
DATE: Monday, October 7, 2019
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Urbana City Council Chambers, 400 S. Vine St, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, October 7, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Urbana City Building.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: City Council Members (CM) Maryalice Wu (Ward 1), Bill Brown (Ward 4), Dean Hazen (Ward 6), Shirese Hursey (Ward 3) Eric Jakobsson (Ward 2), Jared Miller (Ward 7), Diane Wolfe Marlin (Mayor)

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Dennis Roberts (Ward 5), Charles A. Smyth (City Clerk)

STAFF PRESENT: Nick Hanson; Wendy Hundley; Charles Lauss; Carol Mitten; Lorrie Pearson; Marcus Ricci; Michelle Robinson; Bryant Seraphin; James Simon; Richard Surles; Scott Tess

OTHERS PRESENT: Elderess Melinda Carr; Rev. Robert Freeman; Jason Rock; Jennifer Ivory-Tatum; Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood; Joseph Wiemelt; News Gazette; WCIA; Fox Broadcasting

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

There being a quorum present, Mayor Marlin called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:00 p.m. following a meeting of the Cunningham Township Board

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

City Council Member (CM) Hazen made a motion to approve minutes from the September 16, 2019 regular meeting and the September 23, 2019 public hearing, seconded by CM Miller, and passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

D. PRESENTATIONS

1. School Resource Officer

Police Chief Bryant Seraphin, Urbana School Superintendent Jennifer Ivory-Tatum, Deputy Chief Rich Surles, Urbana Middle School Principal Joseph Wiemelt and Officer Michelle Robinson all took part in this presentation. The police department developed this plan at the request of the school district after a large fight at the high school in February 2019. It is a proposal for staffing both Urbana Middle School and Urbana High School with one School Resource Officer (SRO) for each school. Instead of the police department funding 100% of SRO funding, as it has in the past 26 years, the school district will bear the cost for the SROs.

Deputy Chief Surles explained that the SRO will have three roles and provided a report explaining how the plan for an SRO was developed: [“Development of a Full-Time School Resource Officer for the Urbana High School and Urbana Middle School”](#). One of the roles of an SRO will be law enforcement, handling police reports of crimes committed on campus. The second role will be teacher, providing information concerning law enforcement subjects, life skills, traffic safety and general safety strategies. The third role will be that of an informal counselor, which will give students a safe way to discuss issues relating to school and the community. Some of the goals of an SRO are to provide safe environments in schools for everyone, by fostering positive relationships with youth and developing strategies to resolve issues.

Joseph Wiemelt, principal at Urbana Middle School, and Officer Michelle Robinson, SRO at Urbana Middle School spoke about a day in the life of the Urbana Middle School SRO. The daily schedule for the SRO is from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Principal Wiemelt said the key areas of support by the SRO are the times when children are not in class, such as arrival in the morning, passing in the halls between classes, lunch hours, and dismissal in the afternoon. The SRO has a variety of duties to perform, but is not directly involved with day to day discipline with students. Disciplinary issues are handled by administration, counselors, social workers and others.

Officer Robinson spoke about working with the Youth Assessment Center in trying to redirect the path or behavior of some of the middle school students. She explained what the Youth Assessment Center does to help at risk juveniles with support and restorative services.

Deputy Chief Surles and Superintendent Ivory-Tatum discussed the duties of the Urbana High School SRO. The SRO helps direct students away from the school to prison pipeline by helping them avoid involvement with the juvenile justice by having incidents handled by the school, by the SRO informally or formally, or referring students to the Youth Assessment Center.

2. Urbana Landfill Solar Development Update

Scott Tess, Sustainability and Resilience Officer, gave an update on the solar development at the City's closed landfill. Sunpower was selected by the City in December 2018 to enter into a lease option to apply for State of Illinois solar incentives and develop solar arrays on 41 acres of the closed landfill for two years.

The City/Sunpower project was chosen for a Low income Community Solar Incentive and this was approved by the Illinois Commerce commission in October 2019. The City will convert the lease option into a long-term lease. Electricity purchasers (subscribers) will be able to buy or lease a share of the community solar system and will be credited on their utility bill for the energy produced by their share of the system.

Residential households can qualify for the program if they meet income requirements of 80% or less Area Median Income and can check to see if they qualify at <https://www.illinoissfa.com/> . There are no upfront or ongoing costs for this.

E. PUBLIC INPUT

Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood did not wish to speak but asked that her concerns regarding the Dr. Ellis Subdivision sewer issues be entered into the record.

Elderess Melinda Carr spoke on behalf of the Ministerial Alliance of Champaign-Urbana and Vicinity. She questioned the role of the School Resource Officer (SRO) as an informal counselor. She asked whether the SRO has full access to any student at any time, and if a student speaks to an SRO voluntarily, would parents have to give permission for the student to do so. She asked whether parents could opt out of having their children speak voluntarily to an SRO. She said the need for having law enforcement on school grounds for violent incidents is understood, but treating children fairly is also a concern when incidents do occur.

Jason Rock spoke about road closures and providing pedestrian safety in work zones.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

G. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

There were none.

H. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There were none.

I. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

There were none.

J. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Ordinance No. 2019-10-053:** An Ordinance Approving a Major Variance (304 S. Race St. / ZBA Case No. 2019-MAJ-11)

Planner Marcus Ricci presented this ordinance. First United Methodist Church of Urbana wants to update their seventy year old sign at Race Street and West Green Street with a new electronic version. They are in the B-4 zoning district, and an electronic sign in that area requires a major variance.

Rev. Robert Freeman from First United Methodist Church told council members that the church is 183 years old, and now has 14 agencies and groups in the building.

CM Miller moved to approve Ordinance No. 2019-10-053. Motion seconded by CM Jakobsson and carried by voice vote as follows:

Brown – aye; Hazen – aye; Hursey – aye; Jakobsson – aye; Miller – aye; Wu – aye; Marlin – aye. [7-aye; 0-nay]

2. **Ordinance No. 2019-10-054:** An Ordinance Authorizing the Purchase of Certain Real Estate (2310 B E. Main Street)

Building Inspector Nick Hanson presented this Ordinance. He said Community Development has dealt with this property for about five years, and the property is now going into foreclosure. After purchasing the property the plan is to demolish it through a state grant called the Abandoned Property Program. After demolition the property could be sold or used as an addition to the Kickapoo Rail Trail.

CM Wu made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2019-10-054. Motion seconded by CM Brown and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Brown – aye; Hazen – aye; Hursey – aye; Jakobsson – aye; Miller – aye; Wu – aye. [6-aye; 0-nay]

3. **Ordinance No. 2019-10-055:** An Ordinance Suspending Charging and Collecting Application Fees for Special Events Permits

City Administrator Carol Mitten explained that this ordinance suspends application fees while the application approval process is revamped and a review of which groups might be exempt from paying the fees is done.

CM Jakobsson moved to approve Ordinance No. 2019-10-055. Motion seconded by CM Brown and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Brown – aye; Hazen – aye; Hursey – aye; Jakobsson – aye; Miller – aye; Wu – aye. [6-aye; 0-nay]

4. **Resolution No. 2019-10-040R:** Resolution Authorizing Intervention in Assessment Complaint of OSF Healthcare System

CM Hursey made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2019-10-040R. Motion seconded by CM Hazen and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Brown – aye; Hazen – aye; Hursey – aye; Jakobsson – aye; Miller – aye; Wu – aye. [6-aye; 0-nay]

K. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Wendy M. Hundley
Deputy City Clerk

Minutes transcribed by Kay Meharry, Assistant City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded with website link (viewable on demand):

<https://www.urbanaininois.us/node/7683>

Minutes Approved: October 21, 2019