

Start 5:10 pm

Observer: Diane Goldring

Aldermen present: Braithwaite, Revelle, Fleming, Fiske, Rue Simmons.

Vote on suspending rules to hold Zoom meeting passed 5-0

October 5 2020 meeting minutes approved 5-0

For action

HS1 – Resolution 90-R-20 designating a portion of Church street between Darrow and Dodge “Clifford James Wilson Way” passed 5-0

HS2 – 2021 meeting schedule approved 5-0

HS3 – Community Member Relief Fund to provide emergency assistance through the city’s General Assistance Fund to undocumented residents passed 5-0.

Public comment: Three community members spoke in favor. Rebecca Mendoza – President of Evanston Latinos, a non profit organization, spoke about general distress in Latinx community. Stephanie Mendoza and Megan Shay both supported the fund.

Revelle agreed it is an important program. Braithwaite thanked speakers Rebecca and Stephanie as well as Alderman Fleming and city staff. He stated that the city does use resources to help residents and take care of our most vulnerable. Rue Simmons thanked advocates. Fleming mentioned that the proposal needed an update on how donations will work.

Ike Okbo clarified that there will be a \$25,000 allocation from general funds to execute the program. Typically the federal government prohibits city funds to be used to support undocumented residents but staff identified an exception in an emergency. He said we need to think about the future to sustain the program. The memo needs to be amended to include the \$25,000 allocation.

There was some discussion about communicating the information out to the public. Braithwaite acknowledged ECF and Tiffany Holmes who looped in the Caribbean community.

For discussion

HS 1 – Presentation by Toby Sachs, Arts Council Chair. Artists are being creative in ways to keep arts alive. The council overhauled cultural fund grants in light of the pandemic and heightened focus on racial equity. Applications from BIPOC organizations and programs will be favored; the judging panel will be predominantly BIPOC. They got results with more applicants and grantees. 15 out of 21 grants went to BIPOC organizations.

Fleming was impressed with the turnaround. Rue Simmons thanked the arts council and said that she has grown to appreciate the arts and the community benefit. She asked about a permanent BLM installation that seems to be stuck in the approval process. Paulina Martinez said that we are past mural season and need to find an alternative wall for the mural.

HS2 – banning outdoor games involving consumption of alcohol that can be viewed from a public way or adjacent property.

Public comment: Three speakers spoke against the proposal and one spoke in favor. Those against believe bringing in police to solve neighbor conflicts is dangerous and expensive. The one in favor is trying to address the worst of student behavior.

There was general agreement that public excessive alcohol consumption by NU students is a problem but that this ordinance is not a good solution. It would cover the entire city when the issue is limited to the area around NU (first and fifth wards). Fiske said that she doesn't know what else to do to help the neighborhoods that are suffering. Drinking games are prohibited by NU on campus. Students fill sidewalks and streets and cause safety issues. Conversations with students aren't successful and this does not mean police will show up and take students to jail.

Fiske asked the city attorney how the city can limit the restrictions geographically. Attorney said that binge drinking is a safety issue and she will look into tying a restriction to proximity to residence halls.

There was discussion around NU enforcing its policies and student code of conduct off campus. General agreement that NU is being negligent and the city should not be forced to pass an ordinance. Ultimately they decided that the item will come back to committee with NU staff and EPD at next meeting.

Items for communication

HS1 – Review of police complaints

Public comment – one resident asked that the committee not approve the complaint reports. The opinions of citizens police review commission are not included. Also 6 of the 8 letters of commendation are from other police departments.

Chief Cook responded that the citizens police review commission did review but did not issue a report. It found that the police investigations were thorough. The report will be included in meeting minutes. Going forward the police review commission findings will be included.

Fleming said that she reviewed body cam videos and didn't agree with two of the findings.

Chief Cook the addressed the NU protest downtown on October 31. He had called in Northern Illinois Police Alarm System (NIPAS) mobile unit because it provides broader response and more specialized manpower/equipment. He said EPD was outnumbered. There have been other protests but none others elevated to violence. He drew the line when officers were injured and downtown businesses were vandalized.

Braithwaite asked about the origin of fireworks, and whether officers who come in from outside agencies have authority to use force. The Chief stated that the fireworks were launched from the crowd at police. Outside officers do have the authority to use force under state/federal guidelines. He also said he believed that "some anarchy groups and antifa folks" were in the crowd.

Chief Cook briefly reviewed his safety plan for election day. He canceled days off and would be patrolling poll sites. Police won't enter unless requested.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm