
DATE: Monday, October 5, 2020
TIME: 7:00pm
PLACE: *Held virtually due to Governor's and Mayoral Emergency Declarations
400 S. Vine St., Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council Committee of The Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, October 5, 2020, at 7:00pm via zoom.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor; Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: City Council Members (CM), Bill Brown, Bill Colbrook, Shirese Hursey, Julie Laut, Jared Miller, Dennis Roberts, Maryalice Wu

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Julie Laut, Ward 2; Dennis Roberts, Ward 5

STAFF PRESENT: Curt Borman, Kevin Garcia, Wendy Hundley, Jason Liggett, Stepheny McMahon, Carol Mitten, Lorrie Pearson, Bryant Seraphin, James Simon

OTHERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Allan Axelrod, Allison Casar, Tracy Chong, Christopher Hansen, Justin Hendrix, John Kraft, Emily Klose, Gabriel Lewis, Meghan McDonald, Sarah Nixon, Ameena Payne, Terry Reifsteck, Lena Walker, Julie Watkins, Grace Wilken

Chair: *Maryalice Wu, Ward 1*

Prior to starting the meeting Chair Wu read a statement about the structure of the meeting for everyone attending via Zoom.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

With a quorum virtually present, Chair Maryalice Wu called the meeting of the Committee of the Whole to order at 7:01pm.

2. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

CM Miller made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2020 meeting. Motion seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

3. **Additions to the Agenda**

There were none

4. **Presentations and Public Input**

a. [Kickapoo Rail Trail \(KRT\) Extension Study](#)

Regional Planning Commission Planner Gabriel Lewis gave this presentation about the Weaver Park and [East Urbana Kickapoo Rail Trail Connectivity Study](#). The goals are to connect the KRT to Weaver Park, develop a primary trailhead, and improve East Urbana bike and pedestrian access. He said the study will conclude December 31, 2020. The next 30 days (October 1-30, 2020) will be for public comment and presentations to stakeholders. People can submit comments to the CCRPC website at ccrpc.org/urbana-krt-extension-study, google form, email comment pdf card to glewis@ccrpc.org, or via mail.

After presentation, Gabe Lewis addressed questions from the council about active users, crossing counts (pedestrian/bike), buffer, rails to trails and rails with trails crime statistics and impact.

Mayor Marlin acknowledged the collaborative work from RPC and their efforts for securing the grant funding of \$100,000, Carle Hospital for providing the local matching amount of \$25,000 to conduct the visibility study and to the office of Senator Tammy Duckworth for their assistance with the arrangement to meet with Rail Road staff.

Public Input via Zoom

The following people submitted public input via Zoom: Aameena Payne, Christopher Hansen, John Kraft, Allan Axelrod, Julie Watkins, Tracy Chong, Grace Wilken, Lena Walker, Meghan McDonald, Justin Hendrix, Sarah Nixon, Allison Casar, Emily Klose, and Rita Conerly. Some of the comments included: racial disproportion in school, black and brown kids are being harassed by UPD, have an honest discussion about Freedom of Information (FOIA), the public is not required to provide personal information when asking for a FOIA, do not increase council salaries, advocate for a utilities moratorium, Hillard Heintze update about rifle status during Aleyah Lewis's arrest, do not discourage public input, status of One Door, do not abuse your power, have empathy, stop hindering progress, do not underestimate the public, UPD failed victims, opposition in changing council rules for public input, read the FOIA sunshine book, defund police, drop all charges against Aleyah Lewis.

Public Input via Email

Edgar Garrett, Fran Rigberg some of the comments included: opposition for Visit Champaign County and Elected Officials salaries, and in support of approving council rules.

5. Staff Report

Mayor Marlin announced the financial forecast presentation for next week's meeting.

- [Resolution No. 2020-09-046R](#)**: A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Community Partnership Agreement (Visit Champaign County, FY 2020-2021) – [COW 09/21/2020]

Economic Development Coordinator Stepheny McMahon presented this resolution with the recommendation for approval. She said the proposed contribution of \$10,000 for [Visit Champaign County](#) (VCC) is included in the budget.

Terry Reifsteck addressed questions from the committee, some of the questions were: statistics about website traffic and how they were measured, process of events and the logistics, [Buy Black Chambana](#) and website directory post, City of Urbana representation on the website, local affordable amenities.

After presentation, CM Brown made a motion to send Resolution No. 2020-09-046R with recommendation for approval. Seconded by CM Colbrook. After further discussion, there was a consensus to clarify post allegation between VCC and Buy Black Chambana. CM Brown restated the motion to send to council without recommendation. CM Colbrook concurred with the amendment to send the Resolution No. 2020-09-046R without recommendation. Motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook,

Nay: Miller

- [Ordinance No. 2020-09-049](#)**: An Ordinance Amending Urbana City Code, Chapter Two, Addition of Section 2-5 (Electronic Virtual Public Meetings) – [COW 09/21/2020]

Mayor Marlin read a statement about the suggested changes to the code, and to simplify changes a new section was added to deal with electronic virtual public meetings as suggested by CM Wu. The new language will provide guidance for consistent meeting procedures and to allow enough time for city business while promoting productive and effective virtual meetings.

City Administrator Carol Mitten read a statement in favor of imposing limits on the abusive language that found their way into the city council meetings, and noted her concerns about the name-calling and personal attacks to staff during public input. Additionally, she said “why not start with what we are teaching the children in our community. [Urbana School District 116 Policy Manual section 7:20 Harassment of Students Prohibited](#)”. Discussion ensued.

After intense discussion, CM Hursey made a motion to send Ordinance No. 2020-09-049 to council without recommendation. Seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook

Nay: Miller

8. [Ordinance No. 2020-10-053](#): An Ordinance Amending Urbana City Code Chapter Three, Section 3-43 (Increasing number of Class R&T-1 liquor licenses for Hickory River/Urbana, Inc dba Hickory River Smokehouse, 1706 N. Cunningham Ave, Urbana, IL)

Mayor Marlin presented this ordinance with the recommendation for approval, noting a simple change in the classification to sell all liquor. No questions or objections were voiced.

CM Brown made a motion to send Ordinance No. 2020-10-053 to council with the recommendation for approval. Seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

9. [Ordinance No. 2020-10-054](#): An Ordinance Fixing the Salary of City Officers who are Elected for a Definite Term of Office (2021-2024)

Mayor Marlin introduced the proposed salaries for the City’s elected officers, which will be an increase of 1% each year for the next four years starting May 2021.

CM Brown made a motion to send Ordinance No. 2020-10-054 to council with the recommendation for approval. Seconded by CM Colbrook, discussion ensued.

Some of the comments and recommendation by council were as follows: no increase for council for the next four years, no increase the first year and \$7,000 for the following three years, or just \$7,000 for the next four years. After discussion, CM Miller made a motion to amend the Alderperson line to keep the current rate of \$6,878 and \$7,000 for the remainder of the term. Seconded by CM Hursey and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

The final motion was to send Ordinance No. 2020-10-054 to council as amended with the recommendation for approval. Seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

10. [Discussion](#) – FOIA

Assistant City Attorney Curt Borman was present to address questions about the Freedom of Information process within the City of Urbana.

At 10:26pm, CM Miller made a motion to extend the meeting to 10:45pm. Seconded by CM Hursey and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Miller *Colbrook was not present during this vote*

Nay: None

City Attorney Simon and Assistant City Attorney Curt Borman addressed questions from council about FOIA process and clarification regarding voluminous and recurrent requesters and how fees are applied to requests. Discussion ensued.

At 10:38, CM Miller made a motion to extend to meeting to 11:00pm. Seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Brown, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

11. **Adjournment**

With no further business before the committee, Chair Wu adjourned the virtual meeting at 11:00pm.

Wendy M. Hundley

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable on-demand. [HERE](#)

Minutes Approved: October 19, 2020

From: [Edgar Garrett](#)
To: [!City Council](#)
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT. October 5
Date: Monday, October 05, 2020 11:11:22 AM
Attachments: [CommentsCityUrbanaCouncilMtgOct5.docx](#)

Refer to the attached document for my comments related to the October 5 City Council Meeting of the Whole.

Regards

Ed Garrett
[REDACTED], Urbana, IL 61801

Comments for City of Urbana Council Meeting on Oct 5, 2020.

Submitted by Ed Garrett, [REDACTED] Urbana IL

Public comments at Council meetings have been heavily skewed towards complaints and negative reactions to various aspects of city government. I would like to offer an alternative view. I think the Mayor, City Council and professional staff are doing a good job managing the city with the resources at hand. For instance, it is great to see the building projects on Lincoln and Vine. Urbana was overdue for some new developments. There is room for improvement in every business and the City is no exception. However, having room for improvement is not the same as poor performance. Unexpected challenges are a part of life – personal, business and government alike. These challenges may change us, but they do not define us. Our response to the challenges and the growth that results from those challenges tells the story and the narrative from Urbana is a positive one and should be a source of pride for the community. When I was learning trail riding on a mountain bike, a friend advised me to see the rocks and trees and let them define the path, but not to focus on the rocks and trees because then the tendency is to steer towards the rocks or trees and crash rather than follow the path. So, Mayor and Council members, don't focus on the drama but let the drama define your path.

The City has a budget deficit caused by the economic turmoil associated with the coronavirus pandemic. The deficit can be covered by reserves in the short term; but, because the reserves are finite and the depths of the economic downturn and the timeline for economic recovery are unknown, adjustments to how the City does business will be required. There will be some 'pain' associated with the changes. Focusing on the economic challenges may obscure your view of Urbana's path. Keep your focus on the long-term well-being of the City. The economic challenges can guide you to efficiency in operation that may be a long-term benefit. Some items may have to be forgone temporarily during the downturn but that doesn't mean they have to be permanently abandoned. Part of leadership is making difficult decisions such as what has to be cut during periods of reduced revenue. There is no way to avoid disappointment in these situations. Avoiding disappointment is not your objective; maintaining a functioning city that is poised for recovery is the objective.

You have two budget items on the agenda this evening – Visit Champaign County and salary increases. Both items have merit but have to be critically evaluated in light of the budget constraints faced by the City. The VCC representative made a compelling argument to continue supporting the agency. However, the City's revenue in 2019 was more likely a reflection of the general economy and activities of the University and local businesses rather than a dramatic effect of VCC. The local economic activity associated with 40,000 people coming to town for a UI football game or 10,000 people coming to a basketball game or concert at Assembly Hall/State Farm Center will overshadow anything the VCC can offer. Regional benefits of the VCC don't matter in your consideration of funding the VCC; the only issue is whether there is a direct benefit to Urbana. Past contributions to VCC are not sufficient reason to continue funding the VCC. The VCC should be viewed as just another business and that business has made a sales pitch to the City. You have to decide the merit of the purchase. The benefits of

advertising are often difficult to measure and this is the case with VCC. Given the budget shortfall, funding for VCC should be eliminated until the budget shortfall for the City is resolved.

As an aside, the Urbana Business Association should be viewed in the same light as the VCC. Funding should not occur during deficit years. In addition, funding for the UBA from the City should have been organized as seed money – i.e. funding provided for a specified period of time with the understanding that the organization would become self-sustaining. If the business owners of the UBA cannot keep the UBA afloat without the City, they may not be particularly astute business operators or they don't value the UBA as highly as they say. Opportunities for growth in Urbana exist in many parts of Urbana. There are better ways to promote expansion of businesses in Urbana than the UBA.

The Mayor and Clerk deserve a salary increase but you cannot afford it. The jobs are challenging and require a level of commitment and hours of work not reflected in the current salaries. Unfortunately, the City is facing a significant budget deficit. This is not the time to ask for a raise even if it is a very modest raise. With local businesses suffering and the not unrealistic prospect of layoffs within the City, even a well-deserved raise is a tough sell. A raise well beyond that requested is deserved and should be granted when the budget shortfall for the City is resolved.

Salary increases for the City Council members should be delayed for the same reasons. It is unlikely that Council members sought their positions for financial gain and denying the raises is unlikely to cause a hardship. Delaying the raises until there is money available is reasonable.

Regarding the demands of the job of Mayor, the Mayor should step back and reconsider the approach to the job. Focus on basics of leadership. Hire competent, reliable people, empower those employees and hold those employees accountable for meeting specific, measurable goals. That will leave more time for the Mayor to focus on planning to help secure the future vitality of the City and reduce the time and stress associated with personally handling too many details of City business. For instance, some turmoil developed because of actions by the Urbana Police Department. The police officers are employees of the City and the Mayor and Council oversee the UPD at a very high level; however, the City employs the Chief of Police as the immediate supervisor of the UPD. The Chief of Police is well paid and makes substantially more than the Mayor. Problems arising in the UPD should be dealt with by the Chief of Police – that is what he is paid to do. Guidance on issues can be provided by the Mayor and Council but the work of resolving the problems is that of the Chief. If the Chief is not capable of handling the problems, you should hire a new Chief of Police. Delegate jobs to well trained, empowered employees.

From: [Marlin, Diane](#)
To: [Hundley, Wendy](#)
Subject: FW: Civility at public meetings
Date: Monday, October 05, 2020 3:53:11 PM

For public input

Diane Wolfe Marlin
Mayor

City of Urbana | Executive Department
400 S Vine St | Urbana IL 61801
217.384.2456



From: Frances Rigberg [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 05, 2020 3:02 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Civility at public meetings

Dear City Council Members,

I urge you to pass the change to the rules governing public input to disallow personal attacks. This should be a no-brainer. Such attacks are disallowed under Robert's Rules of Order and under the ordinances of many governmental bodies in our democracy. Such input is not necessary to public debate and has a corrosive effect not only on the the targets of the attacks but upon those who must witness them repeatedly and upon our institutions. Mr. Hansen, for example, has announced his intent to attend every HRC meeting and repeat his grievances and accusations, which have either been addressed to the extent the Ordinance allows or have no basis in fact. I have tried to inform him of the facts in these matters in a respectful way, and he has responded by accusing me of lying and corruption.

I am proud to serve Urbana, and I'm especially happy to see that Lemond Peppers has joined us as Community Outreach Coordinator. But I am unwilling to continue on the HRC if it means being subject to or having to witness abusive railings at every meeting, as Mr. Hansen has vowed to deliver. There are many other ways for me to serve the cause of social justice (tikkun olam) that don't involve such punishment. We have already lost two people and may lose up to three more from Human Relations because of this phenomenon.

You can put an end to the use of public input time as bully pulpit. It is not difficult or impossible to define and recognize these abuses, and there is no slippery slope to the

loss of freedom of speech. Simply put, those who serve the City don't deserve such abuse, and it serves no democratic, social, or moral purpose; in fact, quite the opposite by sowing anger, division, and libelous misinformation.

Fran Rigberg

On Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 11:46 AM Frances Rigberg <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to support the City Council's adopting the proposed rule to ensure civility at City meetings consistent with Robert's Rules of Order, under which personal attacks are always out of order. Many municipalities in the US have such rules in place. Currently in Urbana, people who have long and effectively served the City in the cause of social justice have left or have become uncomfortable attending meetings because they feel harassed and unsafe. Adopting the proposed rule, or affirming the City's commitment to civility at meetings in some other meaningful way, would be a welcomed demonstration of empathy, concern, and support for City staff and commissioners—especially women and people of color, who have borne the brunt.

Thank you for your consideration,
Fran Rigberg
Chair, Urbana Human Relations Commission

"Yet dreams do not die, they recur, sleeping or waking they haunt us. Deep within us we know that our world could be redeemed from its present pitiful state and blossom forth ... So we labor on, whether alone or in communal association with one another."

--Dora Black