

City of Darien
Minutes of the Administrative/Finance Committee
October 6, 2025

Alderwoman Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Committee members Leganski and Schauer were present. Also in attendance was Mayor Marchese, City Administrator Bryon Vana, Treasurer Coren, April Padalik, Director, Darien Business Alliance & Community Events, Stanley Bonilla, Senior Vice President of Development Safeguard Self Storage, and Braeden E. Lord, Taft Law, also representing Safeguard.

Approval of an ordinance disbanding the environmental committee

Staff advised the city maintains various committees that provide recommendations to the council. The committees generally have different purposes. The city currently has a discretionary Environmental Committee. This committee began in 1987 with an initial focus on recycling, which was a new topic for Illinois communities in the late 1980s. Many of the issues they discussed were informational only and being handled by other groups such as city committees and DuPage County. Other volunteer groups, such as the garden club and Arbor Day group, now handle many of the issues the committee discussed. The challenge with discretionary committees is to maintain an active role after their initial priority, such as solid waste. In 2000, the committee began to review its role and functions. After their review in 2000, it is evident that they have struggled for topics and the committee cancelled many meetings for lack of agenda items. Since 2000, the committee has met once or twice per year with no meetings in 2024. Recently, staff was working to schedule a meeting for the committee and had difficulty in identifying topics and agenda items. Due to a continued lack of agenda items, staff is recommending the city council disband this committee. The committee discussed the topics and lack of agenda items for the committee. The committee unanimously recommended approval of an ordinance disbanding the Environmental Committee.

Motion to approve the tax levy determination for general and special purposes for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Staff advised following the Council's decision process on the tax levy last year, the proposed draft ordinance requests a general corporate purpose (general fund=\$zero) and special corporate levy (police pension fund=\$3,109,271) for a total of =\$3,109,271 which represents a 23.72% increase over this year's non-debt extension of \$2,513,053.45. The police pension actuary report recommended a city contribution of \$3,109,271 for FYE27. This is a 4.64% increase (\$137,986) compared to last year's police pension contribution of \$2,971,285. Last year the council approved a tax levy of the full pension recommended by the actuary. As part of the budget meetings, the council approved a tax abatement in March of 2024 in the amount of \$459,324. The abatement kept last year's property tax request the same the previous years. Following the discussion, the committee unanimously recommended approval of the levy determination and ordinances which:

- Set the City's 2025 general property tax levy and special corporate tax levy (police pension fund) at \$3,109,271 (which is equal to the full-recommended pension contribution) and consider an abatement after the FYE 27 budget discussions.
- Set the City's 2025 Special Service Area I property tax levy at \$5,000.

An ordinance establishing a tax of five percent (5%) upon the gross rental charge for the rental or leasing of any individual self-storage space in the City of Darien

Staff advised as discussed during the 2025-26 budget meetings, staff is reviewing current general fund revenues. Alderman Leganski previously asked that I review a storage facility tax that he identified as part of Willowbrook's revenue. Staff recommended the committee consider recommending approval of an ordinance establishing a tax on the rental of spaces within self-service storage facilities at a rate of 5% of the gross rental charges imposed for the use or rental of the space. The tax is collected monthly. The self-storage facility is responsible for keeping records and submitting payment directly to the city. The amount of revenue varies depending on the number of facilities and occupied units. Darien currently has two self-storage facilities. Since we do not have information of the local facilities gross income, there are no preliminary revenue estimates available. As a comparison, Willowbrook has four facilities and generates approximately \$270,000 annually. At its August 4, 2025 Admin/Finance committee meeting, the committee unanimously recommended approval of the new revenue. Based on the direction of the committee the city attorney prepared an ordinance. Staff originally planned to include the ordinance at the September 2, 2025 city council meeting. However, at the request of Stanley Bonilla, Senior Vice President of Development Safeguard Self Storage, staff postponed this item until the October 6, 2025 council meeting. Mr. Bonilla requested additional time to provide the city with information relating to another revenue alternative that could replace a self-storage tax, which would include a partnership between the city and Safeguard to work on a battery storage facility that could generate revenue, by providing electricity into the electric power grid. The committee recommended the city postpone a vote on the ordinance until Safeguard could provide additional information.

Review of events – Darien Business Alliance

April Padalik Director, Darien Business Alliance & Community Events, provided an overview of the DBA and community events. April advised that the city is looking to work with individual shopping centers to promote business. April also reviewed the community events held this year. Staff and committee discussed the challenge and importance of scheduling bands and securing other necessary items prior to the budget approval.

Minutes – September 2, 2025 - The committee unanimously approved the minutes.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Approved:

Mary Sullivan, Chairwoman _____

Ted Schauer, Member _____

Gerry Leganski, Member _____