

***Proceedings of the Council of the City of Joliet, Illinois
held on the 2nd day of February, A.D. 2009***

PRE-COUNCIL MEETING of the Council of the City of Joliet, Illinois held on Monday, February 2, 2009 at 3:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers, Joliet Municipal Building, 150 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: MAYOR ARTHUR SCHULTZ and DISTRICT 4 COUNCILWOMAN SUSIE A. BARBER, DISTRICT 2 COUNCILMAN TIMOTHY M. BROPHY, COUNCILMAN AT LARGE THOMAS C. GIARRANTE, COUNCILWOMAN AT LARGE JAN QUILLMAN, DISTRICT 1 COUNCILMAN JOSEPH R. SHETINA, COUNCILMAN AT LARGE MICHAEL F. TURK and DISTRICT 3 COUNCILMAN ANTHONY UREMOVIC.

ABSENT: DISTRICT 5 COUNCILMAN WARREN C. DORRIS.

ALSO PRESENT: CITY MANAGER THOMAS A. THANAS and CORPORATION COUNSEL JEFFREY S. PLYMAN.

The City Manager went to the beginning of the agenda to explain the items.

The City Manager explained Council Memo #88-09 dealing with awarding a contract for the purchase of Natural Gas. He said the current index contract expires on March 1, 2009 and in order to avoid automatic renewal, the City needs to award a new contract by February 15, 2009 with bids due tomorrow morning. He said we anticipate receiving a fairly good proposal and if we think the price is in the right range, we'll recommend its approval, and if not, we can continue with our current program. He said right now we're paying on a daily basis and it's been fairly manageable.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA asked if is there any potential for it becoming lower than what we have now.

Director of Management and Budget Ken Mihelich said there is the possibility that it could decrease. He said the prices that we're looking at right now are in the 60 cent range and that appears to be below what we've averaged over the last 3 ½ years. He said when we've looked at the market the decline probably has to do with the economy as a whole and there being less demand for energy. He said we do run the risk that it could go up if we let it go with the market.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said historically it has gone up.

Mr. Mihelich said right now it looks like we're at a low point over the last several years and we're thinking this might be a good time to lock in, but there are no guarantees.

COUNCILMAN UREMOVIC asked if they are quoting around 60 cents per therm.

Mr. Mihelich said those are the quotes that we're hearing right now but we'll actually get a quote tomorrow morning. He said we're asking for quotes for 3 different periods of time, either 6 months, 12 months or 18 months, and within those there is one company that will give us a fixed price no matter what quantity we use, and the other companies will give us prices based upon our average usage for the last year.

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COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE said if you look at the chart of the price per therm since 2005, the biggest price we've paid is not right now.

Mr. Mihelich said that's right and that's why we're looking to lock in a price.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE said it would be a good idea to freeze it.

Mr. Mihelich said that's what we're thinking and it will add a little bit more certainty in the budget. He said one of the things that we'll try to do for tomorrow night is give you an idea of what kind of savings we might have had if we had that price for the past year.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said we had no way of knowing about the salt where we had guaranteed prices but couldn't get delivery, and he's assuming that the same premise holds here and we look at their ability to deliver.

The Director of Management and Budget said we will and it's a little different in this case because essentially all of the gas goes through Nicor's lines anyway.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said they distribute for everybody.

The Director of Management and Budget said they do. He said it's similar to what we went through with the electricity earlier where it's all on the same grid or the same set of pipes, so essentially we buy the gas from the distributor and then they square up with Nicor, so if they're out of gas then we're all out of gas.

The City Manager explained Council Memo #105-09 dealing with the City of Joliet Economic Development Stimulus Plan which is a list of \$445 million worth of projects to be considered as a portion of the pending federal stimulus package. He said these projects are either shovel ready or could be shovel ready in the near future. He said the staff has put together a short PowerPoint presentation to go over some of the projects.

Director of Planning Don Fisher said the proposed projects are in several different categories: Community and Economic Development/Public Works projects (\$165 million); Public Works projects with State agencies as the lead (\$97 million); Community and Economic Development projects (\$79 million); Public Utilities projects for Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment (\$97 million); and Public Utilities projects for Water and Sewer Infrastructure Improvements (\$6.6 million).

Mr. Fisher stated they selected a few of the highest priority projects for the presentation today and said the I-55/IL 59 Full Interchange project would leverage approximately \$1 billion in private investment with the development of the Bridge Street Town Centre. He said the total project cost for the infrastructure that would allow for Bridge Street to move forward is approximately \$140 million. He said the economic spin-off on this project would mean about 3,500 construction jobs and 4,700 permanent jobs for a total of almost 8,200 jobs associated with this project. He said we estimate tax revenue to all of the taxing bodies over a 30 year period to be about a quarter billion dollars with the majority of it going to schools. He said final engineering for this project should be done in 2010.

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Mr. Fisher said the second project is the new arterial Bridge Street construction that is the link from Houbolt Road into the Joliet Junior College campus that would help with the redevelopment in their master plan and also the new YMCA. He said this is a stand alone project and we would like to work in conjunction with JJC and apply for grant funding for this project. He said this would help to enhance the viability of Joliet Junior College's Master Plan as well as the Bridge Street Town Centre development. He said the total cost of this project including sewer, water and construction of the roadway is about \$20 million. He said JJC estimates that the economic spin-off for their Master Plan construction project is about 8,000 construction jobs and there will also be new programs for JJC with associated jobs. He said there will be a total investment of \$220 million which is the investment that JJC anticipates to make in the future with their campus redevelopment. He said final engineering for this project could be done in 2009.

Mr. Fisher then explained the Storm Sewer Outfall project in the south end of the downtown area to accommodate redevelopment including a new transportation center and civic district campus with a cost estimate of \$5.2 million. He said we've been working with the County on the possibility of a new Courthouse and Civic District and possibly a new Transportation Center in the south end. He said this sewer project would help accommodate that and would have the capacity that would be necessary for these projects to move forward. He said the economic spin-off would be about \$30 million in construction and final engineering could be completed by 2009-2010.

Mr. Fisher said another project is the construction of a 100,000 sq. ft. Multi-Modal Commuter Regional Transportation Center which is estimated to cost about \$30 million. He said this project would relocate all of the mass transit modes including Metra, PACE and Amtrak into one coordinated facility and we believe with the economic spin-off the project would anchor a major mixed use transit oriented development district around the Union Station area and would spur some of the condominium/office/retail development in that corridor that we would like to see in the future. He said final engineering could be completed in 2010. He said Metra, PACE and the RTA are very interested in this project and we have been working very closely with them and we feel pretty good that this meets what the Federal government is looking for in regards to economic development spin-off and green construction.

Director of Public Works Jim Trizna said the next batch of projects involve IDOT or the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as the lead agencies. He said the first one would be the reconstruction of Route 53 from I-80 down to Arsenal Road at an estimated cost of \$35 million. He said IDOT has recently resurfaced it, but we envision that all of the development with CenterPoint Intermodal and the resulting spin-off businesses will take its toll on the road and we would like to see it get reconstructed.

Mr. Trizna said another project is the reconstruction of Route 6 from Henderson heading east to I-355 at an estimated cost of \$30 million. He said Route 6 is a road that IDOT has looked at as a strategic regional arterial in the past and the reconstruction would enhance potential commercial and other development in that corridor. He said two IDOT projects that don't have cost estimates are adding another lane to both I-80 and I-55. He said I-80 from LaGrange Road out to Minooka needs to be three lanes in each direction, and I-55 needs three lanes because of the CenterPoint Intermodal and all of the industrial growth we have up and down I-55 between I-80 and Lorenzo Road.

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Mr. Trizna said the last two projects are to complete the Hickory Creek and Spring Creek Flood Control Projects that IDNR has been working on since the late 1970's totaling \$32 million and that would protect the areas from a 100 year flood event.

Mr. Fisher said another high priority project is the South Chicago Street Greenway Project and Economic Development Incentive Project which is estimated to cost \$3 million. He said this involves a greenway coming in from South Chicago Street from about McDonough Street into the downtown area with a business corridor combination to enhance the environment around there to attract new commercial development and add to the quality businesses that are located there now.

Mr. Fisher said other projects that don't have cost estimates yet are the Near West Side Plan Implementation and Downtown Traffic Circulation. He said with the traffic plan we're looking at the possibility of redoing the circulation of the downtown streets back to two-way streets. He said when we had our stakeholder meetings with all of the different agencies and business groups downtown, probably the number one priority that came out of all of our meetings was to take a really close look at the possibility and feasibility of having the streets in downtown go back to two-way streets.

Mr. Fisher also explained the Columbia Street Extension from Ruby to Collins Street project and the Community Development Block Grant/Home Investment Program.

Director of Public Utilities Jim Eggen said the next round of projects are water and sewer infrastructure related. He said we've identified the need for a new water supply on the near west side and one possible location would be near Fire Station No. 2 at the Prairie and Campbell Booster Station. He said we are looking to reuse that fire station facility to provide treatment to coincide with the one million gallon ground reservoir that we have.

COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN asked if we would use the existing building or remodel it.

Mr. Eggen said we would have to remodel it.

COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN asked how would that fit in the neighborhood.

Mr. Eggen said we would try to fit within the existing fire station. He said before any of these projects would ever be constructed we would go through the normal review process with all of the Council committees to review any designs.

Mr. Eggen said another project would be the replacement of digester covers at the West Side Wastewater Treatment Plant at a cost of \$3 million.

Mr. Eggen said there are a series of improvements that we need to make totaling \$17.5 million at the East Side Wastewater Treatment Plant and this would fit within the wastewater infrastructure improvements portion of the stimulus package. He stated these are old units and new equipment is much more energy efficient. He said the influent pumping station is an old facility and those pumps break down a lot and upgrading that facility is in our ten year plan.

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Mr. Eggen said also at the East Side Treatment Plant we are slated later this year to go out for bid to relocate an outfall pipe from the plant. He said the current outfall is discharging into Hickory Creek and this would feed into our CSO project and we would move the outfall to be classified as discharging out into the DesPlaines River.

The Director of Public Utilities said another project is an upgrade along Route 6. He said there is currently a series of pumping stations and forcemain that serves Empress, Caterpillar and Eco Lab and that forcemain breaks probably six times a year. He said it was put in in the 1950's and we need to replace that facility. He said we are proposing to put in a new pumping station and redirect that flow to the West Side Treatment Plant and this would open up that area for future development; the estimated cost for that project is \$4 million.

The Director of Public Utilities said another project would be to upgrade the Black Road lift station and redirect the flow to the Aux Sable Wastewater Treatment Plant. He said we could be ready for bid later this spring and the cost of that is \$15 million.

Mr. Eggen then explained the five phases of the proposed Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Program which is estimated to cost \$52 million. He said the first phase is the construction of a new tunnel under the DesPlaines River to convey the wastewater from the west side of the river to the east side. He said associated with that on the east side is the addition of storage tanks and pumping facilities to handle that flow once it gets to the east side.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE asked where would that cross at.

Mr. Eggen said that would be downstream of I-80.

Mr. Eggen said the next series of projects are isolated ones where we would bring in water and sewer infrastructure to surrounding areas for residents that are in need of upgraded utilities facilities. He said an area within the City is Monroe and Pleasant which never had water and sewer brought into that area and we're proposing to do improvements there. He said another area outside of the City is Randall Heights which is south of I-80 and east of Richards Street which has been isolated since the construction of I-80 back in the 1960's and they are in need of water and sewer facilities.

Mr. Eggen said other proposed projects totaling about \$5 million include the Clark Street Sanitary Sewer Replacement which would serve the Liberty Meadows development, the Stevens and Faust Water and Sewer Extension which would allow for us to provide an extra feed into the Ridgewood area and out to the Edgecreek area with a link to underneath the EJ&E yard, the Rock Run Drive Watermain, the Belmont Avenue Watermain Replacement and the Essington Road Sewer and Water Main Extension.

Mr. Fisher said that is the end of the summary and it's quite a lengthy list. He said we decided to think of as many projects as we could because at this point we really don't know what the categories are going to be and exactly how the funding is going to work, so we tried to exhaust our ideas on what type of projects would be engines for economic development in Joliet.

The City Manager said we're making our contacts and hoping that we can get support from our Federal legislators for as many projects as we possibly can.

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COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN asked where we are with the project with the water tower on the east side for Edgecreek and Neufairfield homeowners. She said this has been ongoing and we keep promising them and she has heard nothing. She asked when that is going to be finished.

The Director of Public Utilities said we're still on schedule for completion this summer so the tower is going up right now and we're moving along.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE said the staff did a great job and they must have put a lot of time and effort into it. He said he knows it's a wish list but who knows what will happen.

The City Manager said there is not a project on that list that doesn't have to be done and this is not something we would characterize as being our great dream, it's really a list of services that need to be provided to our citizens and the reality is a lot of these have to be done to be in compliance with Federal mandates and that's why we thought we'd make a good case, especially for a lot of the sewer and water projects.

COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN asked if this was all on-line.

The City Manager said we wanted to float it past the Council first but we'll post it so citizens can take a look at it.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said the staff and everybody involved did a good job.

The City Manager said it was a good team and he has to give them the credit. He said part of his job is to make sure we continue with the contacts that we've made in Washington already and bring the right people in to help us.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said no one can say we're not ready should that bill come about.

The City Manager said actually it's moving very quickly. He said the Bill as you know passed the House and hasn't passed the Senate yet. He said Congresswoman Debbie Halverson has a deadline for submitting projects and we are ready to go with that. He said she has a form and Senator Durbin has the same thing and his deadline is a week after Congresswoman Halverson's so we'll be ready. He said he's not sure if we'll submit all of the plans but those that we think are priorities we'll certainly submit and see what kind of help we get.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY asked if Congresswoman Halverson offered to meet with us or has she looked at these plans.

The City Manager said he had a conference call with her Chief of Staff in the local office and the office in Washington D.C. and we had an in-person meeting with Senator Durbin's projects manager so we're working closely with the people that are lining up the programs for each. He said he thinks Congresswoman Halverson will be back here in the District soon and we've offered to take her on a tour along with her Chief of Staff who is now in the Joliet office which is in 2 Rialto Square on the 4th floor so we have good access to the new Congresswoman.

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COUNCILMAN BROPHY said he would be glad to help the staff promote these projects; just let him know.

The City Manager said we're counting on the Council's help because he thinks they look to hear from elected officials also. He said we'll let the Council know when we're submitting and will ask them to help us out.

The City Manager then explained the remaining items on the agenda.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE moved that the Council recess to closed session to discuss personnel, land acquisition and pending and anticipated litigation at 4:15 p.m. after which the meeting will be adjourned.

Motion seconded by COUNCILMAN BROPHY.

Motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILWOMAN BARBER, COUNCILMEN BROPHY, GIARRANTE,
COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN, COUNCILMEN SHETINA, TURK,
UREMOVIC and MAYOR SCHULTZ.

NAYS: NONE.

ARTHUR SCHULTZ
Mayor

JANET K. TRAVEN
City Clerk

Recorded on Tape