



# WHEATON CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION MINUTES

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MAYOR PHILIP J. SUESS

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL BARBIER | COUNCILWOMAN ERICA BRAY-PARKER | COUNCILMAN SCOTT BROWN  
COUNCILWOMAN SUZANNE FITCH | COUNCILWOMAN LYNN ROBBINS | COUNCILMAN SCOTT WELLER

WHEATON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Monday, January 10, 2022

## 1. Call to Order

The Wheaton City Council Planning Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Suess. The following were:

Physically Present: Mayor Suess  
Councilman Barbier  
Councilwoman Bray-Parker  
Councilman Brown  
Councilwoman Fitch  
Councilwoman Robbins  
Councilman Weller

Absent: None

City Staff Present: Michael Dzugan, City Manager  
John Duguay, Assistant City Manager  
Joseph Tebrugge, Director of Engineering  
Susan Bishel, Public Information Officer  
Russell Peacock, Development Engineer  
Andrea Rosedale, City Clerk

## 2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

## 3. Approval of October 25, 2021 Planning Session Minutes

The Council approved the October 25, 2021 City Council Planning Session Minutes.

## 4. Strategic Priority 2 – Enhanced Infrastructure: Goal C – Sanitary Sewer

Development Engineer Peacock reviewed the City Council's Strategic Priority related to reducing sanitary sewer backups and overflows of the sanitary sewer system during rainfall events. Because inflow and infiltration (I&I) are the main cause of both backups and overflows, the City is working to address this problem through two previously introduced initiatives, plus a third proposed initiative. These include: 1) Identifying best practices to address overflows, 2) Creating programs to provide relief for property owners experiencing basement backups, and 3) Improve/implement programs for long-term private property I&I reduction (proposed).

City staff presented recommendations for changes to two existing programs (Residential Sewer Backup Prevention Program and Private Service Line Reimbursement Program) to encourage participation and recommended the City add a third program, the Foundation Footing Tile Disconnection Program, for long-term private property I&I reduction.

Development Engineer Peacock stated approximately 4 households participate in the Residential Sewer Backup Prevention Program per year, which reimburses homeowners 50% of the cost of installing an overhead sewer in their home, up to \$3,000. The proposed change in the program would increase the reimbursement to 75% of the cost, up to \$8,000, with a goal of increasing participation in the program. The City's 2022 budget includes funding for increased reimbursements.

Similarly, approximately 4 households each year participate in the City's Private Service Line Reimbursement Program, which reimburses residents 50% of costs, up to \$2,000, and the City restores the right-of-way. The current program does not allow rear yard services to be reimbursed. The proposed program would allow for 50% reimbursement of costs, up to \$5,000, for the resident to replace the complete service line from the structure to the water main connection. In addition, the City would restore the right-of-way, and rear yard services could participate. The City included funding in the 2022 budget for at least 50 reimbursements. Replacing the entire service line would yield a greater reduction in I&I for the sanitary sewer system compared with replacing a portion of the line.

Development Engineer Peacock presented a third program staff proposes, which would address another significant source of I&I: directly connected foundation footing tiles. Some older homes that do not have a sump pump have foundation drains that directly discharge into the City's sanitary sewer system. Under current City Code, this is now considered an illegal connection. Such connections could be encountered when completely replacing the sanitary service line, and a homeowner would be required to remediate it. To assist homeowners with the cost, City staff recommends implementing a Foundation Footing Tile Disconnection Program to reimburse residents 50% of the cost, up to \$5,000, for removing these direct connections.

In response to Council questions, City Manager Dzugan confirmed that foundation drain tiles with direct connections were permitted many years ago, which is why some older homes have this type of connection. Development Engineer Peacock stated this type of connection usually only are discovered when replacing the service line. City Manager Dzugan responded to a Council question on whether this practice could be grandfathered by stating it is somewhat unclear because the EPA deems these connections illegal.

Development Engineer Peacock answered a Council question regarding how many residents on average replace sewer service lines, stating that about 80 homeowners per year seek permits and replace their service line. He stated that homes in north Wheaton and near Wheaton College more frequently experience issues due to the age of the service lines with older homes.

To address questions about capacity, Director of Engineering Tebrugge stated the City's sewers are correctly sized for dry weather flow, but they are not adequately sized when they take on rainwater.

City Manager Dzugan answered Council questions regarding capacity of the Wheaton Sanitary District by stating they can only treat a set amount, and the City cannot send any more capacity than this set amount. The City explored building underground storage tanks to hold additional capacity temporarily, but the City Council determined the associated costs were not feasible. City Manager Dzugan and Director of Engineering Tebrugge discussed the need for the City to reduce overflows and backups to comply with EPA requirements.

To answer questions related to how residents learn about the reimbursement programs, Development Engineer Peacock stated when residents have a backup, they contact Public Works, who will notify them of the available programs, and the City also reaches out to local plumbers. If the Council approves the

proposed program changes, the City intends to also implement public information campaigns to notify residents of the programs' availability.

The Council expressed support for implementing the City staff's three recommended initiatives as presented.

## **5. Board, Commission and Committee Review**

City Manager Dzugan stated following two previous Planning Session discussions related to City boards, commissions and committees, the Council expressed a desire to establish consistency and reporting mechanisms for these groups to report to the City Council. City staff completed extensive research on other municipal boards, commissions and committees' general provisions and each group's purpose statement. From this, City staff compiled best practices with the intent of establishing rules for all boards/commissions/committees to follow, unless there is a specific need outlined for that group or if otherwise required by law.

City Manager Dzugan's focus for this first part of the discussion was on the non-regulatory boards/commissions/committees, which include: Band Commission, Community Relations Commission, Environmental Improvement Commission, Housing Commission, Sister City Commission, Historic Commission, Fine & Cultural Arts Commission, and Bicycle Advisory Commission.

The general provision amendments City staff proposed for the Council's consideration included 3-year terms, residency requirements to be on a board/commission/committee (non-residents would serve until the end of their current term), and a potential mechanism for removal from a group for excessive absences.

In response to Council questions, City Manager Dzugan stated the potential removal for excessive absences would be optional and could be recommended to the Council at the discretion of the board/committee/commission chair.

Other proposed amendments related to boards/commissions/committees selecting a chairperson, who would serve a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms. The Council discussed this term limit and stated they would like to hear feedback from the boards/commissions/committees.

City Manager Dzugan reviewed proposed changes requiring boards/commissions/committees to continue adhering to Open Meeting Act procedures, having a quorum to conduct business, and following meeting procedures set through Roberts Rules of Order. In response to a Council question, a quorum would be a majority of those appointed.

City Manager Dzugan reviewed a proposed amendment that would require requests for use of City staff to be approved by the City Manager, which would assist in ensuring boards/commissions/committees are not drawing excessive resources from City staff.

A new section about finances would establish a procedure for boards/commissions/committees to propose their annual budget by October 15 each year outlining planned expenditures for approval by the Council. In addition, City Manager Dzugan presented a proposed section by the City Attorney establishing required practices for donation solicitation and financial reporting.

The final general provision section covered would require each board/commission/committee to present an annual report to the City Council by October 15 each year informing on past and proposed action items.

In response to Council questions regarding Section 2-263, Nonpolitical Status, City Manager Dzugan stated staff could work on further defining the language in this section so that it is more precise.

City Manager Dzugan stated that to refine each board/commission/committee's section of the City Code, staff reviewed best practices, reviewed ordinances from many other municipalities, read reports and minutes from recent years, and incorporated the key themes of educating, informing and promoting. Staff also sought to incorporate the ability to measure goals.

The City Council reviewed the significant changes suggested for these boards/commissions/committees. For the Band Commission, this included adding a purpose statement. In response to Council questions, City Manager Dzugan stated the City's Finance Department provides auditing for the Band Commission's finances. The Friends of the Band is a separate organization from the City who oversee their own finances.

For the Community Relations Commission, proposed changes included updating the purpose statement to reflect the work they do, and incorporating the role of the Sister City Commission, which has not had enough members in recent years to have a quorum. Council members expressed a desire to incorporate in the Community Relations Commission's purpose statement the goal of bringing people together. Council members also discussed making language more specific to include the Good Citizens Awards and a program focus on helping others within our community.

In response to Council questions, City Manager Dzugan confirmed that the proposed format would have each group present their budget along with action items tied to their purpose statements.

For the Environmental Improvement Commission, the Council discussed the possibility of adding both Earth Day and Arbor Day in its stated purpose, as well as reducing plastic pollution and actions that improve public health. Council members also expressed an interest in incorporating into the wording a focus on making an impact locally for this and other commission statements.

City Manager Dzugan stated in the proposed changes for the Housing Commission, City staff recommends changing the commission to the Commission on Aging. This would reflect the commission's current work and would mirror what other communities established, with a focus on senior assistance rather than housing.

For the historic commission, changes related to deleting specific membership traits outlined in the City Code.

City Manager Dzugan stated the proposed changes to the Fine & Cultural Arts Commission would expand their focus to be a clearinghouse of cultural arts events, creating a calendar for the community to inform them of local opportunities. The Council expressed a desire to make the proposed wording more flexible for an arts month and combining redundant language.

For the Bicycle Advisory Commission, Council members discussed the possibility of requiring at least one citywide event. This concept could be applied to the other groups' sections as well.

City Manager Dzugan stated if the Council is in favor of this approach, the next steps would be to incorporate the City Council's comments and then present the suggested changes to the boards/committees/commissions to solicit their feedback. The Council spoke in favor of this course of action. City Manager Dzugan stated staff would continue reviewing the regulatory boards and would

present proposed changes for these groups in the coming months.

**6. City Council/City Staff Comments**

Councilman Barbier stated he is glad that the Wheaton Police Department will be implementing body-worn cameras, as a recent example of officer body-worn camera use in a Bradley, Illinois incident illustrated their value.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Bishel