

**Observer:** Betty Hayford

**Council Members present:** All

**Meeting began:** 6:55

**Meeting ended:** 9:30

**Public announcements.** The Mayor made three announcements. June is LWBTQ National Pride Month. Juneteenth will be celebrated on June 19, Evanston's Real Independence/Freedom Day. June 2 was National Gun Violence Awareness Day.

The City Manager announced that Evanston has been awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association. CFO Hitash Desai thanked the staff for their excellent work. The City Manager called on Mike Houlihan, representative of Drexwood, to report on the work that his firm has been doing to represent Evanston in Springfield. Houlihan said activity in Springfield is back to normal, after Covid and Brauner. The goal is to help Evanston obtain grants from Springfield; significant grants include \$1 million for Beck Park and \$600,000 for building out the Living Room facility. There are other state funds that will be coming to Evanston. CM Reid asked several questions and said it was important for Council to have regular reports on the work in Springfield. City Manager Stowe pointed out that regular reports are provided. Mayor Biss said it was important to have representation in Springfield to learn about possible funds.

**Public comments.** 11 comments. 4 opposed the project on Church Street, 1 supported it. 3 supported the Safe Storage gun safety ordinance. 2 spoke in favor of the street name recognition of Janet Alexander Davis. 1 opposed several contracts for an engineering firm he said had done poor work in the past.

**Special Order of Business. (SP1) Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Emergency Contracts and Payments for Elevator Shaft Repairs for the Police/Fire Headquarters.** City Engineer Lara Biggs presented an overview of the need for emergency repairs in the elevator shaft at the Police/Fire Headquarters and maintenance/repair issues in other city buildings. Police Chief Stewart explained that the current building is inadequate for the police force. In addition to the elevator renovation, the building has insufficient space; is not ADA compliant; does not meet health and safety standards; and does not provide adequate support or space for the police force. The poor facility fosters departures of current officers and difficulties in recruiting new officers. Costs of the elevator work have increased from the initial \$200,000 to a current \$1,360,000 and the time for the work has increased from 4 – 8 weeks to 7 – 9 months. Major work will also be needed at the Civic Center, the Service Center and the Noyes Center. Building the new Animal shelter and repairs in the Ecology Center are other imminent projects. Anticipated total costs are \$14,525,000 for the coming year and \$145 - \$275 million over the next 5 to 10 years. Costs are so high because the buildings were not designed for their current uses, maintenance has suffered underinvestment for decades, and standards for building codes have changed.

Biggs concluded that she is asking for approval of the Emergency Contracts tonight, and alerting Council to the forthcoming AECOM report on the costs and options for the Civic Center and other locations.

Several council members expressed appreciation for the report and support for a serious Council response to the building needs. The Mayor summed up the comments by acknowledging the sober report, reiterating the need for a more suitable police department building, and calling for a pragmatic response to identifying the functional needs and proposed costs for these buildings.

The motion to execute emergency contracts passed 9-0.

**Consent agenda.** Items removed from the consent agenda were A2, A5, A7, P1, P2, HS1, HS2, and R1. The consent agenda passed 9-0.

HS1. Approval of an Honorary Street Name Sign designating Leland Avenue between Church Street and Lyons Street with the Honorary Name "Janet Alexander Davis Way." Several council members praised the civic contributions of Ms. Davis, and the motion passed 9-0.

HS2. Amending the City Code to create the Safe Storage Act. The motion passed 8-0. Suffredin had left the meeting.

A2. Approval of BMO Harris Amazon Credit Card Activity. Passed 8-0.

A5 and A7. Approval of contracts with Burke Engineering for the Central Street Traffic Signal Modernization and the Leon Place Reconstruction Project. Council Member Kelly asked staff to press Burke Engineering to explain their involvement in the Fountain Square failure. The motions passed 8-0.

P1. Authorizing the Sale of City Owned Property at 1805 Church Street, 1708 Darrow Avenue and 1710 Darrow Avenue. This will allow the Housing Opportunity Development Corporation to build a mixed use development with 33 units of affordable housing. For Introduction. Kelly spoke at some length about her concerns that Mt. Pisgah Church does not have sufficient funds to build a new church and the HODC has not been a responsible manager at 319 Dempster Street. The motion passed for Introduction, 7-1, Kelly voted no.

P2. Approving a special Use for a Daycare Center at 3434 Central Street. This motion was withdrawn by the developer before the meeting.

R1. Adoption of the Civility Pledge by the Mayor and City Council. Reid spoke at some length to express disappointment about how the media has covered this issue. He criticized the coverage by Evanston Now and other media. He declared that community members are not using their discernment and outlined some of the criticism that had been directed to him. The Mayor added that this motion originated with the Illinois Municipal League and is not directed at any individual. The motion passed 8-0.

**Call of the wards.** Several meetings were announced. Suffredin returned. The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 9:30 to discuss collective bargaining, real property, and litigation.