

Observer: Betty Hayford

Council members present: 8. Council member Reid absent.

Meeting began: 5:25 pm

Meeting ended: 8:55 pm

Announcements. The Mayor explained this is a Special Council Meeting. He reported the dangerous water conditions on Saturday that caused one drowning death and required the rescue of three other swimmers. He praised the work of the rescue teams.

Acting City Manager Gandurski called on Deputy City Manager Kim Richardson who reported that applications for the Reparations Restorative Housing program could be submitted starting on September 21. Staff will be available to provide information and assistance on submitting the applications.

Public comment. 16 comments. 7 former colleagues of Kelly Gandurski praised her qualifications for Interim City Manager. 3 opposed Gandurski because of her possible connection to abuse accusations and objected to the requirement that 7 votes be needed for dismissal. 2 urged Council to apologize to the victims of sexual harassment. 3 encouraged action on affordable housing and 1 suggested that sprinklers should not be required for ADUs.

Special Orders of Business. SP1. Authorizing the Appointment of an Interim City Manager. Council Member Kelly said she wants to amend the contract and eliminate the requirement that 7 votes are needed for dismissal. Fleming said she was willing to second but needed clarification. What specifically was the amendment? What to delete and what to add? She noted that the contract was based on the City ordinance. Biss suggested it was not appropriate to amend a contract that had been negotiated, and agreed the city code specified the 7 votes. This contract did not provide extra protection as had been suggested in public comment. He suggested the amendment had no practical utility. Wynne endorsed the Mayor's comments and said the amendment was acting in bad faith towards a negotiated contract. Nieuwsma called the question. The vote to call the question passed 8-0. The vote on the amendment failed 2 – 6.

The vote to approve SP1 passed, 7-1, Kelly voting no.

SP2. Continued Discussion of ARPA Funds Allocation. Gandurski reviewed the staff memo on ARPA Fund allocation. She noted that \$700,000 had been allocated to the Guaranteed Income Pilot program and \$950,000 to lead pipe replacement and the parking fund. Work force development and economic development are other priorities. Other potential areas are equipment replacement and staff hazard pay. She reported that the Evanston Community Foundation has held community roundtables to identify needs and will be producing a comprehensive report for Council. Social Services, Inclusivity and Equity, as well as funds for CARP, are high priorities. Sol Anderson, ECF CEO summarized the report. He recommended Evanston take time to allocate the ARPA funds in order to leverage the funds for maximum impact, especially in light of the evolving landscape of federal (and state) revenues.

Council member Wynne emphasized the need to focus on investment in order to have a long term impact. Work force development was a high impact program. Evanston has had some goals for a long time and this was an opportunity to pursue them. It is important to meet mental health needs resulting from the pandemic trauma. CFO Desai said the funds should be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

Council member Fleming said she had thought the previous discussion would result in higher allocations for social services. She suggested some of the economic development proposals needed more specifics. She needed more information about the concept of hazard pay, how it would be determined, who would be eligible, etc. She suggested a dedicated meeting with more time for discussion on allocation.

Braithwaite asked how the ARPA allocations would impact the regular budget process. He urged Council to focus on its practical responsibilities and not spend time on unrealistic ideas that had consumed too much time at previous meetings. Nieuwsma agreed that he had anticipated some changes from the August proposed allocation categories and emphasized the need to use the funds for long term investments. He proposed \$1 million to \$1.5 million for CARP implementation. He identified work force development as a priority and urged collaboration with other stakeholders such as ETHS and Oakton CC. Revelle supported funds for CARP as well as social services, such as early childhood programs. She asked for guidance about integrating ARPA funds with the budget.

SP3. Affordable Housing Activities and Progress in 2021. Sarah Flax and others presented extensive information on activities and planning. Betty Boggs, Director of Connections for the Homeless, outlined housing and services provided for the homeless over the past year, using City, County, State and private funding. A representative of the Metropolitan Tenants Organization reported on the eviction process and how they advised tenants. Flax updated the status of several projects creating new affordable housing and several developments that included some affordable units. The Planning and Development Committee has created a subcommittee to examine several policy issues related to housing, including the definition of family, the three-unrelated rule, and possible updating of the Landlord/Tenant Ordinance. Two new committees, Social Services and Housing and Community Development will focus on housing issues.

It was voted to accept the Report and place it on file.

SP4. 2021 Emergency Solutions Grant Recommendation. The Social Services Committee recommended approval of a 2021 Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) of \$156,606. \$144,861 will go to Connections for the Homeless and the YWCA/North Shore to provide housing and services and \$11,745 to the City of Evanston for grant administration. It was moved and seconded to approve the Grant. The motion passed 7-0 (one alderman temporarily absent).

SP5. Presentation of McGaw YMCA Men's Resident Renovation Plan. Monique Parsons, McGaw YMCA CEO, presented the renovation proposal for the single room occupancy facility at 1000 Grove Street. The facility houses many men of all ages, some of whom have lived there for years. The project is expected to cost \$12.6 million, including planning, renovation, relocation of tenants, furniture, and maintenance. A new entrance on the east side of the building is planned, along with a new lobby. Fund raising will begin shortly and designs are being developed.

SP6. Metropolitan Tenant s Organization Landlord/Tenant Assistance Program. A presentation was made on the services provided by MTO to assist landlords and tenants to resolve disputes and avoid eviction. They offer a special focus for Evanston residents. Council member Burns expressed appreciation for the services and encouraged even more outreach. There is a strong need for these services in Evanston.

Call of the wards. Nieuwsma expressed appreciation that the street repair work on Main Street is almost finished. He will be sponsoring a meeting to consider responses to aggressive panhandling.

Burns said he is forming a new committee "Here To Stay" to generate ideas about how to avoid displacement of Evanston residents. He wants to develop ideas to put the vacant lots in the Fifth Ward and elsewhere to more productive use.

Fleming expressed concern about the slow response to the demand for an apology for the sexual abuse of beach front workers. An apology is an important first step, and even more important is the need for tangible change in work place training and conditions.

Braithwaite reiterated this concern, and stated that supportive working conditions should be provided for all city staff, especially young people.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.