

**MINUTES**  
**March 9, 2021**  
**Committee of the Whole – Hybrid Meeting**  
**City of Batavia**

Please **NOTE:** These minutes are not a word-for-word transcription of the statements made at the meeting, nor intended to be a comprehensive review of all discussions. They are intended to make an official record of the actions taken by the Committee/City Council, and to include some description of discussion points as understood by the minute-taker. They may not reference some of the individual attendee's comments, nor the complete comments if referenced.

Chair Wolff called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**1. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Chair Wolff; Ald. Miller, Russotto, Beck (online), Knopp (online), Chanzit, Baerren, O'Brien, Callahan (online), Malay (online), Meitzler (online), Uher, Cerone (online) and McFadden (online)

**Members Absent:**

**Also Present:** Mayor Schielke; Chief Deicke, Batavia Fire Department (online); Laura Newman, City Administrator; Gary Holm, Director of Public Works; Scott Buening, Director of Community Development (online); Howard Chason, Director of Information Technology; Jeff Albertson, Building Commissioner (online); Wendy Bednarek, Director of Human Resources (online); Anthony Isom, Assistant to the City Administrator (online); and Jennifer Austin-Smith, Recording Secretary

**2. Reminder: Please speak into the microphone for BATV recording**

**3. Approve Minutes for February 9, 2021 and February 16, 2021**

**Motion:** To approve the minutes for February 9, 2021 and February 16, 2021

**Maker:** Uher

**Second:** O'Brien

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Baerren, Wolff, O'Brien, Callahan, Meitzler, Malay

**Nay:**

14-0 Vote, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

**4. Items to be Removed/Added/Changed**

Agenda item thirteen was tabled until next week's Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on March 16, 2021.

**5. Matters From the Public (For Items NOT on the Agenda)**

There were no matters from the public at this time.

*Ald. Beck exited the meeting at 7:03pm due to potential conflict of interest, as she will be a future business owner within the City with a liquor license.*

**6. Ordinance 21-22: Authorize Execution of a Redevelopment Agreement with Batavia Buildings, LLC Relating to the Building Improvements at 18 E. Wilson (LN 3/03/21) CD**

Callahan overviewed the memo. Newman stated that it is not ordinary that we would give two types of incentives of this type into the same building. There are several circumstances that warrant this such as the installation of the fire suppression system, which would increase the safety of all the buildings on this block. If we were not to do this, the Comedy Club would not be able to come into this building. The owner of this business has many downtown properties and over the course of the past two years alone he has made more than \$300,000 in investments in both renovation and maintenance of those buildings. Callahan noted that a lot of the money that is being spent stays with the building and is coming out of the TIF fund, which this property owner has been contributing towards. This is a way of reinvesting the money he has already spent on paying his taxes, which is what the TIF was designed to do. Chair Wolff stated that the sprinkler system is such a big upgrade to the building with a large cost but it makes every building around it safer by providing fire protection. Newman noted that the agreement is with Marco Limited Partnership, not Batavia Buildings, LLC. All of the documentation will be changed prior to City Council next Monday.

Michael Marconi, building owner, virtually addressed the Committee. Marconi stated that when the Comedy Vault owners approached the Committee he made it known that the only way they could enter the building is if he came forward and asked for funding to put the sprinkler system in. He does not make it a habit to ask the City for money for his buildings. He spends a lot of his own money and he also has been helping his tenants survive what has happened with COVID-19. He discussed the bidding process with the Committee for the sprinkler system.

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Ordinance 21-22: Authorize Execution of a Redevelopment Agreement with Marco Limited Partnership Relating to the Building Improvements at 18 E. Wilson

**Maker:** Callahan

**Second:** Cerone

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Callahan, Meitzler, Malay, Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Knopp, Chanzit, Baerren, Wolff, O'Brien

**Nay:**

13-0 Vote, 1 Absent. Motion carried.

**7. Approval: Class D-1 (Restaurant – All Liquor) Liquor License Application for the Columbian Club located at 1117 N. Washington Ave., Batavia IL 60510 (DE 2/25/21)**

Newman summarized the memo.

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Class D-1 (Restaurant – All Liquor) Liquor License Application for the Columbian Club located at 1117 N. Washington Ave., Batavia IL 60510

**Maker:** Wolff

**Second:** Knopp

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Wolff, O'Brien, Callahan, Malay, Meitzler, Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Knopp, Chanzit, Baerren

**Nay:**

13-0 Vote, 1 Absent. Motion carried.

*Ald. Beck entered the meeting at 7:15pm*

**8. Presentation: Doc Watson Smokehouse located at former site of Smashburger (Mayor Schielke)**

Mayor Schielke introduced the owner of the Doc Watson Smokehouse to the COW. Chris Kowa, business owner, stated that the Doc Watson Smokehouse is a family owned business. They have one location currently and opened in November 2017 in Romeoville, Illinois. They are a Texas style smokehouse and serve craft and domestic beer and wine. They currently hold a liquor license with the City of Romeoville, Illinois. He will not have a bar in the Batavia location but will serve craft and domestic beer and wine. They are planning on opening at the end of April 2021.

**9. Presentation: Annual Report from Batavia Bicycle Commission**

John Gamble and Jennifer Ress presented the annual report from the Batavia Bicycle Commission. The presentation included the following information:

- Top Priority Crossing and Navigation of Route 31 – excited about the road diet on Route 31
- Priority 2 Clear Signage, More Sharrows and Bike Lanes in Batavia – bicycle safety
- Sign Images: May Use Full Lane, State Law 3 Feet Min to Pass Bicycles
- Recommendations for Signage in Batavia
  - Replace current Share the Road signs with signs that have a clear, simple message.
- New Paths:
  - Prairie to Pine to Fermi
  - Raddant tied to Spur
- Priority Three: Randall Crossing and Main Street Bike Lane

**10. Resolution 21-023-R: Authorizing Purchase of Ford F150 Pickup Truck for Community Development Department Not to Exceed \$29,275.00 (JA 3/1/21) CS**

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Resolution 21-023-R: Authorizing Purchase of Ford F150 Pickup Truck for Community Development Department Not to Exceed \$29,275.00

**Maker:** Wolff

**Second:** Russotto

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Wolff, O'Brien, Callahan, Malay, Meitzler, Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Baerren

**Nay:**

14-0 Vote, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

**11. Resolution 21-025-R: Authorizing Execution of a Contract with Denler, Inc. for the 2021 Crack filling program (TFG 2/24/21) CS**

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Resolution 21-025-R: Authorizing Execution of a Contract with Denler, Inc. for the 2021 Crack-filling program

**Maker:** Wolff

**Second:** Miller

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Wolff, O'Brien, Callahan, Malay, Meitzler, Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Baerren

**Nay:**

14-0 Vote, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

**12. Ordinance 21-21: Creating Parklet/Pedlet Program (LN 3/3/21) GS**

**Motion:** To recommend approval of Ordinance 21-21: Creating Parklet/Pedlet Program

**Maker:** Chanzit

**Second:** O'Brien

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Chanzit, Baerren, Wolff, O'Brien, Callahan, Malay, Meitzler, Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Beck, Knopp

**Nay:**

14-0 Vote, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

**13. Discussion: Status Report on Probationary Police Officer Hiring Process (DME 3/3/21)**  
Tabled until the March 16, 2021 meeting.

**14. Continued Discussion: Wagner Road Gate (SCB 2/15/21) CD**

Callahan reported that this topic was a tabled discussion for a long time. The Committee reviewed the minutes from February 24, 2015 in which this topic was tabled until further development. Chanzit clarified that his comment recorded in the February 24<sup>th</sup> minutes was sarcasm and he fully supports removal of the gate. The Committee discussed the major concern about traffic on Batavia streets, Aurora streets and subdivision traffic. Buening noted that the City of Batavia has had additional volume of traffic particularly due to the Prairie Commons development and this topic is still an issue. Buening stated that staff feels it would be appropriate to have the Mayor sign a letter to the City of Aurora asking them to remove/open that gate within some period of time to make sure the traffic could flow both ways. If the City of Aurora does not want to do that we could ask them to move the gate to the common City line so that the traffic of the Aurora subdivision goes through Aurora, which is not the ideal situation. The ideal situation would be to remove the gate entirely so that traffic could move in both directions. That allows for the best emergency response to that subdivision. This is not an easy subdivision to cut through unless you have gone through it a number of times and know where you are going. We do not think there is going to be a substantial amount of cut through traffic even if the gate is removed.

The Committee discussed how this neighborhood is not a simple cut through for traffic and the benefits of having two exits out of the neighborhood. O'Brien stated that this was tabled because

we were not sure how this area was going to be developed. Now we are confident with the development being done and we know the activity that is there. O'Brien stated that he thinks that we are all in agreement that the gate needs to go away and we should have the Mayor write the letter. O'Brien asked if anyone has any benefits of keeping the gate and there were no responses. The consensus of the Committee was in favor of removing the gate.

**Motion:** To send a letter asking the City of Aurora to open or remove the gate at Wagner and Mesa

**Maker:** Callahan

**Second:** Wolff

**Roll Call Vote:** **Aye:** Callahan, Malay, Meitzler, Uher, Cerone, McFadden, Miller, Russotto, Beck, Knopp, Chanzit, Baerren, Wolff, O'Brien

**Nay:**

14-0 Vote, 0 Absent. Motion carried.

### **15. Discussion: Zoning Code Parking Minimum Requirements CD**

Callahan stated that he would request that staff work on viewing other ordinances regarding parking minimums that are out there and make sure it fits our community to bring it back to Council. Beck stated that we talk about increasing density but what keeps us spread out across the town is how much off street parking that we have. Beck stated that for a lot of the buildings that we have done over the past decades we have almost had a 2:1 ratio of building space to parking area and we do not have any requirements that people build up. That is a pretty stark landscape with a couple decades of that ratio going. This would be a great step in the right direction to fill in some gaps and give us some more destinations. Callahan we could repurpose some of those parking lots into something like the Boardwalk Shops. Buening stated that staff could look at other communities and see what they have done. The Committee of the Whole could provide specific direction to the Plan Commission because it is a change to the Zoning Code. Chair Wolff stated that this is a great time to do this and he would like to have this come back to the Committee of the Whole to make recommendations to the Plan Commission.

### **16. Project Status**

Newman reported on the following:

- Coordination of the mass vaccine site at the former Sam's Club
- Hitchcock Design Group: Fox River Master Plan timeline and the meeting with the Park District staff, City staff, and Hitchcock Design Group on March 17, 2021
  - Every three months we plan to have a joint meeting with the City Council and the Park District Board to provide a read out on what has been accomplished on the project and what lies ahead.
  - Master Plan anticipated in November 2021
- March 16<sup>th</sup> there will be discussion about outdoor dining on North River Street
- Budget and Brief document made by Griffin Price, Communications Coordinator
- Interior demolition permit has been received for the proposed comedy club at 18 East Wilson Street
- Economic Development Manager position has been posted and anticipate the resumes being due the first week of April

### **17. Other**

Miller asked about 5/3<sup>rd</sup> Bank and Newman answered that the RDA says that the developer has an obligation to obtain an access agreement from their lender.

Miller stated if anyone is looking at a possible utility shut off in this pandemic time to contact the utility department because there are payment plans. Newman added that our Batavia United Way has funding to assist low income and those who have experienced job loss with both utility payments and rental assistance. There is help out there for those having trouble paying their bills. It is the last thing we would want to do is turn off someone's utilities under these circumstances. Beck added that there are community contacts that serve Kane and DeKalb County with assistance programs to those eligible. Newman noted that Batavia Township is who should be contacted for the State program that is called LIHEA (Low Income Heating and Electric Assistance).

Callahan expressed his appreciation for the Council's priority to discuss suicide and mental health issues. It has been amazing that our leadership makes sure that we talk about these issues without stigma and pretense. He asked that this good work continue to be done to help the most venerable in our community.

### **18. Adjournment**

There being no other business to discuss, Chair Wolff asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53pm; Made by O'Brien; Seconded by Uher. Motion carried.