

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COMMISSION  
LONG RANGE PLANNING MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 26, 2019  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 151 MARTIN  
8:30 A.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Patty Bordman, Mayor

**II. ROLL CALL**

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Bordman  
Mayor Pro Tem Boutros  
Commissioner DeWeese  
Commissioner Harris  
Commissioner Hoff  
Commissioner Nickita  
Commissioner Sherman (arrived at 8:33 a.m.)  
Absent: none

Administration: City Manager Valentine, Assistant City Manager Gunter, City Attorney Currier, Police Commander Albrecht, Communications Director Byrnes, Police Chief Clemence, City Planner Cowan, Library Associate Director Craft, Planning Intern DuPuis, Planning Director Ecker, DPS Manager Filipski, Assistant Engineer Fletcher, Finance Director Gerber, Building Official Johnson, Library Director Koschik, City Engineer O'Meara, HR Manager Myers, City Clerk Mynsberge, Museum Director Pielack, Interim Fire Chief Wells, Deputy Finance Director Wickenhauser

**III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**I. 8:30 AM – 9:10 AM Finance**

**A. Five-Year Financial Forecast**

Presentation: Tim St. Andrews, Plante Moran

Summary: Property taxes are 70% of the general fund revenue. The state equalized value (SEV) goes up or down with the market. Taxable value has no limit on the decline and is limited on the growth by Proposal A, which is the lesser of 5% or inflation.

Taxable value growth is estimated at 5% for 2019, declining to 3.4% in 2023. These rates are caused by new developments and redevelopments within the City and exceed inflation.

The SEV growth is 5% in 2019, declining to 3.5% in 2023. Birmingham's SEV and taxable value have largely kept pace with each other and are estimated to continue doing so through FY 2022-2023. This signals there is a lot of investment in the City which is estimated to continue.

Since 2001, the City's Headlee maximum went from 14 mills to under 12 mills. These Headlee rollbacks are expected to continue over the next five years, with very little gap between the Headlee limit and the expected operating millage. To date this has not impacted the City at all because there was a wide gap between what the City levied and what the City's maximum was. Looking forward the City's capacity is becoming more limited, however.

Mr. St. Andrews said he is aware of very few communities with the capacity Birmingham has.

The City is projected to use some of the general fund balance in 2019 mainly due to the planned Old Woodward sidewalk expenses and the capital investment planned for the 48th District Court. The general fund balance is otherwise expected to grow throughout the forecasted period largely due to the continued taxable value growth which will keep the City's property tax revenue increasing.

The major and local streets fund remains relatively flat over the forecasted period with climbs and dips according to the timing of City projects.

The City's policy is to maintain the general fund projected unassigned fund balance between 17% - 40% of general operating expenditures. In the first two years of the forecast the City is within this range, and in the last three years the City is estimated to be above that range.

Finance Director Gerber explained that the large increase in the ratio between the general fund projected unassigned fund balance and the general operating expenditures is because all the major downtown projects, including sidewalks, should be done by 2022. This relieves the general operating fund of many expenditures, thus increasing the proportion the unassigned fund balance makes up of the total expenditures.

Mr. St. Andrews returned to his presentation with the water and sewer rate forecast. Birmingham's rates are expected to increase at the rate of inflation.

Finance Director Gerber explained water consumption has largely levelled out over the last three years, although consumption has decreased overall.

Clarifications/Comments: David Bloom asked when the City's pension and healthcare liabilities will be paid off, and whether it would be prudent for the City to tax at the maximum right now in order to put aside money to protect against the City's projected decrease in capacity.

City Manager Valentine told Mr. Bloom:

- The City's liabilities are factored into the five year forecast and there is an actuarial schedule for the City's contributions to the liabilities. The City also looks to contribute extra every year as it is able. Birmingham is likely closer to paying off its liabilities than many communities in the State.
- It would be difficult to justify taxing for more than the City needs without accounting for where exactly it would be used. He was also not sure if it would be a legal practice. If the City taxes up to its Headlee limit it may have negative consequences on the City's bond rating. The City is taking a longer-term approach. Staff has been looking to manage the City's millage rate to the extent that the City can create capacity under Headlee.

Finance Director Gerber estimated the City's pension and healthcare liabilities will be funded in twenty years. After that, there would just be normal costs of having individuals drawing from these plans. He explained this estimate is subject to market risk, market fluctuation, life expectancies, and other variables.

## B. Birmingham Reinvestment Opportunities

Presentation: City Manager Valentine

Summary: Reinvestment is necessary because infrastructure deteriorates over time.

### Parks

- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan assessed community needs along with facility needs.
- The Last Recreation Bond was approved in 2002.
- Major projects included the Barnum Park acquisition and the Shain Park renovation.
- The Ice Arena Facility was built in 1973 and still maintains its original infrastructure.
- There is a reinvestment opportunity through a new Parks Bond.

### Parking Structure

- The parking study has identified the North Old Woodward structure, built in 1966, as being in need of replacement and expansion.
- The current structure and lot can house approximately 750 cars.
- There is available space to expand the structure and add an additional 500 parking spaces.
- A parking bond provides a reinvestment opportunity for the City, with the funding for the project to be paid from the Automobile Parking System user fees.

### Streets

- The Ad Hoc Unimproved Streets Study Committee is evaluating how to address unimproved streets in the City.
- Approximately 22 miles of Birmingham's streets are unimproved and consist of a gravel base with a slurry coating.
- The City is currently looking at how to incorporate an additional 22 miles of streets into the existing street maintenance program.
- The reinvestment opportunity for streets is to be determined.

### Senior Services

- The US Census projects the population aged 65 and over will almost double by 2050. Current service demands are growing.
- Viable cities must be positioned to meet the demands of all residents.
- The current service model is contract based and funded through the General Fund.
- The Ad Hoc Joint Senior Services Committee was established to assess needs and provide recommendations for the long term.
- Senior services presents a reinvestment opportunity through collaboration with neighboring communities and potentially a Senior Millage (PA 39 of 1976) to support the increasing demand for services.

Clarifications/Comments: Jim Suhay, Library Board, asked why the library was not mentioned as a reinvestment opportunity.

City Manager Valentine explained:

- His presentation only covers opportunities that have been started by the Commission and are currently in the works.
- Phase II of the Library is already included and is not a long-term proposition. Further work on Phase II will come before the Commission next month.

- This presentation regards a longer-term view of the studies that are being done in different areas within the community.
- The Phase III component of the Library will be a decision of the City Commission.
- The timing of the proposal for Phase III is at the discretion of the Library Board.

Commissioner Hoff said the library is different from the considerations presented because they are largely bond proposals or specific millages for projects which cannot be absorbed by the City's current revenue.

## **II. 9:10 AM – 10:00 AM Public Services**

### **A. Parks & Recreation Improvement Funding**

Presentation: Department of Public Services Director Wood

Summary: At the June 4, 2018 City Commission Meeting a resolution was made directing the Parks and Recreation Board to review the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan's 5-year capital plan and work with city staff to identify facility needs related to the Parks and Recreation operation through a public engagement process to identify a priority list of projects and associated amounts to be considered for a potential parks bond to be implemented over the next 3 to 5 years, and further, to return to the City Commission with a recommendation for consideration.

#### Parks and Recreation Master Plan Sub-Committee

The sub-committee was set up to meet regularly to focus on this task and report monthly to the Parks and Recreation Board. The first meeting was held in August 2018.

The sub-committee identified categories from the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan for 10 potential Park Improvement projects and associated estimated costs.

#### Parks and Facilities Needs

Adams Park Development: \$ 700,000

- Implementation of Park Concept Plan in its entirety

Poppleton Park Playground: \$680,000

- Inclusive playground with sidewalks leading up to and around playground, and poured in place (PIP) accessible surfacing

Kenning Park: \$1.2 million

- Inclusive Playground with sidewalks leading up to and around playground
- Ballfield development
- Walking paths to connect playground with ballfields

City-wide Playgrounds: \$1.9 million

Update Outdated and Aging Equipment - Considerations for Inclusive Needs

- Crestview
- Howarth
- Lincoln Well
- Pembroke
- Springdale
- St. James

Parks and Facilities Needs

Splash Pad: \$500,000

Booth Park Phase III-Corner Feature: \$250,000

-Entry Plaza with seating, gardens

Rouge River Trail Corridor: \$1 million

-New trail entry plaza/trailheads

-Signage/Connectivity/Streambank Stabilization

-Connect Willits to Maple

New stone steps, accessible pathway,  
benches, retaining walls, plant material

Ice Arena: \$5.1 Million

New refrigeration system infrastructure

Locker room expansion/facility upgrades

Golf Courses: \$525,000

New irrigation at Springdale

New cart paths at Springdale

New Pickleball Court: \$150,000

Total Estimated Improvement Costs:

\$12,005,000

Potential Funding Sources:

Grants

Donations

Public/Private Partnerships

Parks & Recreation Bonds

The sub-committee will gather information from the February 5, 2019 public input session, online poll and feedback/input received during the 2018 Master Plan process.

NEXT STEPS

The Master Plan Sub-committee will present a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Board at the March 5, 2019 meeting.

The Parks and Recreation Board will make a recommendation to the City Commission for consideration.

Clarifications/Comments:

DPS Director Wood said:

- Bridges along the river trail have not generated as much conversation as other elements. She noted that the Commission has the latitude to allocate money for the building of bridges along the river trail at a future date should it see fit to do so.
- Recommendations would be made based on both public input and staff rankings, since the public may not be aware of the specific urgency of some projects such as the Ice Arena.

- The dollar amounts needed for a specific playground, such as Poppleton, are not included in the \$1.9 million figure needed for general park playground upgrades.

Robert Stempien Plante Moran|cresa: Birmingham Sports Ice Arena Facilities Assessment

Mr. Stempien reviewed the facilities assessment of the Ice Arena, noting that the cost of the proposed changes would total about \$5.1 million.

The following updates to the Ice Arena were recommended:

- Replacement of the existing in-floor cooling piping;
- Installation of a sub-soil heating system;
- Replacement of the existing ice plant equipment;
- Replacement of the existing arena dehumidification system;
- Relocation of the main ice arena to the east;
- Provision of a women's locker room facility;
- Enlargement of the existing main ice arena locker rooms;
- Provision of a team locker room;
- Replacement of the lighting with led fixtures;
- Provision of a new studio rink observation/meeting room; and
- Provision of revenue generating amenities.

Clarifications/Comments:

Mr. Stempien clarified:

- If Birmingham were to build a new, identically-sized arena today with all the recommended changes it would cost approximately \$7.5 - \$8 million.
- Dehumidification and the cooling tower are the two most urgent needs. Birmingham has been doing an excellent job with maintaining these systems but they do need to be replaced.
- A second sheet of ice would require a 30,000 square foot addition.
- There are overlapping time needs requiring 4 locker rooms.
- The viability of the rink is very strong with robust programs and good revenue streams.
- The City would want to rent out the running of the Pro Shop and the concessions.
- This rink is one of the nicest ones in the area which adds to its appeal.
- The in-floor cooling system is a high priority for updating. There is no way to know the state of the pipes until the concrete floor is opened up, and at that point it is most worthwhile to just update the piping.
- He could not speak to whether any local ice arenas are considering closing and also could not bring to mind any proposed ice arenas for the local area.

DPS Director Wood stated that the City does not directly track use of the ice arena. That said, data will be collected and published if these projects are approved so the public will be aware of the Ice Arena's regular usage. She added that DPS has been generating ideas for the use of a year-round rink if that recommendation is approved.

Commissioners Nickita and Hoff said they would like data on the Ice Arena's demand before making more specific decisions on updates and funding. Commissioner Harris agreed with Commissioners Nickita and Hoff. He added anecdotally that the demand on the Ice Arena is increasing. Mayor Bordman agreed the Commission needs robust usage information before it proceeds. She added that as other ice arenas age and close, Birmingham will likely see an increase in utilization as long as it maintains and improves its ice arena.

## B. Water Portal

Presentation: Department of Public Services Manager Filipski

Summary: AquaHawk is an online, user-friendly customer portal that puts water usage and billing info at the residents' fingertips. It was launched June 1, 2018. Six months in the City is gaining about 100 users per month – currently near 600 users. DPS has made various publicity efforts to make the program known to residents.

Clarifications/Comments: None.

## C. Maple/Eton Bridge Enhancements

Presentation: DPS Director Wood

Summary: This is the CN Railroad's bridge and they do the work. Their estimate for painting the facade on the east and west, all columns, and the interior is \$96,000. This estimate does not include painting the ceiling. Other costs include road closures.

Based on the Walker study: pedestrian lighting will cost \$25,000 just for the pedestrian crossing. The sidewalk removal/replacement is estimated to cost \$52,000. A mural is not easy to get approved by CN Railroad which would need to see plans before making a decision. The first step will be to get a Right of Entry (ROE) permit with CN Railroad for lighting, sidewalk replacement, and the mural.

Clarifications/Comments: DPS Director Wood said CN Railroad and the Walker study recommended not painting the ceiling of the pedestrian walkway under the bridge. She added the ceiling may have lead and asbestos as well. In reply to Commissioner Nickita she said she would look into possible options for asking CN Railroad to update, paint, or otherwise clean up the ceiling to make a more pedestrian-friendly experience.

City Manager Valentine stated:

- The City could complete this project during the next fiscal year if the Commission so chooses.
- In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Boutros' concern about the ceiling and its dripping, that the bridge is inspected regularly for structural safety, so there is no structural safety issue with the bridge.
- The possibility of bringing in other funders for the upgrades and painting remains. This presentation is only about the likely cost of the project.
- Local businesses may want to get involved in the design and funding of a mural on either side of the bridge.

Commissioner Nickita agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Boutros, saying there may not be a structural safety issue but there are certainly safety questions as to the potential toxicity of the material that regularly drips from the ceiling.

## D. Cape Seal Project Planning

Presentation: DPS Manager Filipski

Summary: After reviewing street updates to-date, DPS Manager Filipski outlined the following Next Steps for Cape Seal Planning for FY 2019-2020 and 2020-2021:

- Evaluation of the streets;

- Allocation of funds in the budget for potential projects;
- Receipt of the Ad-Hoc USC Report/Recommendation;
- Determination of the project necessity and scope; and
- Commencement of projects in the fall of the current fiscal year.

Clarifications/Comments: None.

#### E. Ad Hoc Unimproved Street Study Committee

Presentation: Assistant City Manager Gunter

Summary: The Ad Hoc Unimproved Streets Committee held its first meeting in June 2018. Its mandate is:

- Reviewing and evaluating the types of roads in the City while considering road durability, maintenance cycles, drainage, rights-of-way usage, traffic speeds, and parking.
- Reviewing current policies and procedures relative to both the special assessment process, as well as various road construction and maintenance procedures.
- Reviewing various neighborhood conditions, such as percentage of improved vs. unimproved streets, as well as various pavement conditions.
- Reviewing cost and budget implications as various revised policies are considered, and developing strategic funding alternatives.
- Developing recommendations to the City Commission for an updated policy.

#### Current Status

- The Committee has worked to develop a common understanding of the history of unimproved roads in the City, the City Charter and ordinances as they relate to unimproved streets, special assessment districts, pavement types and their associated life cycles, the cape seal program, and road funding fundamentals.
- Staff is currently working to respond to the request of the Committee to explore future funding scenarios for a potentially more robust program to improve the unimproved roads in the City.
- Staff recently completed the five-year capital needs program for roads and the five-year financial forecast for the City. This forecast data provides the Committee with a model to explore possible funding scenarios.

#### Next Steps

- The financial model being developed can be built upon with other potential funding options as the Committee continues to work toward recommendations for the Unimproved Streets program.
- Staff is nearing completion of this task and expects to meet with the Committee in the coming weeks.

Clarifications/Comments: Assistant City Manager Gunter explained that over the past ten years, the City has only improved four roads. The Committee would like to determine how to improve roads at a quicker pace. A higher prioritization of improving roads and a more robust education of the public as to why road improvement is important could be beneficial.

City Manager Valentine confirmed that since improving these streets would significantly increase the City's street maintenance responsibilities, the Committee is looking at various options for addressing those maintenance costs.



### **III. 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM Planning**

#### **A. City-wide Master Plan Update**

Presentation: Planning Director Ecker

Summary: The City of Birmingham has a history of implementing master plans and ordinances that are intended to guide and regulate the growth of the City in order to promote the type of development that the citizens and property owners value. Currently, the development of the City's planning and zoning regulations are principally governed by six documents which are currently available on the City website:

- The Birmingham Future Land Use Plan (1980);
- The Downtown Birmingham 2016 Plan (1996);
- The Eton Road Corridor Plan (1999);
- The Triangle District Plan (2007);
- The Alleys and Passages Plan (2012); and
- The Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (2013).

At this time the City has embarked on a comprehensive update of the 1980 Birmingham Future Land Use Plan, and the formal inclusion of each of the subarea plans into an updated comprehensive master plan.

On October 29, 2018 the City Commission voted to hire the renowned planning and design consulting firm DPZ CoDesign, led by Andres Duany, which prepared the Downtown 2016 Plan adopted in 1996.

#### **Project Elements**

1. Comprehensive Community Engagement Plan
2. Updated Data Collection and Analysis
3. Infrastructure Analysis
4. Parking Analysis
5. Attendance at Meetings
6. Plan Preparation
7. Finalization and Adoption

Tentative Project Schedule: The City is currently working with DPZ to supply them the documentation of key issues discussed over past years for them to prepare for kickoff, which begins next week. It will be a year-and-a-half to 2-year project. DPZ will report at 60% and 80% complete before bringing the final plan at conclusion.

Clarifications/Comments: Community engagement and public review consists of the public outreach plan which includes the web survey, stakeholder meetings, and small area meetings, prior to and after the Charette process.

The Commission will be updated on a regular basis on the progress of the Master Plan process.

#### **B. Retail Regulations**

Presentation: City Planner Cowan

### Summary:

After the City Commission adopted a new definition for personal services in relation to retail use on November 13, 2017, the City Manager directed the Planning Board to continue studying the larger issue of retail use in Downtown Birmingham specifically, but not limited to, the following:

- To evaluate the current geographic boundary of the Retail District for modification and also consider a priority level hierarchy consisting of the downtown core and other areas within the current Retail District Boundary.
- To evaluate current properties in the Retail District that were not built to support first floor retail uses and provide recommendations to address this issue. Such properties may, for example, have not been built with first floor frontage at grade or the building was not previously designed to support retail use.
- To evaluate a prohibition of desks, workstations and office related amenities placed within the first 20 feet of depth of window frontage within the Retail District and recommend ordinance language to address the issue.

The RFP for retail consultants is being revised to clarify the City's needs and encourage more responses from consultants.

Clarifications/Comments: Commissioner Nickita said the RFP needs to be oriented toward the conditions necessary for ground floor retail, how the ground floor is used and how to make the best use of the first twenty feet of the space. The Commission should also receive information on how the ground floor can be potentially used going forward to include alley space and parking.

Commissioner DeWeese noted that this is not a study of demand. The Commission is trying to set the policies and structure to activate the street on the first floor level. There is nothing in the RFP about redefining the use of alleys to create an experience. Commissioner DeWeese would like to hear what the City can do to create an aesthetically pleasing environment which encourages development.

Mr. Bloom said it would be beneficial for the City to work with retailers in maintaining and beautifying the alleyways. He suggested murals might also be worth considering.

### C. Alley Regulations

Presentation: Planning Intern Dupuis

Summary: Planning Intern Dupuis reviewed the six-phased approach for alley improvement as presented at the 2018 Long Range Planning meeting. The approach includes: Wayfinding & Signage, Waste Receptacles, Code Enforcement, Parking Control, Paving & Stormwater Management, and Alley Width Standards. The City began implementation of these phases in Spring/Summer 2018.

Clarifications/Comments: The City is looking to make implementation plans with the property owners.

The Commission would like a list of the city-owned alleys. City-owned alleys can perhaps serve as models for future updates to the private alleys in the City.

Mayor Bordman emphasized the importance of enforcement.

City Manager Valentine noted the City does not own all the alleys and some of the properties have been grandfathered in. The incremental approach will allow for a successful process. The next step will come to the Commission on January 28, 2019.

Commissioner Hoff suggested the BSD Board should be presented with this information as well.

More connection with the property owners should occur to encourage buy-in. Activating the alleyways benefits everyone in the City, including the business owners.

City Manager Valentine said he would return with a vision statement on this project that the Commission can endorse, which then can be publicized among the stakeholders.

#### D. Multi-Modal Initiatives

Presentation: Planning Director Ecker

Summary: In November of 2013, the City of Birmingham adopted the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (the Plan). The Plan had several goals for the City, including the formation of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board to review all transportation projects in the City.

The goal of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board is to assist in maintaining the safe and efficient movement of motorized and non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians on the streets and walkways of the City and to advise the City Commission on the implementation of the Plan and to review all transportation projects.

The Board is pursuing education on traffic calming, warrant standards for intersection control devices, complete streets (streets designed for all modes of transportation and users of all ages and abilities), residential street standards, traffic signal timing systems, and autonomous and integrated vehicles.

Clarifications/Comments: Vision zero, which is infrastructure relative to pedestrian safety, has not yet been discussed but is on the Board's radar.

Signal timing at Old Woodward and Willits/Oakland, per Commissioner Nickita, should be analyzed.

#### E. Downtown Parking Study

Presentation: City Planner Cowan

Summary: The City Commission hired Nelson & Nygaard in the Spring of 2018 to conduct an evaluation of the City's parking system related to the structures and metered spaces. Nelson & Nygaard's findings were presented to City Commission on October 8th, 2018 and can be found on the City's Advisory Parking Committee website page. On August 27th, 2018, City Commission approved an addendum to the original agreement and expanded the scope of work for the contract with Nelson & Nygaard aiming:

- To increase residential density in the Downtown Overlay, the Triangle District and the Rail District;
- To encourage the development of more affordable residential units;
- To evaluate the interaction of all demands on parking in Birmingham's mixed use areas;

- To assess current zoning regulations for parking, evaluate and propose options and potential development incentives to meet the City's objectives; and
- To ensure that current and future parking demands will be met.

Nelson & Nygaard kicked off the project by reviewing the City's current parking standards and conducting research on strategies and best practices used in other cities. Nelson & Nygaard will also be hosting small round table discussions with various stakeholders throughout the City to discuss parking strategies and best practices. The purpose of these discussions is to receive input related to the impact of the Zoning Ordinance's parking requirements on private development. There will be three focus group meetings the morning of Wednesday February 6th and three meetings the afternoon of Thursday February 7th. The public is welcome to attend, and interested persons who are unable to attend either day may contact the City Planning department to note their comments, or schedule a time for a call with Nelson & Nygaard.

After reviewing and analyzing Birmingham standards and best practices and receiving public input, Nelson & Nygaard will provide a final report with recommendations for ordinance revisions to parking standards to attract additional affordable residential development in the City's mixed use districts.

Clarifications/Comments: Shared car parking would be beneficial to the community and should be pursued. Birmingham should also be aware of the general trend of municipalities eliminating parking requirements for residences. Commissioner Nickita encouraged Nelson-Nygaard and staff to become aware of all possible options for the City. In addition, certain spots should be designated for motorcycles since more of them can fit in an area, in order to encourage their use and prevent them from taking up parking spaces necessary for cars.

Mayor Bordman noted that a number of people both live and work in Birmingham, according to SEMCOG's analysis. Because of this, she said she would like to hear options on how to encourage Birmingham residents to leave their cars at home. She suggested a shuttle could be an option. She also said she would like to know if residents could rent out their driveways or garages for commuters into Birmingham who need a place to park.

#### F. North Old Woodward Parking Structure and Bates Street Extension

Presentation: Assistant City Manager Gunter

Summary: City administration has been working to finalize a development agreement that will allow for the removal of the N. Old Woodward parking structure and the construction of a new and expanded public parking facility, extension of Bates Street as recommended in the Downtown Birmingham 2016 plan, and the private development of commercial and residential space. The development consultant, Jones Lang Lasalle, Inc. have completed the due diligence process to validate the justification for the project as well as the proposed project costs as presented by Walbridge/Woodward Bates partners. The review included an evaluation of the due diligence package submitted by the Developer. JLL reviewed materials such as the City's master plan, area demographics, site plans, space programming, cost estimates, phasing schedule, market research, and all assumptions used in the Developer's proposal. JLL reported that, while there was a need to clarify costs for some specific line items, the findings of their evaluation were consistent with current industry standards and there was sufficient justification for the project overall based on the parking, housing, and office market in the Birmingham/Bloomfield area. The Woodward Bates partners continue to meet with the City to

establish the terms of the development agreement. Significant progress is being made to that end. The proposed development agreement is expected to be presented to the Commission in Spring 2019 to begin the predevelopment design and engineering work necessary for the project to proceed.

Clarifications/Comments: The City would own the five-story liner building, but the prospect of leasing that space to Woodward Bates Partners is on the table. Ferndale just approved building a similar lining building for a new parking deck.

The cost per space will be higher than normal because the deck will go three levels underground, have higher end liner amenities and higher end finishes because it is in the core of the downtown.

#### **IV. 11:30 AM – 12:15 PM Engineering**

##### **A. Backyard Sewer and Water Master Plan**

Presentation: City Engineer O'Meara

Summary: This is a holistic, eight year plan to address three remaining neighborhoods that were built with backyard water mains and/or sewers.

##### **EASEMENT ACQUISITIONS TO DATE**

Quarton Lake Estates Subdivision – 253 Recordable Easements Received (82%)

East Maple Gardens Subdivision – 19 Recordable Easements Received (73%)

##### **STRATEGY FOR ACQUIRING EASEMENT ACQUISITIONS**

Water/Sewer Billings

Individualized, Signed Letters

Individualized, Signed Letters (Certified)

Visit to House (in Person)

Leave Messages at Front Door

Clarifications/Comments: The sewer lining will be updated and is expected to last at least 50 years. As the Quarton area becomes more developed the City will install storm sewers in the front of buildings, but sanitary will stay in the back.

##### **B. Second water meter analysis**

Presentation: City Engineer O'Meara

Summary: Requests for second meters are not new. With the Storm Water Utility fee, the payback period for a second meter is longer than ever. A second water meter would require lost revenues to be redistributed to everyone else. A second water meter is not recommended.

Clarifications/Comments: Since the storm water ordinance was adopted requests for a second meter have halved, but City Engineer O'Meara confirmed there was never a significant number of requests.

City Manager Valentine said he would be reluctant to change the City's storm water ordinance until the State Legislature passes guidelines. Changing the City's approach, which is currently in-line with other municipalities, could affect the legality of how the City handles the issue.

Birmingham is currently in talks with its State legislators to encourage the passing of the storm water legislation.

Commissioner Harris commended the City for proceeding methodically on such a large issue, and opined that there does seem to be an unfairness to residents when sewer charges are not commensurate with use.

City Attorney Currier stated there is no longer a connection between water usage as to charge for sewer. Storm water charges are now calculated based on lot size.

Commissioner Sherman suggested that in the alternative it may pay to discuss with the Oakland County Water Resource Director the installation of sewer meters on west side of town.

### C. City street projects

Presentation: City Engineer O'Meara

Summary: City Engineer O'Meara reviewed the list of planned City street projects as included in his written report. The list is as follows, and is contingent on being authorized each year.

#### 2019

14 Mile Rd. – Greenfield Rd. to Crooks Rd.  
Collector Street Paving Program  
Coolidge Hwy.

#### 2020

Maple Rd. – Southfield Rd. to Woodward Ave.  
Cranbrook Rd. – Maple Rd. to 14 Mile Rd.  
Grant St. – Lincoln Ave. to Humphrey Ave.

#### 2021

Adams Rd. – CN Railroad Bridge to north of Madison Ave.  
Oakland Blvd. – Old Woodward Ave. to Woodward Ave.  
Pierce St. – Lincoln Ave. to Bird St.

#### 2022

Old Woodward Ave. – Brown St. to Landon Ave.

Clarifications/Comments: The collector street paving program is planned for the week of July 4, 2019 since many people will be out of town.

All street plans are reviewed by the Multi Modal Transportation Board.

The stretch of Old Woodward Ave. between Landon and Lincoln was updated more recently, which is why it is not included in the 2022 plans.

Commissioner Hoff expressed delight that Cranbrook Road is going to be improved.

City Manager Valentine replied to Commissioner Nickita that changes to traffic flow near Landon could be considered, but implementation would be dependent on MDOT's approval.

Commissioner DeWeese said he would also like to see the traffic flow at Landon reconsidered. Creating more of a ninety-degree angle turn for drivers at that intersection would be preferable.

Mayor Bordman concurred with Commissioner DeWeese and Commissioner Nickita.

A pedestrian walkway is being planned to connect the residences, Seaholm High School, and the City's various amenities.

V. Meeting was adjourned for lunch from 12:25 p.m. until 12:48 p.m.

**VI. 12:30 PM – 12:45 PM Birmingham Shopping District**

**A. Downtown Retail Attraction Program**

Presentation: Birmingham Shopping District Executive Director Tighe

Summary: The Birmingham Shopping District will address the retail attraction plan for downtown Birmingham in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Currently the BSD retail occupancy rate is 96% and the office occupancy rate is 90%. While the occupancy rates downtown are extremely high, there are a few vacancies clustered together on high visibility corridors and the BSD continues to promote these open vacancies through its retail attraction plan which includes implementing a marketing strategy that specifically focuses on business development, continuing outreach initiatives that promote the BSD as a great place to locate and do business, considering incentive programs to assist brokers and potential tenants to locate in Birmingham, maintaining retail consultant services to help identify strong, prospective retailers for the city, and maintaining the newly implemented retention program for existing businesses.

Clarifications/Comments: Buxton data continues to be used. The contract just expired. There are twenty prospective businesses the BSD is courting from Buxton data, with two being warm leads right now. The Business Development Committee is considering, this month, whether to renew the contract with Buxton or to pursue other options.

Higher lease rates impact occupancy, but the BSD is not in control of that, so the BSD pursues other strategies to attract businesses which can afford Birmingham.

The BSD holds an annual broker roundtable, to which business owners are invited, where the BSD brings in experts to speak on matters related to Birmingham's business community. This is one of the primary ways the BSD publicizes various trends and considerations for retail. The other method is through BSD Executive Director Tighe's one-on-one conversations with business owners around the City.

**VII. 12:45 PM – 1:00 PM Fire Department**

**A. Departmental Enhancements**

Presentation: Interim Fire Chief Wells

Summary: The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is a rating to determine a community's fire protection abilities. Birmingham was rated a three, which is the top 5% of the country. The rating looks at 4 categories: Emergency Communications, Fire Department, Water Supply and Community Risk Reduction. The lower a score means the better a department is prepared and it also reduces insurance rates in the community.

### Improvements Implemented

Emergency Communications: tablets on fire trucks have computer aided dispatch sent from police dispatch. Fire offices can pull satellite views and fire prevention data from the tables.

Fire Department: training and record keeping, participation in training, increased staffing for medicals and fire protection, Automatic Aid agreements for confirmed fires. The water supply increased hydrant flowing to half the city in 2019, and all hydrants annually by 2020.

Community Risk Reduction: fire safety education through various outlets, including schools and block parties, assigned two current fire officer additional duties and training to be used a Fire Inspectors for pre-incident planning and inspections.

Clarifications/Comments: More personnel to address the ISO rating will also help with the medical side of things. Medical calls are increasing at a rate of 3-6% per year. The ISO also looks at the medical services being used by a municipality to make sure their fire departments are still also able to fight fires.

The Fire Department has been visiting schools to talk about fire safety and emergency management. They also now offer to bring a fire truck out to every block party held in Birmingham for purposes of community outreach.

Jessica Rak, Firefighter, is in charge of the Fire Department's Knox boxes. She is currently contacting everyone with a Knox box to make sure the Fire Department's information is up-to-date. The Department is then working for an online scheduling system for the Knox boxes, and if the Department needs more at that time they will reach out to the Foundation for Birmingham Senior Residents.

## **VIII. 1:00 PM – 1:15 PM Police Department**

### **A. Departmental Enhancements**

Presentation: Police Chief Clemence and Police Commander Albrecht

Summary: The Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Department Accreditation Program, Power DMS, WatchGuard Video System, Residential Permit Parking Streets Review, Residential Permit Parking Streets Review are the priorities for the Police Department in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Clarifications/Comments: The Department's in-car video systems are up for renewal this year, will cost about \$140,000, and will likely be paid for out of drug forfeiture money. At that point in time the City would have the option to add body cameras. Given the political climate, however, most Chiefs of Police and the Oakland County Sheriff are not in favor of body cameras until more details are worked out, specifically in terms of privacy. The system that will be ordered would be able to accommodate body cameras in the future should that become either necessary and/or appropriate.

## **IX. 1:15 PM – 1:30 PM Building Department**

### **A. Short term rentals**

Presentation: Building Official Johnson

Summary: The City Code has had regulations in place since 1962 for dwelling units that are offered for rent or lease. Updating the current regulations to isolate short term rentals makes



appropriate sense at this point in time. Provisions can be added to address potential concerns and format the rules so they can be swiftly updated if necessary in the future. Staff is currently reviewing the existing rental regulations and will present recommendations to the Commission for its consideration within the next few months.

There are currently 2,065 licensed rental dwelling units in the City. These are comprised of 1,560 multi-family units, 37 duplex units and 468 single family homes. The number of these that are rented on a short term basis is not currently tracked, however there are five the City is aware of.

Clarifications/Comments: Birmingham ordinances currently permit rentals of any length of time.

In the last year, the City has received about five complaints about short term rentals.

City Manager Valentine reported contacting an outside consultant for a preliminary discussion of short term rental policies. During the conversation the consultant searched a number of rental websites for short term rentals in Birmingham, and advised City Manager Valentine that the City does not have enough short term rentals for the consultant to even offer a proposal.

In addition, Bill 4046 was recently introduced to the State legislature and would allow short term rentals at the State level. City Manager Valentine said this could be detrimental to Birmingham's ability to manage short term rentals at the local level as it deems appropriate.

#### B. Service remodel improvements

Presentation: Building Official Johnson

Summary:

##### Departmental Enhancements

The department is using funds budgeted in the current fiscal year to enhance its service to the public through the enhancement of the office spaces within the Community Development Department. The plan will redesign the front service counter and support staff workstations to eliminate barriers and improve functionality. The goal is to create a design that merges the public service counter and workstations into a single space allowing staff to work more efficiently.

Clarifications/Comments:

All options are being considered to gain additional room within Community Development.

#### **X. 1:30 PM – 1:45 PM Library**

##### A. Building Renovations - Phase 2 Plan Proposal

Presentation: Library Director Koschik

Summary: The architectural firm selected for the project, Luckenbach Ziegelman Gardner (LZG), has developed a plan for the Youth Room that calls for the following:

- Expanding the Youth Room by approximately 40%--i.e. 2,000 square feet. This expansion would carry the Library building toward the north, east, and south. The expanded Youth Room would be clad in heat-and glare-reducing glass from floor to ceiling.
- Renovating the existing Youth Room, including public, staff, and storage spaces. The play area would increase in size by 130%, and the story room would increase by 160%.

The number of seats would increase by 50% and would include locations where a child and adult can sit together.

- Widening the hallway leading from the lobby toward the Youth Room. This will help circulation and better connect the Youth Room to the rest of the Library. The wall on the north side will contain a large aquarium. Off the hallway will be a room for strollers and backpacks.
- Re-arranging shelving and furniture in order to make the space ADA-compliant.
- Upgrading and expanding the public restrooms on the main floor, making them ADA-compliant in the process.
- Re-using existing shelving wherever possible.
- Adding new furniture, fixtures, and carpeting, carrying through on a number of color and design features used in the Adult Services renovation and the refurbishment of the Grand Hall.
- Creating a more open and logical layout that, among other things, better accommodates children with special needs and improves wayfinding.
- Updating technology.
- Improving lighting.
- Adding a self-check machine to the Youth Room.
- Honoring the 1927 building wherever possible by exposing and highlighting the original brick.
- Adding an outside terrace and children's garden on the north side of the building.
- Landscaping the exterior of the building to make an appropriate transition to Shain Park and The Community House.
- In general, enhancing the Library's connection to the downtown as well as to pedestrians.

The estimated cost is now \$2,447,823, which is 4.2% more than projected a year ago. The Library will be able to afford the project, given current millage forecasts and the Library's successful fundraising efforts in the past year.

The next steps for the project are:

1. The City's Planning Department is currently reviewing the construction drawings, and LZG will make corrections as required.
2. Once the construction drawings have been approved, the City Commission will authorize the issuance of RFPs for construction and landscaping.
3. Likewise, the Library Board will issue an RFP for furniture, fixtures, and equipment.
4. Bids will be reviewed, and contracts will be awarded, following normal City of Birmingham procedures.
5. Construction will start in summer 2019 and end in May 2020.

Phase 3 includes plans to renovate the Circulation/Commons area, develop a new entry consisting of a glass enclosure of the area lying underneath the Birkerts curve, upgrade the outdoor plaza next to the entrance, and install a skylight at the entrance to the Library and possibly also around the exterior of the 1927 building along the line where the 1927 building meets the 1960 and 1981 additions.

Clarifications/Comments: Phase 3 also involves the installation of an elevator from the ground level to the entrance.

During Phase 2 children's books will partially remain in library and partially go into storage. Part of the adult collection will have to go into storage as well during Phase 2 in order to provide access to a sufficient youth collection during the renovations. Temporary shelving will likely be installed in the Great Hall.

Library Board member Frank Pisano thanked the Commission, City Manager, Finance and Building Departments, as well as Jim Suhay, Doug Koshik, Rebekah Craft, and Stephanie Klimmek for assistance and support.

**XI. 1:45 PM – 2:15 PM Birmingham Museum**

**Strategic Plan Update and Historical Collaboration**

Presentation: Museum Director Pielack

Summary: The museum staff and Museum Board have made significant progress in implementing the Birmingham Museum 2017-2020 Strategic Plan, and during 2019 will emphasize implementation of the Landscape Master Plan--Heritage Zone and related projects, continuation of successful community engagement and audience expansion via multiple media platforms and other points of contact, and continuation of the preservation and stewardship efforts of historic buildings and collection objects and education and expansion of public access.

Clarifications/Comments: Mayor Bordman and Commissioner Hoff expressed approval of the planned collaboration between some of the City's Boards and Commissions for historical preservation projects.

Commissioner Hoff asked staff to invest meaningfully in these projects since the City has many enthusiastic and skillful volunteers looking to make a meaningful contribution to the community.

**XII. 2:15 PM – 2:30 PM**

**A. Adult Services Long Term Planning**

Presentation: City Manager Valentine

Summary: In an effort to address the demands of a growing adult population, the Ad Hoc Joint Senior Services Committee (AHJSSC) was established last year. This committee is comprised of representatives from Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Franklin and the Birmingham Public Schools and is directed by resolution.

To date, the committee has had multiple meetings which raised many questions about the current arrangement for adult services and the need to provide a more formal arrangement in the future. To evaluate alternate operating models, the committee has conducted a site visit to the Older Persons' Commission in Rochester. The committee has found this exercise informative and intends to now explore a new governing model for the participating communities and Birmingham Public Schools. The first step in this process is to formalize the existing relationship with the current vendor, NEXT, and their landlord, the Birmingham Public Schools. This process has been initiated and will help serve in the next step of the Committee's work in addressing how to meet the demands of an aging population by providing the needed services, facilities, operation and funding to sustain a segment of the population that will double in the next thirty years. A formal report from the Committee is expected later this year.

Clarifications/Comments: It would be possible to extend the terms of the AHJSSC members beyond March 30, 2019 if necessary.

Birmingham Public Schools (BPS) currently leases the building to NEXT at no cost. Should NEXT need to move locations at the request of BPS, Mayor Bordman -- as a member of the AHJSSC -- noted NEXT would be financially unable to lease or build another space. In addition, NEXT is outgrowing its space as almost all of its programming is at capacity. These are two significant long-term issues the AHJSSC is strategizing about at this time.

**B. Citizen Communication Enhancement**

Presentation: City Manager Valentine

Summary: The City is working with BS&A to consolidate email addresses among the city's various systems for collecting information. The intent is to have the ability to provide timely and relevant information directly to each resident or business that would be affected by an issue in their neighborhood.

Clarifications/Comments: The initial information being collected is limited, with the ability to expand to sending targeted messages by demographics in the future.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**V. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

J. Cherilynn Mynsberge, City Clerk

*NOTICE: Individuals requiring accommodations, such as mobility, visual, hearing, interpreter or other assistance, for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-5115 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.*

*Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:248-530-1880) por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).*