

Observer: Betty Hayford. Meeting on-line.

Aldermen present: All

Media present: Unknown in virtual meeting

Meeting began: 5:05 pm

Meeting ended: 10:05 pm

Announcements. The Mayor announced that May 3-9 is Public Service Recognition Week. He praised the important work of Aldermen and City staff. The same week is International Compost Awareness Week. He also provided a report on the Covid-19 virus, pointing out a slow-down in the growth of cases.

The City Manager made several announcements. The proposers for uses of Harley Clarke have asked to have the scheduled May 18 presentations postponed for 60 to 90 days. A date will be selected when appropriate. She asked Lawrence Hemingway to explain revised planning for summer camps. Hemingway outlined several options being considered, but no plans are settled yet. Beaches may open on June 20 if social distancing is relaxed. The Fleetwood-Jourdain performance schedule is being postponed. All special events up to June 18 are cancelled. Sarah Flax announced that the City will receive additional CDBG and ESG funds, under different guidelines. Storlie recognized the retirements of 8 long time employees including several senior staff. A ceremony will be held when possible.

The City Clerk provided a report on the primary election. Turnout was lower than the previous election. Early voting numbers were high.

Public comment. 16 speakers. 5 spoke in support for Cradle to Career; 6 said that Council should only work on pandemic issues and not other business such as developments. 2 support revisions related to sale and adoption of cats, dogs and rabbits; 2 spoke about 1555 Ridge development, 1 in favor, 1 against; 1 supported move to restrict restaurant delivery fees.

Special orders of business. (SP1) Application for appeal of the Preservation Commission Denial of a certificate at 2404 Ridge Avenue. Braithwaite moved to accept the appeal. There was no second and the item failed.

(SP2) Update on Condition of the Shoreline. City Engineer Lara Biggs presented information on the condition of the waterfront, particularly 5 locations suffering severe damage. These weaknesses present threats to city buildings in some cases. She presented repair strategies and anticipated costs. She recommended moving forward with 4 projects. The Sheridan Road repairs require coordination with IDOT because it is a state road. The request for a Federal emergency designation has not been acted on. She will return with a proposal.

(SP4) City Owned Real Estate Assets Report from Consultant. Summary of report, emphasizing problems in Civic Center with mechanical systems and poor design for offices. Also limitations in police headquarters. May be advisable to construct new building. Review of parking garages and other buildings, including underuse of Gibbs-Morrison Center. Alderman Rue Simmons asserts importance of Gibbs Morrison to the Black community. Moved and passed to accept report and place on file.

(SP5) Authorization to negotiate a line of credit with Byline Bank. Hitash Desai explains that this is not for deficit spending, but if to ensure cash flow until property tax revenue comes in later in the summer. Staff has amended the request to \$15 million instead of the initial request for \$7.5 million. Rainey supports the effort because it is important for the city to pay its bills on time. Rainey amends the

motion to establish a line of credit of \$15 million. The amendment passes 9-0. The motion as amended passes 9-0.

(SP3) Discussion of Dutch Elm Disease Program. Dave Stonebeck explains that the Dutch Elm disease inoculation program costs \$800,000 and it the largest public works expense other than personnel. It is a successful program, but expenses could be reduced if only 1/3 of larger trees were covered. Alderman Fiske opposed any reduction in the program. She said that the cost of removing diseased trees and planting new trees was greater than the cost of inoculation. Revelle agreed and said that trees were important for water retention and climate mitigation. No vote was taken on this discussion item.

(SP6) Budget Discussion. Storlie and staff summarized an expected \$10 to \$20 million budget deficit because of loss of revenue from Covid-19 pandemic. Parking fees, sales tax, restaurant tax, liquor tax, entertainment tax will all be reduced through shut down of economy. They outlined some possible cuts, including retirements, hiring freeze, salary reductions for senior staff, possible furloughs and possible lay-offs. Staff is negotiating with labor unions for reductions. It could be even more serious. Staff will present proposals at a later meeting.

Consent agenda. As the agenda was read, items were removed from the consent agenda for discussion. It was noted that the regular committee meetings were not held and the items had not been discussed. The consent agenda passed 9-0.

From **Administration and Public Works**, Alderman Fleming presented several items. A2, Approval of BMO Harris Amazon Credit Card, passed 8-0, Alderman Suffredin abstaining. A3, Approval of the Replacement of Refuse Vehicle for \$287,605.86. Dave Stonebeck explained that the vehicle was 12 years old, had heavy usage, and was past its expected life. Several aldermen said it was a large expenditure and they were reluctant to make a commitment. It was moved and seconded to defer the vote until July. The motion passed.

A4, approval of contract for planting for the Green Bay Road Bioswale for \$58,640. Fleming proposed deferring the contract because landscaping is not essential. The motion passed, 7-2, with Fleming and Suffredin voting against. A5, Contract for 2020 Water Main Improvement and Street resurfacing. This is part of a long-term plan. The motion passed 9-0. A6, Purchase of Timekeeping Software and Time Clocks. The motion passed 8-1, Suffredin voting no. A7, approval of contract to create storm water master plan. This is important work that can not be done in house. The motion passed 9-0. A8, Approval of \$50,000 payment to Cradle to Career. Fleming said she appreciated the important work of Cradle to Career but would like to see more extensive reporting on its activities. She suggested money could be better spent on direct payments through General Assistance program. Rue Simmons supported the payment because the organization had done very good work in the community. The motion passed 7-2, Fleming and Suffredin voted no.

A11, Establishing Limits on Third-Party Food Delivery Service Fees. Alderman Wilson explained that he generally did not like the city to regulate business, but this proposal would protect customers and restaurants. Delivery services often impose heavy fees on restaurants that customers are not aware of. Suffredin spoke strongly in support of the measure, but only during this emergency. The resolution will put a cap on what delivery services can charge restaurants until the emergency passes. The motion passed 9-0.

A14, Amending City Code to include Pandemics and a Penalty section for failure to comply with public health orders. Fleming said she hoped this would not be seen as a way for the city to raise money through fines. Ike Igbo explained that the goal was to educate residents and not to punish. Fines would be a last resort. The motion passed 9-0.

From **Planning and Development**, Alderman Rainey presented approval of a special use for a planned development office building at 605 Davis Street. This is a proposed 19 story office building with numerous allowances, especially for size. She reported that the developer has added safety features for the alley. Alderman Wilson explained additional public benefits include improvements on the viaducts and a contribution of \$50,000 to the housing fund. Fiske opposed the project because it is too big and requests too many variances. The motion passed 8-1, Fiske voting no.

During Call of the Wards several aldermen expressed appreciation for the dedicated work of city staff and medical personnel, as well as the residents in general.

At 10:05, the meeting adjourned to Executive Session.

The next Council meeting will be May 11.