

# MINUTES

## Finance Committee January 8, 2019 6:00 p.m. City Hall Council Chambers

Alderman Jason Greene called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

### ROLL CALL

Present: Alderman Jason Greene, Alderman Steve Meyers, Alderman Frank Hunt

Absent: Alderman Ryan Myers, Alderman Bonnaye Mims

### Approval of the August 14, 2018 and August 21, 2018 Minutes

Alderman Greene, seconded by Alderman Hunt, made a motion to adopt. The motion was approved by a majority of those present.

Alderman Mims joined the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1). Presentation from the Parks & Recreation Board regarding the Parks/Storm Water Sales Tax

Dave Turner, Parks and Recreation Director, presented the item and, along with Chris Rathbone, Parks Board Chair, remained available for any discussion.

The item was discussed.

Alderman Greene asked for further information about the Parks Reserve Fund balance.

The larger than usual remaining funds were due to employee changes and related payroll funds that were not utilized.

The Parks Department parking lot resurfacing had not been planned to occur at this time, but an opportunity to complete the project at a lower rate was found by attaching the project to the current 59<sup>th</sup> Street Project.

Alderman Greene asked what the savings were after Super Splash was closed.

The Parks representatives stated that the City was able to break-even in 2016 prior to closing by utilizing \$80,000 from other City Funds and deferring the remaining maintenance projects. The closure of Super Splash has not resulted in a significant surplus of funds. Any surplus that was gained has been saved in

case a new 2020 Parks-Storm Water Sales Tax is not approved by the Board of Aldermen or passed by the voters.

Alderman Greene relayed a question from Alderman Mims regarding any federal grant funding related to Super Splash.

The Parks representatives explained that a federal LWCF grant in 1987 for \$155,000 is the only one associated with Super Splash and it attaches the property in perpetuity to the Department of the Interior. Given this, projects and plans related to the Super Splash property require approval from the Department of the Interior and the project must be for an equal opportunity recreational facility that would be completed within two years. The Parks Department does not have the necessary funding to complete any major projects in that timeframe.

Alderman Meyers asked about any current work to sell the property.

Dave Turner responded that a couple of opportunities were pursued without success.

Alderman Greene stated that the failure of three tax questions on the previous election ballot will have impact on the discussion of this proposed sales tax increase and the ability to effectively educate the public on it.

Chris Rathbone expressed the Parks Board's belief that the 1/4 cent sales tax with no split between Parks and Storm Water would give the ballot question the best chance of being approved by the voters because the increased revenue for Parks would allow for attractive projects like a dog park to be attached to the discussion of the ballot question.

Alderman Greene expressed concern about the upcoming sunset of the current sales tax and the fact that this is a single question in the current tax environment. Instead, he suggested creating two questions: 1) a renewal of the current tax, and 2) the proposed tax increase.

Dave Turner reported that a city-wide poll produced results that suggested a 1/4 cent sales tax might be approved by voters.

Chris Rathbone added that the Parks Board believes the Storm Water and Parks tax revenue should not have been combined and this is an opportunity to separate them. The City could also put forward its own Storm Water Sales Tax question to the voters.

Alderman Greene reiterated his stance that it would be prudent to give the voters the option to maintain the existing tax as well.

Parks representatives shared that the Parks Board did discuss that option and decided to move forward with a single question approach asking for a 1/4 cent sales tax.

Alderman Meyers stated that the Parks Department and Board have established the need for this sales tax and thanked everyone for their work.

Missy Wilson, Assistant City Administrator, asked how the Finance Committee would like to proceed.

Alderman Greene asked for the topic to be brought to the Board of Aldermen during a study session.

Missy Wilson stated that it will be scheduled for January 15, 2019.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Alderman Mims made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Hunt. The motion was approved by a majority of those present.