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CITY OF BURLINGTON
Committee of the Whole Minutes
Jeannie Hefty, Mayor
Diahnn Halbach, City Clerk
Tuesday, October 2, 2018

1. **Call to Order - Roll Call**

Mayor Hefty called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll Call - Present: Mayor Hefty, Alderman Susan Kott, Alderman Theresa Meyer, Alderman Bob Grandi, Alderman Ryan Heft, Alderman Steve Rauch, Alderman Jon Schultz, Alderman Todd Bauman. Excused: Alderman Tom Preusker.

Staff present: Administrator Carina Walters, City Attorney John Bjelajac, Finance Director Steve DeQuaker, Assistant City Administrator/Zoning Administrator Megan Watkins, Public Works Director Peter Riggs, Police Chief Mark Anderson, Library Director Joe Davies, and Intern Nick Faust.

2. **Citizen Comments**

Keith Kemper, Bike Burlington, spoke in regards to the bike trails in Wisconsin and encouraged support from the City to expand local trails and suggested adding bike lanes and way finding signs. Kemper also stated that federal and state grants are available; however, a written bicycle plan must be written first.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Alderman Meyer with a second by Alderman Bauman to approve the September 16, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting minutes. With all in favor, the motion carried.

4. **DISCUSSION:**

Gail Boydston, Burlington Senior Center Administrator, provided an update regarding the Burlington Senior Center expenses and activities.

Alderman Bauman asked if an income report was also available. Boydston replied that income fluctuates and she did not have a report with her, but would include that information in the next report.

Alderman Grandi inquired about capital improvements. Boydston replied new windows were donated by Burlington Glass and Thrivent donated their time to paint and landscape.

Alderman Heft stated that at the previous budget update he requested a patron load report be included with the budget update and asked if one had been created. Boydston replied that she was unaware of the request, but would have one prepared for the next meeting.

Alderman Schultz inquired about items missing in the target budget and stated it would be important to have that information as well. Boydston said she wasn't sure of what should have been included but would find out. Alderman Schultz then asked about the 25% commissions Boydston receives. Boydston responded that she receives a commission off of bookings to help compensate for her low monthly salary.

Alderman Rauch asked when the lease agreement would be reviewed again. Attorney Bjelajac replied

that it would be reviewed again at the end of the year.

Boydston then introduced Sharon McGovern, a Senior Center board member. McGovern stated that when they were located at their previous location, they didn't need to pay bills and worry about overhead expenses. McGovern said that this has been very similar to starting a brand new business and although they are working very hard to raise money, it will take time, but they have a vision and are putting forth the effort to be successful. McGovern added that they are also marketing to the younger seniors to reach a broader age range.

5. **RESOLUTIONS:**

- A. **Resolution 4920(22)** - To approve a resolution urging the Governor and the Legislature to protect homeowners and small businesses and close Loopholes that shift a greater property tax burden on to residential homeowners and small business.

Administrator Walters gave a brief overview of the background history and stated that the Wisconsin League of Municipalities, Wisconsin Counties Association, and Wisconsin Towns Associations have launched a campaign because the big box stores are employing strategies to avoid paying higher taxes under the current law, which ultimately shifts the tax burden to the residents. Walters stated that municipalities are being urged to get ahead of the game by approving a resolution to close these loopholes in order to protect homeowners and small business owners.

Alderman Grandi asked if there has been any local big box stores that have taken advantage of this loop hole. Walters responded not yet, which is why it's important to address this now.

Alderman Bauman inquired as to how this can happen. Attorney Bjelajac responded that tax attorneys for big box stores argue that the value of a new store in a busy commercial district should be based on the value of former retail properties in unpopular areas that are now closed and vacant.

Alderman Schultz stated that this has been the Wisconsin League of Municipalities' number one issue for the past two years and that last year, failed to pass in 2018 due to lobbyists, however it is expected to pass in 2019 and encouraged everyone to get involved by contacting their State Senator and/or Assembly Speaker Robin Vos.

Alderman Rauch asked what the tax impact would be if Walgreens and Walmart decided to use this loophole. Walters replied that it would result in a \$63,000 loss which would impact residential with an approximate tax increase of 5%.

6. **ORDINANCES:** There were none.

7. **MOTIONS:** There were none.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Alderman Grandi with a second by Alderman Kott to adjourn the meeting. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Diahnn C. Halbach
City Clerk
City of Burlington