

Observer. Betty Hayford

Council members present. Eight in Council Chambers, Wynne remotely

Deputy City Manager Kelly Gandurski was on the dais.

Meeting began: 7:40

Meeting ended: 9:30

Announcements. Mayor Biss opened the meeting to announce that he and City Council are sending a letter of apology to those who were the victims of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. He read the letter asserting that City officials believe the statements describing misconduct and are committed to eliminating such behavior. They will do everything possible to right these wrongs and keep all City employees safe. The City is conducting an investigation and will discipline any perpetrators and establish practices to prevent any future misconduct. He thanked Council member Nieuwsma for working with his colleagues to draft the letter and thanked Council member Reid for initiating the commitment to making an apology.

Clerk Mendoza announced that she had concluded a contract with a company to assist in digitizing City records and thanked City staff for assisting her in making arrangements.

Public comment. 5 comments. 3, including 1 ETHS student, supported using ARPA funds for CARP goals. 1 asked that ARPA funds be used to assist Northlight Theater in moving to Evanston, where it would serve as an economic and cultural stimulus. 1 general support for positive use of ARPA funds.

Special order of Business 1. Continued Discussion of Use of ARPA Funds.

[This was an interesting and constructive discussion. It focused on a 13 page memo that had been distributed beforehand. This memo is available on the City website and provides a context to understand the discussion. Along with staff comments, it makes clear that ARPA funds will likely be integrated into the proposed 2021-2022 budget rather than being presented independently.]

Gandurski made brief comments explaining that the memo reflected main ARPA goals and how the funds might be used. The funds can only be used for certain types of expenditures and must be clearly identified in regular reports. She also explained that other funds might be available to support programs that Evanston might pursue. Fleming said that she hoped funds for Social Services might be increased even more than reflected in this document. She also asked for more guidance on how Hazard Pay might be determined. Kelly agreed that Hazard Pay might be too low, especially since Fire Department workers had agreed to a reduction in their contractual wages. Gandurski said there is flexibility for spending between categories. Nieuwsma and Braithwaite emphasized the need to shore up city finances and rebuild from the cuts that were made last year. They both stressed the need to invest in productive programs. Nieuwsma emphasized the benefits of investing in CARP goals and Braithwaite noted the need for economic development and support for businesses that would stabilize the tax base. CFO Desai explained that funds need to be obligated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

Mayor Biss summarized the discussion and next steps. He noted the positive tone of the discussion and the useful perspective included in the staff memo. Previous public discussions have been useful and more are needed. The categories in the memo are helpful, and now specific projects within these

categories are needed. With interest in affordable housing or advancing CARP goals or workforce development, specific projects must be identified. He said the meeting has been valuable and more discussion is needed.

Call of the wards. Several meetings were announced. Burns explained that a new subcommittee has been formed to work on how to clarify and enforce housing standards. He and Kelly will be taking the lead.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.