



CITY OF NOVI
Finance and Administration Committee Meeting
October 21, 2025, 5:00 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room | Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road
(248) 347-0445

CALL TO ORDER: 5:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Fischer, Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Councilmember Staudt
Note: Mayor Pro Tem Casey arrived shortly after the start of the meeting but missed the approval of the agenda and minutes

STAFF LIAISON: Victor Cardenas, City Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Katherine Oppermann, Recording Secretary
Greg VanKirk, Plante Moran Realpoint
Todd Fenton, Plante Moran Realpoint
Robert Stempien, Plante Moran Realpoint

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Staudt; Seconded: Fischer; Approved: 2:0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 15, 2025

Motion: Fischer; Seconded: Staudt; Approved: 2:0

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. Interviews with Construction Management Firm for Public Safety Building Project

Mayor Fischer opened the main order of business by stating that this is not intended to be an in-depth discussion but a session to understand the names and personalities of the two construction management firms being recommended by staff and Plante Moran Realpoint. He then invited the first firm, Oliver Hatcher, to begin their presentation.

a. Oliver Hatcher

Mr. Oliver thanked the Committee for the opportunity to interview and expressed that as Novi community members their firm is thrilled for the opportunity to work on the project should they be selected. He and other representatives from the firm then went through their presentation for the Committee. They first went through their team members noting years and areas of experience as well as their project experience in the City of Novi and local region. Their office is Novi based on Meadowbrook Road and they have several projects in the City. It was also noted that they have been one of only two Novi companies to be on the Crain's Detroit "Best Places to Work" list for the 3rd year running. Other items included their "white glove experience", and

explanation of their pre-construction phase process, and an example of their responsibility matrix, their work with both unionized and non-union contractors, their risk register and contingency management process, their use of Procore, master schedule and "look-ahead" schedule, that their team includes a LEED accredited professional, Safety as a top priority, accountability at all levels, and experience with environmentally challenging projects. Overall, they believe that Oliver Hatcher is the best team possible for this job, committed to delivering a state-of-the-art public safety program to the City of Novi, this project directly impacts their team and as novi taxpayers they feel fiducially responsible for delivering a successful project. Mr. Oliver also noted that they would be disappointed to see another firm from outside Novi coming into their town, that it would be frustrating to see another company's signs every day as they drive by. Ultimately, they are very excited about the project, it wouldn't be just another project for Oliver Hatcher but an obligation to deliver a state-of-the-art Public Safety building that impacts not just them but every City of Novi resident. As a community member, that also said that they would be willing to decrease their fee from 2.25 down to 2% to show their commitment both to the project and the budget.

Mayor Fischer thanked them for the presentation and moved forward with the Q&A part of the session. He started by noting that Oliver Hatcher seems to primarily have experience with tech centers, dealerships, etc. He asked if there was an example where Oliver Hatcher has done a large multi-part project at one time, such as the Public Safety Building project requires. Mr. Oliver stated that while Oliver Hatcher as a firm does not have that experience many of their individual team members do. Mayor Fischer then asked who would serve as his direct contact that he can reach out to at any time for the project and it was confirmed that Jack Oliver would be.

Councilmember Staudt said that he had reached out to his own subcontractors and said that none he had heard from had worked with Oliver Hatcher directly, though it was noted they were known for high-quality work. He wants to know how many of the subcontractors Oliver Hatcher works with are union. Mr. Oliver said that it was roughly a 50/50 split between union and non-union, unless the project they were on stipulated otherwise (such as some cities requiring all union). Councilmember Staudt also confirmed with Mayor Fischer that Novi has no such union requirements.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked what potential issues might there be with the project that City Council isn't foreseeing. Oliver Hatcher said that soil conditions, and the cost of moving soil can be a huge impact. They noted that the use of the site as a materials pit creates a big unknown and expressed that to keep costs down as much as possible it would be ideal to coordinate along with the roadwork so as to utilize any dirt on site when they can. Additionally, they noted that as we are still at the schematic phase there are a lot of unknowns but that is simply part of the process and they have their own tools to mitigate and minimize risks.

Mr. VanKirk asked how Oliver Hatcher vets their subcontractors and ensures coverage in all categories. Oliver Hatcher said that they are required to function within the outlines of the bid process, they will make sure appropriate insurance is in place, availability to meet schedule, and EMR rating, etc. will be used upfront as part of the bid to ensure that standard is known and that everyone is comfortable with the expected deliverables of the project. It was also noted that in a past project with public bid they had public meetings to solicit local trade partners, ensuring that there is public knowledge of the need for the project so they can draw in those necessary and qualified tradespeople.

Councilmember Staudt asked if there was a baseline environmental and due care plan that Oliver Hatcher was aware of for the site. Mr. Oliver said yes, there was and that it primarily encompasses recommending not moving dirt off-site (as most due care plans do) and noted that there was one main area of about 40-ft of fill but many other with a smaller 4-6-ft of fill.

Mr. VanKirk then asked how many public bid processes Oliver Hatcher has done over the last three years. Mr. Oliver stated that he believes it would be 10 with public dollars. They also briefly discussed the use of eBuilder for projects, Oliver Hatcher confirmed they were familiar and had used it on other projects. Mr. VanKirk then asked if they had examples of projects that they had input on (Versus simple building) and Oliver Hatcher said that it is typical that they are involved at or before pre-construction and reviewing/giving comments before the drawings are produced.

Mayor Fischer thanked Oliver Hatcher for coming in, Oliver Hatcher also thanked the committee for the opportunity.

Oliver Hatcher departed at 5:51pm.

b. Christman

Mayor Fischer let the representatives from Christman know that there is a Council meeting at 7:00pm tonight that dictates the end of this session. He then noted that they have already been through interviews with staff and our owner's representative for the project, Plante Moran Realpoint, so they aren't looking for anything too in-depth at this time, just Christman's pitch on why they are the best firm for the project as a final "gut-check" for the Committee members.

The representatives from Christman thanked the committee and started on their presentation. They started with an overview of the proposed team members and their experience, noting that most live nearby as the firm is based in Lansing. They have national experience but have done most of their work in Michigan. They also noted that Cristman is an employee-owned company and that they have the resource of 200 area professionals to support the project. They have a good pulse on the area trade and construction market and also have experience working with both Plante

Moran Realpoint and HED. They have done over 100 Michigan municipal/public projects in the last five years alone and the team is proven and capable on public safety projects (including recent work of the Eaton County Sheriff Substation and the Lansing Public Safety Complex). They have an in-depth qualification process for all bidding contractors, and it is their goal to make the largest pool they can of qualified contractors and subcontractors so that the community can get the "biggest bang for their buck". Furthermore, their mission during pre-construction is to bring creative solutions so that City Council and staff can make the best, most informed decisions. They have in-house MEP (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing trade) expertise and robust virtual design and construction tools. They work to be proactive cost leaders rather than reactive cost reporters. They ensure presence at all design meetings to weigh in on cost and constructability. They also shared a benchmarking study that they prepared which looks at six of their recent projects (in Michigan and nationally) adjusted for today's dollars, noting that they see fire stations at about 9.8 mil but that they think that they can get to the 8 mil budget with systems talk and discussion. They stated that they have established systems for contingency management and risk assessment. Councilmember Staudt spoke briefly on his dislike of contingency and Mayor Fischer emphasized that contingency should not be spent without City Council being informed and making a decision. Christman agreed and spoke on their estimate accuracy. In project management they emphasized communication, collaboration, and leadership as well as pre-con support being key as it creates a more seamless construction process. They strive for quality control, constant reporting/feedback and working with early bid packages, especially with specialty and proprietary contractors. They noted key considerations needed for public safety facilities and spoke on their established relationship with specialty providers. They also went over the construction schedule, and site logistics with an emphasize on safety including their MIOSHA partnership that they regularly bring in for walkthroughs. They stated that, ultimately, the bottom line is that they know that they become an extension of the Novi City Council and staff by taking on this work on the responsibility, commitment, and promise made to the residents of Novi, they will bear that in mind every day and take this work seriously and that in this case they have the unique opportunity to bring a full team together from one Public Safety Campus project (Lansing) directly to another (Novi). IT is a further level of operation excellence they can bring to guarantee success.

Mayor Fischer opened the question & answer session stating that he knows staff and PMR brought the two best firms here to be interviewed by Councilmembers. He noted that the other firm is local, and he likes that hometown feel, and he asked them about their history of taking on complex projects and Christman has clearly proven their experience in such projects. Mayor Fischer said that on Christman's side he sees a lot that he likes as well but recognizes that Novi is not their biggest project by a longshot, how can he feel assured that Novi will still get the best team, responsiveness, services, etc. Christman says that the team they have proposed 1. Is currently delivering a similar program in Lansing so we should be confident they have the skills and experience to execute, it is proven and 2. This team is going to be dedicated

to Novi and this Public Safety program, they will be here full-time regardless of any other project Christman as a whole has going on. This team is here and dedicated to Novi. Mayor Fischer then asked who his primary contact would be at Christman, they replied that Mayor could call any one of them but that Pat Schrauben, the senior project manager, would be the main point person for the full process. They also emphasized once more that they are always highly responsive, noting another smaller client that they could use as reference, every single project is treated as the most important client.

Councilmember Staudt stated that he had made calls to his subcontractors and that several had worked with Christman and had reported that the experience had been phenomenal, speaking very highly of Christman. He also had questions on if "Mt. Novi" (IE the materials pile on the site) can be worked on in Fall rather than Spring and also asked about where parking is going to be on the site. Christman said that they would have to refer to the City of Novi site plan for the parking location, they have only a schematic of the construction parking area. Councilmember Staudt further clarified that he'd be interested in Christman's experience and if they would be willing to give their input to the architect should they disagree on the drawings if they think there are better options. Christman says that they always work closely with all players during the design and pre-construction process and will always work to identify the best product for the dollars, including items that might not be in the current scope but that might be of value. They can also provide value analysis and value engineering. In their experience working in Lansing they looked at a variety of options, they can put together a benchmark report based on those various options. Councilmember Staudt also spoke on the value of public space that brings together the firefighters and police officers together with the community

Councilmember Casey asked Christman what they think is the potential biggest surprise that could come out of the project, they replied sub-soil conditions as well as utility cost and timelines (like from DTE) are the primary concerns, and also noted that for anyone who hasn't built recently they may be surprised by overall costs of construction.

Mr. VanKirk asked if Christman would be willing to negotiate their proposed fees. Mr. Luther replied that while they wouldn't say no outright he feels confident that they had "pretty sharp pencils" when they put together their bid. Councilmember Staudt noted that that was a good answer.

Mayor Fischer thanked Christman for joining them, the Committee will be making their recommendation to the full City Council and Council will be expected to make a decision mid-November. The Christman team thanked the committee and departed at 6:45pm.

Mr. VanKirk asked the Committee members if they had any 1st thoughts or impressions to share, having heard from both firms. Mayor Fischer said that the Committee would like to first hear from Plante Moran Realpoint, from their standpoint

as the owner's representative. Mr. VanKirk said that for this project they'd recommend Christman as the Construction Management firm. City Manager Cardenas agreed, noting the experience of Christman.

Following a brief discussion of pros/cons of each firm the following motion was made:

Recommendation to City Council to go with the staff and Plante Moran Realpoint recommendation of Christman as the Construction Project Management firm for the Public Safety Building Project.

Motion Maker: Staudt; Seconded: Casey; Approver 3:0

Mayor Fischer briefly noted that Council will mostly stay out of the design work for the project but that their involvement in any budgetary matter is a non-negotiable must.

Mr. VanKirk asked if the Committee would like to do a similar interview process for the project tech designer or it should be done internally with staff. Mayor Fischer said that Chief Information Officer Rob Petty should be involved and that as long as Mr. Petty is on-board with the recommendation he has no issue with it by-passing the Committee and going straight to City Council.

2. Review of Governance Matrix

This item was removed from Agenda due to insufficient time, the Committee/Councilmembers will review the documents at another time.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS - None

ADJOURNMENT: 6:54 p.m.

Motion: Casey; Seconded: Staudt; Approved: 3:0