

**COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
MINUTES
October 18, 2022**

Mayor Gallo called the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Gallo, Karen McHale, Nick Budmats, Kevin O'Brien, Jon Bisesi, Mandy Reyez, Lara Sanoica
Absent: Jenifer Vinezeano

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: City Manager Rob Sabo, Finance Director Molly Talkington, Deputy City Clerk Judy Brose, Police Chief John Nowacki, Director Public Works Aaron Grosskopf, Assistant Director Public Works JoEllen Charlton, Chief Information Officer Waseem Khan and City Attorney Melissa Wolf

Mayor Gallo announced that the floor will be open to the audience for 20 minutes to address the City Council on matters that are on the agenda after the City Council discusses with Staff. Persons wishing to address the City Council keep their comments to 5 minutes in length. Comments must be addressed to the Council as a whole through the Mayor, and profanity may not be used in any form.

1) FY2023 Library Budget

Kevin Medows, Library Director presented the Library Budget and stated that the Rolling Meadows Library is experiencing substantial increases in its operating costs. Consumer Price Index data shows recent CPI-U increases of about 8.8% for the 12-month period preceding the date of this writing. It is thus no mystery why the Library has experienced a marked increase in its costs for resources and services. Staff have also seen their personal purchasing power decrease in the face of these cost-of-living increases. The Library's 2023 Budget and Levy address these matters conservatively, and to the best of our ability, with a levy increase (5%) that still significantly undershoots the latest inflation data (CPI-U of 8.8%).

Prices for all library materials continue to rise, and the library expects increased usage of e-books, e-audiobooks, and other e-formats, some of which are paid on a pay-per-use basis. Library materials comprise 12% of the budget. Recognizing that the strength of library services is determined in large part by library staffing, State guidelines provide that libraries devote 60% of their budget to salaries, and 70% of their budget to salaries plus benefits. Rolling Meadows Library's FY2023 budget allocates 51.3% to salaries, and 67.3% to salaries plus benefits. The Library's total compensation expenses will increase by 6.5% next year. This is due to the following measures being taken: 1) New positions need to be added to adapt to community needs (areas of service enhancement include information technology, leadership roles, service desks, and community outreach - all subject to priorities determined by the Library Board). These improvements need to be made because the library has made many cuts to staffing over the past several years, and now finds itself too thinly staffed to provide optimal public service, especially as library usage increases coming out of COVID-19; 2) Several current positions in the library require a wage adjustment due in part to the 2023 increase in minimum wage. The resulting overhaul to the Library's pay scale grid may, to a limited extent, help to improve retention and recruitment by bringing the pay rates of several positions in line with those at peer libraries; 3) A general pay increase to all staff (based on available funds and Library Board approval). This increase is expected to undershoot CPI-U figures, but may at least partially buffer the impact of inflation on real earnings.

The Library expects to make major capital improvements over the next 3-4 years. FY2023 will be devoted to projects of a size that can be accomplished in the near term. Three high-priority proposals for the Library Board to

consider in 2023 are: 1) re-design and replacement of our outdoor signs, 2) installation of 24/7 outdoor pickup lockers, and 3) an engineering evaluation of all buildings system, which may include replacement of lower-cost components which can be funded with the FY2023 budget.

Alderman McHale asked if there is any indication of bringing back library fines and Library Director Medows stated they have not implemented them again he personally never thought of them as a revenue source so that would not be the motivation but if it affects other people's use experiences then it would be done. Additionally, they are also looking into the logistics of auto renewals.

2) Results of Kennedy Pond Professional Engineering and Pond Evaluation

JoEllen Charlton, Assistant Public Works Director stated Council approved Resolution 22-R-19 on February 8, 2022 authorizing the City's Engineer to complete a bathymetric survey of Kennedy Pond in order to assess whether the pond's depth remained consistent with original engineering designs, and whether sedimentation infill was contributing to an increase in the amount and duration of excessive algae blooms on the pond. In addition to completing the bathymetric survey, the report evaluated the pond's general current condition and recommended a variety of possible restoration activities to address the aesthetic concerns raised by residents.

Ryan Lindeman, Christopher Burke Engineering (CBBEL) stated that CBBEL was asked to assess the condition of Kennedy Pond as the pond is experiencing sedimentation, algal blooms and has other maintenance concerns.

The appearance of Kennedy Pond dates back nearly two decades with over \$1 million spent in engineering and construction related to the Pond. Over \$600K was spent in 2008 (including approximately \$350K in grant funding) in construction costs to stabilize streambanks, excavate some of the channel, place stone riprap around the edges, and landscaping restoration. In 2017, \$269K was spent removing and replacing the spillway at the dam. Recent complaints over the last few years have focused on an increasing amount and duration of algae blooms in the hot summer months. In response to these concerns, Council has authorized annual budgets to chemically treat the pond up to two times per month during hot summer months.

Ryan Lindeman stated the contributors to the current pond aesthetics are 1) pond depth and sedimentation; 2) upstream tributary watershed impacts and; 3) aerator bubbler effectiveness.

1. Pond depth and sedimentation: A bathymetric survey of the pond's depth as well as the sediment depth was conducted. The pond's maximum depth is 4.5 feet. The pond's maximum depth if constructed to plan would have been approximately 5.2 feet deep. Sediment depths over the pond at the time of the survey averaged +/- 0.75 feet deep, and if taking the original topo into consideration maximum sediment depths could be up around 1.75 feet deep, which is reasonable because over time sediment will consolidate and firm up leading to underestimation of the sediment depth due to probe refusal. Sedimentation lessens dissolved oxygen in the water, and the relatively shallow water promotes higher temperatures which promote conditions that can trigger the generation of algal blooms.

CBBEL compared Kennedy Pond to other similar ponds and summarizes that sedimentation in this pond is minimal and likely due to the significant volume of water passing through the pond during rain events. When compared to other ponds, however, the amount of nutrients and sediment passing through the pond is greater, likely contributing to the algae blooms. Overall, the engineer comments that the pond is severely undersized to treat the quantity of water passing through it.

2. Upstream Tributary Watershed Impacts: Kennedy pond is located at the far tail end of a +1,380 acre upstream tributary area, which stretches through Palatine and into Inverness as seen below and in Exhibit 2 to the report.

Winter road salt, as well as lawn fertilizer applications and leaf litter and woody debris leaching their nutrients into the water that ends up in Kennedy Pond are all impacting water quality and resulting in an overall poor open water aesthetic.

3. *Aerator Bubbler Effectiveness*: The six existing bubbler aerators appear may be undersized or otherwise insufficient to address current conditions. The system needs to be further evaluated to determine if this observation is accurate.

Alternative Methods to Improve Pond Aesthetics during Hot Summer Months:

1. Dredging. Dredging the pond to achieve designed water depths and remove organic sediments that degrade water quality will result in cooler water temperatures and improved water quality. Cooler water is less likely to support algal blooms. Estimated dredging costs range from \$1.1M to \$2.6M, depending on desired depth and method of dredging.
2. Aeration Enhancements. Installation of a more robust bubble aeration in locations with greater than four feet (4') of depth, and water aeration/circulators in areas of the pond shallower than four feet (4'), and allowing the aeration circulation units to operate continuously (year-round) will improve water quality and keep water moving, thereby decreasing likelihood of algae blooms. Estimated cost of \$25k for purchase and installation of this equipment.
3. Enhanced Manmade/Chemical Treatments. Manufactured bacteria and enzymes can be added to the pond to help decompose deposited organic matter to minimize the amount of nutrients available for algae. The report provides no cost estimate for this treatment, as the City currently contracts services of this nature, though the treatment regimen should be periodically examined to ensure desired results are being met.
4. Addition of Ultrasonic Devices. These devices use sound to impact algae and stop growth. If pursued, staff would work with selected manufacturer to identify the proper type of equipment based on the size and depth of the pond. Depending on the type and quantity of unit(s) selected, estimated costs range from \$5k to \$50k.

Implementation of these treatment methods may only result in minimal improvements due to the upstream tributary conditions Kennedy Pond will have to continue to contend with.

Staff recommendations: 1) Evaluate aeration system in Spring of 2023 and budget \$30k for improved system to be purchased/installed in Fall 2023 or Spring 2024; 2) Continue or enhance chemical treatments and consider test applications of bacteria and enzymes ("muck digesters"); 3) Investigate ultrasonic algae control devices for potential implementation in 2024; and 4) Continue to evaluate 1-3, and add dredging alternatives to the CIP for further analysis in 5-10 years.

Alderman McHale stated that this pond is in Ward 1 and she is the one that gets all the calls regarding how the pond looks in July when it's filled with algae. She doesn't think it's just an aesthetic issue as the pond isn't large enough or deep enough to handle the amount of water that's coming in and ultimately this is going to be a growing issue in the years to come.

Alderman Sanoica stated that this is an issue that the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) would take because it involves multiple communities. She knows that Palatine and Rolling Meadows are members of MWRD but not sure if Inverness is. As far as this being an issue for the Environmental Committee to consider, she thinks it should be attacked at all levels not just Rolling Meadows.

Rob Sabo, City Manager stated that Salt Creek Watershed has a group of different municipalities that meet from time to time. One of the big topics that is being discussed in communities nationwide is Stormwater Management Best Management Practices (BMP's). One of the items Ryan referred to is manicured lawns and the significant

increase of fertilizers. Fertilizers being overused or applied before rain and it gets into these types of water systems. One of the things that can be explored with the Environmental Committee as well as the Salt Creek Watershed group is to focus on the stormwater management BMP's that's going to reduce run off into the system which helps fuel this issue further.

Alderman Budmats stated that Harper College has a larger pond on their property and asked if they choose to do nothing with that pond, will our efforts be hampered if their pond is left the way it is which is in the same watershed and feeding into our pond. Ryan Lindeman stated that is correct in that we're beholden to the upstream watershed. Alderman Budmats stated that we can spend \$1 million and within a year or two we'd be in the same place again. Ryan Lindeman stated that the algae blooms coincide with the warm summer months and rainfall is limited during that time. The amount of nutrients coming into that system have already made their way there by that point. However, there are cost effective solutions that can be employed regardless of what Harper does but we are still beholden to the upstream watershed. Alderman Budmats stated that before we spend \$1 million we should be sure that we're working in conjunction with whoever is handling Harper's pond.

Mayor Gallo stated that since this is a much bigger issue both up and down stream and at this point largely an esthetic issue because upstream issues with nutrient run off are creating expedient growth of the algae. He asked if we can just skim the algae until we can work on a much more comprehensive approach with our neighboring communities and their watersheds. Ryan Lindeman stated that he will talk with their water resources department and see if skimming is an option and report back. Mayor Gallo stated that it's a way to remediate the immediate esthetic of the algae until we have the entire watershed from upstream/downstream figured out with the nutrient flow issues.

3) Policy Pertaining to the Purchase of New Vehicles

Aaron Grosskopf, Director Public Works stated that this issue has been discussed at the Vehicle Replacement Committee meeting on September 27th and it was decided at that time to bring it forward to the Committee of the Whole meeting for informational purposes. During the past nine (9) months, staff has experienced severe delays in the ability to procure vehicles and pricing. Due to staffing, supply chain, and demand, every industry has seen and continues to see its share of problems. These issues have created a backlog in ordering and procuring all types of vehicles and equipment.

Eight (8) FY 2022 replacements have not yet been ordered due to these complications, and if ordered, will likely not be delivered until 2023 and possibly into 2024. The forecast for FY 2023 is that this situation is not expected to improve until the fourth quarter, and with ten (10) replacements scheduled, the majority of those will likely not arrive until 2024. Due to these extenuating circumstances and uncertainty of when ordering and pricing will be available, staff recommends that it be given the ability to place orders as they become available to secure a "spot in line" for budgeted vehicles and equipment without requesting Council approval beforehand. This will only be done for vehicles that are currently budgeted in 2022 and 2023 on the Vehicle Replacement Schedule. Securing these slots will allow staff to hold a production position before fully committing to pricing, and will allow staff to move fluidly and effectively through one of the most challenging vehicle/equipment purchasing times in recent history.

Staff will provide pricing before any commitment to vendors for FY 2022 or FY 2023 replacements and monitor their progress before making any final decisions. If the actual delivery date costs exceed staff's spending authority beyond the budgeted amount, the additional costs would be brought back to City Council for approval, which allows Council the opportunity to reevaluate and approve any vehicle/equipment purchases when costs come in higher than originally approved.

Most orders will be placed within the parameters of a joint purchasing contract such as Sourcewell, Illinois State Contract, HGAC (Houston Galveston Area Council), or the Northwest Municipal Conference. If pricing is not available through a contract, staff will obtain quotes from as many participating dealers as possible.

Please keep in mind that no purchases will be made without the ultimate consent and approval of the City Council. The provisions described above allow staff to operate fluidly within the current economic climate to secure the pricing and availability in these trying times.

After the City Council discussed this topic, Mayor Gallo took a straw vote for all those in favor to authorize Public Works to place orders with vendors for vehicles in FY 2022 and FY 2023 and seek Council approval after the order is placed for final approval. 6 in favor and 0 opposed.

4) Council Chamber Improvements Follow-up

Aaron Grosskopf, Director Public Works stated that at the July 19, 2022 Committee of the Whole, the City Council authorized Staff to proceed with obtaining quotes and estimates for work to be performed in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The total budgeted amount for these improvements in FY 2022 is \$100,000.

The Council Chambers is used weekly for City Council, Board, Committee, and Commission meetings. Additionally, the Chambers are used daily by City staff for meetings with the public, contractors, developers, intergovernmental meetings, and for any meeting to be held at City Hall which requires a larger room. The space is one of the most publicly utilized and recognizable spaces of all City facilities. Given that the City uses the room to meet with residents, prospective developers, business operators, and contractors, it is important that the room reflect the professionalism and forward-thinking nature of the organization. Staff have reviewed room features which are aged, outdated, not utilized, and can use aesthetic improvements to reflect a modern and professional municipal operation.

In light of an ongoing current ComEd grant program, City Staff recommends removing the lighting upgrade as part of this improvement and soliciting a vendor who is an Authorized ComEd Energy Efficiency Service Provider to replace all of the lighting in City Hall along with other City facilities at no cost. City Staff has already been in contact with a vendor to start moving this process forward. Removing the lighting costs would save approximately \$15,000 off the prices listed. The costs do not reflect any Audio/Visual upgrades such as replacement of microphones and additional TV monitors. Funds exist within the A/V Equipment budget for such purchases.

If Council supports proceeding with the Council Chamber improvements, City Staff will conduct a competitive RFP process and schedule the work to be completed in early 2023. It should be noted that during that time, the Council Chambers will likely be unavailable for approximately up to two months while the improvements are made. An alternate location to hold Council meetings will be identified and secured prior to any improvements commencing.

Given the time necessary to conduct an RFP and complete the improvements, the budgeted funds (\$100,000) will likely remain unspent by the end of the FY2022 fiscal year. At the time that an agreement for the improvement work is advanced to the Council, it would be accompanied by a budget amendment to include the necessary funds in the FY2023 budget. Note that by not spending the funds in FY2022, the funds will remain within fund balance and be incorporated in the FY2023 budget subject to Council approval of a budget amendment.

After the City Council discussed this topic, Mayor Gallo took a straw vote for all those in favor for staff to proceed with an RFP process for the recommended improvements. 6 in favor and 0 opposed.

5) **Public Works Generator Follow-up**

Aaron Grosskopf, Director Public Works stated that the Combined Services Park District/Public Works Facility at 3900 Berdnick Street provides critical services to businesses and residents and the City's Police and Fire First Responders daily. Rolling Meadows Public Works is responsible for fueling, maintaining, and servicing breakdowns of all City fleet vehicles and equipment, weekly refuse service, drinking and potable water supply and distribution, routine and emergency response to water main breaks and other underground utility issues, street maintenance and snow plow operations, and providing emergency response to victims of flooding or additional storm-related damage.

It's no surprise that the delivery of these services is highly reliant on a reliable and uninterrupted supply of electricity. Without electricity, overhead doors to the bay where all the equipment is located cannot be opened, and emergency repairs to fleet vehicles cannot be made. Additionally, crews and support staff are limited in their ability to communicate with other City staff, given that the City's telephone system cannot operate without power. Computer and internet services go down without power, limiting staff's ability to respond or stay updated on potential emergencies.

Current Generator Process: While all other critical buildings occupied by staff in the City, including City Hall and both Fire Stations, are equipped with emergency backup power with a generator that activates immediately in the event of a power outage, the Public Works Facility is "out of service" until crew members gain manual access to vehicles in the storage bay, which requires dangerously lifting a very large and heavy overhead door without power, and then driving a truck and trailer to locations where existing portable generators are stored, delivering them to the site, and making one or more connections with extension cords, potentially in the dark, where power in the building is most critical. Past power outages at the facility have documented an inability to power heat in the winter or air conditioning in sweltering conditions, inadequate lighting, delays to servicing broken-down vehicles and equipment, and total reliance on cell phones to communicate with crews and receive critical calls from City Hall, and other significant impediments to job performance until power is restored.

Certain emergency weather conditions could render cell phones unavailable, and in those instances, there would be no way to communicate with crews in the field or receive communication from City Hall, Police, or Fire needing assistance. Planned future efforts to modify City buildings with keyless entries would further exacerbate Public Works crews' abilities to gain access to certain doors without power. Overseeing generator operations to ensure they remain adequately connected, fueled, and with access to proper ventilation reduces the number of crews available to perform critical tasks in the field. In today's world, performing all the tasks necessary to power equipment with portable generators creates dangerous working conditions for Rolling Meadows Public Works staff and negatively impacts our ability to provide timely essential services to the City's residents and businesses.

The current approved FY 2022 budget identifies \$325,000 in funding for an emergency generator to be installed at the Public Works Facility. Recent inquiries with vendors suggest the price for a permanent mounted generator is \$335,360. This includes running electric and natural gas to the site. It also includes the addition of another transfer switch that would control the pump for our fire suppression system. Currently, even if we are on mobile generator power, our fire suppression system would not activate. As indicated in our agreement, the Park District would cover roughly 33% of the generator purchase and installation cost.

Overall Benefits: Immediate power supply when an emergency situation occurs; allow the City to utilize natural gas for powering the generator, which is a cheaper and a greener fuel source than diesel; better location for the generator, when the mobile generator is used it partially blocks the drive lane on the West side of the building; reduces risk and enhances mitigation and response time for emergency events; supported by IRMA, the City's

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Risk Management Company; and enhanced reliability.

IRMA Recommendation: Public Works staff reached out and discussed the purchase of a generator with the Illinois Risk Management Association (IRMA), the City's Risk Management company. While there are no benefits in the underwriting process due to the group Risk Management style of insurance, the purchase is highly supported by IRMA. Their representatives stated;

"based upon the service that the public works department provides to the community, It is imperative that it be available to the community in an emergency or just the day-to-day operations. If the facility loses power and has no way to recover, there is a possibility that there could be damage to City equipment and property. Still, the department may not be able to effectively respond in an emergency, causing damage to residents' property and potential injury to residents."

Grant Opportunity: Public Works Staff has worked to apply for the newest iteration of the Building Resilient Infrastructure Communities (BRIC) Grant. The City submitted this grant application before September 30 and is awaiting information from IEMA. While we have not had luck in the past with the BRIC Grant related to the generator purchase, it is an opportunity that we cannot pass up. However, we do not recommend waiting for the response to this grant before the generator is purchased. Often, this may take months to process, and no guarantee for federal funding is given. We recommend ordering the generator as soon as possible, as current lead times are around 40 weeks. In the interim, we will follow up with the grant process and monitor that funding source.

While an emergency generator is used infrequently, the protection it provides the City cannot be put lightly. When emergencies arise, they are often unpredictable and dangerous, allowing a small window to respond effectively. We cannot always predict when an emergency will occur. Therefore, we must take steps to protect and mitigate as many scenarios as possible and put Public Works crews in the same level of storm readiness as the City's Police, Fire and Administrative services.

After the City Council discussed this topic, Mayor Gallo took a straw vote for those in favor for Staff to proceed with an RFP process for the purchase and installation of a permanent backup generator at the Public Works Combined Services Facility. 6 in favor and 0 opposed.

Mayor Gallo asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Sanoica made the motion and was seconded by Alderman O'Brien. A voice vote approved adjournment.

There being no further business, by unanimous consent the Committee of the Whole meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Judy Brose, Deputy City Clerk

October 18, 2022 Committee of the Whole Minutes Approved by Council on November 8, 2022.

Judy Brose

Judy Brose, Deputy City Clerk