

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024 | 2:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL B. O'QUINN, COMMITTEE CHAIR

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

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 Williams Motioned to Approve.

Councilor Smitherman Seconded the Motion.

The February 20, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes were Approved as Recorded.

3. **Council Administrator's Report- Cheryl Kidd, Councilor Administrator**

Department Budget Update:

The Budget Hearing is scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2024, 2:30 p.m. A link has been created for viewing. Submission packets were distributed to the Councilors.

The district budgets will be delivered to each office in April 2024.

The 2023 Statement of Economic Interest is due on April 30, 2024.

Senator Linda Coleman-Madison has introduced two new bills in the Senate: SB9 and SB3

SB9 – Class I municipalities enforcement of state regulations and municipal code liens, judicial in rem foreclosures, court-ordered sell of property, recovery of unpaid liens, and cost of enforcement.

SB3- Landbank authorizes tax sale property acquisition, tax exemption for acquired properties.

Departmental Concerns:

Staff continues to work with each district with purging files and surplus equipment.

The Administration's Communication Team participated in a presentation led by Eric Burgess, Interpersonal Frequency, on the proposed launch of the new City of Birmingham's website. It is projected that the new website will launch within the next 8-9 months. Additional information is forthcoming.

Ms. Kidd personally thank the PIO Team for their preparation of the Town Hall Meeting.

Kim Garner produced a Spanish version of the Council's Budget information book.

Once a second review of the translation has been completed, the booklets will be posted on the Council's website.

The English and Spanish version will also be accessible via QR codes.

Ms. Kidd also thanked the entire Central Staff for their continued support of the Council.

Travel:

The Economic Development Cohort is Friday, March 22, 2024.

NCRC Conference is April 2 – April 4, 2024, in Washington, DC.

The Alabama League of Municipalities Conference is May 15 – May 18, 2024. Registration is open through April 12, 2024.

Questions & Concerns:

Councilor Smitherman would like to have funding included to the budget to allow youth delegates to attend conferences such as NLC.

Departmental Budget:

A request has been submitted for an additional \$180K to spread across three (3) line items; professional fees/consulting/other, marketing, and travel. This represents an additional 14% increase in the departmental budget.

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Office Budget

There is a request that the total amount increase from \$27,800 to \$29,800, which is a difference of an additional \$2,000.00. The additional \$2,000.00 is being requested in the travel line item. The cost of travel has escalated.

Councilor Williams asked if consideration was made for council committees to have individual budgets.

Councilor O'Quinn would like Councilor's individual budget request(s) be finalized and reflected in the presentation for the March 21, 2024 budget hearing.

Councilor Smitherman is appreciative that the legislative analyst and language translation services positions are reflected in the budget.

Action Taken:

No Action - Information Only.

4. Right Size Parking Amendments- Hunter Garrison, Senior Planner, Department of Planning, Engineering & Permits.

Hunter Garrison presented an update on Right Size Parking Amendments

Current Requirements:

- When a development is built, the City requires a certain number of parking spaces be provided on site.
- They cannot provide more or less than the required number without regulatory action. If a business is required to have five parking space, the business must build five spaces. They cannot build more or less without seeking some type of variance.
- Some parts of downtown do not require a certain number, and some have a 50% reduction.
- There are some small discounts for transit proximity or bike rack installation available.

Key Proposed Changes:

- Minimum parking requirements are removed.
- Previous minimums become new maximums for surface parking lots. Parking decks do not have a maximum if ground level is activated. Garage parking or carport parking that is covered for a residential dwelling unit does not count towards their two-unit maximum.
- Developments over a certain size (25,000 & 50,000 sq ft) must submit a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan. This requirement does not exist.
- Some development types have bicycle parking requirements.
- If accessible via a maintained, good condition alleyway residential parking would be in the rear.

Four Key Reasons to Eliminate Minimums:

- Parking minimums make housing less affordable and limit where it can be built.
- Parking minimums make sprawl endemic, this prevents a multi-modal system from becoming viable by increasing the distance you must travel.
- Parking minimums block redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings as complying with minimums can make projects infeasible.
- Parking contributes to environmental hazards such as flooding and urban heat island effect.

What Right Sizes Parking Does:

- Encourages infill development on vacant and smaller lots.
- Enables affordable and missing middle housing construction.
- Improves walkability and pedestrian safety.
- Makes transit more viable due to increased density along corridors.
- Addresses stormwater, urban heat island, and climate change.

What Right Sizes Parking Doesn't Do:

- Eliminate parking altogether.
- Remove ADA parking requirements.
- Address curbside parking enforcement.
- Address parking in front yards.
- Affect residents' private driveways or garages.
- Parking will still be built; this just lets the market drive it and allows parking.

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How to Manage Parking Going Forward? - How does it work?

- Developers would be required to provide a threshold number of TDM measures to address transportation demand.
- Developments that are located near BRT or Birmingham Parking Authority decks will receive free points for the proximity.
- The number of measures they must include is dependent on the size of the development.
- Developments are not allowed to build with zero parking and not demonstrate how they will address demand.
- The Ordinance regulates new residential developments to two (2) parking spaces, but does not include garages, carports, etc.
- Once meters are eliminated, parking enforcement employees will continue their current enforcement of writing tickets for violations.

Councilor Williams:

- Why is the city implementing a maximum if developers drive parking needs?
- It is to eliminate excessive maximums.
- Who will track transportation demand?
- The department uses a spreadsheet for tracking.
- How will BDOT work with BPD with shortage of officers to increase parking enforcement?
- BDOT is working with multiple departments: Municipal Court, Office of the City Attorney, and the Birmingham Policy Department.
- Are there any changes needed to current policy?
- There are no major changes because the current policy allows for towing. It will require some changes.
- Why hasn't Park Mobile access been added to all meters?
- BDOT is working on those updates.
- Meters will not be replaced or added to new developments.
- Councilor William stated would like to ensure that BDOT is working closely with the Council on policy needs.

Councilor O'Quinn:

- Councilor O'Quinn stated that he would like top parking violations offenders/repeat offenders to be first consumers that will be affected by changes to towing policy.

Councilor Moore:

- Will TDM detour developers and does it include residential areas?
- Yes, this will detour developers and does include residential areas.
- What type of safeholds are in place to stop parking of vehicles in yards since this will include residential areas?
- Increasing enforcement of current ordinances for violations.

Councilor Clarke:

- Is UAB is excluded in Right Size Parking?
- Maximum have been removed for UAB, but cost of decks will regulate how much parking they build.
- Will this help UAB's dense area?
- They will have to meet TDM requirements, and must submit a plan which includes shuttle transportation, lots, new decks, etc.
- What are the implications for new surface lot business owners?
- No new surface lots will be allowed, and current lots will be grandfathered in.
- The City of Birmingham will also follow policy and not add surface level parking.
- Director Fowler stated that Right Size Parking reform is needed to help decrease sprawl. It is not to stop building of parking but have the option to decrease cost of development.

Councilor Tate:

- How is data tracked of parking violators?
- Municipal court tracks that data.
- What is the plan to educate public on the implementation plan?
- BDOT is creating a public information plan that will depend heavily on media outlets.
- Councilor Tate stated that she would like literature to be created to give to the public.

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Councilor Abbott:

- Councilor Abbott is concerned that residential parking will not be available because of minimums, and will push people from business areas into residential areas.
- Councilor Abbott asked if the ordinance regulate new residential developments to 2 parking spaces?
- It does, but that does not include garages and carports, etc.
- Who controls parking enforcement for the City of Birmingham?
- The Birmingham Police Department manages parking enforcement.
- Once meters are eliminated what will the parking enforcement staff do?
- The staff will continue their current enforcement of writing tickets for violations.

Action Taken:

Councilor Williams Motioned to Advance the Right Size Parking Ordinance to the City Council Agenda and set a date for a public hearing.

Councilor Clarke Seconded the Motion.

Councilor Abbott – Naye.

Item Recommended to the City Council Agenda.

5. **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

None

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Smitherman Motioned to Adjourn.

Councilor Williams Seconded the Motion.

Meeting Adjourned