

**MINUTES**  
**May 25, 2021**  
**Committee of the Whole – Hybrid Meeting**  
**City of Batavia**

Please **NOTE:** These minutes are not a word-for-word transcription of the statements made at the meeting, nor intended to be a comprehensive review of all discussions. They are intended to make an official record of the actions taken by the Committee/City Council, and to include some description of discussion points as understood by the minute-taker. They may not reference some of the individual attendee's comments, nor the complete comments if referenced.

Chair Wolff called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**1. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Chair Wolff (online); Ald. Baerren, Knopp, Solfa, Leman, Chanzit (online), Malay (online), Uher, Cerone (online), Ajazi, Beck and Vogelsinger (online)

**Members Absent:** Ald. Miller and Russotto

**Also Present:** Mayor Schielke; Laura Newman, City Administrator; Rahat Bari, City Engineer; Andrea Podrazza, Senior Civil Engineer; Scott Buening, Director of Community Development (online); Anthony Isom, Assistant to the City Administrator (online); and Jennifer Austin-Smith, Recording Secretary (online)

**2. Reminder: Please speak into the microphone for BATV recording**

**3. Approve Minutes for: April 13, 2021 and April 20, 2021 Special Meeting**

**Motion:** To approve the minutes for April 13, 2021 and April 20, 2021 Special Meeting

**Maker:** Knopp

**Second:** Solfa

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Knopp, Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi, Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck

**Nay:**

12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

**4. Items to be Removed/Added/Changed**

There were no items to be removed, added or changed.

**5. Matters From the Public (For Items NOT on the Agenda)**

There were no matters from the public at this time.

**6. Consent Agenda**

**(The Consent Agenda is made up of items recommended by city staff that requires recommendation to the full City Council by the COW. This agenda is placed as a separate item on the COW agenda. The items on the Consent Agenda are usually minor items, already budgeted, standard non-policy activities or outgrowths of earlier**

meetings and are voted on as a “package” in the interest of saving time on non-controversial issues. However, any council member may, by simple request, have an item removed and placed on the “regular” agenda.)

**a. Resolution 21-052-R: Approving a Plat of Dedication for Parts of West Wilson Street (SCB 5/13/21)**

**Motion:** To approve the Consent Agenda as presented

**Maker:** Chanzit

**Second:** Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi, Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck, Knopp

**Nay:**

12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

*Ald. Leman exited the meeting at 7:18pm. Chair Wolff explained that being a business owner in a TIF District Ald. Leman has exited the meeting due to potential conflict of interest.*

**7. Discussion: Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Grant and Incentives (SCB 5/12/21) CD**

Chair Wolff overviewed the memo. Chair Wolff shared that the discussion on signage was a huge topic because signs never stay with the building itself. Once the business leaves the sign leaves. The ones that are about building improvements are easier to justify that are accomplished with the grant. The real intent is to upgrade the buildings that are there such as upgraded electric, utilities, etc. Chair Wolff stated that we could expand some of the things we have done with this grant to incentivize improvements.

Newman stated there are areas where some questions have come up and we want to ask the Committee’s advice on what the intent is for the future of these programs. Would it be suggested that there be any limit on the number of grants that could be provided to any particular business or to any particular property? Is it limited to types or could they get one of each type? Not the same type of grant over a five-year period? Newman stated that these do not currently exist in our guidelines in our TIF Grant programs. There has been a differentiation between grants provided to make improvements to a property but not for the regular maintenance of the property. We are getting requests, given the nature of the economic times we are in, for grants to perform ordinary maintenance on buildings. The TIF Redevelopment Grant Program currently is restricted to projects that would add retail types of revenue. There are business owners who are wondering if the program could be expanded to non-traditional revenue generating types of businesses. Buening stated that he outlined in his memo some ideas for what could be done for some changes in regards to the programs and overviewed the memo with the Committee.

Chanzit stated that he has always been in favor of this type of program to assist businesses. He recognizes that there are a lot of opportunities for abuse if we leave things too loose. Chanzit does not want the ordinance written so that there is an incentive to not maintain your property because the City could come in as a backstop to help out a business owner who was purposely being neglectful. He recognizes that this has not been an issue so far but there should be some guidelines. He would favor a business that has owned the property longer rather than one that has

changed ownership recently. Regarding interest rates, this is not meant to be a money making venture for the City. If this is a public private partnership, we should not be competing with the banks. He knows of past loans where the interest rate was so low he wondered why we were charging interest in the first place. If that money were parked in a CV somewhere or a safe investment, we should at least be making that much money but he would not necessarily want to go as high as commercial loan rates are.

Knopp read a comment from Ald. Brown from past minutes stating, “this program was set up to encourage maintenance of buildings within the Historic District that have some added maintenance expense due to the age of the buildings.” Knopp stated when we talk about maintenance items that are very narrowly focused to within the Historic District due to the age of the buildings. That, to him, is something that we work with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) on to talk about maintaining buildings within the HPC guidelines and the added expenses that go into that normal maintenance. Knopp noted that there was data provided at the end of 2013 with statistical evaluations looking at businesses that received grants and if they were still in business. Knopp asked for that information to be updated. Buening answered that staff could prepare that information. Knopp commented that it would be nice to know if our investments are paying off. Newman noted that the whole point of this conversation tonight is are we being good stewards of these funds. We created a TIF that had a TIF Redevelopment Plan and the idea was to utilize this funding in order to accomplish the goals of that plan. That is really the question we are here to answer and that would be a really good piece of data to use. Chair Wolff stated it would also be good to know how many times a building applied for a grant and which business was in place at the time of the application. He added that if the building is still occupied with a tenant, whether it is the same business or not, shows there is a return of investment. The Committee discussed signage on canvas awnings and how that would apply to the signage program.

Ralph addressed the Committee. He shared that he purchased a building at 228 East Wilson Street and it was a two-story building and at that time it was a run down two flat. He completely remodeled the building inside and outside and he is still using the building to this day. He is in the TIF 3 District. He has owned the building for forty-five years and has done good maintenance on it. The assessed evaluation is quite low for this particular building. The land is assessed at one half of the total evaluation. He is not asking for a grant himself, he has a contract with Mr. Tom Gosselin who will be addressing the Committee next. He is very interested in coming in and redeveloping the property completely. This is the type of thing that would increase your property tax, assessed evaluation and his guess is it would go up at least double. It would be a nice improvement to that part of the town right now. Ralph gave a history of the building to the Committee. The building is over one hundred years old. He has a joint driveway easement to the property east of him that was recorded in 1914.

Tom Gosselin addressed the Committee. Gosselin distributed plans to the Committee along with the parking. The reason they are here is they have been talking to staff about grants and TIF money to help with the cost of construction of what would be an office building. The office building would be four independent offices within the building to be rented and possibly a couple of other smaller workstations and shared conference rooms. The issue we have had that it is neither residential or sales tax generating. The building to the west of the property has the

kiosk businesses that have relocated. The parking was a joint plan with that property owner and himself. The hope is the property would be worth more when done so the tax bill would double. Hopefully it would be a good income generating property for the TIF. The project as a whole would be basically bringing everything down to the studs. The building would be redone inside and out with new electrical, new plumbing, handicap lift for accessibility and much improved parking. This is a permanent project and not a minor project. It is a one-hundred year old building in the Historic District and if you look at a traditional TIF project this is the poster child for it. While it is not sales tax generating, the people who are working there along with all the clients who might come in would be in town buying gas, having lunch, and benefit the business to the west. Gosselin asked for a little bit of flexibility when possible for either TIF money or some of the other grants. This project would help his business and other projects that are good in the City but might not fit that sales tax recipe that we currently have.

Chair Wolff commented that this project would be a permanent addition to the EAV for the City. To him this makes sense when he looks at a TIF, we are putting money into a building that increases the TIF by roughly two thirds. That building would be there for the entire period and that is the best return of investment we could make. Chair Wolff stated that he would like to see this as one of the changes in the program because this creates what we want in the EAV and a new opportunity for a building. The general consensus of the Committee was in agreement.

Buening stated he would take the suggestions and changes discussed at tonight's meeting and put together a draft document reflecting the changes in each program. The draft document would be brought back to the COW for further discussion and direction.

*Ald. Leman returned to the meeting at 8:26pm.*

#### **8. Presentation: Batavia Environmental Commission (Annual Report) (AMP 5/18/21)**

Carolyn Burnham presented a PowerPoint presentation titled "Presentation of 2020-2021 Recap of Recent Activities and Achievements" that included the following information:

- Members
- Achievements/Initiatives
- Upcoming: Wildflower Walk
- Upcoming: Big Trees
- Upcoming: Water Willow Planting
- Upcoming: Water Conservation Campaign
- Get Involved!

#### **9. Resolution 21-055-R: Authorizing Execution of Task Order #3 with HR Green for Mahoney Creek Watershed Based Plan (AMP 5/18/21) CS**

Podraza overviewed the memo with the Committee.

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Resolution 21-055-R: Authorizing Execution of Task Order #3 with HR Green for Mahoney Creek Watershed Based Plan  
**Maker:** Malay  
**Second:** Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:**      **Aye:** Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi  
                          **Nay:**  
                          12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

**10. Resolution 21-053-R: Authorizing Execution of Contract with Alliance Construction for Bridge Preventative Maintenance Project (CB 5/18/21)**

Podraza overviewed the memo with the Committee.

**Motion:**      To recommend approval of Resolution 21-053-R: Authorizing Execution of Contract with Alliance Construction for Bridge Preventative Maintenance Project

**Maker:**      Malay

**Second:**     Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:**   **Aye:** Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi

**Nay:**

12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

**11. Resolution 21-054-R: Authorizing Phase I Engineering Agreement with CMT for Main Street Reconstruction – Van Nortwick Avenue to Randall Road (RB 5/18/21) CD**

Malay summarized the memo. Bari overviewed the Phase I Engineering Agreement with the Committee.

**Motion:**      To recommend approval of Resolution 21-054-R: Authorizing Phase I Engineering Agreement with CMT for Main Street Reconstruction – Van Nortwick Avenue to Randall Road

**Maker:**      Malay

**Second:**     Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:**   **Aye:** Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi

**Nay:**

12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

**12. Resolution 21-058-R: Approving a Phase 3 Construction Engineering Consultant Supplement Agreement with BLA for Main Street Construction for an amount not to exceed \$73,296**

Malay summarized the memo.

**Motion:**      To recommend approval of Resolution 21-058-R: Approving a Phase 3 Construction Engineering Consultant Supplement Agreement with BLA for Main Street Construction for an amount not to exceed \$73,296

**Maker:**      Malay

**Second:**     Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:**   **Aye:** Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi

**Nay:**

12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

**13. Resolution 21-059-R: Authorizing the City Administrator to Apply for Kane County Development Funds and Execution of all Necessary Documents (AMP 5/18/21) CS**

Malay summarized the memo. Bari discussed the process with the Committee.

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Resolution 21-059-R: Authorizing the City Administrator to Apply for Kane County Development Funds and Execution of all Necessary Documents

**Maker:** Malay

**Second:** Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Malay, Uher, Cerone, Vogelsinger, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Solfa, Wolff, Baerren, Leman, Ajazi

**Nay:**

12-0 Vote, 2 Absent. Motion carried.

**14. Project Status**

Newman reported on the following:

- The Colony Bike Share program has begun.
- Garbage stickers are available at the Utility Billing Department at City Hall, Batavia Jewel, Batavia Menards, Batavia Ace Hardware, and a new location that was added is the 711 located at 718 Butterfield. Waste Management is working closely with Berkley Finer Foods to sell the stickers again with a surcharge to cover the cost of that location for credit card purchases. They are also working with Walgreen's.
- Construction going on outside of City Hall on the Nicor Gas Main on Island Avenue had an issue yesterday. A line was accidentally punctured and emergency crews were called in to shut down that line. This may set back the project a few days.

**15. Other**

Mayor Schielke stated that the City has received a lot of complaints about coyote nests. The City has a contract with the Kane County Animal Control Department (KCACD) who has not been very communicative with the City. Newman noted that the City is not trained or equipped to remove a family of coyotes. Chair Wolff stated that years ago he was told that unless it is a rescue organization or someone that is willing to come in the County would not come in to remove a den. If it were a sick animal the KCACD would come in and take care of that.

**16. Adjournment**

There being no other business to discuss, Chair Wolff asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:43pm; Made by Knopp; Seconded by Solfa. Motion carried.