

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
MONTHLY RULE 45 REPORT
May 2021**

On May 24, 2021, at 10:03 am, the Committee on Finance held a remote meeting pursuant to applicable law.

The following members were present: Hopkins, Dowell, King, Sawyer, Mitchell, Harris, Beale, Sadlowski-Garza, Thompson, Cardenas, Quinn, Burke, Lopez, Moore, Curtis, O'Shea, Brookins, Tabares, Scott, Burnett, Ervin, Taliaferro, Reboyras, Villegas, Sposato, Napolitano, Reilly, Smith, Tunney, Osterman, Silverstein, Vice Chairwoman Hairston, and Chairman Waguespack.

The following members were absent: Austin, and Mitts.

The following additional alderpersons were present: Sigcho-Lopez, Cardona, and Nugent.

Chairman Waguespack opened the meeting with a statement regarding the impracticability of meeting in person. Chairman Waguespack took a roll call to establish a quorum, as reflected above.

Chairman Waguespack opened the floor for public comment. Marilyn May spoke in support of renaming Lake Shore Drive for Jean Baptiste Point du Sable. George Blakemore spoke in favor of investment of City money in underprivileged neighborhoods. Duane Jerrett, Nancy Joseph, and Andrew Sparks spoke in favor of O2020-3651.

1. Approval of Rule 45 Report of the previous meeting of the Committee on Finance.

On Item 1, Ald. Thompson moved do pass by the roll call taken to establish quorum. Motion carried on a voice vote.

2. O2020-3651 A communication recommending a proposed amendment to Municipal Code Chapter 10-32 by adding new Section 10-32-245 to establish the Urban Forestry Advisory Board.

Chairman Waguespack invited Committee on Finance Policy Analyst Adam Flores, Chicago Department of Transportation Bureau of Forestry Deputy Commissioner Malcolm Whiteside, and Bureau of Forestry Senior Forester Jeff Brink to speak regarding the ordinance, which they did.

Ald. Nugent spoke in support of the ordinance. Ald. Smith spoke in support of the ordinance.

Ald. Sadlowski-Garza asked if this ordinance would change how the Bureau of Forestry trims trees. Chairman Waguespack said it would not. Ald. Sadlowski-Garza spoke in support of the ordinance.

Ald. Sposato asked if the ordinance would limit the ability of alderpersons to have trees removed. Flores said the ordinance would not change any Forestry policies, and it would mostly be focused on finding additional funds. Ald. Sposato spoke in favor of more money for trees.

Ald. O'Shea spoke in support of the ordinance. Ald. Thompson spoke in support of the ordinance.

Ald. Moore asked if the ordinance would change the ability of alderpersons to have trees removed. Ald. Moore also asked if Forestry was planting trees that would not block streetlights. Flores said the advisory board would not have the power to change any policy. Brink said Forestry tries to avoid planting trees that block streetlights. Whiteside said trees planted now have fewer issues.

Vice Chairwoman Hairston asked if anything stopped departments from communicating now. Flores said no. Vice Chairwoman Hairston asked about the delay in tree trimming. Whiteside said there is a year backlog. Vice Chairwoman Hairston asked if the number of tree trim crews should be increased, and Whiteside said it should. Vice Chairwoman Hairston asked for Whiteside to provide an estimate of how much that would cost through the Chair.

Ald. Brookins said the education component of the board was important. Ald. Brookins spoke in favor of the ordinance. Whiteside agreed that education is important.

Ald. Burnett asked if it was possible to transplant trees. Brink said it was cost prohibitive and unhealthy for the tree. Ald. Burnett noted that his office is receiving complaints about tree seeds clogging sewers. Brink said that, right now, that is happening due to a lack of rain.

Ald. Dowell asked about trees pushing up sidewalks. Whiteside said Forestry does not have data on how often that happens. Ald. Dowell asked what is being done to expedite stump grinding. Whiteside said the existing contract is out for bid, and the hope is for increased participation so that stumps are removed faster.

Ald. King asked if tree roots can penetrate sewers. Whiteside said, according to studies, no, but roots will seek existing cracks. Brink agreed.

Ald. Sigcho-Lopez asked how the board will connect to various communities. Flores said the public education component would help with that, as well as the dictate that one board member be part of a community organization. Ald. Sigcho-Lopez asked when the board would be up and running. Flores said it would depend on when members are appointed.

Ald. Napolitano asked if the board would have a budget. Chairman Waguespack said no. Ald. Napolitano asked how new trees are paid for now. Whiteside said much of the money comes from capital improvement funds.

Chairman Waguespack held Item 2 in Committee.

3. O2021-1651 A communication recommending a proposed ordinance to amend the authorizing ordinance regarding the redevelopment agreement with Our Revival Chicago, LLC

for acquisition of Ramova Theatre, adjacent parcel, and provision of tax increment financing (TIF) assistance funds.

Chairman Waguespack invited Department of Planning and Development Deputy Commissioner Tim Jeffries to speak regarding the ordinance, which he did.

Ald. Thompson spoke in support of the ordinance.

Ald. Scott asked how many seats will be in the venue. Tyler Nevius, founder of R Revival Chicago, said the venue would seat 1,600. Ald. Scott asked about the adjacent restaurant. Nevius said it is a small restaurant. Ald. Scott asked for clarification of the Tax Increment Financing structure, and Jeffries provided the clarification.

Ald. Smith asked how often extensions are allowed for projects. Jeffries said it is rare, maybe once or twice a year, and this extension was driven by COVID-19. Ald. Smith asked how often planned development approvals expire without construction. Jeffries said he did not know. Ald. Smith expressed support for the ordinance.

Ald. Ervin said his question had been previously asked. Ald. Dowell expressed support for the ordinance and asked how much of the development cost would be covered by TIF. Jeffries said it was 24 percent. Ald. Dowell asked where parking would be located. Ald. Thompson said it would be across the street from the site.

Ald. Hopkins expressed support for the ordinance. Ald. Quinn expressed support for the ordinance. Ald. Thompson thanked members of the Committee for their support of the ordinance.

On Item 3, Ald. Hopkins moved do pass by the roll call used to establish quorum. Motion carried on a voice vote.

4. O2021-1653 A communication recommending a proposed ordinance regarding the authority to issue multi-family revenue bonds for Westhaven Park-IID, LLC, for acquisition and construction of low-income housing development at 145 N Damen Avenue.

Chairman Waguespack invited Department of Housing Project Manager Jim O'Connell to explain the ordinance, which he did.

Ald. Burnett expressed support for the ordinance.

On Item 4, Ald. Dowell moved do pass by the roll call used to establish quorum. Motion carried on a voice vote.

5. Direct Introduction A communication transmitting reports of cases in which judgments or settlements were entered into for the month of April 2021.

Chairman Waguespack said Item 5 would be placed on file with the Clerk.

6. Direct Introduction A proposed order authorizing the payment of various small claims against the City of Chicago.

7. Direct Introduction A proposed order denying the payment of various small claims against the City of Chicago.

Chairman Waguespack said Items 6 and 7 would be placed on the Omnibus Agenda at City Council. There was no objection.

12. Direct Introduction One (1) proposed order authorizing Charitable Solicitation on the Public Way (Tag Day) permits:

A. Children International Foundation
Citywide
June 1 through September 30, 2021

B. The Nature Conservancy
Citywide
June 1 through November 30, 2021

C. United Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc.
Citywide
June 1 through November 30, 2021

Chairman Waguespack said Item 12 would be placed on the Omnibus Agenda at City Council. There was no objection.

Chairman Waguespack moved to the Supplemental Agenda.

1. Three (3) proposed orders authorizing the Corporation Counsel to enter into and execute Settlement Orders in the following case:

A. Anthony Tucker v. City of Chicago, et al., cited as 17 CV 2331 (J. Kendall).
Amount: \$500,000.00

Chairman Waguespack invited First Assistant Corporation Counsel Renai Rodney to explain Supplemental Item 1A, which she did.

Ald. Ervin asked how much the City has spent litigating the case. Rodney said it was tried in-house and had been heavily litigated.

On Supplemental Item 1A, Ald. Ervin moved do pass by the roll call used to establish quorum. Motion carried on a voice vote with Ald. Reboyras voting no.

B. Deandre Jones v. City of Chicago, cited as 19 L 78 (Cook County Cir. Ct.) (J. Van Tine).
Amount: \$250,000.00

Chairman Waguespack invited First Assistant Corporation Counsel Renai Rodney to explain Supplemental Item 1B, which she did.

On Supplemental Item 1B, Ald. Burnett moved do pass by the roll call used to establish quorum. Motion carried on a voice vote with Aids. Moore, Reboyras, and Napalitano voting no.

C. Proposed Prelitigation Settlement with One Chicago Square.

Amount: \$410,000.00

Chairman Waguespack invited First Assistant Corporation Counsel Renai Rodney to explain Supplemental Item 1C, which she did.

Vice Chairwoman Hairston asked about the due diligence performed by the Chicago Department of Transportation in preparing for litigation. Rodney said CDOT was unable to find records indicating the previous owner had consented to the trespass. Vice Chairwoman Hairston asked if anyone examined plat maps or any filings with the Cook County Recorder of Deeds. Chairman Waguespack expressed hope such records were not lost in the Great Chicago Flood of 1992. Rodney agreed to provide more specifics through the Chair.

Ald. Cardenas expressed concern the settlement could establish precedent for other actions of the City. Rodney said this case was an aboraton, and CDOT does not expect similar cases in the future. Ald. Cardenas asked if the claims of One Chicago Square were taken at face value, and Rodney said the settlement was vigorously negotiated.

Ald. Cardenas asked the size of the project. Rodney said she did not know, but it is a high rise in the Gold Coast which is already complete. Ald. Cardenas asked about the risk of litigation. Rodney said the costs of litigation, plus any judgment, would likely cost more than the settlement. Ald. Cardenas asked if Committee staff had reviewed the settlement, and Chairman Waguespack said they had. Ald. Cardenas said that made him comfortable with the settlement.

On Supplemental Item 1C, Ald. O'Shea moved do pass by the roll call used to establish quorum. Motion carried on a voice vote with Vice Chairwoman Hairston voting no.

The Committee having no further business, on a motion by Ald. Cardenas, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Waguespack
Chairman, Committee on Finance