

Observer: Betty Hayford

Council members present: All

Meeting began: 7:15 pm

Meeting ended: 10:35 pm

It was moved and seconded to suspend the Rules to allow virtual participation. Council members were in the Chamber and most public comments and staff presentations were virtual. The motion passed.

Announcements. Mayor Biss announced that June is LGBTQ Pride Month; Bike Week is the week of June 21; June 4 was National Gun Violence Awareness Day; and Juneteenth will be celebrated on June 19 with a Parade and Celebration. He also explained the change in the Metra schedule that reduces trips north from the Central and Main stops, and said the City is contacting Metra to request a better schedule for Evanston.

The City Manager had no announcements.

The City Clerk reported several communications, including several in opposition to the U2 Zoning Change requested by Northwestern and encouragement for lawn services to make their work more friendly to the environment.

Public comment. The Mayor explained that he would enforce the time limit. 13 speakers. 5 speakers supported the leaf blower ordinance and even a prohibition on all leaf blowers; 4 opposed the ordinance because more time would be needed to implement changes. 2 opposed the zoning change for Northwestern events. 1 supported bonus pay for essential workers, and 1 opposed several items on the agenda.

Councilmember Reid moved to adjust the agenda to consider (P6) Amending the City Leaf Blower Policy. The motion passed. Councilmember Revelle said she is very much in support of revising the ordinance but opposes this measure at this time. It is the middle of the leaf blowing season and contracts have been signed. A more thoughtful approach is needed and more discussion with lawn services and residents. She proposes tabling until the second meeting in September. She urged that current regulations be enforced, including no gas powered blowers during the summer. Homeowners need to support enforcement. Reid proposed moving forward with amendments, and holding businesses, not homeowners, responsible. Wynne supported Revelle's motion to table and take time to phase in changes. She supported efforts to educate homeowners and businesses on the issue. Nieuwsma said it is time to start phasing out gas blowers, but this ordinance is not well drafted and needs to be delayed. The City should conform to the ordinance. Director Ogbo said his department is responsible for leaf blower enforcement and is hiring a staff member to strengthen enforcement. Braithwaite emphasized the need to work with lawn services to phase in changes and Suffredin emphasized the need for enforcement. Several suggested amendments were proposed. The final version, from Councilmember Reid, amended to change the hours of permitted leaf blowing to 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and extend the summer prohibition to October 15. The rest of the proposed ordinance was tabled to be revised and returned in September. The motion to amend passed 8-1, Braithwaite voting no. The motion, as amended, passed 9-0.

Special orders of business. SP1 Planning for a Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan Process. Deputy City Manager Kim Richardson presented the proposal to solicit proposals for consultants to conduct a Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan for Evanston. The current plans were developed in 2000 and 2006. There is a need for plans to set a vision for the City for 3 to 5 years. Residents will be engaged in re-shaping the plans. The cost is uncertain, and will probably be between \$60,000 and \$200,000. Staff would like to circulate an RFP at the end of June, receive proposals at the end of summer, and have a finished plan early in 2022. The plan will be concrete and will include measures to evaluate progress. The proposal was approved 9-0.

SP2. Creating “Worker Rights” and Mandating Hazard Pay for certain employees (essential workers). The proposal requires larger retailers or franchisers to pay essential workers an additional \$250 a month for work performed during the Coronavirus Response, retroactive to 15 weeks before passage. Braithwaite moved approval. Reid said the measure still needs amendments and proposed to hold it. Wynne said there is insufficient information about the rationale and impact of the measure and the business community has not been consulted. There has not been a responsible process to develop and present this measure. It should be voted down. The motion to hold failed, 5-4. A 2/3 vote is needed to pass. Suffredin, Revelle, Braithwaite and Wynne voted no. The motion failed 2-7. Reid and Kelly voted in favor, Nieuwsma, Burns, Revelle, Fleming, Braithwaite Wynne and Suffredin voted no. Councilmember Reid said those voting against “don’t give a damn” about workers, and should be “ashamed.”

Consent agenda. Items A1, A10, A13, and P5 were taken off the consent agenda. It was pointed out that P3, Granting a Special Use for Office Use at 1327 Chicago Avenue and 528 Greenwood failed in committee. P6 has already been addressed. It was moved to suspend the rules for R1, Creating the Social Service Committee, and R2, Creating the Housing and Human Development Committee, to allow Introduction and Action. The motion to suspend the rules passed.

The consent agenda, as modified, passed 9-0.

Council Member Braithwaite moved A1, Approval of City Payroll and Bills. Council Member Reid moved to amend and add \$3,185, to pay an intern employed by the City Clerk Office in summer 2019. Braithwaite said this was not on the Bills list, and adding by amendment was not transparent. There is no invoice or documentation, and it was not discussed in committee. Reid explained he forgot to raise the issue in committee. Extensive discussion took place. Reid said the funds were for a fine young man who worked for the office. Wynne pointed out that Council had rejected this payment when it had been proposed. Attorney Cummings said that once Council rejected a payment it could not be reconsidered. A1 was approved without amendment 9-0.

A10, Amending the City Code concerning Municipal Waste was introduced. Fleming asked about the requirement to clear snow around waste bins in alleys. She was told that the ordinance did not require plowing the alley, but only clearing the bins. The motion passed, 8-1, Fleming voted no.

A13, Amending the City Code on the Sale of Real Property was introduced. It relates to publicizing City plans to sell property (equipment or real property). Fleming expressed opposition because the City needs to be transparent when it plans to sell property. Cummings reminded Council that State law requires notice of intent to sell. Reid moved to send the issue back to committee to consider methods of

notifying residents of plans to sell, including the city website or other sites. The motion to send back for further clarification passed 9-0.

P5, Amending the City Code to Extend the Date of Permitted Uses Within the U2 Zoning District was introduced. This allows Northwestern to hold a limited number of large events at the Central Street athletic complex. Last meeting, Dave Davis of Northwestern presented the case to amend. This meeting a citizen presented the case to oppose, primarily the inconvenience to residents and the need to maintain zoning restrictions. Council Member Revelle spoke against this measure. Council Member Braithwaite said these events could be valuable for many Evanstonians and the pilot program should be approved. The motion failed, 8-1, Braithwaite voting yes.

Call of the wards. Several council members announced meetings. Nieuwsma said he will be meeting with the Environment Justice group to consider measures. Burns reported the transfer of the ETHS Geometry in Construction house to 1824 Emerson Street and praised the program as a good experience for students and a positive contribution to affordable housing. Revelle emphasized her commitment on working to create a strong ordinance to restrict leaf blowing. Kelly referred to committee a measure to avoid any increase in property taxes. Reid referred to Human Services the decriminalization of all drugs.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 pm.