



DATE: Monday, September 14, 2020
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: *Held virtually due to Governor's and Mayoral Emergency Declarations

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, September 14, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Urbana City Council Chambers, 400 S. Vine St., Urbana, IL 61801

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

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Curt Borman, Sheila Dodd, Elizabeth Hannan, Wendy Hundley, Alyssa Jaje, Jason Liggett, Carol Mitten, Bryant Seraphin

OTHERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Fran and Marc Ansel, Beau David Barber, Allan Axelrod, Tracy Chong, Brian Dunn, Christopher Hansen, Jennifer Ivory-Tatum, Sarah Nixon, Ameena Payne, Allen Romero, Cord Schroeder, Benjamin Stone, Julie Watkins, Grace Wilken

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

There being a quorum virtually present, Mayor Marlin called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:17pm following Cunningham Township Board meeting.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

CM Miller made a motion to approve minutes from the August 12, 2020 (Rescheduled Meeting). Motion seconded by CM Hursey and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu

Nay: None

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Community Development Director Lorrie Pearson addressed the council and asked for the removal of items five and six.

D. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC INPUT

Mayor Marlin read a statement about the current structure of meetings and public input highlighting the following items of priority moving forward. Public safety, One Door program, Hillard Heintze recommendations, Racial disparities, Police oversight, and possibly joining (Government Alliance on Race and Equity) GARE.

For this meeting, each member of the public had an opportunity to address the council about any action agenda items. Each member was allowed to speak for three minutes; the rest of the public with non-agenda related comments had the opportunity to speak at the end of the meeting. Furthermore, Mayor Marlin strongly asked the public to direct comments to the city instead of specific city staff, board members, and or any member of the public. The many hurtful comments, personal attacks, tone, and tenor towards staff, board members, elected officials, and residents are not acceptable and it needs to stop. An agenda item with council rules revisions will be provided at the next committee of the whole meeting. Anyone refusing to follow directives was muted and encouraged to submit their comments via email at citycouncil@urbanaininois.us

Superintendent of Urbana School District Jennifer Ivory-Tatum addressed council to express her concerns about the School Resource Officer (SRO) agreement with Urbana School District 116. Urbana School administrators believe that SRO are an integral part of the school.

Public input via zoom on action items from the following people: Tracy Chong, Ameena Payne, Benjamin Stone, Brian Dunn, Christopher Hansen, Grace Wilken, Julie Watkins. Some of the comments included: SRO and GARE.

Public input via email in support of removing section a. of Resolution No. 2020-09-045R (The City deems the agreement to expire at the end of the then current quarter, and) Amari Johnson, Ashleigh Orton, Bruce Rummenie, Cheryl Van Ness, Cord Schroeder, David Bales, Esra Coskun, John Minor, Julia and David Guth, Julie Erlinger, Lynda Minor, Marcus Johnson, Mary Bunyard, Pilar Ahuerma, Shad Baker, Sheri and Michael Langendorf, Tamera Bajema, Theresa Sweeney

Public input via email in support of Resolution No. 2020-09-045R were: Christine Janak, Megan Mericle, Anne Marie Esposito, and Jon Hays.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none

F. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Committee Of The Whole

1. CONSENT AGENDA

2. REGULAR AGENDA

- a. **Ordinance No. 2020-09-044**: An Ordinance Ratifying Extension of Emergency Order 20-03 Temporarily Suspending the Issuance of Special Event Permits

On behalf of the committee, CM Colbrook made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-09-044 as amended and forwarded from committee. Seconded by CM Laut and carried by roll call as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu

Nay: None

- b. **Ordinance No. 2020-09-045**: An Ordinance Ratifying Emergency Order No. 20-10 Temporary Ban of On-Premises Consumption of Food and Beverage within Specific Bounded Area

On behalf of the committee, CM Colbrook made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-09-045 as amended and forwarded from committee. Seconded by CM Wu and carried by roll call as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu

Nay: None

G. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There were none

H. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Mayor Marlin acknowledged the presence of Assistant City Attorney Curt Borman was present representing the legal department.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. [Resolution No. 2020-09-038R](#): A Resolution Accepting the Local Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency Support (Cure) Program Funding from the State of Illinois

Community Development Grants Manager Sheila Dodd presented this item with the recommendation for approval. Ms. Dodd gave a brief summary about the awarded the grant. The grant is to assist with expenditures incurred by the city due COVID-19 as March 27, 2020.

After presentation, Ms. Dodd addressed questions from council. CM Wu made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-038R as presented. Seconded by CM Roberts and carried by roll call as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu

Nay: None

2. [Resolution No. 2020-09-039R](#): A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana Home Consortium Subrecipient Agreement (Champaign County Regional Plan Commission TBRA FY 2020-2021)

Community Development Grants Manager Sheila Dodd presented this item with the recommendation for approval. The proposed agreement would allocate \$ 175,000 from reallocated funds, the City of Urbana, and City of Champaign allocation of HOME funds to assist Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) to fund a tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) program for qualified low-income renters. CCRPC has been managing rental assistance program for many years.

After presentation, Ms. Dodd addressed questions from council. CM Wu made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-039R as presented. Seconded by CM Laut and carried by roll call as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu

Nay: None

3. [Resolution No. 2020-09-040R](#): A Resolution Accepting a Census Implementation Grant from the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

Community Development Grants Manager Sheila Dodd presented this item with the recommendation for approval. The City was awarded \$59,000 in February 2020 for census outreach expenses; with this agreement, the City will receive an additional \$20,000 to continue the census outreach efforts.

After presentation, Ms. Dodd addressed questions from council. CM Roberts made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-040R as presented. Seconded by CM Hursey and carried by roll call as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu

Nay: None

Mayor Marlin acknowledged the efforts on this campaign to get the message out about Census 2020 by Deputy City Clerk Wendy Hundley, Communications Specialist Bridget Broihahn, Community Development staff, and City Council Members.

Mayor Marlin reminded everyone of the deadline to complete Census 2020 by September 30, 2020.

4. [Resolution No. 2020-09-041R](#): A Resolution of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois Authorizing the Execution of an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement

between the City and the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois ("Normal"), and Authorizing Normal to Exercise the Powers of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois in Connection with an MCC Program and a Loan Finance Program

Community Development Grants Manager Sheila Dodd presented this item with the recommendation for approval. Ms. Dodd gave a summary on how the program logistics. The Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) program is being funded through Bond Cap which council approved in May. Bond Cap is allocated by the State of Illinois and it does not come from the general fund or any grants.

After presentation, Ms. Dodd addressed questions from council. CM Roberts made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-041R as presented. Seconded by CM Wu and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: None

5. [Resolution No. 2020-09-042R](#): A Resolution Approving the Emergency Solutions Grants Program Subrecipient Agreement with Cunningham Township (FY 2020-2021)

*****This item was removed under Additions to the Agenda**

6. [Resolution No. 2020-09-043R](#): A Resolution Approving the Emergency Solutions Grants Program Subrecipient Agreement with CU at Home (FY 2020-2021)

*****This item was removed under Additions to the Agenda**

7. [Approval of Consolidated Social Service Fund FY 2020-2021 Allocations](#)

Community Development Specialist Alyssa Jaje presented this item for approval. Ms. Jaje presented the City's list of social service organization to be funded in FY 2020-2021, noting the removal of the Channing Murray as this will be funded by Township instead.

After presentation, Ms. Dodd and Ms. Jaje addressed questions and concerns from council. CM Laut made a motion to approve the Consolidated Social Service Fund FY 2020-2021 minus \$8,000 for Channing Murray. Seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: None

8. [Resolution No. 2020-09-044R](#): A Resolution Approving City of Urbana Community Development Block Grant Agreement (Family Service Proj. 2021-CSSP)

Community Development Specialist Alyssa Jaje presented this item for approval. Ms. Jaje explained the requirements for managing CDBG grants. This resolution would allow Family Service of Champaign County to receive \$5,500 for the Meals on Wheels program. The grant comes from two different sources \$5,000 is from CDBG and \$500 from the City's general fund.

After presentation, Ms. Jaje addressed questions and concerns from council. CM Roberts made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-044R as presented. Seconded by CM Colbrook and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: None

9. [Ordinance No. 2020-09-046](#): An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #2- Omnibus)

Community Development Grants Manager Sheila Dodd presented this item with the recommendation for approval. This ordinance will allow the city to accept the following grants: Census grant from Public Health and the CDBG.

After presentation, CM Roberts made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-09-046 as presented. Seconded by CM Hursey and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: None

10. [Ordinance No. 2020-09-047](#): An Ordinance Approving a Major Variance (102 W. Pennsylvania Ave./ ZBA Case No. 2020-MAJ-03)

Katherine Trotter, Planner I presented this item with the recommendation for approval. She provided background history about the variance. The owners are requesting a Major Variance to allow a garage encroachment of 14.5 feet into the required 15-foot front yard at 102 W. Pennsylvania Ave., the Major Variance is necessary because there is a Bald Cypress tree on the property that is three feet from the existing garage. The applicants could build a new garage without a variance, but to keep it out of the front yard would require the Bald Cypress to be removed. The applicants would like to preserve the tree and would like to build the proposed garage closer to the property line.

After presentation, she addressed questions from council. CM Roberts made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-09-047 as presented. Seconded by CM Brown and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: None

11. [Resolution No. 2020-09-045R](#): A Resolution Regarding the Future of the School Resource Program Intergovernmental Agreement with Urbana School District 116 – Laut/Miller

CM Miller said that this resolution is a result brought forth by residents who expressed concerns about the city not releasing the school district from their Intergovernmental agreement regarding the School Resource Officer Program.

CM Miller made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-045R as presented. Seconded by CM Laut. Discussion ensued.

CM Brown made a motion to add an amendment as follows: In the event that the School District wishes to terminate, suspend or amend the School Resource Officer Program Intergovernmental Agreement, then at such time the City will work with the School District to develop a financial exit strategy that is mutually acceptable to both parties.

Seconded by CM Wu, discussion ensued. Some of the comments made by Council Members are as follows: The City should let the School District do their job and not intervene at this time, Mayor Marlin met with School District staff to discuss options, School District and City Staff have a good working relationship, reacting because of rumors is not the proper way to address issues, the amended resolution has enough flexibility to give the City and the School District time to workout the logistics of the SRO agreement, this resolution is merely to give the School District affirmation of the city's willingness to work with them.

After discussion, the motion to approve the amendment was approved by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Hursey, Laut, Roberts, Wu
Nay: Colbrook, Miller

After discussion, Mayor Marlin read the amended resolution prior to the final vote, the motion carried by roll call as follows:

Aye: Brown, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: Colbrook, Hursey

12. **Discussion:** Hillard Heintze – Next Steps – City Administrator Carol Mitten and Urbana Police Chief Bryant Seraphin

City Administrator Carol Mitten spearheaded the discussion by laying out the process and plans the city will take to amend the Use of Force Policy. During this process, the City will create a website page with the purpose of educating the public and put them on notice of the City's intention to rewrite the policy based on some of Hillard Heintze recommendations. Create a devoted email to funnel communication among public and council. After receiving input from the public, create a draft of the policy and make it available for additional public feedback, maintain council involvement during the process. Logistics of the process will be communicated to council.

After introduction of the plan, City Administrator Carol Mitten and Police Chief Bryant Seraphin addressed questions from the council. After extensive discussion, some of the suggestions made by CM's were as follows: Availability of unredacted police policies to council, having public forums, listening session, youth involvement, and moderated conversations. Any ideas or suggestions should be sent to City Administrator Carol Mitten.

13. **Discussion:** City of Urbana Membership in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) – CM Laut/Miller

CM Laut began this discussion and explained that GARE stands for Government Alliance on Race and Equity. She said it was part of a circulating document that came from the City of Evanston, Illinois, which is currently a member of GARE. GARE is a joint project between Race Forward and the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and for the past 20 years, they have helped city governments' work toward racial equity and advance opportunities for all. More information about [GARE](#) can be found on their website, which includes tools and resources as well as events and training.

Discussion ensued. It was suggested this should be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan to help promote the idea of community as a whole rather than as people in various groups. Including Champaign and Champaign County was also suggested so work could be done collectively to make the entire community better.

14. Additional Public Input via Zoom by the following people: Sara Nixon, Allan Axelrod, Alen Romero, Beau David Barber, Meghan McDonald, Brandi, and Ben Theobald. Some of the comments included: Racial inequity, respect is a two way issue, SRO, utilities moratorium, abused of power by censoring public input, school principal does not represent the school board and community, council is pay to serve the community.

At 10:29pm, CM Wu made a motion to extend the meeting until 11:00pm., seconded by CM Miller and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Brown, Colbrook, Hursey, Laut, Miller, Roberts, Wu
Nay: None

J. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the virtual meeting at 10:41 p.m.

Wendy M. Hundley
Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes Approved: October 12, 2020

Regards,

Ameena Payne, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which I work, and pay my respects to the Elders, past and present.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 9/14/2020
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 3:54:16 PM

Hello City Council,

I would like to voice my support for allowing the Urbana school district to remove SROs from schools. Thank you to Julie and Jared for bringing this gto the table. I would also urge city councilors to think about appropriate police behaviors, oversight, and consequences for our city. The officers who responded to the call that resulted in charges against Ale'yah Lewis did not act appropriately. First off, based on the H.H. report they did not try to pat down the two individuals who they suspected of having weapons as they did to the other people they checked before them (according to the H. H. report). This seems like a misstep which resulted in escalation. Both individuals did not present immediate harm to anyone including the officers when they were threatened with being shot. This is not an appropriate response and certainly not de-escalation. Ale'yah was walking away, again not causing harm to anyone when she was grabbed and forced onto the ground. The officers did not conduct themselves in a manner that is focused on protecting the community. I live on Colorado Ave, while I do not anticipate police treating me (a white woman) this way, I am scared to know that they would treat my partner and neighbors with the same disrespect. Please think about not only this incident but the many other incidents that do not get reported similar to this one. Please do not let this happen again in our town. You have the power to ensure that it does not.

I would also like to thank Julie for responding to my email input last week, I felt heard and look forward to you all working to achieve the needs that this community is asking for.

Thank you,

Anne Marie Esposito

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [!City Council](#)
Subject: Vote yes on SROs
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:32:54 PM

>

> To Whom it May Concern-

>

> It is my belief that SROs are an important resource in schools to help ensure safety. Vote yes on keeping SROs in school.

>

> -Ashleigh Orton

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Support for SRO
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 6:33:31 PM

I urge you to delete Part (a) of the resolution to allow district and city time to explore options.

Respectfully,
Bruce Rummenie, Ph.D

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: SRO OFFICERS
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:36:11 PM

My name is Cheryl Van Ness as resident of Urbana, I am hearing again that the City of Urbana does not want to fund the necessary SRO officers in the middle and high school in Urbana. I am resident of Urbana, but at the time our daughter's were at Edison Middle School and Champaign Central High School we lived in Savoy and can't think of a time that it wasn't a blessing that there were SRO Officers in the schools. While our daughters were in middle school and high school, I was a PTA officer, band parent, served lunch to the staff, mentored in the schools and also was a substitute for 10 years. I saw them break up fights between the students, walk down the halls with students talking and laughing with them and doing their job of making a safe environment for all.. PLEASE don't take them out of the schools here in Urbana

Cheryl Van Ness
1809 A Lydia Court

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Release USD from SRO Contract
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 12:45:24 PM

Dear City Council Members,

I write to ask that you pass the resolution releasing the Urbana School District from their \$327,000 contract with the city for SROs if they choose to cancel the contract.

There is widespread community support for the cancellation of this contract for SROs and the school district desperately needs those funds to use in ways that will actually support our students this year.

Thank you for your service and for considering this resolution. Please make it clear to school board members that there is no fear of legal retaliation from the city of Urbana if they make the prudent choice to cancel the SRO contract.

Sincerely,

Christine Janak

Christine Janak *(she/her)*

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: SRO vote
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 6:57:10 PM

Hello, my name is Cord Schroeder and I have lived in Urbana for the past 16 years. My son is a freshman at UHS and I have a daughter that is planning on attending UHS in 2 years.

Please keep the SRO in our school. Do not vote to take funds away from the budget that the school board just approved.

Do not make my son a test dummy to another experiment you want to try. Every other school in the conference has a full time SRO in the high school. Several have more than one. You are trying to do something different because you think you know better than everyone else. Please don't use your ego as a platform to try out a different method than everyone else in a school similar to yours in this area. My children should not be your experiment. Please listen to the school board in its entirety that voted in favor of this and don't try and usurp their authority.

I was at the school board meeting when this vote was taken. Both sides had valid points and the vote was close, but the vote was in favor of the SRO. Please do not try and undercut the proper process.

This school attempted another experiment recently that was a colossal failure. Staff and students were put in danger because people thought they knew a better way than everyone else. Can you please do what everyone else is in the conference is doing? Please do not risk my child's safety because you want to be different or smarter than everyone else.

Thank you.
Cord

Cord Schroeder
[REDACTED]

Please note, this email was sent from my phone and may be short or have silly typos. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. Always feel free to text or call me

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: SRO
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:05:31 PM

To whom it may concern;

As a parent of a dist 116 student, I am hoping for the deletion of “part a” of the resolution to be voted on regarding SRO in schools. Are there other possible options? Would like to see further discussion before vote. Thank you

David Bales

CityCouncil@Urbanallinois.us and ask them to delete Part (a) of the resolution to allow district and city time to explore

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
[\[City Council\]](#)
Subject: RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09-045R - Please Vote Down
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 6:42:39 PM

Dear City Council Members,

Please delete line (a) from RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09-045R that expires the intergovernmental agreement with USD116 at the end of this quarter.

I think SROs impact should be evaluated based on data and should be released to the public before a decision is made.

In case the existence of SROs' positive impact cannot be determined, better alternatives should be put in place before eliminating SROs.

Best regards,

Esra Coskun

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Resolution No. 2020-09-045R to end SRO's in schools
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:44:37 PM

I ask that you delete Part (a) of the resolution No. 2020-09-045R to allow district and city time to explore options on the SRO's in the Urbana Schools. I have a sophomore at UHS and have a stake in maintaining the SRO program in the schools.

John Minor

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT: 09/14/2020
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 11:26:25 AM

Dear City Council and Mayor Marlin

I just want to write in a short note today expressing support for the resolution being put forward by Julie Laut and Jared Miller, the Resolution Regarding the Future of the School Resource Program No. 2020-09-045R.

It seems like this resolution can give a clear path forward for the school district to rethink the presence of SROs, especially during this time of pandemic when even their purported purpose of protection is moot.

I hope very much this resolution can be passed.

Thank you for your time,

Jon Hays

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: REMOVE Part A of RESOLUTION NO: 2020-09-045R
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 6:55:50 PM

Mayor Marlin and Members of the Urbana City Council,

We urge you to remove Part (A) of RESOLUTION NO: 2020-09-045R and table the discussion regarding the SRO Intergovernmental agreement at this evening's meeting.

It is premature to authorize this resolution to expire the SRO intergovernmental agreement before the District administration, staff, parents, and students have been made aware and/or have opportunity for input.

In addition, we encourage you to read our recent mail below to the Urbana Board of Education in its entirety. It details our oldest child's seventeen incidents of physical assaults and bullying in Urbana's secondary schools.

Thank you for your time and service to our community,

Julia and David Guth

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2020 7:55 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Thoughts on SRO Budget (NOT A CITIZEN COMMENT)

THIS IS AN EMAIL TO THE USD #116 BOARD OF EDUCATION AND IS NOT A CITIZEN COMMENT TO BE READ ALOUD

Dear Dr. Ivory-Tatum, President Hall, and Members of the Board of Education,

Thank you to Member Patten for reaching out to reassess our thoughts on the **SRO intergovernmental agreement under our current remote learning situation**. We have watched the recent Urbana Board of Education and City of Urbana meetings with great interest and are very aware of the current efforts by UHS alum and resident of Australia, Ameena Payne, in collaboration with our former superintendent, to eliminate the SRO line item from the 2020-21 budget. While we recognize the unprecedented challenges resulting from the pandemic and join the voices passionately advocating for racial justice, we encourage all Urbana stakeholders to listen actively and think critically in order to move forward collaboratively towards safe and equitable outcomes.

In answer to Member Patten's question at the September 3, 2020 board meeting, there are many reasons you may not be hearing from constituents who were vocally in support of the SRO petition last fall. On a macro level, we are collectively exhausted by the effects of the pandemic, traumatized by injustice, and shocked by the increasing divide in our nation. On a micro level, the majority of families and educators enrolled in and employed at UMS and UHS are currently overwhelmed by the challenges of remote learning and are vastly unaware of the current effort to eliminate the SRO line item in the 2020-21 budget. To help put things in historical context, we write to remind you of **the countless hours of public comments, board emails, petitions, and mass exodus of families and educators of all race and socioeconomic backgrounds detailing critical injuries, physical assaults, and thousands of hours of lost instructional time due to the former administration's failure to maintain control of our schools and provide a safe learning environment for all students and educators**. Hence, the impetus to formalize the intergovernmental SRO agreement.

To refresh your memory, below please find our **original email to Member Patten dated October 15, 2019 which details our son's seventeen incidents of physical assaults and bullying he experienced at UMS which**

then later followed him into UHS. Since then, despite five years of interventions with clinical professionals, those same students who assaulted our son succeeded in shutting down Urbana High School with mob action on February 4, 2019 —resulting in the collective **loss of approximately 2400 hours of instructional time and hospitalization of a severely injured and beloved teacher.** Tragically, our local story doesn't end there, as **the sharp increase in incidents of gun violence among youth 16 and under** —and now the related tragic shooting death of a 15-year-old Urbana youth on April 11, 2020 — have continued to traumatize our families and community.

While we vehemently share in the need for police accountability and reform across the country, we are also equally confused by Member Patten and President Hall's disregard for **the administrative recommendation of Superintendent Ivory-Tatum and board recommendation of Member Exum, both of whom have spoken publicly numerous times in favor of the program, not only as leaders of the District, but as mothers of Black sons.** In addition, we respectfully remind Member Patten and President Hall of the professional testimony in support of the program provided by a broad representation of our clinical professionals, social workers, and secondary building administration this past fall.

Ironically, our former superintendent who is guiding the current effort to eliminate the SRO line item, extols the merits of Urbana's "student centered" SRO program in this video from BOE archives on February 20, 2018 here: <https://youtu.be/pltOjSe39bs?t=3358> Over the course of the last few months, our current student resource supervisor at Urbana High School, Jay Simpson, details his own experience with **guns in the hands of youth in Urbana as early as nine years old, and describes student resource officers as "much-needed in every middle school and high school."** Mr. Simpson shares his experience with gun violence in his July 22, 2020 column here: https://www.news-gazette.com/opinion/columns/jay-simpson-gun-violence-is-a-problem-ive-seen-with-my-own-eyes/article_d8f04da8-1587-59fa-87b8-1e962df3e412.html and his support for SROs in his September 9, 2020 column here: https://www.news-gazette.com/coronavirus/jay-simpson-in-my-book-school-officers-are-a-good-resource/article_802e4658-b362-5d1b-a7fd-f6c34ad71dfa.html

With an emphasis on increased accountability measures, we share in Dr. Ivory-Tatum's view that Urbana has an opportunity to establish a national benchmark to educate and model effective relationships with SROs while at the same time making sure all students feel safe and valued. For this reason, **we write to reaffirm our support of the current intergovernmental SRO agreement and believe that eliminating the \$327,000 SRO budget line for 2020-21 is negligent for the following reasons:**

1. Member Patten bases her current reasoning to eliminate the line item for SROs upon the pandemic and that we currently have very few students in our buildings, yet it's our understanding that our current remote learning situation extends through October 16. **Any decision to eliminate the SRO program prior to a definitive date to return to in-school learning is premature.**
2. The intergovernmental agreement was ratified in December 2019 by both USD116 Board of Education and the City of Urbana, after six intensive study sessions and public meetings over the course of several months. Several of us attended all of those meetings in person, totaling approximately 40 hours of our individual time (and countless hours of yours) collectively. As elected public servants, board of education members are expected to adhere to governance agreements. Section 2:82 of the Board Policy Manual dated June 24, 2019 states **"As a board of education, we understand the value and necessity of working together as a governance team. In order to effectively govern the school district, we have established the following expectations for the board and its members. After the meeting: All board members are expected to support the board decision. Once the decision has been made, it is time to move on to the next critical issue. Efforts by board members to revisit previous decisions or secure belated public support will only distract from the future work of the district."** Other than the petition against the SRO agreement disseminated to a very narrow audience in the community, there has been no

formal communication from the City of Urbana or USD116 to families enrolled in Urbana Schools that indicates that the SRO intergovernmental agreement is up for review or elimination.

3. **Amending or breaching the intergovernmental SRO agreement with the City of Urbana could result in additional legal expenses which may significantly lessen or nullify the perceived savings** that Member Patten and President Hall were promoting at the September 3, 2020 meeting. It is our perception that the public discussion generated by Member Patten and President Hall (which pondered the possibility of breaching the intergovernmental contract) not only disregards Section 2:82 of the Board Policy Agreement detailed above, but demonstrates a lack of adequate study and judgement. In our view, the topic of contract law should be slated for consultation with District attorneys before being raised in public discussion. In addition, we recently reviewed the proposed 2020-21 budget resolution and are not seeing evidence of the \$1.5M shortfall being used as the premise by opponents of the program to eliminate the SRO line item.
4. A petition signed by **141 parents, students, and educators who are specifically enrolled in or employed at USD116's Urbana Middle School and Urbana High School** was submitted to the Board of Education on December 17, 2019: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1U6Kd5XkocZZUhWDn55hVPvd7JA9f0YAkYeW8Ha1ncsE/edit#responses>
In contrast, the signatories of the recent petition in opposition to the SRO agreement cited residents from multiple cities, including Urbana. Of those signatures in opposition, less than a handful are from families currently enrolled in or educators currently employed at Urbana Middle School or Urbana High School. Since Member Patten reached out to us to assess whether our support for the intergovernmental agreement has changed, we assume that all 141 signatories in support of the SRO agreement, would also be surveyed before any decision to eliminate the SRO line item from the 2020-21 budget.
5. Review of the intergovernmental SRO agreement and/or elimination of the SRO line item in the 2020-21 budget has not been listed on the agenda since it was ratified in December 2019. It is our opinion that **any effort to eliminate the SRO line item or amend the agreement without formal notice and opportunity for public input from ALL Urbana stakeholders would be in violation of the Open Meetings Act.**
6. Member Patten also bases her proposal to eliminate the SRO line item on the premise that the two SROs we currently employ have been assisting with various support duties while students are not in our buildings, duties that are not specifically related to their training as SROs. However, **an informal survey of UHS admin and UMS admin shared that SROS continue to remain an integral part of the student support team during remote learning.** UHS SRO Chad Burnett is a former teacher and is at the high school every day. He continues to educate and assist with driver's ed classes, work on relationship building and goes to the hub at the high school to support students who come to the gym for academic and tech support, internet, etc. He has also assisted families when their children are missing and helps locate the missing students. He also has been accompanying social workers on wellness checks and home visits with students who are not connecting (and brings families needed resources). It's also our understanding that the UMS SRO Michelle Robinson has continued to remain integral to the UMS team in a very similar fashion.
7. **Despite community efforts to curb gun violence among youth, the number of local incidents involving youth 16 and under with guns continues to rise.** As discussed, in several study sessions in Fall of 2019 and shared by Dr. Ivory Tatum, **youth are bringing their guns onto school campuses for self-protection.** Recently, Tracy Parsons, the Champaign Community Coalition Facilitator, shared that the number of shootings in our community continue to increase, especially among youth. As of July 21, there have been

more than 50 shooting incidents in Champaign-Urbana, compared to only 35 at the same time last year, <https://will.illinois.edu/news/story/as-shootings-rise-champaign-urbana-leaders-grapple-with-gun-violence> Per testimony from study sessions last fall, as long as gun violence among youth continues to be on the rise despite community efforts to curb it, the student resource team will need balanced wrap-around supports of social workers, clinical professionals, and student resource officers in order to appropriately meet the emotional, social, and academic needs of all students.

8. As you may recall, parents formed the Urbana Parent Advisory Group in June of 2018 (now up to 1083 members) shortly after the Board approved dismissal of the deans and the sudden resignation of both UMS and UHS principals. Attached please find the initial mandate and action plan issued to the Board of Education on June 19, 2018. For historical context, the group issued the following **mandate to our former Superintendent and the USD116 Board of Education on September 21, 2018** after continued reports of violence and injuries on district premises during the school day:

"We believe that the working conditions of our staff are the learning conditions of our students. Students deserve a safe environment conducive to learning, and teachers deserve a safe environment free from fear and intimidation. We find the working conditions to be unacceptable and are contributing to unsafe spaces that are counterproductive to learning. **We demand that the Board of Education move immediately to restore safety in Urbana Schools. Failure to take immediate action, beyond what is currently in place, to improve safety within our schools is effectively condoning and permitting a dangerous and hostile environment for students and staff.**"

Since the July 2018 shooting of an Urbana student and ongoing related retaliation among factions, gun violence in our community and gun presence on our secondary school campuses is readily increasing. While we agree we need more clinical professionals and social workers, these professions are in no way qualified or prepared to intervene in the case of gun violence or mob action. Student Resource Officers are not only embedded in school campuses to build relationships with students, but within the community to build trust and communication with families in order to prevent conflict in the community from spilling over into our school campuses. We will never be able to fully measure this prevention because it is based on relationship building and qualitative outcomes. In the case of gun violence or mob action on campus, whom would you rather respond? A student resource officer who knows the students and is trained to prevent or deescalate potential gun violence before it happens? Or unknown officers who respond blindly to a 911 call, are unfamiliar with the individuals involved in the situation, and are trained to shoot-to-kill?

We respectfully submit this communication as historical record of the violence our own son has experienced in Urbana secondary schools along with the collective steps taken by individual members of the Urbana Schools Parent Advisory Group to notify the USD116 Board of Education and former administration of its pattern of failures to provide a safe learning environment within our schools. **For reasons outlined above, we urge the Board of Education to maintain the \$327,000 budget line item for the SRO intergovernmental agreement in 2020-21. We believe that a vote to remove this line item would establish a continued pattern of negligence and is effectively condoning and permitting a dangerous and hostile environment for students and staff.**

Thank you for your leadership, time, and consideration,

Julia and David Guth

From: Peggy Patten [REDACTED]

Date: September 5, 2020 at 5:47:03 PM CDT

To: "J. Loofbourrow Guth" <[REDACTED]>

Subject: SRO budget -- your thoughts

Hello David & Julia,

I'm checking back with you two because of your past support for SROs.

The Board of Education will finalize the budget for the upcoming school year at our Sept. 15 public meeting. The proposed budget includes \$327,000 for two SROs. Those who supported the SRO hiring last fall argued that the increase in SROs was needed to improve safety in our middle & high schools. Because of the pandemic, we currently have very few students in our buildings. It's possible we may not have all our students return to our buildings for over a year or more. I understand that the two SROs we currently employ have been assisting with various support duties while students are not in our buildings, duties that are not specifically related to their training as SROs. I believe our budget should reflect our current reality & priorities. The reality is that this pandemic has presented enormous education, mental health & health challenges for our District which, in my view, should be reflected in the budget we approve for the coming year. I suggested at our last two Board meetings & will do so again at the Sept. 15 meeting that the \$327,007 SRO budget line be eliminated for 2020-21 & that those funds be redirected to pay for personnel—teachers, social workers, counselors, nurses— with qualifications to address our current challenges.

Because of the demands of the pandemic I recognize many families may not be aware of recent School Board discussions. I'm checking in with individuals who expressed strong support for the SROs last fall to see what your thoughts are about including the \$327,000 SRO line item in the budget for this coming year.

Thanks in advance for sharing your thoughts.

Peggy Patten

Urbana School Board

From: "J. Loofbourrow Guth" <[REDACTED]>

Date: October 15, 2019 at 1:40:00 PM CDT

To: Peggy Patten <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: SRO Proposal

Peggy,

Thank you for sharing your very detailed thoughts. As always, we respect your well thought-out decision making processes and methodology. We remain grateful for your wisdom, dedication, and service to our schools.

With a 5th grader about to enter UMS in 6th grade next year, we are paying particularly close attention to the Board of Education's decisions impacting safety and security in Urbana Schools. As you may be aware through our board communications last year, our oldest son, current sophomore at UHS, was the victim of 17 incidents of bullying behavior, including multiple physical assaults at UMS during his 6th grade year. Due to the physical nature of the bullying behavior, he suffered repeated nightmares and debilitating school related anxiety which eventually surmounted in school refusal.

Fast forward three years later, the youth involved in at least 12 of those 17 bullying incidents and assaults was at the center of the mob action which resulted in the injury of a beloved teacher at Urbana High School on February 5, 2019. This is also the same mob action that shut down the school at 1:05 pm that day, resulting in the loss of more than two hours of instructional time for nearly 1200 students, or the equivalent of approximately 2400 cumulative lost hours of learning. This same youth was also present in the shooting of a 14-year-old Urbana High School incoming freshman on the way home from the County Fair in July 2018.

Respectfully, "teachers, counselors & social workers—professionals who know our students best & are to prevent serious conflicts from escalating" did not prevent the seventeen incidents of bullying and assaults that our son incurred four years ago. Fast forward to today, these same "professionals who know our students best"

still did not prevent the shooting of the fourteen-year-old last summer nor the shooting of an Urbana youth just a few weeks ago. Nor did these professionals prevent the 49 rounds of ammunition discovered in an Urbana student's backpack last May, the same student who was later found with a stolen gun used to shoot up a house in Urbana: https://www.news-gazette.com/news/urbana--year-old-gets-years-in-juvenile-prison-for/article_1e82a45f-4ae2-5278-bbb6-01dbafc43b6c.html

This recent incident in Urbana is further evidence of the increasing gun violence among youth that Chief Seraphin referred to during the study session on October 1st. According to Tracy Parsons, head of the Champaign Community Coalition and guest presenter at the University YMCA's Friday Forum Series in February 2019, "This past year, we started to see our shooters become younger and younger," Parsons said." So we're starting to study that data. I don't want to come out and say that we have youth gangs that are doing a huge amount of our shootings, but it's alarming that more and more young people are carrying guns and solving their conflicts."

We encourage the board to pay attention to the signs of the changing needs in our community and heed the caution of Chief Seraphin and Mr. Parsons. As inferred by Mr. Parsons and seen in local headlines even over the past few weeks, more and more young people are carrying guns to resolve their conflicts. We agree that we need "teachers, counselors and social workers who know our students best," but sadly, due to the unfortunate reality of increasing gun violence among our youth, we also need designated SROs who are specially trained to deter local youth who are pushing boundaries and bringing guns and ammunition onto school property: https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/courts-police-fire/centennial-student-arrested-after-police-find-gun-ammo-in-backpack/article_94a06d62-ea0c-11e9-869e-17b047629e2d.html

Thank you for listening. We respect your opinion and understand we may have to agree to disagree. We also invite you to share this expanded communication with the remainder of the board.

With sincere appreciation for your service,

Julia and David Guth

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: SRO Intergovernmental Agreement---please work to keep our SROs
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:26:22 PM

Dear City Council Members,

I am a teacher at Urbana High School. I can speak to the value of having well trained SROs in our building to make connections with students and to keep our building safe. Please delete part a of the resolution and allow both the district and the city more time to explore more options. This is a very important part to our schools and community.

Sincerely,

Julie Erlinger

--

Julie Erlinger, NBCT
Instructional Coach

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [!City Council](#)
Subject: SRO's
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 7:08:17 PM

Hello-I am writing as I was just informed that the subject of SRO's is on tonight city council meeting agenda.

I am quite perplexed as to why this agenda item is included in tonight's meeting. No matter which side you take on this matter, it was openly debated, discussed, and voted on. I do not understand how, because a small group of people disagree on the outcome of this vote, it is allowed to be brought to the forefront of a city council meeting, months later. There is a process and it must be followed. How can district administration even begin to develop plans, policies, and procedures to move our district forward when the target keeps changing. I firmly believe there is a process for a reason, and it must be trusted.

Best regards,
Katie Schroeder

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: vote down RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09-045R
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:17:36 PM

I am asking city council members to delete line (a) from RESOLUTION NO. 2020-09-045R that expires the intergovernmental agreement with USD116 at the end of this quarter.

Given the current political climate, I understand the thought process of the city council to question and reconsider the presence and role of police officers in schools - that is healthy and absolutely appropriate. However, in the current system we live in, SROs are the best short-term solution until we can fix the larger systemic issues at hand. This contract was passed in December 2019, meaning that given the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been less than a quarter where students were in the building with the SRO present. This is not nearly enough time to determine whether or not the SRO's made a positive impact, nor has the school district been asked to provide information or data regarding the effectiveness of the SRO program, and to date there has been no decisions made regarding in-person school for the 2nd quarter, making this a rash decision. It is not healthy nor safe to eliminate with no alternative ready to function in its place. More time is needed for city and district to explore options.

Sincerely,
Lynda Minor
Urbana, IL

From: [REDACTED]
To: [!City Council](#)
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:28:29 PM

I understand that there will be a vote on a resolution tonight to expire the SRO intergovernmental agreement at the end of the current quarter tonight.

I implore you to delete Part (a) of the resolution to allow district and city time to explore options. Losing SRO's in our schools would be a big mistake.

Thanks,

Marcus Johnson

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: SRO's
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:00:48 PM

I am absolutely opposed to removing the school resource officers from this budget or any budget. I implore that the city council continues to support the SRO program.

Thanks for your support,

Mary Bunyard

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 9/14
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 3:32:02 PM

Dear Councilmembers and Mayor Marlin,

My name is Megan Mericle and I am a resident of Champaign. I am writing today to express support for the resolution being put forward by Julie Laut and Jared Miller, the Resolution Regarding the Future of the School Resource Program No. 2020-09-045R.

This is a significant step toward removing SROs from our schools, and will allow the school board to work toward de-investing in punitive measures that fail to make students safer, while re-investing in supportive measures that address the roots causes of students' struggles in school, including licensed counselors, health staff, individualized tutoring, upgrades in technology, and additional educational resources.

SROs contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline by escalating school disciplinary measures to the level of criminal punishment, and [national peer-reviewed research](#) has shown that SROs are more likely to arrest and use force against students of color. They serve to remove students from the learning environment, and make schools a more stressful and potentially traumatic space, particularly for students of color.

I fully support this resolution, and hope it is the beginning of a larger conversation about how we can remove carceral systems of punishment from learning environments.

Thank you for your time,
Megan

From: [REDACTED]
To: [!City Council](#)
Subject: Do not expire SRO agreement
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:18:23 PM

**I don't agree with cutting the budget or expiring the agreement to have SRO.
Our kids and staff deserve a safe place to learn and teach.
Did you already forget about the big fight at UHS where even other police departments had to collaborate to end the chaos????
My daughter could be attending UMS, but thanks to the unsafe environment, I have to pay a private school for her to learn in a safe place and I can have peace of mind she is not in risk to be jumped or witness a fight.
This email is to ask you, not to expire the SRO intergovernmental agreement and give more time to explore options.
Pilar Ahuerma**

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [Rose Merriam](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Public Input, September 14th, 2020
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 3:52:29 PM

Hello City Council,

After listening in to the last few months of meetings and hearing so much about other citizens' difficulties with FOIA, I decided to try submitting a request of my own. This was a simple, straight-forward request of three parts: information about members of boards and commissions starting or leaving their position in 2020, information about the recent appointment to Ward 2, and information about Urbana city employees leaving their positions in 2020.

This is my first FOIA request to the City, and yet Curt Borman responded by labelling me a "recurrent requester". He also labelled my request as "voluminous" because it asks for records from more than five categories. I asked him to clarify how a three-part request is more than five categories and this was his response:

"Part 1 of your request seeks records pertaining to board and commission applications and resignations in 2020. We have had at least nine applications and three resignations. The records requested for each board member or applicant are separate categories. That makes at least 12 categories for part 1.

Part 2 of your request seeks applications and other records concerning the Ward 2 vacancy. We have had four applications for this vacancy. The records requested for each applicant are separate categories. That makes four categories for part 2.

Part 3 of your request seeks records concerning separations, resignations, and retirements of Urbana employees in 2020. We have had at least six separations, resignations, or retirements. The records requested for each employee are separate categories. That makes at least six categories for part 3.

Therefore, your request totals at least 22 categories of records."

Curt Borman is counting information about individuals as separate categories. This seems like a blatant attempt by the City to withhold information from the public. Imagine a citizen asking for all police complaints received in a given time frame – this would be considered "voluminous" simply if more than five officers received complaints against them. I am now being asked to re-word my request to make it non-voluminous. This would mean splitting it into several smaller requests that ask for the same information. Additionally, since I am apparently a recurrent requester, I must now wait 21 business days for a response. Finally, Curt Borman refuses to address me by name, instead calling me "Dear Requester".

I had a bit of trouble believing that the City could be so obstinate when filling FOIA requests to its citizens. Having submitted my own and seeing to what lengths the City will go to keep its citizens ignorant about the inner-workings of the government, I am quite concerned about what goes on behind the closed doors of the City Building.

Sincerely,

Rose Merriam

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Date: SRO Intergovernmental Agreement
Monday, September 14, 2020 5:56:47 PM

To Whom it may concern,

I'm asking that you delete Part (a) of the resolution to expire the SRO intergovernmental agreement at the end of the current quarter to allow the district and city time to explore options.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [!City Council](#)
Subject: SRO's
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 4:56:09 PM

What a thoughtless gesture to put this resolution out without the school district even having an opportunity to discuss any changes with their staff, parents and students! Aren't you putting the cart in front of the horse? Your trained SRO's should be a resource for the students, teachers and parents to help with challenges that occur. Table this discussion until the school contacts you.

Sheri and Michael Langendorf

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [!City Council](#)
Subject: Support SRO!
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 6:20:21 PM

Regarding your vote tonight, I urge you to delete Part (a) of the resolution to allow district and city time to explore options.

--

Tami Bajema

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Part A Resolution being voted on tonight
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:05:30 PM

I am writing to ask that you immediately delete part A of the resolution to allow the Urbana School District and the City an opportunity to explore options prior to terminating the Intergovernmental agreement on SROs in Urbana Schools.

I am in agreement that school has changed since the initial agreement. We are not sure when we will resume school as usual. It is premature to make this decision at this time. The school district has had insufficient time to assess the effectiveness of the SRO supports. Has the school district even been asked to supply the data they are using to assess the effectiveness? The issues surrounding the necessity of the SROs have not disappeared. Minimal community supports and opportunities continue to exist even though schools are on remote learning. The community has more gun violence than ever, and this makes it this vote inappropriate. I am in agreement that additional social and community supports and opportunities are needed, but not at the expense of students and staff in our schools.

Reconsider having this be included in the resolution. There has not been enough time to give the public opportunity to weigh in on this issue. Families are trying to get through remote learning and functioning in the midst of the pandemic. Voting in favor tonight effectively pulls the rug out from under them. Give the public time to comment and consider the issue. Get the data from the School District. Give members of this community Grace to be informed and active participants. Please do not be a group that plows forward without input from the people you are trying to serve.

Thank you,

Theresa Sweeney
Urbana Resident
UHS Parent