,000.00 for fuel, of which \$556,000.00 was spent. Alderman Cahnman asked if the City is projected to spend \$770,000.00 for fuel for this year. Director McCarty clarified that he expects that the City will not expend that much money, but he would rather error on the side of caution and have enough budgetary authority to pay any bills that come in. He also pointed out that in the previous year; there was a gap between what was appropriated and what was spent. And he expects the same to be true for this year.

Alderman Simpson asked how the City might proactively reduce the amount or keep it at a manageable level. She also asked the procedure for the police officers to fill up their cars. Director McCarty responded that the officers purchase gas through the City, through the City's bulk purchasing program. Alderman Simpson asked if the City could negotiate to keep the fuel at a steady level for the year. Director McCarty responded that the City already receives a bulk rate for the gas, which is significantly less than what would be paid for at the gas pump. He also pointed out that this week; gas is being purchased for \$2.85 per gallon for this week vs. \$3.20 at an ordinary gas pump. Director McCarty stated that he believes that the current vendor is offering the best possible price for gas right now. And that the only way to reduce the cost of the gas is to reduce consumption, which would mean responding to less calls or put the police department on bicycles, which does not make sense.

Alderman Theilen pointed out that just because the money is budgeted does not mean that it is going to be used. The money that does not get spent remains in general revenue. Director McCarty added that once the budget year is over, the authority to spend the money lapses. He stated that the money never really comes out of the fund, unless they spend it on fuel.

The motion to place Agenda Item 2011-503 onto the consent agenda passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-504 AN ORDINANCE DECLARING 13 UNCLAIMED BICYCLES BEING HELD IN THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT'S EVIDENCE ROOM TO BE SURPLUS PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZING THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT TO DONATE SAID BICYCLES TO THE CAPITAL AREA CAREER CENTER (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-504 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-505 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AMENDMENT TO A CONTRACT FOR SALE AND PURCHASE OF COAL BETWEEN ARCH SALES COMPANY, INC. AND THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-505 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin.

Alderman Griffin pointed out that, through negotiations between the City and Arch Sales, Inc, the price for coal will remain steady through 2015.

The motion to place Agenda Item 2011-505 onto the consent agenda passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-506 AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT WITH CENTRAL STONE COMPANY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$3,000,000.00 FOR THE PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF LIMESTONE FOR THE DALLMAN POWER PLANT SCRUBBERS FOR THE ELECTRIC DIVISION (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-506 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin.

Alderman Lesko asked if the City is taking the lowest bid on the contract. Corporation Counsel Mark Cullen pointed out that this is a sole source determination.

Alderman Theilen asked if they were the only company that had approached the City to supply the limestone. CC Cullen responded that no one is able to supply under the contract. City Water Light and Power Director Eric Hobbie responded that this ordinance is to award the contract to the only qualified bidder. He added that the previous bid was rejected because they had not been pre-qualified. He also stated that they are currently going through the process to pre-qualify additional bidders to allow for a more competitive bidding.

Alderman Lesko asked when that process might be finished. Director Hobbie responded that they are working to get them pre-qualified as quickly as possible.

Alderman Simpson asked if the process is written and communicated to everyone. Director Hobbie responded that the methodology and the processes are written down and communicated to all of the bidders.

The motion to place Agenda Item 2011-506 onto the consent agenda passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-507 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT SERVICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD AND CLINICAL RADIOLOGISTS SC FOR THE ELECTRIC DIVISION (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-507 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-508 AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR GRANT NO. 12-481004 UNDER THE COAL DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000,000.00 FOR THE ELECTRIC DIVISION (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-508 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion passed with a voice vote of 9-0-1 with Alderman Theilen voting present because he works for the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

2011-509 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$30,000.00 FROM UNBUDGETED, UNAPPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE FOR THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS WASTE & RECYCLING (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-509 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-510 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL PAYMENT OF \$89,225.79 TO OTTO BAUM COMPANY, INC. FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$779,136.79 UNDER CONTRACT PW 11-09-64 FOR THE 2010 RESIDENTIAL SIDEWALK PROGRAM FOR THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS (**Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston**)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-510 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Lesko.

Alderman Theilen asked about the additional cost that the company is charging the City. Public Works Director Mark Mahoney clarified that while the title makes reference to 2010, the program was actually for last year (2011) and has been completed. And the over-run in expense is typical for the program, especially when additional work comes up in the field.

Alderman McMenamin asked why the title makes reference to 2010. Director Mahoney responded that it was because that is when the Council approved the program in the fall of 2010, but the bulk of the work was done in 2011.

The motion to place Agenda Item 2011-510 onto the consent agenda passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-511 AN ORDINANCE ANNEXING CERTAIN DESCRIBED REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1598 LICK CREEK LANE (LAKE SPRINGFIELD CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY) (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-511 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion passed with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-512 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE APPOINTMENTS OF GARY L. HAMMONS AND BARBARA SEIDMAN TO THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF OAK RIDGE CEMETERY (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Lesko made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-512 onto the consent agenda. His motion was seconded by Alderman Cahnman. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-513 AN ORDINANCE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CLASS "A" LIQUOR LICENSES BY ONE FOR TIN CAN INC., 225 E. MONROE STREET (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-513 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-514 AN ORDINANCE TO PLACE STOP SIGNS AT OAKMONT DRIVE AND INVERNESS ROAD CREATING AN ALL-WAY STOP INTERSECTION (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman McMenamin made a motion to hold Agenda Item 2011-514 in Committee. His motion was seconded by Alderman Edwards. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

2011-516 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AMENDMENT WITH, AND ADDITIONAL PAYMENT OF \$15,000.00 TO, HANSON PROFESSIONAL SERVICES INC., FOR SEWER ENGINEERING PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT C99S2058L, FOR THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS (Requested by Mayor J. Michael Houston)

Alderman Simpson made a motion to place Agenda Item 2011-516 onto the consent agenda. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The motion carried with a voice vote of 10-0.

Alderman Simpson mentioned the recent public forum with the United States Postal Service and their plan to close down the Springfield processing center. She asked if there was any plan that the City is pursuing if the Postal Service does move the processing center to St. Louis. Mayor Houston addressed the Committee. He stated that he had a meeting with United States Senator Dick Durbin and that there is legislation in the works to slow down the process down. In the meantime, he and the President of the Postal Workers Union are working on developing a business case to compare the ratings between the Springfield and St. Louis processing centers. This would help to make the case for the processing center in Springfield to stay open.

Alderman Cahnman commended the Mayor on his public statements that he made at the forum.

Alderman Theilen asked if the City had approached the other communities that are losing their post offices. He had recently spoken with relatives from the Quincy area and they had said that their community would much rather see their mail go through Springfield as opposed to St. Louis. Estimates are that a letter could take as long as five days to be delivered because it has to go through St. Louis. Mayor Houston pointed out that the communities are working on keeping their own processing center. He also added that within the Gateway District of the Postal Service and nationally, Springfield is one of the better centers.

Alderman Turner encouraged citizens to submit written comments to the Postal Service. She encouraged citizens to make the business case for the Springfield being the better of the two centers for processing mail.

Alderman McMenemy pointed out that the internal investment rate of return for the police and fire pension funds currently sits at 7.5%. The blue ribbon committee that was set up recommended a rate of return at 7.7%. The actuarial for the funds had previously recommended a rate of 5% and 7.5% for a rate of return. Alderman McMenemy then asked Director McCarty to get an updated range and a new recommended rate of return for the police and fire pension funds.

Alderman Edwards asked for an update on the pump test. Tom Skelly with City Water Light and Power stated that the contractor had completed the drilling of the three observation wells and they are completing the development of the test well. He anticipates that the test will be in the next week. He also added that the Council should have a report by March.

Alderman Edwards also updated the Committee on five budget hearing dates in February. All of the dates will be before the last Council meeting in February and allow for time for any follow up.

Alderman Edwards asked for an update on where things stand with the budget from FY12. Director McCarty stated that there are still many variables that are being factored out, but he is working with his staff to come up with a full analysis. He also added that there is every expectation of reaching the \$1.2 million reserve that Mayor Houston had requested. He is optimistic that it might even be more than that, but there are holes that are coming up. Alderman Edwards pointed out that the City is close to being on target to reach the \$2 million range to have in reserves. Director McCarty added that there has been an unexpected decrease on some revenues, such as from Springfield School District 186, and some unanticipated expenses. He is optimistic that the City will reach the goal of having \$1.2 million in reserves by the end of the year.

Alderman Simpson asked about the status of the budget books. Director McCarty responded that the delay is waiting on the results of the Maximus Personnel Audit and the implementation and factoring in the results of the study into next year's budgets.

Alderman Turner asked if the City had received the Maximus report yet. Director McCarty responded that they have not received it. Alderman Lesko asked when the report was due. Director McCarty responded that it is expected in the next week or so. Alderman Turner asked how the information will be given to the Council. Director McCarty responded that the timetable for the study's release has not been discussed as of yet and is a discussion that needs to happen between the Mayor and the Human Resources Office.

Alderman Edwards asked that the budget books be prepared a week in advance of the first budget hearing date of February 1st.

Alderman Simpson asked if the timeline is achievable if the study has not even been submitted to the City. Director McCarty responded that it is the goal to have the budget books done in time before the February 1st budget hearing date. He also added that the Departments have been working on their budgets for some time, but there will be changes made based on the results of the Maximus study. Alderman Simpson asked if the study is being completed in the time frame that the City had requested or if they are behind. Director McCarty responded that the study is where the City expected it to be at this point.

Alderman Cahnman asked if the Administration has any plan to get the input of the Alderman before making its decision on implementing the report. Director McCarty stated that those discussions had not happened with the Mayor as of yet.

Alderman Griffin clarified that the budgets are being constructed based on what the Departments have at this time and that they would be adjusted once the study is implemented. Director McCarty stated that there are frameworks set up for each department's budgets, but he anticipates last minute changes to them to reflect the study. Alderman Griffin asked when people might be notified of any layoffs. Director McCarty responded that it depends on what the recommendations of the study would be. He went on to state that it would be hard to say that the recommendations could be implemented right away because there are so many variables. Alderman Griffin asked if people were let go, would they be given right of recall for any other positions that might open up for which they might be qualified. Human Resources Director Melina Tomaras-Collins responded that he is correct.

Alderman Turner asked if that was happening now with the employees that were let go earlier in the year. Director Tomaras-Collins responded that it was. Alderman Simpson asked for clarification. Director Tomaras-Collins responded that the employees are on a recall list and if a position becomes available under the same title and has the same qualifications, that employee would be considered for that position. Alderman Turner asked if the employees are given any kind of preference. Director Tomaras-Collins responded that they are evaluated based on their qualifications, just as any other candidate would be. Alderman Lesko asked if the process was open and competitive just like anyone else applying off the street. Director Tomaras-Collins clarified that it would be for a different titled position.

Alderman Griffin pointed out that sometimes job titles change, which might disqualify the previous employees from recall. He recommended that the employees be looked at for any position for which they might be qualified. Director Tomaras-Collins stressed the need to abide by the current practice and policies in regards to filling the positions.

Alderman Lesko asked Director McCarty how the budget booklet might be handled if the Maximus study recommends something that takes time to implement. Director McCarty responded that until the City sees what the recommendations are, it is hard to plan for them. He stated that he anticipates any plan that is worked out to be incorporated into the budget.

Alderman Simpson asked if Maximus was only directed to look at reduction in staff. Director McCarty responded that they were directed to look at efficiencies within the City. They were also excluded from looking at sworn police and fire and personnel in the City Clerk and City Treasurer's offices. Alderman Simpson asked if efficiencies could also mean hiring of additional employees. Director McCarty responded that it could be the case.

Alderman McMenemy asked Director McCarty to expand his request of the actuary to calculate what the annual contribution from the City to the police and fire pension funds if the rate of return of 6.5% or 5.5% respectively. He pointed out that if the City changes the rate of returns, the required contributions that the City would have to make would increase.

Alderman Edwards addressed the recent concerns about the Labor Management Committee. He stated that his suggestion to the Committee will be that the City feels comfortable to fund the cost and if the additional money is needed that it will be available. He asked the Committee if they were all on the same page in recommending to the Committee that the City is prepared to move forward with a potential commitment from the estimate of the actuarial of \$600,000.00. Director McCarty responded that if the committee reversed their policy and extend the benefits to partners in civil unions and accept the actuarial numbers as presented, then the City would be bound by the ordinance to budget the money for the premiums. Alderman Edwards pointed out that premiums might be raised as a result of this decision and he asks that the City be prepared for the potential added expense. Director McCarty responded that the City is required to cover 75% of the cost. Alderman Edwards stated that it is his recommendation to the Committee to extend the benefit, but not raise the premium and see what happens. Director McCarty added that the City employees might see their premiums raise 3.4% or 3.5% over the base that they are already seeing of around 3.6% or 3.7% if the committee accepts the actuarial estimate of the additional cost that could be incurred. Director McCarty recommended that the Labor Management Committee recommend a number less than what the actuarial has reported so that there will be lower premiums and it can be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Mayor Houston referenced the actuarial study where they estimate that 65 civil union partners would be added to the health insurance program. He went on to point out that there have only been 108 civil unions in Sangamon County and the chances of 65 additional civil unions among are slim, even compared with communities of similar size. He added that since the Labor Management Committee monitors things on a quarterly basis, that changes could be made when the need arises. He does not see the need to take the \$725,000 figure from the actuary to be put in the budget. Alderman Edwards asked for a number to estimate for the additional cost for the Labor Management Committee to consider.

Alderman Turner pointed out that she, Alderman Cahnman and Alderman Jobe has been asking since September for the actuarial information and methodology and how the Labor Management Committee reaches its decisions, but to date, they have never received the information. She stated that she would like to see the Labor Management Committee use a reasonable process to arrive at the number that will be estimated.

Alderman Edwards stated that the process has not been closed. The information that was given to the Committee is not in an easy to understand and the Committee has been asking for additional information as well. Alderman Turner stated that there should be someone on the Committee to help to understand the information. And if the information is not being provided in a way that the Committee understands, it might be time to investigate hiring a new actuary. Alderman Edwards pointed out that Alderman Cahnman had attended a meeting.

Alderman Cahnman stated that he did attend an Labor Management Committee meeting. The Committee allowed him to make a presentation on their arguments on the estimated costs. He was then told that the Committee meetings were not open to the public and he was asked to leave. He also stated that he had received the information that the Committee members had received and he found it easy to understand. He also added that he believes that the costs are way out of the mainstream. He also pointed out that the City's dental insurance provider had sent out a notice offering benefits for civil union partners and they are not part of the self insurance fund. He also asked if anyone has requested civil union benefits that they would be entitled to. Director Tomaras-Collins responded that there have not been any inquiries about benefits for civil union partners made of her office. Alderman Cahnman pointed out that the City is compelled by law to offer the benefits and it would be the best interest of the city to offer the benefits rather than opening up the City to additional lawsuits.

Alderman Edwards stated that the Labor Management Committee should stick with the original actuarial number because it is easier to lower it over the course of the year as opposed to raise it. He stated that he trusts the figures from the actuary because he is the professional and was paid to calculate the number. Alderman Cahnman pointed out that the number for civil union partners is different than for married spouse's partners. Alderman Edwards pointed out differences between the City and the County's self insurance funds. The County does not allow retirees to stay on their plan and the County does not allow widows to stay on the fund past six months, neither of which the City does. Alderman Edwards again advocated for the number that the actuary had put forth.

Alderman Cahnman stated that he would like to see the reasoning behind the number before going forward. Alderman Edwards stated that the Committee is taking time to do the right thing and ask the right questions, but there is also pressure to reverse their policies. Alderman Cahnman pointed out that the numbers had just been released in December. Director McCarty stated that the Council has been provided with all of the information that the city was given. He has also followed up with the actuary for additional information. Mayor Houston pointed to similar communities of similar size and the increases that they have seen in civil union partnerships have been minimal.

Alderman Edwards pointed out that the same discussions are occurring within the Labor Management Committee. He also stated that the vote was taken because they did not see any other option.

Alderman Jobe expressed concern about the process and the vote that was taken. Alderman Edwards pointed out that the committee is voting to leave things as they are until their questions are answered. Alderman Jobe expressed concern about the fact that a vote was taken to deny benefits. Alderman Edwards stated that the vote taken was to leave the premiums as they are. Alderman Turner expressed concern about the conflicting reports from what actually occurred at the meeting.

Alderman Cahnman asked Labor Relations Manager Jim Gates to address her concerns. Mr. Gates pointed out that there were two votes that the committee had taken. For the first vote, advice was given that the City was not under any legal obligation to offer civil union benefits. At that time, the Committee voted not to include them. The committee then waited until they were given the actuarial report to discuss what the premiums would be for the next fiscal year. There were three categories of benefits that were considered. The first was keeping the benefits as they stand now or keeping the status quo. The second set was if the benefits were determined not to be grandfathered under the federal guidelines. The third set was if the City would include civil union partners. After discussions and after looking at what the premium increases would be, the Labor Management Committee made a motion to accept the status quo (the first set) and that what was voted in.

Alderman Cahnman asked if the committee could take another look at the issue, now that more information has been provided. Mr. Gates stated that in light of the recent events, that the topic is being put back on the agenda.

Alderman Simpson asked for clarification on the 25% increase in the cost of insuring a civil union partner versus a married spouse. Alderman Turner echoed her concerns and the estimate of 65 people that would take advantage of the benefit.

Alderman Edwards re-iterated that the numbers are coming from the actuary and the Labor Management Committee is asking similar questions.

Mayor Houston stated that he would make an assumption that the actuary is looking at national employment numbers that are giving him an indication to where there might be civil unions. And he would also assume that he might be looking at national trends to come up with the cost estimate.

Alderman Turner again expressed concern about the numbers.

Alderman Edwards pointed out that the health insurance for his company went up 24% for this year. Alderman Cahnman pointed out differences between his company and the City of Springfield.

Mayor Houston stated that the actuary is the same one that has been used for several years. He also pointed out that he does not think that the members of the committee have done a bad job. They are fiduciaries and they have done what they feel is in the best interest of the City. He also reminded the Council that when the committee was established that the self insurance fund was a mess and the committee has done a good job of turning that situation around.

Alderman Cahnman echoed Mayor Houston's praise of the committee. He pointed out that the Clerk does not keep records and minutes of the Labor Management Committee meetings and the meetings are not open to the public. He asked Corporation Counsel Mark Cullen why the meetings are not subject to the open meetings act. Alderman Edwards responded that some of the issues that are discussed are private information. Alderman Cahnman pointed out that the Council goes periodically into executive session for the same reason and he asked why this committee could not do the same. CC Cullen responded that the reason is because the process is part of collective bargaining agreements. And while the agreements are public record, the process to achieve them is not. Alderman Edwards pointed out that before the labor management committee, the City would have to go to each of the labor unions to individually negotiate their health benefits. The committee was formed after many years of building up trust.

Alderman Turner asked Alderman Edwards and Alderman Dove if there is a process by which they bring information back to the committee. Alderman Edwards stated that they do when they are asked.

Alderman Jobe stated that the issue is one of fairness and of following the law. He expressed concern about the vote and the way that the situation was handled. Alderman Edwards stated that the issue is about more than fairness. He pointed out some of the concerns that surround civil unions vs. marriages and the differences in state and federal laws.

Alderman Turner pointed out that civil unions are not unique in the nation or to the City of Springfield. He stated that the Governor set the standard for all municipalities within the State of Illinois. She also pointed out that a civil union can be between any two people, not necessarily of the same sex.

Alderman Cahnman added that civil unions are the law in the State of Illinois and we are required to follow the law in the State. He also pointed out that the trend in France is towards civil unions instead of marriages.

Don Hanrahan, the President of the Steering Committee of the Springfield American Civil Liberties Union addressed the Council. His office is at 1118 South Sixth Street. He addressed the Council in regards to the decision of the Labor Management Committee to deny benefits to civil union partners. He also applauded the statements that were made by Mayor Houston earlier in the day. He thanked Alderman Jobe, Cahnman and Turner and Mayor Houston for their positions on the issue. He also cautioned the Council about the potential for legal action to be taken against it as a result of this decision.

Alderman Griffin pointed out that the committee is set up similarly to the County and they are given the freedom to make decision on their own. The Council does not have a say in their actions. Alderman Theilen added that to undo that authority would require a negotiation process with each of the unions. Alderman Edwards asked for patience to give the committee a chance to fix the situation.

Alderman Simpson asked CC Cullen if there is any body that operates under the City of Springfield that the Council does not have some say in their actions. Council Coordinator Joe Davis responded that it is by the ordinance. Alderman Simpson requested that the ordinance be changed. CC Cullen stated that the committee is part of the labor negotiating process and is not an entity of the City of Springfield. It is related, but is not under the jurisdiction solely of the City. Alderman Simpson pointed out that legal action would be taken against the City and not the committee. CC Cullen pointed out that if the Council changes any of the terms of the Labor Management Committee that the City would be subject to grievances by all of the unions within the City. Alderman Simpson again expressed concern about the City being sued for actions that are taken by an entity in which they have no control. Alderman Theilen pointed out that it would be the self insurance fund that would be sued.

Lowell Jaffe, the Political and Policy Director for the Civil Rights Agenda also addressed the Council. His offices are located at 2129 N. Western Ave, Chicago. He also expressed concerns about the recent decisions of the Labor Management Committee and the need to follow the law.

Bob Wesley of 700 East Adams in Springfield also addressed the Council and expressed his concerns about the recent decision of the Labor Management Committee. He also thanked Alderman Jobe, Cahnman and Turner for their work in bringing the issue to light and Mayor Houston for his comments. He also asked what would happen if 65 employees of the City went out and got married within the next year. He asked the City to honor the law because it is the fair thing to do.

A motion was made by Alderman Simpson to adjourn the meeting. Her motion was seconded by Alderman Griffin. The meeting was adjourned at 7:18pm.

Cecilia K. Tumulty
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City Clerk