

City of Cuba- Committee of the Whole Minutes

August 11th 2026

10:00 AM

Call to Order

Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM

Pledge of Allegiance

Recited

Roll Call			Aye's	Nay's	Absent
Alderman Falk			X		
Alderman Burgett			X		
Alderman Yocum			X		
Alderman Scharping			X		
Alderwoman Clark					X
Mayor Cozart			X		
Alderman Lynch					X

Community Needs Assessment Presentation

Mr. Richard Proffer of University of Illinois Extension met with the Committee to conduct a community needs assessment as part of Extension's Community and Economic Development program. Mr. Proffer explained that the purpose of the assessment is to gather local perspectives regarding community strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Information collected will be used to identify resources, technical assistance opportunities, and potential programs available through University of Illinois Extension and partnering agencies.

Discussion focused on several key areas, including health, community development, economic development, infrastructure, food access, technology, housing, and future planning.

Health and Medical Services

The Committee discussed the availability of healthcare services within the community. Members noted recent efforts to improve local access to healthcare, including the introduction of OSF mobile healthcare services and the construction of a facility to support those services. Existing local healthcare resources, including a general practice clinic, nursing home services, physical therapy, telehealth opportunities, and access to Graham Health System services, were reviewed.

Discussion also addressed concerns regarding diabetes rates within Fulton County and the need for improved access to mental health resources. Members noted that limited mental health services and transportation barriers remain challenges for some residents, particularly elderly residents and those requiring specialized care.

Community Development and Quality of Life

Committee members discussed efforts to improve community engagement and support families through

community events, partnerships with the school district, the Community Center, Cuba Cares, beautification activities, volunteer projects, and annual community celebrations.

The Committee identified several community needs including:

- □ Additional housing opportunities.
- □ Redevelopment of vacant and dilapidated properties.
- Increased youth activities and leadership development opportunities.
- □ Services that support young families, including childcare options.
- □ Attraction of younger residents and future community leaders.

Members noted the importance of increasing youth participation in community organizations and volunteer activities.

Economic Development

The Committee discussed economic challenges facing Cuba following the historic decline of local mining and industrial employers.

Topics discussed included:

- □ Limited retail and commercial development.
- □ Lack of employment opportunities for youth and young families.
- □ Challenges associated with maintaining and attracting businesses.
- □ Population decline and an aging population.
- □ The need for additional retail, service, and grocery options.

Specific business types identified as community needs included:

- □ Grocery store or expanded grocery offerings.
- □ Daycare services.
- □ Laundromat.
- □ Additional retail businesses.
- Workforce opportunities for local youth.

Members reviewed the City's existing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and discussed potential future economic development tools, including expansion possibilities, redevelopment incentives, and business attraction strategies.

Mr. Proffer described examples from other rural communities and discussed opportunities for future feasibility studies and economic development planning.

Infrastructure, Environment, and Utilities

Significant discussion focused on aging infrastructure and long-term utility concerns.

Topics included:

- □ Aging sewer infrastructure.
- □ Stormwater management challenges.
- □ Flooding events and basement flooding.
- □ Lift station needs.
- □ Water tower rehabilitation requirements.
- □ Water distribution infrastructure.
- □ Ground movement and historic mining impacts affecting streets, sidewalks, and underground utilities.

Members noted that infrastructure improvement costs far exceed currently available municipal funding and discussed ongoing efforts to pursue grants and outside funding sources.

The Committee reviewed prior flood-related damage, infrastructure assessments, and grant applications, including several unsuccessful funding requests.

Housing and Property Development

Discussion addressed the shortage of available housing and redevelopment opportunities.

Topics included:

- Demolition of unsafe and abandoned structures.
- Potential redevelopment of cleared lots.
- Housing rehabilitation opportunities.
- Possible future partnership opportunities with housing development organizations.
- Opportunities to acquire or develop additional land for future growth.

Members also discussed challenges associated with expansion due to limited available land and municipal service requirements.

Food Access

The Committee discussed food availability within the community.

Members noted the absence of a full-service grocery store and discussed efforts to attract expanded grocery options.

The Committee also reviewed existing food assistance resources, including:

- The local food pantry.
- School backpack food programs.
- Meals-on-Wheels services.
- Community donation programs.
- Informal food-sharing and assistance efforts.

Members agreed that while food assistance resources exist, access to fresh produce, fresh meat, and expanded grocery options remains limited.

Technology and Communications

Discussion focused on technology access and public communication.

Members reviewed:

- Expansion of fiber-optic internet service.
- Broadband availability.
- Community use of social media, websites, and online services.
- Technology access for older residents.
- Potential educational opportunities to improve computer literacy.
- Use of public information signs and electronic communication tools.

The Committee also discussed modernization efforts undertaken by City staff, including improved digital recordkeeping, public information distribution, and website updates.

Strategic Planning and Future Opportunities

Mr. Proffer discussed services available through University of Illinois Extension, including:

- Community strategic planning assistance.
- Grant identification resources.
- Grant writing education and training.
- Feasibility studies completed by student teams.
- Economic development resources.
- Housing and redevelopment programs.
- Community engagement initiatives.

Discussion occurred regarding the possibility of developing a long-range community strategic plan to help identify priorities and guide future decision-making.

Members expressed interest in reviewing potential planning resources and continuing discussions with University of Illinois Extension.

Actions Taken

No formal action was taken.

Recommendations

No formal recommendation was made to the City Council.

The Committee expressed interest in receiving the completed University of Illinois Extension assessment report and reviewing potential future opportunities, resources, and strategic planning assistance.

Adjournment

Motion and second to adjourn Committee of the Whole meeting at 12:15 PM, Alderman Scharping/ Falk, All Aye's, Motion passed