



**City Council**

City Council Chambers ♦ 524 West Stephenson Street ♦ Freeport, IL 61032

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**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT  
REGULAR MEETING  
Monday, September 14, 2015**

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Freeport, Illinois, Committee of the Whole was called to order by Mayor James Gitz with a quorum being present at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 2015, in council chambers.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present on roll call: Mayor James Gitz and council members Peter McClanathan, Art Ross, Jodi Miller, Patrick Busker, Sally Brashaw, Michael Koester and Andrew Chesney (7). Alderperson Klemm was absent.

City Staff Present: Corporation Counsel Sarah Griffin, Finance Director Cynthia Haggard, City Engineer Shaun Gallagher, Public Works Director Tom Dole, Fire Chief Scott Miller, Chief of Police Todd Barkalow, and City Clerk Meg Zuravel.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderperson McClanathan, chairperson of meeting.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEMS**

Kathy Wilkin, 902 S. 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Freeport Illinois, asked to have a letter read into the record regarding investing in and doing business in Freeport and how this is relevant to fixing the roof and taking down the fence at the historic City Hall (230 W. Stephenson Street). She spoke about the fence deterring investment into Freeport because if the city government is not going to fix their roof then why should others in the City. She asked why she would invest anymore in Freeport and start another business or buy another building when Freeport is not willing to reinvest in itself. She stated she is hopeful the council will take the right action and do the will of the people that say save the building and put a roof on it and put city services back in historic City Hall.

Brian Borger, 1828 W. Canyon, Freeport, Illinois, spoke as the president of Freeport Downtown Development Foundation. He stated he heard the conversations from the last meeting as to the funding of the Carnegie Library building. He encouraged the council think past that project and to include dollars to take care of the City Hall building. The building has been neglected and is an eyesore. He referred to a letter read into the record about the Church and Masonic Temple bringing people into the City and it looks terrible to have that building across the street from them. He spoke about the Jackowski building and going through the legal process to get the necessary repairs and yet a building owned by the City has been neglected. He asked council to look at revenue streams that might be generated to retire that bond in due time. He encouraged looking at the City Hall building as the funds for the Carnegie building are considered.

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Douglas Wilken, 908 S. 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Freeport, Illinois, spoke about why you would worry about the next step about the historic City Hall building when you have not fully committed yourself to Carnegie Library building. He recommended putting the roof repairs on the City Hall Building and to wait and see about the final decision on the old Carnegie Library building. This makes more sense to him as a taxpayer. The pros with historic building experience have stated that the cost to renovate the historic City Hall building is between \$2.9 and \$3.6 million. This would include all the structural repairs that this building needs and this can be a project that the citizens can be proud of. Do not give up on the City's history to be penny-wise and dollar foolish.

Andy Dvorak, 1211 W. Stephenson, Freeport, Illinois, stated the council needs to be reminded that the N.I.U. survey that was taken last year indicated that a majority of Freeport residents either wanted to renovate the City Hall building or make the needed repairs to renovate later. He stated it can be interpreted that 51 to 58% favor those options. He asked to pay attention to the results of the survey. He stated recently we have witnessed this council arguing for hours about \$500 from a department's budget but there doesn't seem to be any type of long term vision or plan for the community. He spoke about plans for the future to preserve the City Hall building, getting the roof repaired and taking the fence down.

Deb Elzinga, 1147 W. Lincoln, Freeport Illinois, spoke about the importance of community and civic pride which she thinks is sorely lacking and doing the necessary repairs on the City Hall would go a long way to bring back some community and civic pride that we need. She talked about what we do as property owners to make repairs and improvements on our properties and noted the same care should be done on the historic City Hall. She spoke about the ordinances we have to adhere to and the negative impact of not taking care of our properties.

An invocation was given by Dixie Ditsworth.

**5. MINUTES**

The minutes of the August 10, 2015 were presented. Alderperson Koester moved for approval of the minutes, seconded by Alderperson Miller. Motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

**6. PRESENTATION BY AMY DREIBELBIS REGARDING A5 MARKETING GROUP**

A presentation was given by Amy Dreibelbis regarding "a5 Marketing Group". Ms. Dreibelbis stated she is a native Freeporter and she and her husband own and operate D+F Photography. They have been working in conjunction with "a5 Marketing Group" on projects and would like to speak to council about branding Freeport. Representatives from a5 Marking Group were introduced and they told their backgrounds. Fletcher Martin and John Harris spoke about the "a5 Marketing Group" as a Chicago-based brand and digital consultant who works to tell the clients' story from branding to outreach and engagement to digital communications, advertising, public relations and social media. Council was provided the opportunity to ask questions and there was much discussion on the branding of Woodstock Illinois.

**7. PRESENTATION BY CITY ENGINEER GALLAGHER AND MCCLURE  
ENGINEERING REGARDING 2015 BIENNIAL BRIDGE INSPECTIONS DATED JUNE  
16, 2015 AND MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Provided in the council packet was the 2015 Biennial Structure Inspections which was placed on file with the City Council on July 20, 2015. This information was also available to the public on the City of Freeport website.

An excerpt of the report stated:

On the 27<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of May, 2015 McClure Engineering performed the required biennial structure inspections for the three (3) above referenced bridges in the City of Freeport. This letter serves as a summary of the findings from the recent visual inspections and provides brief recommendations for current and future maintenance/repairs. Each structure was inspected and the current condition was documented with digital photographs. The individual inspection assessment item conditions were updated on the BBS-BIR Routine Inspection Report Form and electronically submitted to the IDOT Local Roads Office as required. Copies of the Inspection Reports are attached to this summary letter for your files. Please refer to the attached documentation for additional details.

The document included summary of observations and recommendations for 1) Structure No. 089-6000(r) Van Buren Avenue over Pecatonica River, 2) Structure No. 089-6001, S. Hancock Avenue over Pecatonica River, 3) Structure No. 089-6003 – Park Drive (Gladewood Drive) over Yellow Creek. City Engineer Shaun Gallagher introduced representatives from McClure Engineering Associates, Inc. including Ali Gharamti, P.E. S.E., Chief Structural Engineer and Bridge Inspection Program Manager and Christopher Baer, P.E., Project Engineer and Bridge Inspection Team Leader. They authored the report and provided explanations of their observations and recommendations in a PowerPoint presentation along with City Engineer Gallagher. Engineer Gallagher stated this report is provided tonight to give their comments back to IDOT as to what is the best interest of the council.

City Engineer Gallagher reviewed the summary of observations and recommendations on the Van Buren Bridge which was built in 1885 it crosses the Pecatonica River with a single span. It had rehab work done on it in 2002 and it is strictly available for pedestrian bridge use. There are maintenance items outlined on the biennial report that need to be done on the Van Buren Bridge and that will be to remove brush, tuck pointing, repair washout, and motor with wood deck. Recommendations on this bridge include biennial inspections, special inspections, watch overloading, and perform load rating. Engineer Gharamti reviewed the load rating information and noted that was not available as to what that bridge was designed for. There were repairs done on the bridge in 2002 but there was not a load carrying capacity on that bridge. City Engineer Gallagher stated they will seek load capacity on that bridge to help determine future use, such as requests for 5k's. The remaining life expectancy is to be determined.

City Engineer Gallagher reviewed the summary of observations and recommendations on the Hancock Bridge which was built in 1952 and it crosses the Pecatonica River with a three-span. The deck repairs were completed in 2009 and it is used for vehicular traffic. Maintenance items that need per the biennial report include removal of the brush, removal of pier debris, clean bearings and repair deck slab. The recommendation of the engineers is a biennial inspection and rehabilitation or replace. The remaining life expectancy is 10 to 15 years. He explained that there are a lot of floating trees in this river system and they work with Stephenson County to keep the area clear from debris that collects annually at the bridges. Engineer Gharamti explained that they expect a bridge deck to last 20 to 25 years and this deck has lasted 65 years and it is near the end of its life. Repairs were done in 2009 but there is not much left of that and it will need new concrete. This will need asphalt to repair the holes. If we expect this deck to last another 10 years the deck will need repairs.

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City Engineer Gallagher reviewed the summary of observations and recommendations on the Gladewood Bridge which was built in 1920 it crosses the Yellow Creek with a single span. It was closed to vehicular traffic in 2011. This is strictly available for pedestrian bridge use. There were no maintenance items outlined on the biennial report that need to be done on the Gladewood Bridge except for continual monitoring. It is recommended that there be annual inspections, special inspections on all flooding incidents, and remove or replace. The remaining life expectancy is none.

The McClure representatives were available to answer questions and council members were provided an opportunity to discuss each bridge and make recommendations as to how to proceed. It was explained the future planning for the bridges includes both short and long term planning. For the short term it is necessary to remove the overgrowth and debris near structure, complete tuck pointing and washout repair at the Van Buren Bridge, patch or overlay the Hancock Bridge deck, continue the annual and biennial bridge inspections, perform load rating on the Van Buren Bridge and inspect the Pecatonica Path Bridge.

City Engineer Gallagher explained the long term plans include a replacement of the Hancock Bridge. This is estimated to cost \$5.0 to \$5.7 million dollars (in 2025 dollars). It is also recommended to replace the Gladewood Bridge at an estimate cost \$1.4 to \$1.6 million dollars (in 2016 dollars). City Engineer Gallagher explained the different funding sources to include local Motor Fuel Tax dollars or various other taxes, Federal Bridge Funds or Surface Transportation Urban Funds. Another source of funding would be donations or intergovernmental agreements.

Council members were provided the opportunity to give their opinion on the bridges and ask questions of the three engineers.

City Engineer Gallagher stated when we talk about cost and what this might entail, he will be working on the MFT program through the winter and he will anticipate use of the MFT funds within this system and we may get less road repairs done but will work on these improvements. He will take this back to the Jane Addams Trail Commission to talk about anything to do with the Van Buren Bridge to see if there are any maintenance funds available. He will program it in and prepare the general maintenance as discussed this evening.

Chairperson McClanathan stated that Engineer Gallagher asked for direction in taking plans to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to determine if there will be funding and he asked if there were any objections for him to move forward with that. Alderperson Busker made a motion for Engineer Gallagher to move forward with the plans and funding requests from IDOT, seconded by Alderperson Brashaw. Motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

The time was 8:00 pm and the engineers from McClure left council chambers. Alderperson Miller asked if item number 13 could be moved forward to follow item number 8. Leave of council was granted.

**8. UPDATE BY NICK JUPIN, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS COORDINATOR  
ON THE BLIGHT REDUCTION PROGRAM (BRP) AND THE INTENT TO APPLY FOR  
ROUND 2 FUNDING.**

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Nick Jupin provided information on a Blight Reduction Program grant application he is working on to apply for Round 2 funding. This round will include properties in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> wards. The Community Development Department has been in communication with IHDA administration about the Blight Reduction Program Round 2 funding recently and will ask council to proceed applying for the funding. He has also been working with the FACC director to train a work group to rehab houses. Nick Jupin explained he will prepare a resolution for the grant application to be presented at the next City Council meeting and this will also have a resolution for approving the agreement with NICA. The grant is due September 25, 2015. Discussion was held on the opportunity to apply for grant funding through IHDA and the hardest hit funding and Mr. Jupin feels the chance is strong to obtain funding.

As requested by Alderperson Miller, item #13 was moved forward at this time.

**13. AS REQUESTED BY ALDERPERSON MILLER – RESOLUTION SUPPORTING NORTHWEST ILLINOIS TRAILS FOUNDATION IN FORMING A COALITION TO ASSIST WITH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRAIL-RELATED OUTDOOR RECREATION**

A sample resolution was provided to council members. It explained that the Northwest Illinois Trails Foundation (the “Foundation”) is seeking to form an independent committee to be known as the “Outdoor Recreation Advisory Coalition” (the “Coalition”). Present at the meeting were Mr. Robert (Bob) Nickels and Connie Sorn of Freeport/Stephenson County Convention & Visitors Bureau. They explained that the coalition, if approved by council, would consist of members of the Foundation, the Freeport Park District, City of Freeport (specifically a member of the council), Jane Addams Trail Commission, the Pecatonica Prairie Path Commission, the Friends of the Pecatonica River Foundation, the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation, the Freeport/Stephenson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, 3rd Ward residents of the City of Freeport, and other interested citizens and organizations. The coalition is intended to be for the purpose of assisting the City of Freeport to develop, fund and construct facilities, amenities, and improvements, and to promote public input and participation in the creation of trails and trail-related outdoor recreational developments. These developments may occur on properties that have undergone remediation with the assistance of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (the “IEPA”) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and all parties recognize that they must comply with terms and constraints of the No Further Remediation Letter provided by the IEPA. The foundation will attempt to obtain a tax-exempt IRS 501(c) (3) status through its affiliation with the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois.

Council members discussed the membership. It was recommended removing Freeport Park District as a member because it is redundant as a member of both trail commissions. Mayor Gitz asked that he be placed as a member and Mr. Nickel stated he would agree to that addition. City Engineer Gallagher stated that although he applauds volunteerism there are already two committees that oversee the trails and that is the Jane Addams Trail Commission and the Pecatonica Prairie Path Commission and he offered that there are openings on that board and also public comment time at the meetings. Mr. Nickels stated there is a lack of people that attend trail meetings and the coalition will be used to disseminate information to the public and be used as an advisor in planning and development of trail related outdoor recreational facilities.

Alderperson Miller asked to have the draft resolution amended to add the administration as a member and to remove the Freeport Park District and then move it forward to the City Council. This motion was seconded by Alderperson Chesney. Motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

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8. As requested at the September 8, 2015 council meeting- discussion of **ORDINANCE #2015-46: ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, SERIES 2015B, PROVIDING THE DETAILS OF SUCH BOND AND BONDS FOR A LEVY OF TAXES TO PAY THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON SUCH BONDS, AND RELATED MATTERS**

Mayor Gitz stated this ordinance is on first reading so that it will be up for consideration next Monday. This is a parameters ordinance. The issue is what the projects costs that need to be included are we willing to go to market on this as soon as possible.

The ordinance as written and on the first reading is for bonds in the amount of \$2.6 million.

***An excerpt of Ordinance #2015-46 placed on the floor for council approval is as follows:***

“WHEREAS, the City of Freeport, Stephenson County, Illinois (the “Issuer”), is a home rule unit pursuant to the provisions of Section 6 (Powers of Home Rule Units) of Article VII (Local Government) of the Constitution of the State of Illinois and accordingly may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs, including as supplemented and amended under and as provided by the Illinois Municipal Code (Section 5/1-1-1 et seq. of Chapter 65 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, as supplemented and amended, including by the Bond Authorization Act, the Registered Bond Act, the Bond Replacement Act, and the Local Government Debt Reform Act, collectively, the “Act”); and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the Issuer (the “Corporate Authorities”) hereby determines that it is essential that the Issuer undertake the acquisition, construction and installation of various capital related projects, and related facilities, improvements and costs (the “Project”), and

“WHEREAS, the Corporate Authorities have heretofore and it hereby is determined that not to exceed \$2,600,000 General Obligation Bonds, Series 2015B (the “Bonds”), to finance the Project, and to pay related costs of issuance, and under and pursuant to this ordinance it is necessary and desirable that the Issuer issue the Bonds for such purpose.”

“WHEREAS, the Issuer proposes to enter into a Bond purchase arrangement (when fully executed or closed upon, as applicable, the “Bond Purchase Agreement”) with a financial institution, investment bank or other qualified purchaser (the “Purchaser”) concerning the sale and purchase of the Bonds, and the Bonds are to be as described and authorized in this ordinance and, as applicable, the Issuer’s term sheet, request for proposals, official statements, or other offering document (in preliminary form and as supplemented to be final, as applicable, if at all, the “Offering Document”) in connection with the offering of the Bonds for public or private sale, as supplemented by, as applicable, a Continuing Disclosure Certificate and Agreement (the “Disclosure Agreement”) related to the Bonds under Rule 15c2-12 (“Rule 15c2-12”) of the Securities Exchange Commission (“SEC”)

Discussion was held on the administration’s estimation as to the bond amount. The proposed project breakdown for the bond ordinance included Carnegie Library at \$2,000,000, former City Hall Improvements at \$75,000, and Newell Parking Lot at \$275,000 for a total of \$2,350,000. It was also estimated there will be a need for additional \$250,000 contingency for alternative options to Carnegie Library and additional unknowns that may result during the abatement of falling hazards at former City

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Hall. City Engineer Gallagher explained the design of the Newell parking lot will allow for reductions of the improvements should overages in bidding occur. The cost of issuing the bonds is projected to range between \$35,000 and \$40,000, which could reduce the funds available for improvements, should they not be absorbed by the investors. The administration requested the funding amount at \$2,600,000.

City Engineer Gallagher stated that in order to stabilize the old City Hall building it would cost about \$650,000 which would readdress the foundation, improve the storm water drainage, improve the façade, repair the roof and remove and patch the dormers. He estimated in order to be able to remove the fence it is required to repair the dormers and to take down the loose façade. He estimated that cost to be \$75,000 to \$150,000. This will be necessary to stop the leaking problem. He also reviewed this estimate with Prairie Forge and they agreed that this is the minimum to cut down on the freeze thaw issues and to repair the leaks. They recommended the repairs around the dormers as well as McClure.

Discussion was held on the City's financial picture since the State of Illinois is holding funding on Motor Fuel Tax dollars, 911 funding and video gaming revenues for the City's share. The State of Illinois is also holding funding for the transit program at an amount of \$90,000 per month. The video gaming dollars is estimated to be \$25,000 per month, MFT is about \$15,000 to \$60,000 per month and this is contingent upon the legislators reaching an agreement on the budget downstate.

Aldersperson Koester recommended keeping the bond at \$2.6 million and to earmark at least \$75,000 for repairs at the old City Hall building.

Aldersperson McClanathan reviewed the estimates with City Engineer Gallagher and Finance Director Haggard. Aldersperson Chesney spoke about the bond indebtedness of the City. Council members provided their comfort level of funding the bond at \$2.5, \$2.6 or \$2.7 million.

Aldersperson McClanathan made a motion to amend the amount to \$2.5 million and refer this ordinance back to council. This motion was seconded by Aldersperson Chesney.

Aldersperson Koester voiced his concerns for this amount of funding and stated he is afraid that if we keep taking money out of this we are not going to be left with a City Hall that we are proud of and he is not in favor of cutting it one dime or he is in favor of increasing it.

Aldersperson McClanathan explained that the amount of \$2.5 million puts you in excess of what you are looking at when you approved the Carnegie project the end of January. It also includes the City parking lot, money for repairs at City Hall at the high end of the proposal for repairs at that building at an amount of \$100,000 and that puts the ceiling a little lower. It is not cutting anything except for maybe some of the dollars put on for contingency or extra spending. He believes that is a reasonable alternative in light of the lack of specific numbers. They are not cutting anything except the additional potential dollars so you still have that potential of \$150,000 and you still have the parking lot and you still have flexible options in excess of \$1.9 million that was the general framework for the Carnegie.

Aldersperson Koester asked by dropping the bond from \$2.6 million to \$2.5 million how much are we saving. Finance Director stated roughly \$7,000 per year. She stated that amount of bond payment is \$69,000 per year per million.

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Finance Director Haggard stated that there was \$150,000 set aside in the budget based on bonding at \$2.275 million. She noted there will be a cost savings of \$94,000 at the time we do not have to pay rent. She stated that you need to consider the rent of the Newell parking lot is \$14,000 so you are looking at about \$42,000.

Aldersperson Chesney asked to call the question.

Chairperson McClanathan this is a roll call vote on changing the amount of bond to \$2.5 million and referring the ordinance as amended to council. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Yeas: McClanathan, Ross, Miller, Busker, and Chesney (5)

Nays: Brashaw and Koester (2)

The motion prevailed by a roll call vote of 5-2.

**10. AS REQUESTED BY ALDERPERSON MCCLANATHAN – DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEP/S ON FORMER CITY HALL BUILDING (230 W. STEPHENSON)**

Aldersperson McClanathan explained that calculations were added into the bond in an amount of \$75,000 and if there is anything more than that the council would need to be consulted for additional funding over and above that amount. He stated in addition to the \$75,000 there is a potential of \$150,000.

Aldersperson McClanathan made a motion to direct the mayor and staff administration to put together a Request for Proposal for the sale of the City Hall building. Aldersperson McClanathan stated that when we ask for RFP's we are assuming that we are doing the work in an amount of \$75,000 to \$150,000. This motion was seconded by Aldersperson Chesney. Mayor Gitz agreed that the administration would continue on its current path and requested the administration be given the chance to select the details and alternatives. Mayor Gitz stated the worst that will happen is that we will test the waters and know if there are no takers, but what he plans to do is to put together an RFP and put together a proposed process for distribution and bring it back to council for simply input on that in about 10 days. Corporation Counsel Griffin clarified that this would be for the sale of the building of the old City Hall. It was clarified that bond money could be used to structurally stabilize the building while the City owns it, but not after it is sold. The Mayor reiterated that as long as the Council is comfortable with the RFQ/RFP itself that staff will sweat the details and then bring it back to Council for final approval. Upon no further discussion, the motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

**11. AS REQUESTED BY ALDERPERSON KLEMM AND CHESNEY - CHAPTER 1270, FENCES (VARIOUS AMENDMENTS)**

Due to the late hour, it was decided to discuss this item at a special Committee of the Whole meeting on September 21, 2015.

**12. AS REQUESTED BY ALDERPERSON MILLER AND CHESNEY - DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER 290 COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS INCLUDING ITEMS SUCH AS MERIT PAY, CAP ON VACATION CARRYOVER, VACATION DAY ACCRUAL, HOLIDAYS, PEHP**

Due to the late hour, it was decided to discuss this item at a special Committee of the Whole meeting on September 21, 2015.

Item number 13 was moved forward on council agenda.



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**14. PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA OR NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no public comments.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion duly made by Alderperson Klemm and seconded by Alderperson Brashaw, the meeting was adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

*S/ Meg Zuravel*

Meg Zuravel, City Clerk