

Observer: Betty Hayford

Aldermen present: Seven. Wynne and Fleming were absent.

Media present: Four. Evanston Now, Roundtable, Review, NU Daily

Meeting started: 7:20 pm

Meeting ended: 9:45 pm

Announcements. The Mayor reported positive news in the 2018 Economic Development Report. Highlights were 40 new businesses in Evanston, including 14 food establishments. There were increases in sales, liquor, hotel and amusement taxes. Unemployment rate was low, office vacancy rate was low, retail vacancies down. Bad news was decline in building permits and communications tax. He announced National Fair Housing Month and National Volunteer Week.

The City Manager announced that Administration and Public Works had amended the proposed increased cap for the debt limit from \$160 million to \$152 million. He also stated that Valli Produce is contributing \$250,000 for the Robert Crown Center and received the check from the manager. He asked CFO Hitash Desai to explain the impact of the new, generally increased assessments. Desai explained that there is no clear way to predict the impact.

The City Clerk announced a Safe Neighborhood walk on April 17 and provided a report on the recent election. He noted the turnout was very low and suggested that City Council create binding referenda for the ballot in off-years to encourage larger voter turnout. The Mayor responded that proposing referenda in off-year elections could have a negative result.

Citizen comment. Thirty people were signed up, and were given 1.5 minutes each. The first comment was by phone, arranged by the City Clerk. 14 expressed concern about the high cost of the Robert Crown Center, the burden of resulting debt and higher taxes. Many are members of the Poor People Campaign advocating for low income Evanstonians. 6 supported the Robert Crown Center and thanked Valli for its contribution. 4 asked for city support for saving the Family Focus building. Others supported the proposed Car Wash on Oakton, praised the community activity, attacked City Council for corruption or racism. When one speaker accused aldermen of racism, the microphone was cut off. There was difficulty restoring the microphones.

Before the Consent Agenda was introduced, Alderman Suffredin, as a member in the majority on the vote over developing the library parking lot, introduced a motion to suspend the rules and reconsider the issue. Hagerty pointed out that a motion to reconsider should be considered at the same meeting as the vote. Wilson said it was unfortunate to bring the issue up when Wynne was absent, since she had strong views. The motion to suspend the rules passed 6-1 (Wilson voting no). After some discussion, the motion to reconsider passed 5 to 2, Wilson and Revelle voting no. Uncertainty was voiced about how to proceed. The item was now on the table, where it could stay. Fiske said that some discussion had been carried out with neighbors, and she thought further discussion might bring some compromise agreement. Fiske and Suffredin will organize discussions to resolve issues and hope to bring the issue back in three to four weeks.

Consent agenda. Suffredin presented the consent agenda from **Administration and Public Works**. Payroll. Bills. Credit card (except Amazon). Contract for Emerson Street Traffic Signals Project. Contract for Phase III Construction Services for the Emerson Street Traffic Signal Modernization Project. Contract for the Main Street Corridor Improvement Project. Contract for the Phase III Construction Services for the Main Street Corridor Project. Contract for Pavement Patching. Contract for 2019 Debris Hauling. Contract for purchase of Granular Materials. Contract for Crack Sealing Services. Contract for Pavement Marking. Contract for the 2019 Streetscape and Rain Garden Landscape Maintenance. Contract for 2019 Lakefront Concession. Agreement with ETHS to supply lunches for the 2019 Summer Food Program. Contract for elevator and inspection services. Purchase of 4 vehicles for the Public Works Agency and the Police Department. Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement with the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 742. Approval of Great Merchant Grant to the Hill Arts Business Association. Approval of Settlement payment in Paul Caldwell v City of Evanston. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with the Friends of the Robert Crown Center detailing how funds raised by FRCC are applied to construction and debt service. Approval to execute a naming rights gift agreement with Wintrust Bank for a field

and multi-purpose room at the Robert Crown Center. Approval to execute a gift agreement with Valli Produce for naming rights to the lobby of the Robert Crown Center. Approval to increase the number of Class T liquor licenses from 5 to 6 and permit issuance to Halim Time and Glass Banquet Hall, 1560 Oak Avenue (Introduction, suspension of the rules and action). Approval to increase Class D liquor licenses from 53 to 54 for Eures Dining Services, 1560 Sherman Avenue (Introduction, suspension of the roles and action). Approval to increase the number of Class T liquor licenses from 6 to 7 and issue to Eures Dining Services, 1560 Sherman Avenue (Introduction, suspension of the rules and action). Approval to allow the paving of the alley north of Simpson Street and east of McDaniel Avenue (Introduction). Approval of Updating the City Code to change payment for parking permits from quarterly to monthly and allow for stickerless enforcement fo surface parking lots (Introduction).

Alderman Revelle presented from **Planning and Development** an ordinance to grant a special use permit for a Planned Development, Car Wash, at 2425 Oakton Avenue (Introduction). She then presented an ordinance to revise the list of appropriate ground floor uses in the Central Street Overlay District, for Introduction.

The consent agenda was moved and seconded and approved 7-0.

Alderman Suffredin presented additional items from **Administration and Public Works**. Amazon credit card bill was approved 6 for, 1 abstention (Suffredin). He then presented a contract for Parking Lot improvements at aty 717 Howard Street and Tallmadge Park. He had removed it from the consent agenda because the expenditure was a large portion of the 2019 Parking Fund budget. He made a thoughtful statement urging city staff to be more transparent in presenting a plan for the Parking Fund. The motion passed, 6 to 1, with Suffredin voting no. He presented an easement agreement to increase the width of the alleys on the side and rear of 910-938 Custer Avenue to allow a planned development. The motion passed 6 to 1, with Fiske voting no.

He then introduced a resolution increasing the debt limit from \$150 million to \$152 million. This had been amended by the committee from the original ordinance increasing the limit to \$160 million. The motion passed 6 to 1, with Rue Simmons voting no. The next item provided for the issuance of bonds up to \$18 million to finance construction and equipment for Robert Crown Center and up to \$18 million for capital improvements (for introduction). Alderman Revelle asked if the Robert Crown project could be delayed or built in stages. Deputy City Manager Erica Storlie explained that the contract calls for a specific project and a specific schedule and any changes would have to be negotiated. There is no viable plan for “building in stages.” Alderman Rue Simmons said she was concerned about diversity goals in the project and has not received any concrete information. The contractor needs to comply with diversity requirements. She will not support the project if it does not meet diversity requirements. She is concerned about the project being over budget. She asked to hold the project until diversity goals are met. Counsel Maisoncup explained that the city would receive significant penalties for any delay. Storlie said the project was not over budget. Bobkiewicz said the January report stated that diversity goals were exceeded. Rainey expressed opposition to any delay and Wilson and Hagerty agreed there would be high penalties for any delay. The motion to approve issuance of bonds passed 6 to 1, with Rue Simmons voting no.

Revelle presented one item from **Planning and Development**. She moved approval of a special use permit for a planned development at 910-938 Custer Avenue for 40 attached single family townhouses in five buildings of four stories. The motion passed 6 to 1, with Fiske voting no.

Braithwaite expressed concern about the tone of some citizen comment. He felt the charges of racism against aldermen were offensive in the context of the tragic history of racism in the United States.

The City Clerk asked for an alderman to ask the Rules Committee to establish guidelines for electronic participation in Citizen Comment, presumably comment by phone. Several aldermen said they did not think this is a good idea, but it might be discussed in Rules. Braithwaite said he has extensive contact and communication with his constituents and will not support electronic comments. Alderman Revelle said she would refer to the Environment Board the issue of prohibiting the use of gas or propane leaf blowers or mowers to reduce noise and air pollution. She would like the Board to look at other communities who have established bans and determine how they might work in Evanston.

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 9:45 pm