



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Date: November 18, 2022
Time: 10:30pm
Location: Virtual meeting only, via Zoom

Committee members Present: Spencer Duncan (Chair), Christina Valdivia-Alcalá, Hannah Naeger

City Staff Present: City Manager Stephen Wade, Rachelle Mathews (Interim Finance Director), Mary Feighny (Deputy City Attorney), Bill Fiander (Planning Director), Richard Faulkner (Development Services Division Director), Fran Hug (Development Services), Leigha Boling (Contracts & Procurements), Alan Stahl (Fire Marshal), Dylan Smith (Topeka Fire Dept)

1) Call to Order

Chairman Duncan called the meeting to order at 10:30am. Committee members introduced themselves.

2) Approve Minutes from October 28, 2022 Meeting

Committee member Naeger made a motion to approve the minutes. Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá seconded. Minutes approved 3-0-0.

3) 2021 Updates: International Building Code and International Fire Code

Development Services Division Director presented information regarding the updated items on the International Building Code (IBC) and International Fire Code (IFC).

These codes are published by the International Codes Council.

Presentation Highlights:

- Two changes to the Commercial side of the IBC and IFC being amended are updates from the 2015 codes to the 2021 codes.
- The Governing Body requested staff adopt the most up-to-date construction codes. The 2021 IBC and IFC are the most recent versions available until 2024.
- These codes are presented together because they have chapters that overlap. To avoid conflict with these chapters, the codes were reviewed together by Development Services, Fire Prevention, and the Board of Building and Fire Appeals (BBFA).

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- Updating the codes allows the City to stay current with current trends in the construction industry, and the ability to provide safety and a quality of life for the citizens of Topeka.
- A chart showing neighboring cities' shows that Topeka will be the first to utilize with the 2021 IBC and IFC, upon adoption. The majority of the other cities are operating off of the 2018 codes.
- The BBFA subcommittee led the review process. Members of City staff served as liaisons to the board including the Building Official, Fire Marshal, Plan Review Supervisor and City Attorney. The recommendation to the Governing Body will be to adopt the 2021 IBC and IFC with several local amendments.
- Notable Amendments to the codes:
 - Continue to exempt sprinkler requirements for up to two dwelling units in mixed used buildings.
 - Continue to exempt sprinkler requirements for up to four attached dwelling units. This particular chapter is helpful in redeveloping some of the structures in the Downtown commercial buildings.
 - Mobile food preparation vehicles are addressed in the IFC.
 - Add a new chapter for more detailed solar power and energy systems information.

Questions/Comments:

Chairman Duncan thanked staff for the work they have done to keep these changes up to date and that it has taken a lot of effort on staff's end to keep these going.

Committee member Naeger inquired if there was a feeling that there would be any loss of development if this update is made and neighboring cities are still using the 2018 code? Division Director Faulkner did not feel there were any major differences, and did not think this would be a deterrent for developers.

Deputy City Attorney Mary Feighny clarified that the Committee would not need to make a motion on these items at this time. An ordinance for each item is being drafted. It would be staff's preference to have the Committee review the draft ordinance before moving it forward to the Governing Body. The purpose of bringing the information to the Committee today is to receive feedback before drafting the ordinances. If the Committee currently felt there was anything they did not want to see in the ordinance, or needed additional information on, this would be the time to ask that it be kept in Committee.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá inquired about how soon the draft ordinances would be ready for review, and if the Committee would have advance notice of them prior to them being presented before the Governing Body? Director Bill Fiander stated he felt staff was comfortable to move the items forward, and that

they could be sent far enough in advance of moving before the Governing Body to receive questions.

4) TMC 3.30 Contracts & Procurement

Interim Finance Director Rachelle Mathews stated Contracts and Procurements is seeking to update this particular part of the Municipal Code, in an effort to raise the lowest level of procurement guidelines to help account for costs and inflation and the number of items that have now changed a level. An increase to the limit can reduce the administrative burden on staff when they are trying to procure items and services, and will reduce the unnecessary paperwork. The cost of materials have increased, so something such as concrete that used to cost \$2,000 now costs \$7,000 and due to the current language, staff must perform additional paperwork to solicit a full bid process. Increasing the limit will also allow for fewer delays of getting in-field staff what they need to complete their jobs.

City Manager Wade included that an additional benefit would be the ability to increase vendor diversity. By reducing the administrative burden, there could be an increase in the vendor diversity. One of the push-backs received, by vendors, is that the City's policies are burdensome enough that it is difficult for some vendors to do business with the City. Interim Director Mathews agreed that it would remove some barriers to entry for smaller and diverse vendors.

Interim Director Mathews stated that raising the spending threshold will also expedite the process, as staff would be able to get quotes for things faster than having to do the full bid process, which also requires vendors to submit a formal application.

Chairman Duncan stated he felt the language was fairly straight forward and found the request to be reasonable. Committee member Naeger appreciated staff's commitment to remove the barriers that are not needed in order for the process to be more efficient and more diverse.

MOTION: To move the item forward to the Governing Body with a recommendation for approval of amendments to TMC Chapter 3.30. Chairman Duncan made a motion to approve. Committee member Naeger seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0-0.

5) Other Items

No additional items.

6) Adjourn

Chairman Duncan adjourned the meeting at 10:48am.

The video of this meeting can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/9eNrybzooTM>

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