

Observer: Betty Hayford

Council members present: Seven. Wynne and Suffredin absent. (Suffredin arrived towards the end of the meeting.)

The City Clerk was absent.

Meeting started: 6:20 pm

Meeting ended: 9:25 pm

Announcements.

Mayor Biss made four announcements. First he recognized the importance of trees and proclaimed Arbor Day on April 29. He announced that Evanston would be redrawing ward boundaries following the 2020 census. CM Nieuwsma is chairing the redistricting committee and the first meeting will be Tuesday, May 10. He announced that Lake Front Manager Adam Abajian passed away and expressed appreciation for his many years of good work for Evanston. He also said that he and several others had just had a dinner with the initial recipients of the Reparations grants. It was a moving occasion and an opportunity to see that financial contributions are only one part of repairing the damages of slavery and discrimination.

Public comment. 15 speakers. 7 supported the Climate Emergency Resolution, included 2 ETHS students, the head of Citizens' Greener Evanston, and Elizabeth Kinney on behalf of LWVE; the head of Connections for the Homeless explained the services provided at the Margarita Inn and the lack of disturbances, while 2 neighbors complained about disturbances; 2 supported the Reparations process and looked forward to expanded activities; 1 criticized the 2021 budget revision and 1 supported it; 1 regretted that the Board of Ethics has not been meeting.

Special Orders of Business. SP1. Evanston Reparations Restorative Housing Program Update. CM Braithwaite thanked City staff for working to achieve the first stage of the Reparations program, mentioning in particular Kim Richardson and members of the law department. He described the impact the program will have on the initial recipients and planning for the next phase. CM Reid said that current funding was less than expected and Council needed to identify additional revenues.

SP2. Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP) Update. Cara Pratt, Sustainability Coordinator, provided an update on progress of the CARP Plan adopted in 2018. A few goals are on track, but many are not and implementation steps are not clear. She said it would cost millions of dollars to reach the 2050 goals. She was encouraged by CM Reid, Burns and Nieuwsma who urged her to engage Council and citizens in the effort. It was moved and seconded to accept the report. The motion passed 7-0.

SP3. Declaring A Climate Emergency and an Immediate Mobilization Effort. Revelle introduced the ordinance and Nieuwsma expressed support. It was approved 7-0.

Consent agenda. The Mayor asked for items to be removed. A13 and P1 were held in committee for further information. Items removed were A2, A22, A23, P2, F1, H1.

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

A2, Approval of Contract for Citywide Landscape Maintenance. CM Reid said he would prefer to use a local business for landscape work. The motion passed 6-1, Reid voting no.

The Mayor explained that he had mishandled the consent agenda. Item A12 should have been removed. The approval of the consent agenda was out of order. The consent agenda without Item A12 was considered and passed 7-0.

Item A12, Approval of an Amendment to the Five-Fifths Development Project Area was introduced by CM Burns. He moved to suspend the rules for Introduction and Action. The motion to suspend the rules passed 7-0. Burns moved the ordinance for Introduction and Action. The motion passed 7-0.

Item A22, Designation of Truck Routes and Bicycle Routes. This would make part of Howard Street and part of Custer truck routes. Reid expressed some opposition and asked that more information be presented. It was moved to hold the item to the next meeting.

Item A23. Amending Building Regulations to update the city code to the 2021 International Code Council model codes. Staff explained that the city regularly updated its codes to meet new standards. The changes would apply only to new buildings or rebuilding. The motion passed 6-0 (Reid was out of the room).

Item P2. Approving a Major Variation for the Property Located at 1706-1710 Sherman Avenue. CM Kelly praised the work of the developer to provide adaptive re-use of historic buildings. She supported the development. The motion passed 7-0.

Item H1. Amending Portions of the City Code "Noises Prohibited." Revelle introduced the item and proposed an amendment to reflect the committee's work. The amendment passed 7-0. Reid expressed opposition to the ordinance. He said it set decibel levels too low, and he opposed the exceptions for SPACE and NU. Others said they were uncertain if the prohibited levels were appropriate. Kelly said concern about noise from neighbors should be discussed directly and should not be a matter for police calls. There was quite a bit of discussion and uncertainty about what the limits in the ordinance represented. Reid moved to send the ordinance back to the committee for better clarity. The motion passed 7-1. (Suffredin had joined the meeting.)

Item F1, Authorizing the City Manager to increase the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Reid raised concerns that the expenditures had not been approved by Council. CFO Desai explained that all expenditures had been approved. Some of the expenditures involved replacing bonds at lower rates. Kelly expressed concern that there was not sufficient transparency on these expenses. Nieuwsma explained very clearly that every budget has items over budget and others underbudget. The overall budget was balanced because reduced expenses were great than these over budget expenses. State law requires that budgets be amended to match over budget items. Nieuwsma pointed out that the budgeting process had been highly accurate, and the Finance Committee will be making regular reports on over- or under- spending.

Kelly moved to hold the item to the next meeting. Initially there was no second, and then Reid seconded. Nieuwsma moved to overturn the hold, Braithwaite seconded. Nieuwsma said this delay will not provide any further information. To overturn the hold, Braithwaite, Nieuwsma, Suffredin, Revelle and Giacaris voted yes, and Burns, Kelly and Reid voted no. The 5-3 vote failed because it needed two-thirds to pass. The item will be on the May 9 agenda.

Call of the wards. Various meetings announced, including the Redistricting meeting on May 10

At 9:25, the meeting adjourned to Executive Session.