

Committee of the Whole
Minutes of the Meeting
December 21, 2020
Held remotely on ZOOM

1. Vice-President McMenimen called the meeting to Order at 8:00pm.
2. Vice-President McMenimen requested that a roll call be taken to record the attendance for the meeting. The COW Clerk called the roll – President Brasco, Councillors Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, LaCava, LaFauci, LeBlanc, Mackin, McLaughlin, O’Brien, Paz, Stanley, Vidal, and Vice-President McMenimen were present remotely.
3. Councillor McLaughlin moved to approve the minutes of the COW meeting held on December 7, 2020. The motion was adopted on a voice vote and the minutes of the December 7, 2020 meeting were approved.
4. Councillor LaFauci moved to take the matter of the \$1.6M loan authorization for improvements to Prospect Hill Park (11/27/2017) from the table. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Councillor LaFauci moved to combine this matter with the matter of the \$375K loan authorization for improvements to Prospect Hill Park (12/14/2020). The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Councillor LaFauci moved to hear from the Recreation Director, Nick Abruzzi. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Upon questions from Councillor LaFauci, Mr. Abruzzi gave a detailed explanation of the proposed scope of work, including aspects of the master plan that are included in the scope of improvements for Prospect Hill Park. Councillor LaFauci also asked questions about the maintenance and other improvement issues. Councillor LaFauci suggested creating some collaboration with area businesses whose employees frequent the park. Councillor Paz asked the reasons for the urgency of the project, to which Mr. Abruzzi stated it was long overdue. Councillor Paz also asked if there had been any public input for the proposed improvements, to which Mr. Abruzzi responded in the affirmative. Councillor LeBlanc spoke favorably about the project citing his personal experiences at the park. Councillor LeBlanc also asked questions about drainage and flooding issues. Councillor Vidal stated he was glad to hear the public had input on the project. Councillor McLaughlin stated support for the project, also citing his personal experiences and expressing that improvements to recreational facilities was always money well spent. Councillor O’Brien voiced support for the project. Vice-President McMenimen gave a significant historical remembrance of the evolution of the park and the variety of programs and activities that were conducted at the site. Councillor LaFauci moved to give the loan authorization of \$1.6M a first reading. The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 15 in favor (President Brasco, Councillors Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, LaCava, LaFauci, LeBlanc, Mackin, McLaughlin, O’Brien, Paz, Stanley, Vidal, and Vice-President McMenimen) and none opposed. Councillor LaFauci moved to give the loan authorization of \$375K a first reading. The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 15 in favor (President Brasco, Councillors Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, LaCava, LaFauci, LeBlanc, Mackin, McLaughlin, O’Brien, Paz, Stanley, Vidal, and Vice-President McMenimen) and none opposed.

5. Vice-President McMenimen requested the Committee go over the various items on the COW docket for the purpose of updating the status. A motion to take the matter of Chamber Safety and Security (5/14/2018) from the table was adopted on a voice vote. Vice-President McMenimen explained the minutes of the executive session meeting held on 2/3/2020 had been approved but not released to the public. Vice-President McMenimen stated an opinion pertaining to the release of the minutes was provided by the Law Department on 5/29/2020. A motion by President Brasco to redact the minutes of the meeting did not pass on a roll call vote of 6 in favor (Darcy, Harris, LeBlanc, McLaughlin, Vidal, and McMenimen) and 2 opposed (Mackin and Stanley). A motion by President Brasco to release the minutes to the public was adopted on a roll call vote of 8 in favor (Darcy, Harris, LeBlanc, Mackin, McLaughlin, Stanley, Vidal, and McMenimen) and the minutes of the executive session of 2/3/2020 were released.

A motion by Councillor Paz to take the matter of the Riverwalk extension (9/19/2019) from the table was adopted on a voice vote. Vice-President McMenimen stated the Law Department said the matter was closed. Councillor Paz moved to file the matter without prejudice. The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 14 in favor (President Brasco, Councillors Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, LaCava, LaFauci, LeBlanc, Mackin, McLaughlin, O'Brien, Paz, Stanley, and Vidal) and Vice-President McMenimen presiding.

A motion by Councillor Mackin to take the matter of the Route 117 Bridge project (8/3/2020) from the table was adopted on voice vote. Councillor Mackin moved to approve the minutes of the executive session meeting of 8/3/2020. The motion was adopted on a voice vote and the executive session minutes of 8/3/2020 were approved. Councillor Mackin moved to send the executive session minutes of 8/3/2020 to the Law Department for review prior to a vote to release the minutes to the public. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Councillor Mackin moved to place the matter back on the table. The motion was adopted on a voice vote.

A motion by Councillor Harris to take the matter of the property located at 89 Maple Street (8/3/2020) from the table was adopted on voice vote. Councillor Harris moved to approve the minutes of the executive session meeting of 8/3/2020. On the motion, Councillor LaCava asked the minutes are amended to read, "Councillor LaCava was again adamant in his objection to eminent domain and urged there to be more attempts at settling this matter by the mayor and the city solicitor". The motion, as amended, was adopted on a roll call vote of 14 in favor (President Brasco, Councillors Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, LaCava, LaFauci, LeBlanc, Mackin, McLaughlin, O'Brien, Paz, Stanley, and Vidal) and Vice-President McMenimen presiding. Councillor Harris moved to send the executive session minutes of 8/3/2020 to the Law Department for review prior to a vote to release the minutes to the public. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Councillor Harris moved to place the matter back on the table. The motion was adopted on a voice vote.

Vice-President McMenimen spoke of the open meeting complaint that was filed against the City Council pertaining to executive session minutes that had neither been approved nor released to the public. Vice-President McMenimen stated that the executive session minutes of 4/4/2016 and 5/21/2018 had not been approved and/or released. Vice-President

McMenimen noted that neither the President nor Vice-President at the time or the complainant ever attempted to approve or release the minutes. Vice-President McMenimen requested that President Brasco carry the matter over to the 2021 docket. Vice-President McMenimen moved to request the COW Clerk send the minutes of the executive session meeting of 4/4/2016 to those councillors who were present at the executive session. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Vice-President McMenimen moved to request the COW Clerk send the minutes of the executive session meeting of 5/21/2018 to those councillors who were present at the executive session. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Vice-President McMenimen stated her intent to vote on the approval and release of both sets of minutes at the next COW meeting on 12/28/2020. Vice-President McMenimen reminded the Committee that only those present at the executive session could vote on approval of the minutes, but all councillors could vote on the release of the minutes.

6. A motion by Councillor LaFauci to adjourn was adopted on a voice vote, and the Chair declared the Committee adjourned at 9:07pm.

Paul G. Centofanti – Clerk to the Committee of the Whole