



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024 | 2:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL B. O'QUINN, COMMITTEE CHAIR

Councilor(s) Present: O'Quinn, Abbott, Alexander, Moore, Smitherman, Williams, Woods

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Council President O'Quinn.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action Taken:

Councilor Alexander Motioned to Approve.

Councilor Williams Seconded the Motion.

The APRIL 16, 2024 and April 16, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes were Approved as Recorded.

**3. Council Administrator's Report - Cheryl Kidd, Council Administrator
Mr. McDaniels presented the Administrator's Report.**

I. Department Budget Update:

As staff continues to work with the Administration to facilitate the end of year transactions, it is anticipated the departmental ending account balance will be approximately \$200K. Staff enlists the Council's support in transferring the ending account balance the City Council Capital Projects Account. The Capital Projects Account is where the funding will reside to accommodate the ongoing improvements in the Council Chambers, Conference Room A, and the Anteroom. In addition, staff is exploring the removal of the file cabinets in the workspace north of Conference Room A to provide additional workspace for Central and District office staffs.

The G. Courtney French Broadcasting Agreement, in an amount not to exceed \$25K will appear on the May 28, 2024 Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda and the June 4, 2024 City Council Agenda.

District Account Balances

Staff is preparing to request all applicable transfers on the June 10, 2024 Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda.

There are at least two Councilors who are behind on programming their ARPA funding. The funding obligation deadline is December 31, 2024. The expenditure deadline is December 31, 2026. The point of contact is Chris Hatcher.

II. Central Staff

President O'Quinn asked Ms. Kidd to provide the Councilors with Central Staff job descriptions.

The job descriptions that are presently proposed in the City Council Central Staff were distributed for the Council's review.

III. District Staff/Office Concerns

All district offices request for support in contract administration is actively under review by OCA or have already been converted to a purchase order.

IV. Departmental Concerns

An interior designer is working to complete the soft renovations in the Council Chambers. The renovations include but are not limited to seating cushions inside the secured areas, window treatments, wood finishing/touch-up painting, door hardware, and re-upholstering or replacing the fabric behind the City seal.

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As quotes/new information are received from the perspective vendor, the information will be shared with the Council's leadership.

Several of the Council Chambers microphones were temporarily inoperable, but have been restored by the vendor.

A requisition for the furniture for Conference Room A has been submitted for review and approval for a purchase order approximately 3-4 weeks ago. Staff is awaiting the purchase order.

Employee Benefits Open Enrollment

If anyone has not met with the benefit coordinators to date or have an appointment scheduled before May 23, 2024, schedule an appointment to meet with a coordinator on May 23, 2024 at the Central Library. If anyone is unable to meet on May 23rd, an opportunity will be extended via telephone between May 21 and May 28, 2024.

V. Constituent Complaints/Concerns

None noted.

VI. Council Travel/Events/Invitations

During the 2024 Regular Legislative Session, 495 bills were introduced in the House and 349 in the Senate. To date, Governor Ivey has signed 340 bills. There are an additional 118 bills that will probably become Acts without her signature. There is a list of all bills that have been enacted by the Legislature available on the Secretary of State's website.

Act 2024-194 - sponsored by Senator Wagner

Effective January 1, 2025 all elected mayors and members of governing bodies will be required to enroll in ten (10) credit hours of training and development.

Senate Bill 9 is now Act 2024-246 - sponsored by Senator Coleman Madison

The bill allows Birmingham to enforce state regulations on unpaid liens and to recover those fines as necessary.

Act 2024-278 – Sponsored by Senator Orr

The revision to public records compliance.

The Alabama League of Municipalities Convention was May 15 – May 18 in Huntsville, AL. Four Councilors attended the Convention.

Councilor Smitherman retained her position as Vice Chair of Finance Administration and Governmental Relations.

To date, the groundbreaking Ceremony for the Birmingham Amphitheater has not been rescheduled. Kim Garner is the point of contact, and as information becomes available, she will inform the Council.

The National League of Cities Centennial Road Show is underway, and they are asking members to join them in one or more of the 100 cities towns and villages road show stops.

The closest stops to Birmingham will be on June 1st in the city of Wetumpka and then to Montgomery, AL. The first stop will be at City Hall at 8:00 a.m. and then they will travel to the city of Montgomery at 11 a.m.

CREED 63 will celebrate their third-year anniversary on June 12, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Due to Major League Baseball, the June 20th Cohort Meeting has been cancelled. A new date has not been determined. Most of the Councilors will not be available during the first week of July. Councilors are asked to confirm their availability for the latter part of July.

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The Summer NLC Boards and Leadership Meetings dates are June 10th through June 13th in Rancho Cordova, California. Councilors are asked to submit their travel plans as soon as possible. Attendance and participation are several of the conditions for service during the Council term on the board or on an advocacy committee. Councilors Alexander, O'Quinn, Smitherman and Tate are in NLC leadership positions and will attend the meetings. That leaves potentially five Councilors available for the June 11, 2024, City Council Meeting. With four Councilors unavailable for the June 11th Council Meeting, it will be determined if the remaining five Councilors will be available to reach a quorum or if the meeting will be cancelled.

The Business Council of Alabama's 2024 Governmental Affairs Conference is scheduled for August 9 through August 11 in Point Clear. Lodging is still available for those who are interested in registering and attending.

VII. Questions & Directives

Birmingham City Schools (BCS) Mental Health Program Overview- Superintendent Mark Sullivan, BCS

A Resolution pursuant to Subsection 11-40-1 and Subsection 1611-9.1 Codes of Alabama 1975, authorizing the Mayor to execute and deliver an agreement with the Birmingham Board of Education in an amount not to exceed \$885,000 to provide the following goods and services for the benefit of students at the Birmingham City Schools. The Board will provide assistance to create Birmingham City School System School-based Mental Health Services Program that will provide mental health support on every Birmingham City School System campus selected by the Birmingham Board of Education. This allocation is exclusively for the purposes stated. Said funds shall be paid from account number 00001_400 _ 96200 _ 96214.550-003.

Dr. Sullivan stated that the funds will ensure that every school has a full-time counselor so they can identify the areas where students have issues and then recommend those individual students to other agencies within the school district.

The City of Birmingham contributed \$1 million to the Birmingham City School System for mental health services. Through the 2021-2022 school year, the funds were spent on all the schools that were provided a .5 counselor, meaning one counselor was shared between two different schools. With the use of the fund in the 2021-2022 school year, they school system was able to provide a school counselor at each individual school to address mental health needs, as well as other issues counselors deal with on a day-to-day basis. In addition, \$41K of the funds were spent to assist faculty and staff with background services as it relates to the Employee Assistance Program. The Board provided MANDT Training to individuals at schools in the amount of \$74K. The MANDT Training provides staff the communication relational and mental health technical skills to intervene with students early. The main goal was to intervene early, identify when a student is having a crisis, to safely support them, and get them back to an expected state. MANDT also trains bus drivers. They provided a school-based comprehensive team the training they needed, as well as school bus drivers. They also wanted to cultivate a climate and culture that supported psychological and emotional safety. As it relates to the funding for the Birmingham City Schools, the appropriation was very necessary and helpful, because based on the funding the State of Alabama provides for the counselors, when they receive a count of 249 or below as it relates to number of students, the funding from the State is only .5. The other .5 is given from the appropriation from the City of Birmingham that allowed the school system not only to have just the .5 unit, but they also did not have to split those units between different schools. The other .5 was the funding the school system received from the appropriation, allowing every school to have a FTE for the counselor. The amount of 500 or more was the amount that is given from the State of Alabama. They gave a full unit. As it related to elementary or the middle school, based on that range, they only earned .5. For the 2022-2023 school year, the funding was able to support 20 of the 0.5 units that the school system would not have otherwise had. The total cost along with fringe benefits was \$654,000.00, along with instructional supplies in the amount of \$39,172.00 and the MANDT training, including bus drivers in the amount of \$54,604.00. The grand total funding was \$1,011,703.00.

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The projection for the upcoming school year indicates that instead of the 20.5 units, they will actually have 21 units. The grand total will be 10.5 units that will possibly be needed to fund the schools to have a full counselor at every school.

The school board uses an aligned method for multi-tiered systems of supports for all students. Several of the programs that are used to support students socially and emotionally include rethinkEd, ThriveWay, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, etc. The 2022-2023 Counselor to Student Ratio Recommendations as provided by the American School Counseling Association provides 250 students to one counselor. The national average is 385 students to one counselor. The State's average is 389 students to one counselor. The funding the school system received from the City allowed them to be below the State and National average. During the 2022-2023 school year, the system experienced 17 student deaths. For the 2023-2024 school year, there were 7 students and two faculty members deaths.

Councilor Smitherman Motioned to Amend the Submission Sheet submitted to the Committee of the Whole from “an amount not to exceed \$885,000.00 to amount not to exceed \$1 million that is reflected in Resolution No. 1842-22.

Councilor Abbott Seconded the Motion.

Councilor Alexander Motioned to Forward Item to the City Council Agenda for Approval as Amended.

Councilor Smitherman Seconded the Motion.

Item Recommended to the City Council Agenda.

4. **Mayor's Community Safety Plan- Uche Bean, Director of Community Safety Initiatives
Not Present**
5. **OLD/NEW BUSINESS
None**
6. **ADJOURNMENT
Councilor Williams Motioned to Adjourn.
Councilor Smitherman Seconded the Motion.
Meeting Adjourned.**