

Observer: Betty Hayford

Aldermen present: All. Judy Fiske came late because of technical difficulties.

Meeting started: 5:30 pm (on schedule!)

Meeting ended: 8:30 pm

Alderman Wilson moved to suspend the rules to allow remote participation. The motion was seconded and passed 8-0.

Announcements. The Mayor announced that preventative medical care remains important during the pandemic, and introduced Matt Rogers who spoke about the importance of testing for colorectal cancer. He then announced that he and NU President Shapiro had reached agreement on the allocation of the \$1 million NU Social Equity Fund. The largest allocations will be \$400,000 to a minority business incubator; \$300,000 to a pilot guaranteed income program \$100,000 to operationalize racial equity in the City; \$50,000 each to community resilience in the Arts, improved language access services, older adult isolation reduction, and a community relief fund for those ineligible for general assistance. He thanked Northwestern for working with the City. He provided a Covid update. Infections continue to drop. The vaccination programs are going well but more vaccine is needed.

The Clerk announced the consolidated election for April 6 and the selection of Daniel Biss as Mayor-elect in the primary.

Public comment. 26 comments. 15 spoke about Harley Clarke, some supporting a particular proposal, but many urging the decision be postponed to next Council. (Inadequate public discussion!) 7 asked that the decision on Reparations be postponed. 3 supported zoning changes to allow "tiny houses." 1 criticized the plan to acquire police vehicle computers, and 1 supported International Women's Day.

Special Orders of Business. (SB1) Review of Proposals for the Harley Clarke Mansion and Coach House.

The Mayor asked for discussion on the proposals. Alderman Revelle asked for information on the staff ranking process. Tasheik Kerr explained the mechanics of the process but said little about the substance. Alderman Wilson pointed out that the discussion has been going on for ten years. The proposal scoring is one part of the process, but aldermen have had extensive discussions. It is time to move forward. The process is not being rushed. He would be willing to move acceptance of the first ranked proposal from Artists Book House. Alderman Braithwaite seconded his motion, and said it was time to discuss what should be needed for a lease. Alderman Wynne said this Council and others have discussed requirements for a lease and is most qualified to vote on a lease. This Council should finish the job. There are several strong proposals and Artists Book House is the best, in part because it coexists with the beach and lake front well. Fiske agreed, and said limited public events are welcome. Revelle pointed out all proposals have merit, but some propose multiple events that would be obtrusive. Fleming asserted this Council is well prepared to move ahead. The proposal to negotiate a lease with Artists Book House passed 7-1-1. Suffredin voted against, and Rainey abstained. She said she did not need to, but she did not want the vote compromised by Ethics Committee discussion.

Consent agenda. The Mayor asked aldermen to remove items needing discussion from the consent agenda. They removed A1, A2, A6 and P3. They voted to suspend the rules to allow Introduction and Action on A5, to allow a four-way stop at the intersection of Eastwood Avenue and Livingston Street.

The consent agenda was moved and seconded and passed 9-0.

(A1) Payroll and Bills was presented and passed 9-0.

(A2), Purchase of 40 Toughbooks for Police Vehicles. These are replacements for current long-used items. Wynne noted that public comment had criticized the purchase as too costly for out-dated equipment. Luke Stowe explained that the current items are well used and no longer being supported. The proposed purchases are less expensive than the earlier purchases. Police Chief Cook explained that they are critical pieces of police equipment. The measure was moved and seconded and passed 9-0.

(A6) Amending City Code relating to the Installation and Maintenance of Service Pipe from Tap to Fixtures. It was moved to suspend rules for Introduction and Action. Dave Stonebeck provided background to explain the need for this change. The motion passed 9-0.

(P3) Zoning Amendment to permit the Establishment of Efficiency Homes. Alderman Fiske asked to take the item off the agenda for consideration at the next meeting. She thought there should be more discussion about the change, and asked that homeowners next to the lots identified as potential areas for "tiny houses" be notified of the change and allowed to comment. It was moved and seconded and passed to hold the item until the March 22 meeting.

Call of the wards. Fiske asked that political discussion remain civil.

Braithwaite urged Evanstonians to understand that the local Reparations program was distinct from the national movement. Local reparations have to reflect local conditions, and are not directly related to slavery or Jim Crow. Housing is the first step, but there will be further programs and economic development will be the next focus. The Reparations Committee has held numerous meetings and Town Halls and extensive discussions have taken place with the community. He expressed uncertainty about the source of opposition.

Alderman Rue Simmons cited numerous meetings and consultations with the community before the housing program was recommended. She noted that the meetings and discussions have been well documented and are available on line.

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 8:30.