

# Council Questions/Comments and Staff Responses Report for September 24, 2012

as of September 24, 2012 at 8:09am

## General Comments:

**Alderman:** Mboka Mwilambwe

**Comment:** I have noticed an effort to get the packet out earlier lately and I am very appreciative. May I suggest that we continue this approach in the future and for those items that are not ready by the cutoff date, they be made available as an addendum. At the very least, we will have less items that would be new and need to be reviewed over the weekend.

**Staff Response:** Staff will continue to work towards having the packets out on Wednesday afternoons before Council Meetings.

**Alderman:** Bernie Anderson

**Comment:** I do not have any questions at this time.

## Consent Agenda:

**Alderwoman:** Judy Stearns

**Item 6F:** Intergovernmental Agreement with District 87 for Providing Salt for 2012-2012 Winter Season

**Question/Comment:** What is the exact cost per ton of salt the City of Bloomington paid last year? If it varied, what was the least and most? Have we been able to lock in a price for any year?

**Staff Response:** The City of Bloomington works with the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) on an annual basis to competitively bid with other municipal entities to get the best pricing for our salt purchases. The salt purchase for this year (2012 – 2013) and last year (2011 – 2012) is \$60.21 per ton. District 87 will pay the City \$60.21/ton for salt and an additional fee of \$5/ton for storage, handling, and loading (same as last year, 2011 – 2012). The pricing is locked in on an annual basis through CMS.

**Alderman:** Robert Fazzini

**Item 6G:** Purchase of a Sole Source Bulk Water Dispensing Unit

**Question/Comment:** Does the motion need to include a statement that the competitive bid process is waived because only one supplier was found that was able to fulfill the request?

**Staff Response:** Legally, the motion only needs to state that the competitive bidding process is waived. Corporation Counsel, Todd Greenburg, will be preparing a Resolution as part of Council's consideration on this item.

**Alderman:** Mboka Mwilambwe

**Item 6G:** Purchase of a Sole Source Bulk Water Dispensing Unit

**Questions/Comment:**

1. What is the average life cycle of this piece of equipment?
  - a. **Staff Response:** The average life cycle for the water dispensing unit would probably be in the range of 15-25 years.
2. Are users of this service charged a different rate and does the rate charged for services take into consideration replacement of the equipment down the line?
  - a. **Staff Response:** Yes, the rate charged is \$0.25 for 40 gallons of water which equates to \$4.68 per 100 cubic feet (748 gallons). The City's current rate for retail customers is \$4.01 per 100 cubic feet (748 gallons). Therefore, bulk rate is 16.7% higher than the retail rate. This rate, like the general water rates, is adjusted periodically.

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3. I am assuming that beyond the one year, staff does not expect ongoing support from the vendor? Should we need their help for something after one year, what is their rate?
  - a. **Staff Response:** The Company manufacturing and selling the equipment would provide support through the one year warranty period. Following that, support will largely come through web conferencing to troubleshoot problems at no cost to the City. If on-site maintenance is needed, an hourly fee in the range of \$150/hour would be charged.

## **Regular Agenda:**

**Alderman:** Mboka Mwilambwe

**Item 8B:** Presentation and Video Streaming Technology for City Council Chambers

**Question/Comment:** My experience with electronics is that they have become less and less reliable over the long term. Any concerns with this especially given the one-year warranty?

**Staff Response:** Staff did speak with Zdi about extended warranty and maintenance contracts, but neither party believed the cost would be fully justified. The components used in the Zdi design are industry standard devices and are readily available on the market. If the system experiences a failure, Zdi does (and has) responded very quickly. We do have Zdi come out at least once per year for a preventive maintenance visit and believe that this accommodates staff needs.

**Alderman:** David Sage

**Item 8B:** Presentation and Video Streaming Technology for City Council Chambers

**Question/Comment:** As I've shared in previous meetings the video streaming is not a constituent priority, when compared to spending \$80K (with more operational costs going forward) on playground equipment replacement or sidewalk repair. Is there a way to separate the video presentation and the video streaming into separate motions? I don't want to create a series of parliamentary gymnastics at the meeting, so to avoid this, I can simply just vote against the motion if that would be easier.

**Staff Response:**

1. It is the Corporation Counsel's understanding that the proposal from Zeller Digital Innovations permits the City to accept the video presentation component and to reject the video streaming component. For technological reasons, the City cannot accept the video streaming component and reject the video presentation component.
2. If Alderman Sage is the first Aldermen to make a motion, he can move that the City accept the video presentation proposal but to reject the video streaming proposal (and to also include in the motion what to do with the voting and timer component).
  - a. An Alderman can make a motion to amend the main motion. The motion to amend must be voted on prior to the vote on the main motion, and must be passed by a majority of the Council.
  - b. To use Alderman Sage's question as an example, Alderman Sage could move to amend the main motion by rejecting that portion of the proposal dealing with purchasing video streaming technology this assumes that the main motion would be to purchase the entire package).
  - c. An Alderman who desired to purchase all the proposals (assuming the main motion calls for rejecting the video streaming proposal) could instead make a motion to amend the main motion by including approval of purchasing of the video streaming technology.

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**Alderwoman:** Judy Stearns

**Item 8B:** Presentation and Video Streaming Technology for City Council Chambers

**Question/Comment:**

1. How exactly can the public access audio and video of the Council once we purchase the equipment proposed?
  - a. **Staff Response:** The public will be able to view the live “raw” video via video streaming over the Internet live (accounting for possible delay due to varying internet speeds). Staff will also archive videos and make them available on the website. Finally, the system will be able to create a DVD that can be rebroadcast on the Comcast Public Access channel.
2. Is there a public or cable TV channel on which the public can view the Council Proceedings? My wish for public broadcasting has always meant that I would like the average citizen of Bloomington to be able to view the proceedings by ordinary accessible means. Without knowing the exact percentage, I think it is well worth noting that many of our citizens still do not access a computer, or if they do, not on any kind of regular basis.
  - a. **Staff Response:** Although Staff still needs to confirm this process with Comcast, it is our understanding is that it is possible to rebroadcast the meetings on their Public Access channel.
3. What other options than the one presented were considered as a way to video stream or broadcast Council? Did we consider the local company that Normal uses, the one I discussed several months ago?
  - a. **Staff Response:** Other options for this technology were considered during the formal RFP process before Staff brought the audio reinforcement portion to Council for approval in April 2010. The RFP process resulted in proposals from four audio/video technology companies. The proposals requested and received were for a design and implementation plan for all three phases (audio reinforcement, video presentation, and video streaming) of technology improvements in the Council Chambers. Staff then selected the overall design of Zeller Digital Innovations (Zdi), and brought the audio reinforcement (Phase 1) portion before Council for approval. For continuity purposes, Staff believes it best to use the same company for all three phases as the overall design is a kind of “building block approach.” That is, the technology in later stages uses that of earlier stages as a foundation to build upon.

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