



**COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE SESSION
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS
MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2015; 5:30 P.M.**

1. Call to Order

Mayor Renner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and asked City Clerk Lawson to call the roll.

2. Roll Call

Aldermen: Jim Fruin, Kevin Lower, David Sage, Mboka Mwilambwe, Amelia Buragas, Joni Painter, Karen Schmidt, Scott Black, Diana Hauman.

3. Public Comment

Mayor Renner opened the floor to public comment.

The following citizens offered comments to the Council:

Alton Franklin
Ron Schultz
Judy Stearns

4. Review and Discussion regarding the FY'15 Year-End Financial Unaudited Report.

Mayor Renner introduced this item by its title and introduced Patti-Lynn Silva. Ms. Silva, provided an updated PowerPoint for them, and had already sent out a draft so that they could review the numbers over the weekend.

Pertaining to the Fund Overview, Ms. Silva, these five (5) funds are important to discuss because they make up 75% of this City's almost \$200,000,000.00 budget, the General Fund getting most of the focus being 51%.

The General Fund projections have had an interesting year, referring to December 2014, where projections were done starting with the adopted budget that is seen in column 1. The budget was adopted with a small surplus that was somewhat inadvertent, but we had the 11th hour taxes that were passed, she said. As the year progressed, they realized they were going to have some middle dropping sales tax, and they had come to the meeting in December of 2014,

with a \$2.1 million dollar projected deficit. With the committee's direction, they were able to freeze the budget and with about \$1.6 million in revenue cuts and some positive revenue projections, they closed that gap during the year as reported to the committee. The Revised Budget column, the \$3.8 million added to the expenditures, which were the use of fund balance and that during the year they also had reported that they had deficits in other funds; the Solid Waste Fund, the Coliseum Fund and so forth. Those budget transfers have to run through current operations and that is why there is an increase from \$91.2 million to \$94.6 million. They did not spend that, even though they had the authority to spend \$94.6 million. When the freeze was put in place, there were a several staff transitions, and departments returned an additional \$3 million on top of the \$2 million in savings. This as a positive, but points out that when there were several staff transitions they do not have a lot of business continuity as a City.

With the exception of electricity and fuel, which listed on the chart shows substantial savings. Therefore, they were not able to get bids out, say the police windows and things that were needed. The \$3.8 million used for budget transfers throughout the year was almost a complete wash with the savings that was returned. Though savings is good, the savings will not help their deficit going forward. In this case, it is because most of it was personnel related. Originally the City thought the fund balance would drop down to \$10 million, and it looks as though the City will be just shy of \$12 million because of that savings. City will remain at 13%. Our credit rating agencies will be happy about that even after we had such a sizable budget transfer.

The General Fund Revenue is the unaudited actuals; however, it is believed that those totals are close and does not expect those to change. About 35% of General Fund Revenue and the rates that we charge are dictated by the state and we are not able to increase those revenues. The ones that are available for increases that would make a difference in the current deficit include, property tax, the home rule sales tax, the utility tax, and some of the other ones, the charges for services and fees will be coming back to us shortly for a contract on studying all of the City's fees and charges for services to see what it would take to update them and also substantiate them.

Ms. Silva provided a historical perspective on the Home Rule Sales Tax dating back to 2007. As you can see fiscal year 2013 was a stellar year, the best year we have had. In 2009, the huge increase is due to 0.25 point that was earmarked for debt service and we have been dropping off since then. At the time that we adopted the budget, we thought that the sales tax would come in at about \$14.43, it really came in unadjusted at \$14.14, and we are finding what our new norm is with that without a rate increase. State Sales Tax, which she states is slightly different due to the automotive factor; the Home Rule State Tax we do not tax unlicensed vehicles licensed personal property, so the state tax is a little bit different and there was a huge increase in 2013 based on automotive.

Regarding the General Fund Expenditures, this is a synopsis of what the final pre-audit numbers came in as. Our principal and interest payments are strictly for our Capital Lease Program and our transfers out are listed there. They are mainly for our debt service, the money for the local motor fuel tax, street resurfacing program and then the contribution to solid waste.

Water Fund, it has almost 170% fund balance. Because of some transitions in the water fund, they have not been moving forward with some of their planned capital projects and so their expenditures came in under budget. They have been consciously accumulating fund balance; they probably have about \$150 million worth of infrastructure needs. This is not a lot of money for their needs that are upcoming, but there was not a lot of capital project work done this year. Locust /Colton Phase 2 was postponed which left them in a positive. Their ending fund balance is 50%. We would love to see fund balance 15% or above. Regarding the Storm Water Fund, same idea there as sewer, storm, and water kind of move together.

Regarding the Solid Waste Fund the revenue shown is based on user fees. The subsidy shown is our budgeted subsidy in the 15 year budget for total revenue of \$6.7 million. Expenditures, she stated they believe are going to be at \$7.4 million. Solid Waste had an operating loss of \$635,000.00, unaudited. They transferred, and there was the deficit that she previously reported to the Council in December, that big part coming out of the General Fund of \$3.8 million--\$1.6 million of that came here to the Solid Waste Fund to correct their deficit fund balance. They have a net ending fund balance of \$635,000.00, unaudited and unadjusted, for 2015. They began to make changes to the program in 16 biweekly, so really it is 16 year, we had a rate increase, but we were give the direction to find those deficiencies, so this is kind of pre-direction from the Council.

Mayor Renner thanked Ms. Silva and asked if anyone had any comments or observations. No comments were made. He stated that it is good news that we are at 13% of our fund balance.

5. Presentation and Discussion on the Comprehensive Plan Pre-Approval and Implementation Plan.

Mayor Renner introduced this item by its title and introduced Vase Pinnamaraju, Executive Director, McLean County Regional Planning Commission. Mayor Renner thanked her on behalf of the City of Bloomington for her continued hard work on this plan and her energy towards it.

Vasu Pinnamaraju began by thanking the Mayor and spoke of how phenomenal the community has been. She discussed “Bring It Bloomington”, and that it is a lengthy report. She explains how this 18-month long process was conducted in 3 phases and summarizes each phase.

Phase I: Existing Conditions Analysis: She states this resulted in an interim identifiable at the end of July 2014. The Existing Conditions Report really is a lot of data crunching, looking and reviewing various plans to be sure they had a good understanding of the work already done.

Phase II: Community Visioning and Outreach: At the end of this phase, an interim identifiable was a Vision and Values report which prioritized the hopes and dreams of the

community for the future of Bloomington. This report was published at the end of December 2014.

Many workers tried to work on making the vision into a reality and the product of that is the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission recommended approval to the Council at their last meeting on August 12, 2015. As a snapshot of community involvement, this plan is a great example of how members of the community together can collectively shape the future. She stated that over 2,000 members have shared their hopes and dreams for the future of this community. She stated that 130 members of the community have invested a tremendous amount of time and talent into this process. They participated in 13 different working groups and met for 10 months anywhere from 1 to 1 ½ hours each month collectively, resulting in nearly 1,300 hours of work.

Lastly, over 60 agencies; public, private, and non-profit, were all involved and showed extreme enthusiasm to partner with the City of Bloomington to really implement the comprehensive plan. As a result, the plan went through many public hearings at the Planning Commission Meeting. This plan is reflective of what the community wanted to see and it did gain a lot of public support during these public hearing processes. This could not be what it is without the help and support of numerous working group members who volunteered to serve on many of the technical groups. Some of the elements that are seen in this comprehensive plan have not been traditional elements within a comprehensive plan; such as, Arts and Culture and Education. These are subjects that we all typically work in silence, but ultimately it effects our quality of life in this community. Without subject matter expertise of all of these working group members, we could not have addressed these topics efficiently in the plan and without the guidance of the Council, which was very much involved throughout this process, and the Planning Commission members, many of them meeting numerous times to discuss these results at the Planning Commission meeting, and the plan's team and committee, that was the administrative committee, that gave us assistance on a day-to-day basis, and also the Advisory Committee that was appointed by the Mayor who met as needed to provide guidance at critical junctures.

The Interim report, but what they found out in existing conditions, among many things, there is a stark difference between Bloomington's Code, meaning downtown and established older neighborhoods, is hugely different than the rest of the community. When we looked at Bloomington's median we stack up really good against any internet community, or for that matter national mediums, which is a fact that we want to celebrate, but as a community trying to envision the future we also need to take a deep look at what our issues are and how we can become the premium community that we already are continue that into the future.

She states that a snapshot of the Vision and Values report, seven core values stood out. She highlights two of these on the overhead projector that really will be visible for the rest of this presentation. One of those is dynamic neighborhoods. There was an enormous amount of discussion throughout these community surveys, and the entire community survey was open-ended questions so people were free to discuss topics that they want to discuss and also in a much more holistic way, not item by item. She stated that what they learned was that nearly

80% of all comments were very heavy on neighborhoods. That is their immediate community, they want to make sure that the neighborhoods that they live in, invest in, and play in are thriving into the future. This applies to both old neighborhoods and new neighborhoods. She states that if you run through the plan, what you will see is a huge focus on the older neighborhoods. The reason for that is that newer neighborhoods, defined as being within the last 50 years, the infrastructure is new and the housing is new. The reason for the emphasis on established neighborhoods is to ensure that some of these neighborhoods have suffered this investment for decades and they cannot afford to suffer anymore this investment.

The second one is solid infrastructure. She states that this has been a topic at the City Council meetings a lot, but that is something that she has heard quite a bit during this process. People want to maintain what we have in good condition before we rule out new.

Jennifer did a fantastic presentation about population projections. This is the first time ever that we have identified two different scenarios, both of which are very possible. She refers to the overhead, and states that the one in blue, based on that history as a community we have been growing nearly two and one-half percent (2 1/2 %) annually for the last two (2) to three (3) decades. Historically, we have several advantages. That will put us in 2015 nearly at 82,000 people and based on housing and other information, we know that we are not quite there. She states that this is the first plan. He states that not just here in Bloomington, the new economic situation across the country, many communities are having to do this. Unfortunately, their economic situation is fluid and the scenario at the bottom of the report, in orange, does project the last five (5) years of information into the future. She cautions that we cannot just rely on those numbers because taking five (5) years of information and projecting it 20 years into the future is statistically wrong, but also it is not acknowledging the advantages that we have as a community, our central location and our quality of life. She states that the projection in the middle, the black dotted line, is taking both of these scenarios into consideration; the new economic realities, the historic advantages, but also acknowledging what needs to be done, it is not an automatic given.

The Planning Commission retained the services of GIS Research Consultant to identify what is the cost of development, and that report is published on their website for detailed review. The numbers used here are not national numbers these are local numbers. This is based on their assessments, based on the City's financial audits and financial reports from 2013. The idea is not to analyse every piece of property to see what it is that we are reaping from here. The idea is to understand moving forward, we are suggesting new development—what working in the past and what did not, and why it did not. She refers to the circles on the graph, she states that the first circle is about 2.5 miles from downtown, which on the East side it takes you to Veterans Parkway, and then from that point onwards it is a mile out.

She states that she wants to point out three things on the map. The cord that is shown with the -\$ is something that is to be expected. That is a core City that has been losing property values and assessments. This study took the revenues that the property generates and matched it up with expenses, which includes public services; such as police, fire, etc. That is something they did expect given the property values declining.

Two developments to highlight and us an example; Grove and Fox Creek. It cost the City several million dollars to make those subdivisions happen. Grove was built 8 years ago and the City spent nearly \$11,000,000.00 just to get the sewer/storm/water installed there. This does not even take into account the investment that Benwood or other public agencies-school districts had to make in those areas, nor does it take into account the additional dollars spent by the City to weed (33:52)out the Kickapoo Creek, etc. What we are showing there is a deficit, but she states that there are several assumptions that went into the study and modification of any assumption would probably change this a few cents here or there. Those assessments are at their peak. The new developments, big houses, are something of value today and if at their best we are still seeing a negative yield; that is not a good rate of return. She states that 8 years into this project the City reaped less than \$500,000.00, which is less than 5% rate of return. The same applies to Fox Creek, nearly \$10,000,000.00 of investment returned about 15% thus far in nearly 20 years. What is common between both of these is that in anticipation of growth, we have extended service out into these areas. The growth may or may not happen during the time frame that these infrastructure investments need to be made again.

Based on the community input, one of the big lessons for them is that we need to make sure that our existing infrastructure is in good shape. Our investments already made need to be capitalized before we make new investments. She states that she wants to reiterate this as the plan uses this as the fundamental framework.

The other fundamental building block for this plan is that they have heard a lot about neighborhoods. People really want to see their neighborhoods and investments being preserved. There was quite a bit of discussion about East versus West and there is a social and economic divide, and they would like to see this somehow mitigated. This is not unique to Bloomington. Regardless of which community you go, every City has this, but as a community we want to aspire to be the premium community that we can be. Comprehensive planning is a great time to really take the input from the community and see how we can make this happen. She states that the areas on the map in pink and orange are our established older neighborhoods. The area colored in blue are the relatively newer neighborhoods within the last 50 years, with the majority of that being east of Veterans Parkway. Looking at these new neighborhoods, most of them are suburban style with single family homes and lots. Upon closer look, our established older neighborhoods are not all equal. The regeneration area, as they framed it (in the pink), is quite different from the preservation area and these characteristics present different opportunities and challenges as we move forward with implementation of this plan. If we are trying to group all of the established older neighborhoods into one big part and try to address that with a big broad stroke, we may not be able to get to the most important areas that need to be addressed. She states that one of the largest things we will see in this plan is placing a high priority in the regeneration area. This area has suffered a large disinvestment in at least the last 50 years. The infrastructure was built at least 100 years ago. Both above and below ground there is a huge need for infrastructure improvement. The big priority was placed on this regeneration area because given the amount of disinvestment that has happened in this area created a lot more than infrastructure or housing issues. It has social issues and other issues that are much more complexly related. The education system is interrelated with the neighborhoods,

economic development is also related in this. Therefore; unless we look at all of these together, no one aspect of this can be addressed without looking at other aspects. She states that when they say high priority, it should not just be high priority for the City, but it should also be high priority for the agencies and entities that really want to make this community truly the first-class community that it should be. She gives an example of the landlocked school district that does get affected based on the demographic needs within these neighborhoods, and the type of schools really dictate the quality of neighborhoods and vice versa.

Every street and neighborhood in here is a treasure trove of history. This once elite section of the community, she believes today is a truly mixed income neighborhood. From an infrastructure prospect, the preservation area, which is the orange section that she previously pointed out, infrastructure is just as much of an issue here that it is in the regeneration area. The History Preservation Plan has not been updated in at least a decade and there are no resources associated with it. Therefore, many of the issues that were pointed out in this section of the City are related to the importance of these historic resources and why they need to be preserved.

In summary, our core is that we have an amazing downtown with a lot of potential for improvement. Together with the regeneration area and the preservation area, the success of downtown and success of these established older neighborhoods are dependent on each other.

Some of the work that has been done ensures they are not replicating the work that has been by other plans. Many plans were adopted by the City council, several resources were allocated to those plans and she wanted to make sure they integrated those effectively in this process. The Comprehensive Plan, it is an integrated parks and open space system that links all of the various individual plans in order to maximize these for recreational and other purposes.

City plans do not just affect the City's budget, but also affects other's budgets. The same applies to County plans, School District Plans and the rest of the regional and agency plans. The list and chart that is being shown from the Mclean County Mental Health Action Plan and how 22% of all calls to the Police are mental health related. Under the Public Safety Plan, the Fire Department is constrained for resources and it is one of the City's biggest budget items.

The Proposed Land Use Plan ensures they effectively utilize their existing infrastructure. This is extended out through the next 20 years. The proposed development approach calls for prioritization and reviews the 3 Tiers used. When she talks about infrastructure, she is not only speaking of the sewer and water, but also to fire safety. She discussed Future Use and that it is not land contiguous to incorporated area and without access to City services.

The City has grown in the last 15 years. She states 2000-2010 were boom years of population growth. Allocations were made to be sure to not cut down on the ability of the community to grow.

She reviews the next steps:

1. Adopt the plan, a 20 year timeline.
2. Establish an oversight process led by the Community Development Dept.

3. Keeping the community posted.

She concludes and states she is available to take questions.

Mayor Renner states time has been allocated for questions. He thanked Ms. Pinnamaraju and expresses how it is very important for us as a community to ask what our short, mid-term and long-term goals are in a variety of different areas. He would like an implementation component to the plan and suggests one method would be to adopt a plan in the near future and set goals by the end of the year to set up specific priorities. He states he is open to any suggestions from other Council members on how to follow up on this plan, as this is the first time for a plan such as this.

Mr. Hales, following up on the objectives for the night, regarding the three (3) key items for adopting the plan and how quickly the Council should act on adoption of the plan. Secondly, the Implementation Plan, who will prioritize the recommendations, and whether that will be staff or Council handling that. He expresses how critical the Implementation Plan is to the City Manager and the Senior Management Staff. Lastly, he asked about the Zoning Code, which is probably the next major piece of implementation, and the timeline for that. He asked Mr. Dabareiner to brief the Council on the needs and timeline to get this accomplished.

Alderman Sage asked Ms. Pinnamaraju about a golf course in the community that is considered park acreage and asked if she could look into this as to how this could be addressed so that it aligns with the Park Master Plan from a definition prospective. She agreed that she will look into this and let him know.

Mayor Renner wanted to make it clear for the audience and for the record that when they are talking about a plan, they are speaking as to what they want to do short term; 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, and he stated that it is absolutely the Council's responsibility as elected officials to determine what those priorities would be. He stated he personally believes that doing this in work groups would be the most efficient way to handle this in any reasonable time, but he believes it is critical however they do this. The resources are a related, but separate decision he believes, as there may be new challenges or opportunities that would arise as time goes by. He wanted to make it clear that they are not committed to spending, for instance, \$10,000.00, they are instead saying that these are our priorities as we move forward.

Mr. Dabareiner, discussed implementing the plan. At this time, it is a work in progress. He stated there has been a lot of public input, which is the foundation of any Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is also a part of the Comprehensive Plan of which is, too, a public process in its creation. The Comprehensive Plan has over 600 recommendations of which can be subdivided into three. Each recommendation has a primary actor (who), and a recommended [when] short or long-term process. There is much guidance in the draft document that will lead to an adopted document. Each of the recommendations can be divided into three categories: 1) Zoning Ordinance, 2) Internal Systems, link the plan to the Capital Improvement Plan through Public Works and Engineering, and 3) Outside Agency, is where the RPC category takes the lead. The City can encourage and share the information that is within our plan. The zoning and

studies categories make up approximately 60% of this 600 recommendations, and would be considered to be one action by the Council—creation of a new Zoning Ordinance. Secondly, the Internal Systems is 25% of the recommendations. Some of the recommendations are simple in nature, and some are more complex and requires additional work. The timing of these task can be reviewed as he has set aside a small amount with the Community Development budget to accomplish some of the processes within this budget year, the Zoning Ordinance can be updates or rewritten within one year.

Alderman Schmidt, agrees that the zoning is the foundation of any older neighborhood as within older neighborhoods, you see a variety of mixed use housing and commercial developments, as well as negative effects that it has on housing values. She expressed concerns with Mr. Dabareiner low staffing levels within the Community Development Department. She asked for a plan to accomplish this level of work without having a sufficient number of staff within the office.

Mr. Dabareiner, there is a lot of work that goes into this type of project, as his department is taxed pretty heavily at this time. Most of the work could not be done without outside assistance which would be the only way to get this done. He does not have Planners sitting around awaiting the next big project. The Community Development Department only has one planner who is busy completing other assignments. Therefore, we would need to hire consultants to do the work. The Zoning Ordinance is the one document that follows every comprehensive plan.

Alderman Fruin, would the people in the community think that government (state, federal, county, or city) is too restrictive on zoning and code enforcement. Sometimes, the City can make it difficult on new businesses or existing businesses, and we have to find that balance of wanting things done according to Code requirements. He complimented Vasu and Jennifer as well as City staff that worked on this Comprehensive Plan that this document serves as a blueprint to Bloomington's future. He supports having this plan placed on the August 24, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Agenda for approval.

Alderman Hauman, echoed the remarks of Alderman Fruin and thanked Vasu and City staff for their work efforts to bring the Comprehensive Plan forward on the August 24, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Agenda for approval. She expressed concern over having the plan sit on a shelf, and stated that the Council must take action on this plan quickly.

Mayor Renner, agrees that the Council needs to take action on this plan and set a date for implementing the plan, suggesting that the Council break into groups to review and work on an implementation plan. That is only one idea, and is open to receiving additional suggestions/ideas.

Alderman Schmidt, echoed the comments of Aldermen Hauman and Fruin and agrees to having the Comprehensive Plan placed on the August 24, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Agenda.

Alderman Buragas, thanked Mr. Dabareiner and Vasu for their work efforts in bringing this plan forward. She is very pleased that the Zoning Code has been included as one of our first priorities within the plan. Agrees with Alderman Fruin about having overly restrictive regulations and should work to safeguard that; however, damaging is our regulations that are vague and inconsistent. We have that in some instances. So, it would be great to have a clear and concise Zoning Code in order to make our system work much better than it does.

Mayor Renner, persons have come to Council with complaints that historically the City has been very selective in enforcement with law-abiding citizens verses slum landlords.

Alderman Black, agrees that the plan needs to come to Council; however, would like to see some type of schedule of implementing the plan.

Alderman Painter, agrees that the sooner the City gets started, the better the community will feel about having a plan, and seeing the City honor the plan that was created with community input.

Alderman Mwilambwe, agrees with the plan and the Council should move forward with adopting the plan. Appreciates distraction when they occur; however, we need to be able to refocus in order to move forward with the implementation. He stated that he does not agree with the workgroups, but need to look for efficient ways to meet with staff and the County.

Alderman Sage, agrees with moving forward; however has one request for managing the agenda. He requested additional time to have to present the Budget Task Force recommendations to the Council.

Alderman Lower, does not support it, but would support a plan. He does not believe that this is grounded in reality. He ask who will ultimately be responsible for this plan. This plan is too restrictive, we need to be very careful about how we change to Code as well as including small businesses. Changing the rules often causes problems. Everything that the Council does have a cause and effect.

Alderman Fruin expressed respect for Alderman Lower's opinion; however stating, he sees that as our other master plans, that being a blueprint to move forward.

Ms. Pinnamaraju stated that the County is one of many agencies that is enthusiastically awaiting the implementation of this plan in Bloomington.

6. Adjournment.

Motion by Alderman Hauman, seconded by Alderman Black to adjourn Regular Session. Time: 7:01 p.m.

The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll which resulted in the following:

Ayes: Aldermen Fruin, Lower, Sage, Mwilambwe, Buragas, Schmidt, Black, Hauman, and Painter.

Nays: None.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

ATTEST

Tari Renner, Mayor

Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk