

**Observer:** Betty Hayford

**Aldermen present:** All

**Meeting began:** 7:30 pm

**Meeting ended:** 11:25 pm

Mayor Hagerty called the meeting to order at 7:30. Alderman Wilson moved to suspend the Rules in order to hold the meeting via Zoom due to the Governor's emergency proclamation. The motion was seconded and passed 9-0.

**Public Hearing: Truth in Taxation for 2020 Tax Levy.** The tax levy is included in the proposed budget. A public hearing is required by State law. Five members of the public spoke. One complained that there was not sufficient public notice of the meeting. All asked Council to cut expenses and avoid a tax increase. Two focused on cutting the police budget. After these comments, the Mayor adjourned the Public Hearing.

**Public announcements.** The Mayor congratulated President Elect Biden and Vice President Elect Harris. He thanked all Evanstonians who voted and encouraged other to vote. He emphasized that the Covid virus is spreading at a rapid pace. He urged Evanstonians to take strong precautions to avoid the virus in order to avoid further restrictions. He announced Evanston Native American Heritage Month and encouraged everyone to visit the Mitchell Museum. He congratulated Rotary Club of Evanston on its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and extensive service contributions.

The City Manager introduced staff to outline preparations for winter. Residents should clear sidewalks of snow.

The Clerk provided a review of election statistics. He also outlined plans and dates for the spring local elections.

**Public comment.** 17 speakers. Several urged council to cut the budget and some specified cutting the police budget; several supported affordable housing and support for landlords and tenants; several opposed the proposed high-rise at 1900 Sherman; one expressed appreciation for relief funds for undocumented residents.

**Special Orders of Business. (SP1) Approving the 2021 Budget.** This is for Introduction. Hitash Desai and Kate Lewis-Lakin presented the budget with a smaller tax levy than the first draft. Fleming asked for additional cuts to avoid a tax increase. She suggested reducing the contribution to the pension fund and the Reserve Fund. Others asked for cuts but had no specific suggestions. Others emphasized the importance of the contributions to the pension funds and the reserve fund. Several aldermen, particularly Braithwaite and Rue Simmons said they were soon holding ward meetings and had made a commitment to their constituents that they would not vote on the budget until they had heard from constituents. They wanted to defer the vote and a long discussion took place about possible additional meetings and the importance of introducing the budget proposal. The current proposal could be changed before the final vote. Eventually the item was moved and seconded. It passed 6-3, Braithwaite, Rue Simmons and Suffredin voting no.

**(SP2) Abating taxes for FY 2020.** This is an accounting issue that abates some property taxes to pay principal and interest on general obligation corporate bonds. The motion was moved and seconded and passed 9-0.

**(SP3) Tax Levy ordinance for General Operations, Human Services Fund, Retirement and Pension Funds, and the Solid Waste Fund.** This proposes a 3.2% increase over the 2019 levy. This is for Introduction. **(SP4) Levying taxes for the General Assistance Fund.** This proposal increases the levy by 20.4% over 2019. For Introduction. Both these items were moved and seconded and passed 9-0,

**(SP5) Levying taxes for the Library Fund for 2021.** This levy has no increase over 2019. For Introduction. The motion was made and seconded and passed 9-0.

**(SP6), (SP7), (SP8) and (SP9) Levying Taxes for Special Service Areas.** These levies supported the Central Street special area, Dempster-Main, Howard, and Downtown. They provide no increase from 2019. The items were moved, seconded and passed 9-0. For Introduction.

**(SP10) Approval of CBDG-CV funding to provide food for Homeless Persons residing in Non-Congregate Shelter.** This provides \$80,000 to Connections for the Homeless to provide three meals a day for Homeless Persons in the Margarita Inn. There was brief discussion of whether Evanston residents received priority for these services. Betty Boggs, from Connections, said about 75% of those served were Evanston residents. City funding only serves Evanston residents and other funding is used for non-residents. Generally Connections has been working with Evanston restaurants to provide meals. Before the vote Alderman Rainey expressed concern about a bus shelter on Howard that had been taken over by homeless people who created unpleasant conditions. It was pointed out that it is often a slow process to convince homeless people to move into a shelter. The item was moved and seconded and passed 9-0.

**(SP11) Approval of Prioritization Methodology for CBDG Rent assistance program to Address Renters at Highest Risk of Eviction.** Staff recommends using the Urban Institute's Emergency Rental Assistance Priority Index than includes many factors. It also prioritizes assistance to tenants of small "Mom and Pop" Evanston landlords. The item was moved, seconded and passed 8-1, Suffredin voting no.

**Consent agenda.** The Mayor asked Aldermen to identify items to be removed from the consent agenda. Items (A2), (P4), (R2) and (R3) were removed. It was noted that (P3) Approving a Plat of Subdivision for 2404 Ridge Avenue was rejected in Committee.

Alderman Rainey moved the consent agenda. It was seconded and passed 9-0/

Rainey moved (A2), Approval of BMO Harris Credit Card Activity. It was moved and seconded and passed 8-0, Suffedin abstained.

Alderman Wynne moved (P4), Amending the Zoning Map to Rezone 1900 Sherman Avenue and Granting a Special Use Permit for a Planned Development at 1900 Sherman Avenue. This will allow the construction of a 16 story 168 unit residence seeking several building allowances. The building is proposed by the Cook County Housing Agency and will serve senior citizens and include affordable units. The motion passed 8-0, Alderman Fiske abstaining because of a personal connection. For Introduction.

Alderman Rue Simmons presented (R2) Amending the City Code to codify the Reparations Committee. The item passed 9-0.

Rue Simmons moved item (R3) Setting Compensation for City Council. Rainey moved to hold until the next meeting. The item will be held until the November 23 meeting.

**Call of the Wards.** Several aldermen said they were pleased with the results of the presidential elections and happy to see Evanstonians celebrating. Some had been meeting since 4:30 and were uncomfortable during a seven hour meeting. They suggested taking breaks during long meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 pm to Executive Session.