

**BUDGET WORK SESSION MINUTES
DES PERES BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUILDING UPGRADES
DRAFT 2023 OPERATING BUDGET REVIEW
OCTOBER 17, 2022**

A Work Session of the Des Peres Board of Aldermen of the City of Des Peres, Missouri was held at the Des Peres Government Center, 12325 Manchester Road commencing at 6:01 PM on Monday, October 17, 2022.

The following Board members were present: Alderman Pound, Alderman Concagh, Alderman Fitzpatrick, Alderman Barrett, and Alderman Osherow. Alderman Kleinschmidt was absent with excuse. Mayor Becker was also present and presided over the work session. Staff members present included the City Administrator, Assistant City Administrator, Director of Finance, Director of Parks & Recreation, Director of Public Safety and Director of Public Works. Katie Aholt was also in attendance on behalf of Navigate Building Solutions.

The City Administrator advised that the purpose of the work session was to address any outstanding concerns from individual members of the Board of Aldermen regarding the proposed building upgrades involving City Hall, Public Safety and the Streets Garage. The City Administrator advised that while the Board of Aldermen recently gave preliminary approval to proceed with these renovation projects under R22-3618, there appears to be some apprehension amongst the Board about the proposed scope of work – particularly as it relates to Public Safety and City Hall.

CITY HALL (GOVERNMENT CENTER)

Alderman Fitzpatrick questioned whether it makes financial sense to renovate City Hall in lieu of constructing a smaller and more efficient facility that could be customized to meet operational needs. City Administrator Harms advised that a new building would cost roughly \$7 million assuming we have control and ownership over the site therefore limiting its placement to Des Peres Park, the Streets Garage, and the vacant 4-acre property located immediately south of The Lodge which has challenging topography due to bedrock. The idea of relocating City Hall to the northern parking lot at The Lodge was also suggested but ultimately disregarded given its small size (0.85 acres) and limited access.

Director of Public Works, Steve Meyer, questioned whether the community would accept the abandonment and potential demolition of the existing City Hall (estimated at \$500,000) given its historic and iconic significance. City Administrator echoed those concerns and suggested that while the current facility is adequate for operational purposes, it lacks efficiency, appropriate ADA accommodations, parking capacity, and climate control for the upper floors among other issues. The Assistant City Administrator raised concerns about demolishing a facility that has

been subject to substantial reinvestment in recent years – most notably a complete HVAC overhaul and environmental abatement of the upper floors.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Board entertained various scenarios in which Public Safety could be relocated from its current location to another property not necessarily owned by the City. Those locations included the BMO Harris Bank property along Manchester, the former MSD site accessible from Barrett Station, the former Janssen Farm which was recently purchased by Ameren UE, and the Streets Garage located along Des Peres Road opposite The Lodge.

The Board briefly discussed a joint operation in which the administrative functions of Public Safety could be relocated to City Hall which in theory could maximize utilization of the available space at City Hall while minimizing renovations at Public Safety. Director of Public Safety, Eric Hall, recommended in favor of maintaining all Public Safety functions under a single building for continuity of operations and advised against relocating Public Safety operations to a different site as the current location is central and therefore more conducive for response times.

City Administrator Harms encouraged the Board of Aldermen to consider the long-term impact of operating the “public safety” model which may prove to be unsustainable and cost-prohibitive given the escalating costs of staff training and turnover.

Director Hall advised that the current renovation plans for Public Safety were intentionally developed to accommodate segregated functions in which police, fire and ems operations could all be disassociated should the City agree to abandon public safety in the future. Director Hall voiced his support and confidence in the existing arrangement which he considers cost-effective, attractive for recruitment purposes, and valuable to the community.

STREETS GARAGE

Alderman Concagh recommended in favor of advancing the Streets Garage project while discussions on Public Safety and City Hall remain in flux and undecided. City Administrator Harms agreed with that approach and provided a quick update on architect selection which has been finalized (Farnsworth) pending adoption of a design agreement at the Board level.

NEXT STEPS

In light of the above conversations, the Board informally instructed staff to prepare task orders that would advance the Streets Garage renovations for consideration and approval. As for City Hall, the Board intends to delay this project indefinitely allowing for additional study on alternative scopes of work including relocation of City Hall to the southern edge of Des Peres Park facing Manchester Road. The Board will also explore the concept of relocating certain administrative functions from Public Safety to City Hall.

2023 OPERATING BUDGET OVERVIEW

Proposed operating budgets were presented by the Director of Public Safety, Director of Public Works, and the Director of Parks and Recreation. A detailed overview of those discussions can be found in the [attached presentation](#).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business to come before the Work Session of the Board of Aldermen, the Mayor called for the meeting to adjourn at 8:21pm.

Minutes prepared by:
Scott Schaefer
Assistant City Administrator