

**Observer Report
Administration and Public Works Committee
September 22, 2008**

Council or Committee: Administration & Public Works Committee

Date: Monday, September 22, 2008

Meeting began: 6:42 pm

Meeting adjourned: 7:37 pm

Observer: Judith Rosenthal

Present: Aldermen Wollin, Jean-Baptiste, Holmes, Rainey, Hansen

Media: NU Daily, Round Table, Evanston Review

Also present were Aldermen Bernstein, Tisdahl, Wynne; Staff: and Acting City Manager, Police, and Norma Robinson (whose lease with the city was on the agenda).

There was extensive discussion before the agenda was addressed, most of it expressed by Alderman Rainey, dealing with issues only known to the Committee which made following difficult.

First Alderman Rainey objected to payments to consultants who had been hired at the behest of the Blue Ribbon Panel to make 3 year financial projections re; pension funds. She pointed out that in this wildly fluctuating economy long term projections were useless. No action was needed on this.

Aldermen Rainey also objected to the city paying for 4 of staff to attend Leadership Evanston (\$1,000 ea) already paid for. She wants new criteria for this policy in the future, and was particularly hard on the Human Resources head who seemed not to know enough about Leadership Evanston. It wasn't pretty.

On Agenda::

Approval of a new fire alarm system for the Robert Crown Center. It was revealed to everyone's amazement that since 1974 there has never been an audible alarm system there, only smoke alarms to alert fire department. **NO ONE IN THE BUILDING WOULD KNOW THERE WAS A FIRE.** Approved.

Discussion of approval of Green Alley Pilot Project which involves higher expenditures to provide porous, permeable surface to absorb water that would ordinarily overload sewers with pollution. Approved.

Discussion of whether the City Manager should enter into a lease with Norma and Nolan Robinson at 1223 Simpson. This item was referred back to committee from Sept. 8 meeting. It seems that the tenants were in arrears with their rent (\$2,300), offered to pay that amount, but since the city had not drawn up a new lease, the payment was refused. This was a matter involving HUD as well. It was decided by a vote of the committee to enter into a new lease, after Mrs. Robinson assured the money was to be paid. Alderman Rainey voted no.

There was a very long discussion of the Local Employment Ordinance which the committee had initially requested to assure that contracts let by the city for \$500,000 or more would require contractors to employ 5% of workers from Evanston. Alderman Rainey said she reviewed many contracts and there were only 2 in recent years which met that threshold. She suggested the threshold be lowered to \$250,000 or less and that the contractor should have to estimate how many hours the project would involve Evanston workers. The Committee agreed that further study of the ordinance as it stands now would have to be done before a vote could be taken and decided to hold it over to the next meeting.