

**City of Columbus
Regular City Council Meeting
Alternative Meeting Format
MN Statute, Section 13D.021
03.23.2022**

The 03.23.22 meeting of the City of Columbus City Council was called to order at 6:47 p.m. by Mayor Jesse Preiner at the City Hall. Present were Council Members Robert Busch, Janet Hegland, Shelly Logren and Sue Wagamon; City Engineer Kevin Bittner, City Attorney Bill Griffith, Public Communication Coordinator Connor Keith, City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

Also in attendance were: Jill Bakowski, Barb Bobick, Kris King, Ray Strom (via teleconference), Jennifer Waletzko (via teleconference) and John Williams.

1. **CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**
 1. **Call to Order – Regular Meeting – 6:47 p.m.**
 2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 3. **MOTION – Agenda Approval with Additions**
 4. **MOTION – Approval of the 03-09-2022 City Council Meeting Minutes**
 5. **MOTION – Approval of the 01-26-2022 City Council Meeting Minutes**
 6. ~~MOTION – Approval of the 11-22-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes~~
 7. ~~MOTION – Approval of the 12-08-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes~~
 8. ~~MOTION – Approval of the 12-14-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes~~
 9. ~~MOTION – Approval of the 12-29-2022 City Council Meeting Minutes~~
 10. **MOTION – Pay Bills as Posted**

Motion by Hegland to approve the Consent Agenda items 3-5 and 10. Seconded by Wagamon. Unanimous approval.

3. **PRESENTATION**
 11. **Public Open Forum**

No participation.

12. **Planning Commission Report**

Wagamon recused herself from the conversation due to living across the street from the property in question.

King shared that the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on March 16 regarding a CUP amendment for Blake Drilling Co. Inc. that was originally approved in 2016, which allowed the business to construct its existing building immediately and a warehouse/office 5-6 years later. The amendment is required because the warehouse/office is planned to expand the building size than originally approved. She indicated the commission was split due to the request by the business to continue the building design standards that were originally approved however the building composition did not meet zoning and City ordinance requirements for building within the Commercial/Industrial District requiring

buildings to be no more than 50 percent metal facing the public right-of-way. The original plan received by the Planning Commission was approximately 25 percent brick and 75 percent metal, but a new plan showed 33.7 percent of the eastern façade and 31.65 percent of the southern façade was non-metal.

The Planning Commission decided to leave the decision to City Council with the recommendation to Blake that they provide an updated architectural plan and/or landscape plan combination bringing the easterly building façade into compliance, as the Council is the policy-making body.

Mursko said the original CUP did not meet the 50 percent rule, but the southerly façade had more brick, doors and windows so it was passed at that time because the Planning Commission and City Council felt the plan met the intent of the code. Mursko clarified that the originally planned entrance with two doors and more windows than the current plan did meet the code and that Blake had agreed to extend the 25 percent of brick around the building. Mursko also shared that Griffith had indicated that the correct way to approve the CUP amendment is with a variance as the Council does not have discretion to award a lower standard.

Preiner invited Williams and Bakowski, representing Blake Drilling Co. Inc., to address the Council, saying they had indicated that they would have a new set of elevations for tonight's meeting. Williams said they did not have the elevations due to workflow backlog. Williams requested the Council approve the amended CUP for the size of the building with the understating that it was Blake's intent to meet the 50 percent design standard on the east side of the building. Williams indicated renderings would be ready by the April 13 City Council meeting for the Council to review, but hoped Blake would receive approval in advance so they could move forward and keep with the construction timeline as a delay at this time would set them back quite a bit with the contractor's schedule.

Preiner said that the reservations of some on the Council was that they did not have official plans in place for them to see. Williams requested the CUP approval with the condition of City Council getting to see the plans for a final approval so that his contractor could get construction started on time. Preiner inquired how confident Blake was they could meet the 50 percent requirements. Williams indicated he was 100 percent confident he could meet all requirements.

Busch asked if the street-facing elevation is what would be 50 percent brick. Williams said that would be the case, leading Busch to indicate he would have no problem with that proposal.

Hegland inquired how Blake was planning on ordering materials without a final plan in place. Williams said the materials being ordered are what the Council approves. Hegland indicated that granting this conditional approval gives away any leverage the City Council might have should the proposed design deviate from the standards and inquired how soon Blake needs to move forward and how quickly they can get the elevations, as she'd be more interested in calling a special meeting to do an official approval instead of a conditional approval tonight. Williams asked how early before a potential special meeting he would need to submit new plans. Hegland said she didn't think the Council needed a lot of time to review one item before a special meeting but deferred to Mursko. Mursko said three-days' advance notice for a special meeting, which would allow for Council to review of the new materials. Griffith added that the Council does still have leverage with a conditional CUP amendment approval as they can revoke approval and stop the project if the conditions are not met. Since Blake is aware of that risk, the leverage is that Blake could lose money by having to stop construction.

Logren indicated she'd like to give Blake the benefit of the doubt as they've been good neighbors in Columbus thus far, referencing the company keeping a buffer between themselves and residents to reduce impact on the community. She also advised evergreens instead of oaks as landscaping.

Griffith clarified his comment on the variance, saying the question isn't properly in front of the Council without a variance application, so there's no way to vary the standard without the application. If that is how Blake would want to proceed, it would set them back approximately 60 days.

Preiner inquired how long Blake would need to address Hegland's concern. Williams indicated Blake's engineer had not shared when plans would be ready.

Preiner requested verification that if the Council approved the amendment with the condition that the City still had control to shut down the project if Blake does not show elevations that the City approves of. Griffith confirmed that was the case, referencing the Love's project that employed a similar condition.

Motion by Logren to approve the Conditional Use Permit amendment for Blake Drilling Co. Inc. based on adopting the Associate Planner's Report Findings of Facts 1-39 and Conditions 1-32 with an additional condition that the applicant present updated building elevations at the future April 13, 2022 City Council meeting and that approval of the application is based on the fact that they will do 100 percent of the work that is required for the east-facing side of the building and updated building elevation renderings that are consistent with the code standard of no more than 50 percent metal materials facing the public right-of-way, which is in the eastern direction. Seconded by Busch.

Hegland inquired if there was any way to set an official date in the motion instead of vaguely "in the future." Griffith confirmed that the date was included in the motion.

Unanimous approval. Motion carries.

Blake Drilling Co. Inc. Conditional Use Permit Amendment Findings of Fact:

1. The City received a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Amendment application from Blake Drilling Co. Inc. (Michael Meyer) on January 28, 2021. The application was found incomplete with a letter sent February 2, 2022.
2. Upon review of additional materials received February 15, 2022, the application was deemed incomplete with a letter sent on February 22, 2022.
3. Upon review of additional materials submitted on February 24, 2022, the application was deemed complete with a letter sent on February 28, 2022.
4. The 60-day review deadline is April 25, 2022.
5. The 120-day review deadline is June 24, 2022.
6. The "Property" in question is a total of 26.60 gross acres, with a proposed 4.9 acres of impervious surface, located at 13528 Lake Drive NE, legally described as Lot One, Block One, Blake Drilling, Columbus, Anoka County, Minnesota (PIN #33-32-22-32-0002).
7. The Property is zoned in the Commercial/Industrial (C/I) District.
8. This Property currently has an approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a contractor hop consisting of a dewatering subcontractor business, previously approved by the City Council on September 16, 2016, as Part 1 of a two-phased development.

9. The area around the Property consists of a vacant commercial property to the north, two vacant 5-acre residentially-zoned properties to the west, a commercial business across County Highway 23 to the east, and what appears to be a nonconforming residential use in the C/I District to the south.
10. The Property consists of a previously approved shop building at approximately 7,500 square feet and an approximate 3-acre gravel outdoor storage area for equipment (portable pumps on trailers, lay-flat hose, galvanized pipes) along with company vehicles and trailers.
11. The applicant states that the trucks and trailers consist of approximately 15 1-ton cab and chassis with 20-foot flatbed trailers and approximately six semi tractors with flatbed trailers or tankers.
12. As noted above, a Conditional Use Permit, approved in 2016, permitted the use and business at the Property. As referenced in their narrative, the existing contractor business (Blake Drilling Co.) consists of industrial sales, rental and service of submersible and trailer-mounted pumps and components, which are stored indoors, and the sales of new ball and socket-type pump fittings, which are also stored indoors.
13. The existing shop building consists of six (6) pump service bays, a fleet service bay and fabrication shop.
14. Typical hours are Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
15. An installation crew of 12 employees arrive at 7 a.m. and depart with equipment around 9 a.m. and return between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.
16. There are approximately 13 employees for the office and warehouse who are on-site from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
17. Customers visit the rental division approximately six to 10 times per day for pickups and returns.
18. The applicant is requesting the CUP amendment to expand the previously approved Phase 2 office/warehouse building by approximately 4,700 square feet. They are also extending their storage area 100 feet to the north while maintaining the existing width of approximately 369 feet for a total of 3.87 acres of storage area.
19. The office/warehouse building was originally approved at 13,500 square feet and is now being proposed at 18,200 square feet.
20. The storage area will continue to be a gravel surface and fenced-in with an 8-10' chain-link security fence.
21. The CUP amendment does not include any other expansion or new use on the Property, such as the reclamation of soil.
22. The office/warehouse building is proposed to be used for the Blake Drilling Co. offices and interior storage.
23. The building is proposed in the same location as the previously approved building but will be expanding approximately 60 feet to the north and 10 feet to the east.

24. Neither the front yard setback nor the south side yard setback is proposed to change as a result of the building expansion. The front yard setback is still proposed to remain 172 feet and the south side yard setback is proposed to remain 70.2 feet. All setbacks are compliant with the City Code.
25. The proposed building will consist of approximately 4,498 square feet of office space on the main floor, and a proposed future expansion on the second floor for a total of 8,992 square feet of office space. The remainder of the building consists of approximately 12,914 square feet of warehouse space that will be split into two sections with a fire wall, per building code.
26. The proposed building will have three bay doors for the indoor warehouse storage.
27. The proposal does not include any information on the trash enclosure design nor is the location on the Site Plan.
28. Section 7A-812 of the City Code stipulates; one (1) parking space for each employee plus one (1) parking space for each two (2) invitees or one (1) parking space for each 200 square feet of Gross Floor Area of retail space, or one (1) parking space for each 2,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area of warehouse space, whichever produces the higher number of parking spaces.
29. The required parking for Blake Drilling Co. is one space per 200 square feet of office area ($8,992/200=44.9$ spaces) plus one space per 2,000 square feet of total warehouse area ($20,414/2,000=10$ spaces) for a total of 64.9 parking spaces. This is greater than one parking space per employee and two parking spaces per two invitees.
30. Per the Site Plan dated February 23, 2022, the applicant proposes 42 existing stalls at 10'x20', two handicap-able stalls, and 20 future proof of parking stalls for a total of 64 stalls with an asphalt parking area. The parking is adequate for the proposed use and consistent with the City Code.
31. In their revised narrative dated February 24, 2022, the applicant states they will install the remainder of the landscaping per landscape plans dated July 21, 2016, which was approved with the initial Conditional Use Permit. The landscape plan includes 18 shade/ornamental trees and 69 foundation plantings on the front and sides of the office/warehouse building. This proposal is compliant with the conditions of approval of the first Conditional Use Permit and City Code.
32. Section 7A-800. K. requires that screening be installed to screen nonresidential uses from existing residential uses. Currently, there is screening installed on the east side of the Property, in the form of approximately 80 coniferous trees and no screening to the residential property south of the Property. However, with the construction of the proposed Phase 2 building, the storage yard will be effectively screened from the right-of-way and the residential property to the south and will be consistent and compliant with the City Code.
33. In the Narrative, the applicant has stated that they would like the building architectural design to be as consistent as possible with the previously approved plans from the 2016 CUP. This consists of approximately 25.3 percent stone wainscot and approximately 70 percent metal, when taking into account the 14 windows, on the façade that is facing the public right-of-way. Section 7A-745 of the City Code states that building exposures facing

the public streets must include a combination of approved materials that include no more than 50 percent metal. This current proposal is not consistent with the City Code.

34. Per the applicant's narrative, they acknowledge that their current architectural proposal is not consistent with the City Code. However, per the architectural rendering dated March 4, 2022, the applicant is proposing to add two additional doors, with awnings on the easterly ROW facing the façade. Furthermore, the applicant has indicated that they plan on adding additional columns of wainscoting along the two easterly facing corners to run up the length of the building to further enhance the building appearance towards the ROW. Due to these amendments, the applicant is requesting that the Planning Commission and City Council allow the building to be constructed similarly as the originally proposed building for the following reasons (1) the building will be compatible with the existing buildings on site (2) the overall site design will be compatible with the regional area, such as the Man Caves (3) the previous design was approved with the less percentages, however, they plan on adding more wainscot and a number of additional features to break up the façade. This is a policy question.
35. The applicant has supplied a lighting plan dated July 21, 2016, that shows that lighting standards are compliant with the City Code. However, the applicant has indicated that with the larger building there will be additional wall packs installed that shall not impact compliance with City Code.
36. The applicant has contacted the Anoka County Highway Division, who has indicated that there are no additional improvements required for the Phase 2 project.
37. Rice Creek Watershed District is currently reviewing the project and appears to have required that the Stormwater Management Plan must be updated. The applicant is expecting approval at the March 23, 2022, Rice Creek Watershed Board meeting.
38. The Property currently has a private septic system to the front. The applicant has indicated that the Phase 2 building will be attached to this septic system. The City building department has commented that the applicant will have to determine septic compliance prior to issuance of building permit.
39. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the CUP amendment on March 16, 2022.

Blake Drilling Co. Inc. Conditional Use Permit Amendment Conditions:

1. The CUP is contingent upon approval and recording of the Blake Drilling Columbus plat.
2. The CUP is contingent upon detailed recommendations of the City Engineer.
3. The CUP is contingent upon detailed plan review and approval by the City Building Official.
4. Access to the Property is subject to permitting by Anoka County.
5. Development of the Property is subject to the permitting of Rice Creek Watershed District.
6. No filling, excavating or other land disturbances are permitted in storm water infiltration or wetland areas without written approval by Rice Creek Watershed District and the City.

7. All exterior lighting shall be shrouded and directed away from adjacent properties and public streets and shall be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer and Building Official prior to installation.
8. Signage on the Property requires administrative review and permitting by the City.
9. All refuse must be stored in a building, trash transport (dumpster), or in covered cans. Any outdoor refuse storage area shall be enclosed on all sides visible from adjacent property by screening, compatible with the exterior of the buildings, not less than two (2) feet higher than the refuse container.
10. Any hazardous materials used, or hazardous wastes generated on the Property shall be in compliance with federal, state and county permitting and licensing requirements.
11. The operations on the Property must be consistent with all local, federal and state laws that apply to the use of the Property.
12. Blake shall be obligated to pay all costs and expenses incurred by the City in connection with any proceeding to revoke the CUP, including reasonable attorneys' fees and consultant fees.
13. The CUP Amendment is for expansion of the proposed Phase 2 Blake Drilling Co. Inc. office/warehouse building.
14. Approval of the CUP Amendment is contingent upon recommendations and comments made by the City Engineer.
15. Approval of the CUP Amendment is contingent upon completion of any recommendations or requirements by Rice Creek Watershed District.
16. Approval of the CUP Amendment is contingent upon recommendations and comments made by the City Attorney.
17. Approval is contingent upon compliance with any further comments by Anoka County Highway Division.
18. Approval is contingent upon septic compliance review and any further comment by the City's Building Department.
19. ~~Approval is contingent upon compliance inspection to ensure that landscaping is consistent to the updated landscape plan, updated to reflect landscape plantings as shown on previously approved plans dated July 21, 2016, has been installed.~~
20. Approval is contingent upon the review and compliance of an updated lighting plan to reflect the additional wall pack lights.
21. ~~Approval is contingent upon compliance and consistency with the Conditional Use Permit approved on September 16, 2016.~~
22. The Site Plan shall be updated to outline the location of the dumpster and trash enclosure and plans for the dumpster enclosure shall be submitted to the City for review. The dumpster enclosure must be built in compliance with City Code requirements, Section 7A-813. C.
23. Upon a finding of need an upon reasonable notice, the City Council may require all or a portion of the addition "proof of parking" spaces to be constructed, consistent with the approved plan.

24. Materials and company vehicles stored outside must be appropriately screened from adjacent residential use properties and the public right-of-way per Section 7A-800. K. and kept in good repair, and replacement may be required should it be determined that screening is not functioning as proposed and approved.
25. Development of the property and conduct of the business shall be consistent with the updated Site Plan dated January 21, 2022, showing the dumpster location, landscape plan dated July 21, 2016, updated architectural rendering dated March 30, 2022, showing updated wainscot addition, floor plans dated February 10, 2022, and the narrative statements submitted with the 2022 application.
26. Any sign installation must be applied for with City Staff and be compliant with City Ordinance Chapter 7B.
27. There shall be no dewatering or soil reclamation on site.
28. No other uses or intensification are allowed on the Property without an amendment to the CUP.
29. There are to be no chemicals, odors, gasses, hazardous wastes or fumes on the Property as a result of this business, excepting normal emissions and discharges associated with operation of motor vehicles.
30. The Applicant shall reimburse the city for all out-of-pocket expense incurred in the review and issuance of the CUP Amendment and for all ongoing inspections and enforcement actions required for the CUP Amendment.
31. The CUP, once issued, may be revoked upon a finding by the City Council that the property and/or use is not in compliance with the conditions for approval of such use, following warning and hearing.
32. The applicant shall update the architectural plan and/or the landscape plan in combination to bring the easterly building façade facing the public right-of-way closer to compliance with the intent of the Commercial/Industrial District design standards for review by the City Council.
33. The applicant shall present updated building elevations at the April 13, 2022, City Council meeting. Approval of the application is based on the fact that Blake Drilling Co. will do 100 percent of the work that is required for the east-facing side of the building and provide updated building elevation renderings consistent with the code standard of no more than 50 percent metal materials facing the public right-of-way.

4. STAFF & CONSULTANT REPORT

13. Engineer's Report

Bittner brought up the 182nd Lane cul-de-sac project, indicating Option 3 had been staked on location as requested. He and Windingstad have visited the location and believe it's a feasible option to construct, seeing only the removal and relocation of an existing culvert under the Herzog driveway as an addition to the plan. The project's estimated cost of \$34,000 is subject to bid quotation and survey costs, but he did not include any costs for easement attainment or other legal work.

Mursko indicated legal and title work is forecasted to cost approximately \$15,000, but that she'd received emails from one property owners saying estimates were not included for the acquisition of easements, something the Council has not yet discussed. Griffith continued, saying that in the past the Council had conducted closed meetings to properly consider discussions regarding value, pricing and

authority given to staff to negotiate those acquisitions. Preiner inquired if Griffith was recommending a closed meeting. Griffith confirmed it was his recommendation if the Council wants to move forward with the proposal, as it is his understanding that the City will need to acquire additional rights.

Hegland indicated that one property owner is adamant that they will not be donating land for the project and another also wants to get paid if another is selling land for the easement. With that in mind, Hegland found it prudent to have a closed meeting to discuss potential purchase of land easements.

In addition to getting basic assessment data, Griffith said they would do a limited review of comparable sales to tell the City how close the assessed value is to market value before the closed meeting.

Preiner motioned to direct the City Staff to continue discussion of property acquisition to the 182nd Lane cul-de-sac to a closed meeting on April 13, 2022, which is scheduled at the end of the next Council meeting. Seconded by Hegland. Unanimous approval. Motion carries.

Bittner continued, bringing up a proposed 2022 Pavement Improvement Project in the Kettle River Heights neighborhood, suggesting a reclamation project for the roadway. Cost estimates were included on page 4 of the meeting agenda packet additions, totaling approximately \$500,000.

Windingstad referenced conversations with Preiner about increased oil costs and their impact on price increases for projects. His projected budget is lower than Bittner's, as he's estimating approximately \$400,000 based on previous projects. He encouraged City Council to advertise for bids and make determinations based on the bids received. Bittner agreed with Windingstad's strategy, pointing out that some contractors may have already locked in their oil prices before the oil price inflation.

Preiner asked Windingstad what his plan was if the Council did not accept a bid or if the road was in desperate need of attention. Windingstad said Public Works wouldn't do a seal coating on the area described, but would do crack filling and fill potholes.

Hegland asked if this project was on a list of projected projects that was submitted approximately half a year ago. Windingstad indicated this project specifically may not have been on the list, but that his list is fluid and updated annually, based on how roads are holding up, which are more traveled and how repairs are performing.

Hegland continued, sharing that the City of Forest Lake told the *Forest Lake Times* that they're expecting significant price increases this season as high as 200 percent, but that she's ok with requesting bids. Finally, Hegland asked if the West Freeway North project is scheduled for this year, as she was under the impression that there was a timeline to meet for grant purposes. Bittner shared that the W Freeway North project is in good shape in regards to timeline and using the grant, as there's no sunset on using it. Bittner said the City has reviewed the 60 percent plan for the project, so the SRF consultant is beginning to complete the remaining 40 percent of the plan and design with intentions of finishing in April so it may be submitted to the state for approval. The project is scheduled to be bid upon in August.

Hegland asked why curbs were on the budget for this project if the current road does not have a curb. Windingstad shared that the curb starts when traveling Vassar Street NE north of 168th Lane NE, pointing out that it's not traditional concrete curb, but asphalt that rolls into the turf which is starting to grow through.

Wagamon inquired if this road was ever on Windingstad's list of plans, or if this road was just added to the top of the list. Windingstad said it was always on the plan, but that this road wasn't in as bad a condition as some projects in the past like Hornsby Street that required immediate attention.

Busch shared he'd heard about contractor using a materials escalator and wondered if any bids received by the City would have those included, but he was open to accepting bids for the project. He asked if the City was responsible for replacing the culverts under this road. Windingstad shared that a culvert under private property is the responsibility of the landowner and culvert under City roads were the City's responsibility.

Busch also asked if it was normal to have a budget line item for mailbox post replacement. Windingstad said it was to streamline reconstruction and repaving projects to ensure mailbox posts were legal height, met USPS regulations, were the breakaway style and easier for the City to maintain.

Hegland inquired if citizens fought the City purchasing and installing standard mailboxes. Windingstad said he hadn't received pushback, but pointed out that some citizens had replaced a City-installed mailbox with one of their own, some of which are too close to the road and not the breakaway style. In those cases, the City will not replace a post should it be damaged by a plow or other City vehicle. Bittner added limited materials are needed for this project, which should hopefully keep costs down, referencing other projects in his office that require items that may not be available until 2023.

Wagamon motioned to direct City Engineer to move forward with the Kettle River Heights Improvement Project by obtaining bids. Busch seconded. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

14. Attorney's Report

Griffith shared an update to the fiscal disparities bill. In addition to Senator Karin Housley being the lead author in her house, Representative Kelly Morrison has agreed to be the lead author in the MN House of Representatives with Representative Shelly Christensen joining as an author as well. Having already been introduced in the Senate, the bill will be introduced in the House next week and awaiting hearings in both bodies.

15. Mayor & City Council Members' Report

Wagamon and Logren had no report.

Busch shared that he'd had a conversation with Housley, who said she'd make sure the bill would be passed.

Hegland brought up the Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization (SRWMO) budget, sharing the budget the City accepted as part of the 10-year plan was \$50,000 per year but that this year's budget was coming in at \$44,500 to try to bring the cost down. In the two years prior, the SRWMO had successfully drive the cost down by using reserves. Last year's total SRWMO budget was \$47,372. To save costs this year, an alum study for Coon Lake was eliminated since the cost of an alum treatment is \$1 million, making a study pointless. Last year at this time, Columbus contributed \$9500 to the total budget, and the downsized budget reduced Columbus' contribution to \$9346. Hegland shared that Ham Lake approved the budget in addition to the \$2000 for the JPA and hoped that the City would follow suit.

Motion by Preiner to approve the 2023 Sunrise WMO budget in the amount of \$44,500 with the Columbus prorated portion of \$9346.73 as presented. Seconded by Logren. Unanimous approval. Motion carries.

Hegland provided an update on the City Accountant position that has been vacant since early February. Despite the opening being posted twice, the City has received no applicants. Hegland attributed the lack of attention to a competitive job market within the profession driven by a reduced talent base. The Personnel Committee has met for two weeks to discuss how to change the approach, including consulting Lissa Grabowski, a consultant accountant with experience hiring accountants for a non-profit that is currently consulting as the interim accountant for the City, about the work the City demands to determine what level of accountant the City should be looking for. After their discussion, Hegland feels the job description that has been posted was shooting too low for what the City needs. Hegland recommends reposting the position as a Senior Accountant with an increased salary between \$6000-\$7000 more than originally budgeted for, due to increased wages and hours.

Wagamon inquired if making the changes to this job description and salary would attract applicants. Hegland indicated that she thought it would be a different talent pool, as the current job description was an entry-level position right out of college and this one is for a senior accountant.

Logren wondered why the City needed to employ an accountant to this degree, referencing future impacts on the City's budget. Hegland indicated that she would have agreed before learning about all that the City manages, like City streets, utilities and other types of assets, and that the City needs a candidate with experience or interest in fund accounting.

Wagamon agreed that the cost is painful for the City but agreed that this was the next step based on the recommendation from Grabowski.

Preiner also agreed with Logren about the cost but pointed out that no applicants with accounting degrees for the original posting were received for six weeks. His hope is that the elevated title and income would attract an eligible applicant. Hegland pointed out that the hourly wages are a savings on the consultant's wages of over \$100 per hour.

Motion by Hegland to approve the addition of up to \$7525 for the accounting position and authorize staff to go ahead with a posting once we get a job description finalized. Seconded by Wagamon.

Preiner inquired how long it would take to post the new job description. Hegland said it should take approximately a week, and Mursko added that it would run for two weeks and that first-round interviews would commence with eligible candidates while still accepting applications.

Logren said that she would like the motion to include that increasing the step would have impacts on future budgets.

Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Logren brought up the Columbus Event Committee Report, indicating that the committee felt this sort of topic should fall to the Park Board.

Wagamon echoed Logren, saying the City knows what it would like to do, but that it would need a committee to plan and execute it. She indicated that other cities either have someone running events

on city staff or a subcommittee of the Park Board and felt that Columbus taking a step in one of those directions would help the City be in control of whatever activities happen via volunteers.

Hegland inquired if the Park Board had been informed of this. Mursko said that the Park Board doesn't meet until next week, but the committee assigned this subcommittee to the Park Board because it felt that was where City events of all types would take place.

Hegland wondered why the memo indicated Fall Fest shouldn't be funded with tax dollars. Logren wondered if something she had said in the meeting was misconstrued, as she had meant to indicate that she doesn't feel tax dollars should be used for specific groups that are raising money for their own organization to give to others. If the subcommittee does come up with something that does promote welfare or generate community pride, she would find it appropriate to use tax dollars.

Busch asked if there was availability to turn an event into a fundraiser conducted by the City to benefit itself. Logren said since the idea of a fundraiser in a City park is for the organizers to contribute something or have money involved with the City since it is supplying equipment, security, etc. so that the City is not covering the organizations' expenses.

Griffith clarified that in other communities, third parties are usually the ones that fundraise to benefit the city, not the city itself since cities have taxing authority.

Motion by Hegland to accept the recommendation from the Event Subcommittee and direct City Staff to discuss with the Park Board creating a subcommittee with the goals listed, with the exception of using tax dollars if the focus is health, safety or welfare. Seconded by Wagamon. Unanimously approved.

16. Public Works' Report

No report.

17. Public Communications Coordinator's Report

Keith advised City Councilmembers to keep an eye on their email as he begins work on the City's annual newsletter.

18. City Administrator's Report

No report.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

19. Planning Commission Meeting 04.06.2022 at 6:30 p.m.

20. City Council Workshop Meeting 04.12.2022 at 5:30 p.m.

21. City Council Meeting 04.13.2022 at 6:30 p.m.

22. Calendar of Meetings

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Hegland to adjourn. Seconded by Preiner. Unanimous approval. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectively submitted:

March 23, 2022

City of Columbus

City Council

Connor Keith

Connor Keith, Public Communications Coordinator