

**CITY OF ROCK ISLAND
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION
FEBRUARY 13, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.**

2/13/23 – Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thoms asked City Clerk Samantha Gange to call the roll.

ROLL CALL

Present: Alderpersons Moses Robinson, Randy Hurt, Judith Gilbert, Jenni Swanson, Dylan Parker, Mark Poulos, and Mayor Mike Thoms.

Alderman Bill Healy arrived at 6:01 p.m.

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Todd Thompson, City Attorney Dave Morrison, Deputy City Clerk Josh Adams, and other City staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Thoms asked if there was anyone in the audience or virtually that wished to comment. No one volunteered to speak.

ROCK ISLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY PRESENTATION

Library Director Angela Campbell discussed the annual 4-10 report as required by the Local Library Act.

Ms. Campbell began by detailing CY 2022 finances, and explained the variance between projected and actual dollar amounts. The revised amounts included transfers for the Watts Midtown project, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and a large grant. She explained the CY 2022 actual revenues, of which 78 percent comes from the City library tax. Normally, tax revenues would range from 90 to 92 percent, but were different for the revisions mentioned. CY 2022 expenditures were reviewed, with the largest being personnel. She noted that cost was low for a service industry, and staffing has remained consistent. Library hours have been adjusted due to lower staffing levels. Service costs have increased due to inflation and supply chain issues, and she does not see that decreasing in the future.

Ms. Campbell reviewed CY 2022 transfers and contingencies for CY 2022 and projected for CY 2023. She noted that vehicle expenses and grants will generally fluctuate from year to year. Bond repayments for

the HVAC project continue. Ms. Campbell provided a statistical overview of what took place at the library in 2021. The total number of library materials used in 2022 was again more than the previous year, up by 9 percent, and also online circulation continues to increase annually. Patron contacts were up 17 percent, mostly due to fewer restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic. Program attendance was recorded at approximately 53,000 patrons. She also discussed the various partners the City Library works with, including neighboring communities.

Ms. Campbell recapped the calendar year 2023 request. She noted that in February 2022 the Library Board requested an increase of \$268,168.70 to cover a projected CY 2023 shortfall. The actual deficit was approximately \$304,000.00 due to unexpected increased insurance costs. She said there was no increase in property tax dollars in the budget season, which is a decrease of 4.43 percent in the library tax levy. Fund requirements for CY 2024 would then be \$392,777.00 due to increases and a carryover from the CY 2023 deficit. In order to operate as-is with no deficit, the total property tax dollars needed for CY 2024 would be \$2,695,187.00. She discussed measures to combat the funding shortfall.

Ms. Campbell discussed accumulations and liabilities. Accumulations include a 90-day reserve and an assigned reserve fund for capital projects. Liabilities include the bonds issued in CY 2020 for the Downtown Library HVAC and lighting as part of the performance engineering project. She discussed earmarks for the 2023 assigned reserve fund, which helps pay for the operating deficit and the HVAC bond. She reviewed the Downtown Library Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) plan, and discussed the library's services offered to the public. This includes a mobile library service, homebound delivery and outreach, various partnerships, printing, streaming, and online resources, and trained librarians.

Aldersperson Hurt asked how the relatively similar personnel amounts from CY 2022 to CY 2023 equated to a \$174,000.00 difference in expected personnel costs. Ms. Campbell said much of it is due to raises and insurance costs, and she would have to review the numbers in detail to determine exact amounts. She noted that there was a retirement, and an incoming person that did not take the health insurance benefit. Library Business Office and Facilities Director Malachi Kohlwey addressed Council, stating that the cleaning and security personnel contracts at the downtown library were turned into a full-time position as opposed to accepting separate bids for such services. Aldersperson Hurt asked if there is additional staff for the new Midtown Library. Ms. Campbell said staff was transferred from other locations, and hours were adjusted.

Aldersperson Swanson asked when the library would receive the first tax money disbursement. Ms. Campbell commented that she was unsure, but it was likely May or June. Aldersperson Swanson pointed to the presentation, noting the numbers are misleading, as the City does not assist when emergency funds are needed, and they have not received an increase in funding for many years. She said Council does not give the library funding via levy to accommodate for increased costs, and if the department is seen as a deficit fund, Council created it.

Aldersperson Parker asked Ms. Campbell if state statute allowed for alternative corporate structures or authority for libraries to levy their own property taxes. Ms. Campbell said the library would need to turn into a district, and the City would lose control over it. She stated she would not be in favor of that option. Aldersperson Parker asked Ms. Campbell why additional levies had not been explored. Ms. Campbell said she had worked with former finance directors, noting the corporate levy would be the easiest way. Aldersperson Parker asked if there was any input from the Library or Foundation boards regarding the exploration of adding additional levies. Ms. Campbell said she would introduce that topic.

Alderson Gilbert asked about the cost of repairs and upgrades for the Downtown Library, and from where would the funds originate. Ms. Campbell said \$384,000.00 is currently available, and grants are currently being pursued. Alderson Gilbert asked about the fee payment for the Midtown branch. Ms. Campbell said it was for furnishings such as shelving and computers, and Alderson Gilbert asked if it was part of the debt agreement. Ms. Campbell said it was not. Alderson Gilbert asked how much was owed on that, and how much time was left to pay on it. Ms. Campbell replied it was approximately \$420,000.00 left with three years to pay.

Alderson Gilbert asked if the library was allowed to have sponsorships for programming. Ms. Campbell said they were, but it was a limited line item.

WEST END REVITALIZATION PRESENTATION

Martin Luther King Jr. Center Director Jerry Jones addressed Council regarding the anticipated request for ARPA funds pertaining to the West End Revitalization project. Some changes have been made since the December 2022 presentation. The name has changed from West End Renaissance to West End Revitalization. Focuses from that assessment include the broad goals of civic capital, assets and incomes, housing stability and quality, economic vitality, infrastructure, and visual design. He said a strategy is being prepared for neighborhood revitalization in conjunction with the Community and Economic Development Department based on the recommendations of the previously discussed collective impact model. He discussed the collective impact structure.

Mr. Jones discussed the roles of the MLK Center in the project. The goals include cultivating community engagement and ownership, ensuring fidelity to the project's vision and values, supporting aligned activities, implementation, facilitation, and mobilization of resources. He requested the hiring of a full-time contractual employee to maintain and manage the project through the MLK Center. He anticipates that the project could take upwards of a year depending on the results of the process.

Alderson Hurt asked about the stated endorsement of \$100,000.00. City Clerk Gange noted that an additional \$50,000.00 had not yet been officially endorsed, but had been discussed at a previous Study Session. Alderson Hurt asked if the plan would be to come back to the City for additional project funds at any point. Mr. Jones replied that part of the initiative is to be sustainable for the future, and asking for additional funds from the City is not the intention, but perhaps some could be requested through outside sources. Alderson Hurt asked why the additional \$50,000.00 was not requested initially. Mr. Jones said it has been a part of the process the whole time, as it has always been the intention of hiring someone for the project. Alderson Robinson said it was not an add-on, as the steering committee identified the staffing need as the work was being completed.

Alderson Parker asked if there would be a job title for the proposed staff position. Mr. Jones said a working title would be West End Revitalization Project Coordinator. Alderson Parker said this situation is similar to the hiring of a position for the downtown area. Mr. Jones noted the continued support of John Deere for the project with seed money. Alderson Hurt asked Mr. Jones how he would envision the dollars be allocated from the initial funding sources. Mr. Jones said the majority of the funds would be invested in the proposed staff position to facilitate the process. Alderson Gilbert

asked if there was a detailed budget for how to spend the proposed \$100,000.00. Mr. Jones said there is not at the moment, but potential salary would be structured in conjunction with Human Resources.

Alderson Parker asked why the name change for the project occurred. Mr. Jones said the initial term gave the impression of a defined end, but preferred to be more accessible and open-ended. Alderson Gilbert said she wanted to see a budget, and asked if the work could be done by an existing staff member. Mr. Jones said the proposed position is a particular skill set, and current staff are fully occupied with other work. Alderson Robinson said the approach is different than usual City plans, and is an ongoing, sustainable effort. He said the community concern is that the project will develop ideas similar to previous instances, but will not have funding to move forward, and the goal is to continue to expand in the future.

Alderson Gilbert asked if the John Deere seed funds had been spent. Mr. Jones said it will mostly be spent on the consultant facilitating the process. Alderson Gilbert referenced a previous discussion involving consultant recommendations. Mr. Jones said those recommendations will be enacted by the working groups of the steering committee based on the five impact areas. Alderson Gilbert asked if financial literacy was part of the recommendations. Mr. Jones said it was, under assets and income.

Alderson Hurt asked Mr. Jones to state the sources for any future additional funding needs. Mr. Jones said state and federal grants will be available that support models such as this project, and searching for additional funds is a responsibility of all individuals involved with the project. Alderson Hurt asked how often Council could be expected to receive updates regarding the project. Mr. Jones said quarterly updates would be reasonable.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

MOTION:

Alderson Hurt moved to adjourn; Alderson Parker seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, and Healy. Nay: None. Absent: None.

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Josh Adams

Josh Adams, Deputy City Clerk