

**Public Works Committee  
Minutes  
6:15 P.M.; January 26, 2006**

DRAFT

Minutes of a special meeting of the Public Works Committee of the City of O'Fallon, held in the Meeting Room of the Public Safety Building, 285 N. Seven Hills Rd., O'Fallon, Illinois on January 26, 2006.

CALL TO ORDER: Time: 6:15 P.M.

ROLL CALL: MEMBERS: Medford, Drolet, West; Absent: Renner, True

STAFF LIAISON: Denton, Rich, Shekell, Funk, Mitchell, Sullivan

NON-COMMITTEE ALDERMEN: Albrecht

STORM WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS (SWAC): Scott Adkins, Linda Cowden, Michael Cozort, Ed Harris, Gary Hoelscher, Ray Kirkman, Dave Pfeifer, Jackie True

GUESTS: Josh Flint, Robert Braswell, Russ Stewart, Sylvia Beuckman, Maury Beuckman, Dyno Eujanides, Bill Dehauser, Herb Gooch, Gary Fulton

CITY CONSULTANTS: Pat Judge (Gonzalez Companies), Andy Reese and Brian Brown (AMEC Earth and Environmental)

The purpose of the meeting was to hear a presentation of the findings and recommendations of the Storm Water Advisory Committee (SWAC), based on their discussions facilitated by AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc. over the past several months.

The meeting started with dinner allowing attendees to interact and socialize. At 6:45 PM, Dennis Sullivan, City Engineer, formally opened the meeting with introductions of Aldermen in attendance, SWAC members, staff and consultants. Ground rules for the meeting were covered. Brian Brown, AMEC Earth and Environmental, then provided an explanation of the SWAC process to date. Finally, Gary Hoelscher, SWAC Member, presented the committee's findings and recommendations for a stormwater maintenance program to the City Council. A copy of that presentation is attached.

With the presentation complete, the Aldermen in attendance asked questions about the presentation's contents that were answered by the SWAC, staff, and consultants in attendance.

Questions from the Aldermen:

1. Is the \$5 per month notional charge based on lot size? Answer: No, it is based on an equivalent residential unit (ERU) which is related directly to stormwater runoff from impervious areas. Most homes would be placed in a category (possibly 'standard' and 'large' impervious areas) and charged a fee accordingly.
2. How would the fee be collected? Answer: It would be placed on the water bills that are currently being mailed, and thus, require no additional mailing cost.

3. What is the legality of creating a stormwater fee; does it go to the citizens for a vote? Answer: No, the City Council may form a stormwater utility under Illinois law if the service rendered is based on a fee reasonable to the services received, similar to the current water and sewer utilities. It is not a tax. Although an extensive public education campaign will be necessary before implementing a stormwater utility fee, a vote of the citizens is not mandatory.
4. How much money from Proposition S goes towards stormwater now? Answer: \$250,000 per year has allocated on stormwater activities and maintenance for the past three years.
5. How long does Proposition S last; doesn't it go away by 2011? Answer: Yes it does unless the city council opts to keep it. The council has that option under a home rule administration.

Questions from the Public:

1. If a resident will be charged \$5 per month, what will the cost be to a business? Answer: The basis for the fee (i.e. the ERU) will be the same for residential and commercial. However, because commercial properties are typically larger than residences, the commercial properties will pay proportionately more due to the increase in impervious areas and stormwater contributed to the storm water system. In effect, "The more you pave, the more you pay." An exception or modifier to that is that the business may have some stormwater detention system that remediates the potential effects of its stormwater release. In such a case, the business may receive some credit for their stormwater control.
2. If ½ crew costs \$135K then why does 1 full crew cost \$310K; shouldn't it just double the ½ crew cost? Answer: Although that is logical, the current ½ crew borrows equipment from the Water and Sewer Divisions of Public Works and does not support monetarily the engineering assistance it receives. Once a full crew is established for stormwater maintenance, additional equipment and technical support will be needed.
3. Who does the stormwater crew work for now? Answer: The Streets Division of Public Works primarily accomplishes the work; however, the Sanitary Sewer and Water Division have accomplished stormwater maintenance, depending on the task and equipment needed.
4. There was a slide that listed the 7 program priorities. Were those listed in order of priority? I ask because I think fixing flooding problems should be higher on the list. Answer: The items on the list were not listed in any particular order, only in the order in which they came up for discussion in the SWAC meetings. Rest assured that fixing flooding problems would be a priority.
5. First of all, thanks for the effort in trying to remedy this problem. When you were talking about funding, one of the options mentioned was sending the currently allocated General Fund money back to the General Fund. Isn't there a way to keep the current funds and collect a stormwater fee? The money collected from the stormwater utility won't get put into General Fund will it? Answer: The final decisions about initiating a stormwater fee and what amount of General Fund

money to allocate to this problem is up to the City Council. However, any funds collected via a stormwater utility fee must legally be used only for the purpose for which it was collected. An Enterprise Fund similar to the ones for Water and Sanitary Sewer will be put into place to account for fund usage.

6. Proposition S was meant to be spent on streets, sidewalks and stormwater maintenance just as it was stated in the informational materials that were mailed to residents before we voted on initiating the tax. We have spent millions on paving but I haven't seen much effort being placed on sidewalks and stormwater; why? Answer: We believe overall that our citizens have expressed more interest in fixing street problems than storm water problems. Therefore, the majority of the money collected via Proposition S has been spent repairing and repaving streets. (To date, about 82% has been spent on streets, 10% on stormwater, and 8% on sidewalks.)
7. New construction isn't well inspected before burying utility lines. Shouldn't we spend some money on preventing long range problems through inspections so that we aren't constantly digging up lines to repair low quality work? Answer: Inspections is one of the areas pinpointed in the recommendation although our inspectors do try to catch those problems on new development currently. Patrick Judge of Gonzalez Companies, formerly a City employee, has created a checklist for inspections to try to alleviate some of those previously missed items.
8. What about the areas that are currently deemed special assessment districts? Will those still exist after initiating such a utility fee? Answer: Not likely, the special assessment areas for stormwater maintenance will probably be dropped and replaced with the utility fee.
9. What other communities in the metro-east have initiated a stormwater utility fee and created a utility? Answer: None, yet. There are 500-600 in existence nationwide, with 200 new ones being created each year. The City's in Illinois that currently have stormwater utilities are Rock Island, Moline, and Bloomington. Normal, Peoria and Morton are working on creating stormwater utilities. Mascoutah has a drainage tax listed in their ordinances, but it is not currently collecting it from what we have been told.
10. Would establishing a stormwater utility affect the maintenance of dams in the area? Answer: No, not dams. Private lakes and even detention ponds that exist in subdivisions will likely remain with the homeowner's associations (HOAs). The use of public funds in most cases would mean that the public would have to be granted access to those areas which would likely be unacceptable to the homeowners of the area. However, the HOAs may receive a credit for properly maintained detention ponds or lakes that are used for detention.
11. Let's say the City Council decides that they want to initiate a utility fee and form a stormwater utility, what is the time frame for the process? Answer: Due to the extensive policy issues to be considered and public education effort required, it will be approximately a 12 month process.

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With no further questions, the meeting was adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:00 P.M. PREPARED BY: Mitchell

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 27, 2006 at 7:00 P.M., to be held in the Mayor's Conference Room or Council Chambers at City Hall dependent upon the number of visitors at the meeting.