

BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes for Special Session
Joint Meeting of the City Council and Bloomington Public Library Board
Osborn Conference Room
305 East St., 2nd Floor, Bloomington, IL 61701
Monday, June 19, 2017; 5:15 PM

1. Call to Order

The Council and Library Board convened in Special Session in the Osborn Conference Room, Bloomington Police Department at 5:45 p.m., Monday, June 19, 2017. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Renner.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Renner directed City Clerk Cherry Lawson to call the roll and the following members of Council answered present:

Aldermen Joni Painter, Diana Hauman, Mboka Mwilambwe, Jamie Mathy, Scott Black, Kim Bray, Karen Schmidt, David Sage, Amelia Buragas and Mayor Tari Renner.

Jeanne Hamilton called the roll of the Bloomington Public Library Board Members and the following members of the Board answered present:

Board members: Alex Cardona, Alicia Whitworth, Julian Westerhout, Dianne Hollister, Susan Mohr, Mike Raikes, and Van Miller. (Absent: Alicia Henry, Kiasha Henry)

Staff present: David Hales, City Manager; Steve Rasmussen, Assistant City Manager; Jeffrey Jurgens, Corporation Counsel; Cherry Lawson, City Clerk; Jeanne Hamilton, Library Director; and Austin Grammer, Economic Development Coordinator.

3. Public Comment

Mayor Renner opened the meeting to receive public comments. The following individual came forward to provide comments:

Donna Boelen

4. Joint Bloomington City Council and Bloomington Public Library Board Discussion on Bloomington Public Library Capital Improvement Infrastructure needs.

Ms. Hamilton stated she had met with the Council earlier in the year and gave a presentation. Since the presentation, on June 1st in a special meeting the Library Board discussed the Bloomington Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Plan and how the library fits into those. One of the things that we took away from that meeting was in the Bloomington Comprehensive

Plan, people spoke a lot about the library. The existing library was built in 1976 and designed for a population of 41,000 people and in 2006, the library increased its space by 25% but the population is 87% greater than it was in 1976. Circulation is 1.3 million each year, which is 82% higher than in 2006 and despite new E-books technology, only 5% of the circulation is made up of E-materials. The visitor count is almost 1000 people daily and program attendance of almost 17,000 people annually is 28% higher than 2006.

Mr. Cardona stated that we have been trying to make sure with our Board that we ground our thoughts, vision, mission and plans for expansion within the plan. We want to make sure that all of our services are aligned in a way to make sure that we not only represent all of our community, but we are also forward focusing in regards to all outreach services within the building and outside of the building.

Alderman Buragas asked whether it makes sense for both Bloomington and Normal to be looking at expansion and/or building new facilities. Mayor Renner commented on a discussion he had with Mayor Koos regarding possible collaboration of services. However, there was no interest in sharing library services.

Ms. Hamilton stated, there are state statutes and that would allow for the dissolving the two municipal libraries and creating elected district library. Mayor Renner stated there does not appear to be any interest in an elected Library Board and merging of two employee groups into one.

Mr. Cardona stated that there was some discussion of the Library Boards considering that. For most residents, regardless of socioeconomic level, they do not see this as two separate entities, mainly because of the shared services that we have.

Ms. Hamilton and Mr. Westerhout commented on the lack of available parking in the downtown area. Ideally, people want to be able to be right in front of things.

Alderman Mwilambwe inquired about having adequate reading space for patrons. Ms. Hamilton stated that Farnsworth would not be building another BPCA level auditorium in the new building. There would be some economies of scale if we had partnered with Normal on a building. The newly constructed library would serve the population size, as it would be 128,000 people with the two areas combined and cities of that size generally have more than just one library building.

Alderman Hauman commented on the construction of the library as it was built in 1976, then renovated 30 years later. She asked how long further expansion might last. Ms. Hamilton stated the renovations in 2006 did were insufficient for the size of the community. The proposed plan has a 20 year or more lifespan.

Alderman Sage thanked Ms. Hamilton and the Board for the undertaking of a large-scale effort that the Board is considering.

Mr. Cardona commented on the strategic approach by the Board. That by revitalizing the area, it could appreciate the property values as well as bring focus on businesses, other entities, not-for-profits, or even other civic services here. It does not have to be done all at once.

Mayor Renner stated that Public Works would not have to be moved all at once.

Ms. Hamilton stated that she and the Board are seeking direction from Council at this time. If we know a timeline and have a goal, we can make fiscal decisions better on our end.

Alderman Sage asked if the phased approach allows the flexibility for the timeline to stretch out longer and could the phases potentially be divided into smaller subparts.

Mr. Cardona stated that they were hoping to structure this in a way that is agreeable to the majority and from a financial standpoint.

Alderman Black stated that this as a huge opportunity for our community. He feels that the Library Board is looking for feedback from the Council. He stated one thing he would like to see in the best-case scenario is that there be a combined library/city hall facility. That we are cutting down on some of the costs because when we look at our capital improvement plan and what our City's needs are, not just today but years from now, those sorts of challenges are not going to go away anytime soon. He stated he would be opposed to any type of branch building for the library. He would be interested in a combined Library and City Hall.

Alderman Hauman asked what would be the potential for some private fundraising to help with the cost. Ms. Hamilton responded, the Board has factored that into their approach, and a conservative estimate would be \$2 million dollars. We have a plan to do fundraising, we have a Foundation and that would be a vital part of this project.

Mayor Renner stated that we need to understand that there are a variety of different ways that this can be funded.

Alderman Mathy asked about the 42% increase in building size and what percent does that equal in operating cost. Ms. Hamilton stated that this had been looked at and there would be some increased staff. She stated that rough numbers would be \$400,00 to \$500,000 increase per year.

Alderman Mathy asked whether the approximate cost includes total buildout of the new library. Ms. Hamilton stated that it is everything from the library perspective but does not include what it would take to move Public Works.

Mayor Renner stated Council would need to provide direction to the Library Board at this time.

Mr. Hales stated there are multiple large projects included in this and it would be an excellent time to consider either library renovation or a new library together with something such as relocation of the Public Works Operation Center, Fire Station renovations and street resurfacing also impact the comfort level threshold of what is the total net capacity you are willing to take on as a City and how we tie that in to projections as mentioned on operating deficits in the years ahead.

Mayor Renner asked for a straw poll of Council in terms of where the new library should be constructed. Alderman Buragas would like to continue to look at other locations; Alderman Mathy would like to continue to look at other locations but is OK with the existing location; Alderman Bray favored the existing location but would like to review other locations; Alderman Sage did not endorse a new library but if it happens he would like it to be in the existing location; Alderman Mwilambwe, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Black, Alderman Hauman, Alderman Painter, and Mayor Renner favored the existing location.

5. Adjournment

Motion by Alderman Mathy, seconded by Alderman Mwilambwe, to adjourn. Time: 6:12 PM.

Motion carried (viva voce)

Motion by Board Member Westerhout, seconded by Board Member Raikes, to adjourn. Time: 6:13 PM.

Motion carried (viva voce)