

**MINUTES
THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
ALD. STEVE WEBER, CHAIR
MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 2 EAST MAIN STREET**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Weber at 7:05 pm.

2. Roll Call

Present: Ald. Silkaitis, Ald. Foulkes, Ald. Bongard, Ald. Muenz, Ald. Lencioni, Ald. Gehm, Ald. Pietryla, Ald. Wirball, Ald. Bessner, Ald. Weber.

3. Administrative - None

4. Omnibus Vote

Items with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine matters and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a council member/citizen so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in normal sequence on the agenda.

There was no Omnibus vote.

5. Public Works

- a. **Recommendation to Provide Feedback on the City Council Chambers and Conference Rooms Interior Renovation Design and Approval to Proceed to the Construction Documents Phase of the Project.**

Maggie Krieger of FGM Architects gave a presentation of proposed design layout, interior finishes and technology upgrades to Council Chambers and conference rooms.

Pete Suhr, Director of Public Works, presented the project schedule and the estimated cost. He explained one-third of the estimated cost would be for upgrading the technology.

Ald. Pietryla stated the upgrade is needed and wants to invest in the building, as Council Chambers is an important room for the residents and City.

Ald. Bessner asked if all the furniture would be replaced. Ms. Krieger explained the dais would remain the same, but the chairs and staff tables would be replaced.

Ald. Wirball asked what changes would be made to the sound system in the Council Chambers and if the conference rooms would be able to act as an overflow area with interactive screens. Ms. Krieger explained there would be a dropped acoustic ceiling made from a softer material that would absorb some of the sound that would prevent the echoing that is currently happening in Council Chambers. The conference rooms would have the capability to function as an overflow space for public meetings. Ald. Wirball expressed the importance of being transparent to residents, so he liked the plans for better technology.

Ald. Silkaitis agreed that the sound system needs to be improved. Mr. Suhr noted that everyone recognizes the need for improvements with the sound system.

Ald. Foulkes asked if the project could be quoted separately, prioritizing the needs versus wants. Mr. Suhr explained this type of project is primed to create many alternates and could be broken down and priced by room.

Ald. Lencioni expressed his concern about the cost of the project and would also like to see the cost broken down by room.

Ald. Muenz asked if the exterior sound would be addressed with the proposed renovation. Ms. Krieger explained the outside sound is likely due to the windows and replacing them is not part of the proposed plan.

Ald. Muenz asked what the life span would be for the new technology. Larry Gunderson, Director of Information Systems, explained the equipment would be on a similar replacement schedule as all other City equipment.

Ald. Bongard asked how often the two conference rooms are booked in a year. Heather McGuire, City Administrator, explained the rooms are frequently used by staff who host developers, Art Council, commissions, and committee meetings. She noted the conference rooms were not originally set up for video and Zoom, which makes it difficult for staff to host a large conference type setting. Ald. Bongard stated the upgrade is needed, but is concerned about the cost. Ms. McGuire explained the HVAC and technology pieces are the most important part of the project. The paint and carpet are not big add-ons to make the room finalized and finished. She added the redesign of the staff table and location would address some security concerns that have happened during crowded council meetings.

Ald. Wirball stated he understood the needs of staff, but would also like to see the project priced out by room.

Ald. Gehm agreed that addressing the sound system in Council Chambers should be a priority so citizens could be more involved in meeting participation. Ms. McGuire noted that after large council meetings she has had several complaints about individuals having difficulty hearing due to the HVAC system and regulating the temperature in the room.

Ald. Bessner asked if there would be an option to put see through glass with blinds between Council Chambers and the conference room for overflow. Mr. Suhr stated that would be possible but would add to the cost of the project. Ms. Krieger added that other communities have found the use of technology as a solution for overflow situations.

Ald. Foulkes asked what alternate locations have been discussed for City meetings other than the Police Department during the renovation. Ms. McGuire explained the room at the Police Department is not set up for this type of meeting. She added that leasing a space at another intergovernmental agency may be the most functional option within the City.

Ald. Bongard asked if this project was built into the budget for next year or as an add-on. Mr. Suhr explained the construction costs are proposed in the next fiscal year budget. He added the next phase would include some architectural engineering costs that had already been approved by Council in July. He added there will be more opportunity for discussion as they move through the construction documents.

Motion by Lencioni, second by Gehm to direct staff to move forward to the next phase to produce construction documents.

Voice Vote: Ayes – unanimous; Nays – none; Absent – none; Chair Weber did not vote as chair.

6. Public Comment - None

7. Additional Items from Mayor, Council or Staff - None

8. Executive Session

- Personnel – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)
- Pending, Probable or Imminent Litigation – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)
- Property Acquisition – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5)

- Collective Bargaining – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)
- Review of Executive Session Minutes – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21)

9. Adjournment

Motion by Ald. Lencioni, second by Ald. Foulkes to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 pm.

Voice Vote: Ayes – unanimous; Nays – none; Absent – none; Chair Weber did not vote as chair.

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ADA Compliance

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