

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

September 13, 1993

Committee Members Present:

Michael Pollock (Chairman), James Hayes, Marya Ryan, Clifford Singer, John Taylor,
Joseph Whelan

Committee Members Absent:

None

Staff Members Present:

Bruce Walden, Jack Waaler, Bill Gray, Glenn Berman, Rod Fletcher, Joseph Smith, April
Getchius, Mayor Satterthwaite, Phyllis Clark

Others Present:

Matthew Snyder, Members of the News Media

Meeting Location:

City Council Chambers

There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman Pollock.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

There were none.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. Hayes moved to approve the minutes of the August 9, 1993 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a voice vote.

Report on Railroad Right-Of-Way Disposition

City Planner/Community Development Director April Getchius distributed a memorandum concerning the disposition of railroad right-of-way between Florida Avenue and Washington Street. After Committee members were given time to read the information, Ms. Getchius stated that she and the Mayor personally contacted residents adjacent to the right-of-way that had not previously responded to a survey or personal inquiry regarding their preference for the disposition of the property. She said the results of the information compiled reveal that 24 property owners prefer private ownership, 22 prefer a bike trail, and 4 prefer that the City do nothing. She noted that the 22 preferring a bike trail includes Cherry Hills Townhomes and Scottswood Manor residents who are not necessarily trail advocates, but want the public to assume maintenance responsibility. She said most respondents on both sides of the issue expressed concern about privacy and security. Ms. Getchius said that a split remains between preferences of individuals in the neighborhood. Ms. Getchius outlined the options available for the Council as follows: 1) City do nothing which would leave the property owners, Illinois Power Company and the Norfolk and Southern Railroad at odds with one another; 2) City acquire the property, improve the right-of-way as part of the Capital Improvement Program and convey the property to adjacent owners (Ms. Getchius noted that such action would be an unusual use of Capital Improvement funds and force competition between other capital improvement projects that are already prioritized); 3) Proceed with acquisition, assess property owners for improvement costs, and sell adjacent property to owners who would take it; 4) Construct a bike trail on 30 feet of the 66 foot right-of-way, erect a privacy fence, lower the grade and construct drainage swales which would leave 18 feet to convey to property owners. Ms. Getchius noted that 80% of the anticipated \$161,500 costs would be covered by an ISTEA grant and a local Conservation Group is willing to begin fund raising efforts to raise the remaining \$32,300 required and to provide day to day maintenance on the proposed bike trail. This option would require mowing by the City and may require additional staff or overtime hours.

Ms. Getchius added that in the interim a barrier has been erected on the right-of-way near Florida Avenue to prevent vehicular access, security lights could be installed on existing poles at a cost of \$1,200 for one year.

Mayor Satterthwaite expressed support for the compromise described by Ms. Getchius incorporating a bike trail and conveyance of property to interested owners.

Mr. Whelan pointed out that the numbers indicate that more property owners prefer ownership than a bike trail. Noting the millions of dollars spent in other neighborhoods, he said it is a disgrace that the City cannot find the money to secure the properties of residents in the area.

Mr. Pollock explained his reasons for supporting the application of an ISTEA grant and moved as follows:

"Staff is requested to: Prepare an ISTEA funding request to be submitted for the improvement of the abandoned railway property between Washington and Florida. The grant request shall include complete regrading, cleanup, storm sewer improvements, surveying, property acquisition

costs, construction of a multi-use recreational path, landscaping, and funds for security fencing and lighting for the entire length of the project.

Work with the local Rails to Trails organization and adjoining landowners to help design the project. The Rails to Trails organization will try to provide the 20% matching funds required, and provide for regular and long term funding for maintenance of the pathway.

Insure that a minimum of 18 feet on either side of the center of trail be surveyed and conveyed to adjacent property owners."

Mr. Pollock added comments regarding his hope that if a trail is installed that it would be continued to the south in the future and that the trail be designed with low maintenance requirements.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Ryan.

Mr. Singer moved to amend the motion by adding that staff continue to work with neighbors by obtaining information regarding their interest in accepting additional parcels of the right-of-way in order that conveyance of the property be complete in case the Conservation Group is unable to raise sufficient funding to initiate the project and provide maintenance assistance.

Mr. Pollock and Ms. Ryan agreed to adding Mr. Singer's amendment to the motion.

Discussion continued regarding ownership of the abandoned railroad property. Ms. Getchius stated that it is her understanding that the Norfolk and Southern Railroad intends to request a title search on the property.

Mr. Singer moved to amend by including in the motion that 1) the grant application require no more than \$1,000 per year in maintenance costs for the City and 2) that the City will commit to prepare the grant application at the time local organizations have raised their commitments for matching funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Whelan moved a substitute motion that the City acquire the property from Norfolk and Southern Railroad and proceed with grading, surveying and deeding the property to adjacent landowners free of charge. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor.

Noting that he would like to have information regarding the title search of the property and information from Chief Schlieter regarding security in the area, Mr. Taylor moved to table the substitute motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan and failed by a voice vote.

The substitute motion failed 1-4-1 by roll call vote. Voting aye were Members of the Council: Whelan -1; voting nay: Hayes, Pollock, Ryan and Singer - 4; abstaining: Taylor - 1.

The motion to amend carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Singer moved to amend by requesting that staff investigate with adjoining property owners the vacation of the Adams Street right-of-way for resale as a single lot and further development, the proceeds, if any, to be counted toward reducing the matching fund requirement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hayes and following discussion carried by a voice vote.

Following further discussion, the main motion, as amended carried 5-0 by roll call vote. Voting aye were Members of the Council: Hayes, Pollock, Ryan, Singer and Taylor - 5; voting nay: Whelan - 1.

Amendment To City Code To Allow Community Development Director To Accept Annexation Agreements For UCSD Permits

Ms. Getchius explained that a proposal to allow the Director of Community Development Services to accept annexation agreements in order to expedite approval of sanitary sewer service for certain individuals is designed to streamline problems regarding the time requirements of annexation agreement approval. She added that the proposed acceptance of annexation agreements would only occur for requests in which there were no outstanding issues and would be facilitated on a standard annexation form. Any zoning changes, concessions or waivers would require Council action as is currently the case.

Questions were raised by Committee Members regarding the possibility of annexation agreements not being ultimately approved by the Council after a sanitary hook up is completed. Mr. Waaler stated that the standard agreement could be revised to include a warning that Council could deny an annexation petition and/or delete Section 4 of Article II which states the Council will approve any final subdivision plats which conform to the requirements of the City's Subdivision Code.

There was a consensus to return the proposal to staff for revisions as suggested by the Committee and that the item be returned to the Committee on Administration and Finance in October.

Mr. Pollock stated that the amendment will be on the September 20, 1993 Council agenda.

Review of CRC Drop-Off Sites

Public Works Director Bill Gray presented a recommendation to continue funding for the recycling drop-off facility at Jerry's IGA for the rest of the fiscal year at a cost of \$1,940 per month.

Chief Administrative Officer Bruce Walden noted that any reduction in U-Cycle and drop-off facility spending would not realistically result in savings since the programs are funded from supplementary reserves, but rather would reduce deficit spending and increase the balance in

supplementary reserve funds.

Matthew Snyder, Executive Director, Community Recycling Center, presented an alternate proposal for fees charged based on an increase in volumes. He suggested that costs be designated at \$1940 per month with a ceiling of \$2,300 plus \$85/ton for quantity above 16.5 tons.

Mr. Singer moved to approve continuation of the Recycling Drop-Off Facility program at the funding level recommended by staff if an agreement can be reached with Community Recycling Center. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a voice vote.

Review of U-Cycle Program

Mr. Gray presented revisions to the Environmental Management line item for the U-Cycle Program. He noted that personnel changes and current service levels could produce a positive balance of \$101,130. Mr. Gray recommended that the recycling program continue as is currently provided until a new solid waste program is established.

When questioned about the possibility of continuing the U-Cycle program at the current funding level for the rest of the fiscal year, Mr. Walden said there are potential problems with the program and he could not make that guarantee.

Environmental Manager Rod Fletcher explained reductions to the line item. He noted that changes in the line item include transfers for personnel services not accounted for in the Council's budget, a reduction in processing service fees, a reduction in cash depreciation and elimination of capital expenditures for a collection vehicle.

Mr. Singer moved to continue curbside recycling and one drop-off site through March 1, 1994 and if funding mechanisms and bidding procedures have not been decided by then that another drop-off center be established and publicly financed curbside recycling be reduced to once per month and that this motion supersede direction provided to staff during the budget process. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor.

To provide members of the Committee with time to review Mr. Singer's written motion, Mr. Pollock suggested a five minute recess. There were no objections.

The Committee recessed at 9:32 p.m. and reconvened at 9:41 p.m. with all members previously in attendance still present.

Mayor Satterthwaite suggested that the motion be postponed in order for staff to consider the ramifications. Mr. Pollock suggested that the motion be defeated and that the Committee direct staff to continue for the current program for the next 90 days.

Mr. Singer moved to table the motion for two weeks. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan and carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Pollock stated that Review of U-Cycle Program will be on the September 27, 1993 agenda of the Committee on Environment and Public Safety.

Fall Leaf Collection Discussions

Mr. Pollock explained that staff has suggested that the reduction in U-Cycle expenditures could be used to fund a fall leaf collection program.

Mr. Fletcher reviewed the history of leaf collection stating that prior to October, 1988, the City provided collection events in the spring and fall paid from general funds. Contractual collection followed also funded from general funds. General fund relief was obtained by developing a system for user generated funding, a recycling program offering U-Bags and U-Ties for sale to fund the programs.

Discussion revealed a consensus that offering the program on a one-time basis would be confusing to the public who have become accustomed the making private arrangements for pick-up.

Mr. Pollock stated that in the absence of a motion, the fall leaf program will not be implemented.

IDOT Agreement - University/Coler and University/Orchard Traffic Signal Improvement

Mr. Singer moved to send to Council the resolutions to facilitate traffic signal improvements on University Avenue at Coler Avenue and Orchard Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan and carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Pollock stated that the resolutions will be on the September 20, 1993 Council agenda.

Appointments to Committees, Commissions and Boards

Mr. Singer moved to send to Council the Mayoral appointments to the Human Relations Commission, the Urbana Free Library Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Community Development Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hayes and carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Pollock stated that the appointments will be on the September 20, 1993 Council agenda.

Resolution Relating To Participation By Elected Officials In The Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund

Mr. Walden stated that the proposed resolution clarifies the number of hours of

Committee on Administration and Finance
September 13, 1993
Page 7

employment for the Mayor. The revision from 600 to 1,000 hours insures continued eligibility in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund.

Mr. Singer moved to send the resolution to Council. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Pollock stated that the resolution will be on the September 20, 1993 Council agenda.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Pollock declared the meeting adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Menges, Secretary

*This meeting was tape recorded

**This meeting was broadcast on cable television