

Observer: Betty Hayford

Council members present: All. Suffredin arrived late and participated in most of the meeting.

Meeting began: 6:40 pm

Meeting ended: 10:05 pm

Announcements. Mayor Biss announced that he would be holding a Town Hall meeting Tuesday evening at 7:00 in the Parasol Room to explain developments in the City Manager search. The Redistricting Committee will be holding a virtual meeting on zoom on Wednesday at 7:00.

Biss expressed great appreciation to Peter Braithwaite for his service on City Council, emphasizing his hard work and valuable experience, and his focus on priorities. He presented a plaque and photos were taken. He presented a plaque to Interim City Manager Kelly Gandurski in appreciation for her excellent work for the city in a difficult time. He expressed thanks and recognition to Robin Rue Simmons for her wide service, especially in working through the creation of a Reparations Program.

The City Manager called on staff member Alison Lefinger to provide an update on the Guaranteed Income Pilot Program being developed collaboratively by the City and Northwestern. The initial budget is \$1.165 million, with \$900,000 in direct payments, from the City ARPA funds, the NU Good Neighbor Fund, and the Evanston Community Foundation. 150 residents will be chosen to receive \$500 a month for one year, from three groups: 18-24 year olds; those over 62, and undocumented people. The program has a large research component carried out by Northwestern. The initial payments will go out by October or November. A control group will be set up with modest compensation.

Public comment. 20 comments. 3 supported ARPA funds for Family Focus; 5 expressed appreciation of Council Member Braithwaite; 3 against unlimited hours for parks and urging consultation with residents; 4 expressed reasoned support for Rank Choice Voting and 1 expressed opposition; 1 expressed opposition to housing the homeless in the Margarita Inn because of the recent police incident and 1 expressed concern for the recent incident but support for the proposed homeless plan; 2 expressed concern about the city manager search; 1 supported the Guaranteed Income program; 1 supported funds for the Northshore Visitors and Convention Bureau; 1 expressed concern for the cost of sewer replacement and asked for discussion on the possible use of city funds.

Special Orders of Business. SP1, Amending City Council Rules related to hiring and firing City Manager. Mayor Biss explained the lack of clarity in the current ordinance and the change to requiring seven votes, a super majority. The motion passed 8-0.

SP2. Authorizing the Appointment of an Interim City Manager. Mayor Biss urged approval of a resolution appointing Luke Stowe Interim City Manager. Stowe has been working for the city for ten years in different positions. The motion passed 9-0, including Mayor Biss.

Consent agenda. Mayor Biss asked council members to identify items to be taken off the consent agenda. They agreed to remove CM1, A2, A6, A8, P1, P2, R1, F1, H1, H2, H3, H6, HC1. The consent agenda was approved, 9-0.

R1. Submitting a Ballot Resolution for the November election for a Referendum to Use Ranked Choice Voting in Evanston. Mayor Biss moved this item to the top of the agenda because several specialists were waiting to address the meeting. Council member Burns reminded his colleagues that the item

could be put on the ballot by petition and Council should take time to deliberate. Reid introduced Professor Jason McDaniel from San Francisco State University who has done research on Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). Daniel concluded that the alleged benefits of RCV are exaggerated, and it may create greater complexity that will reduce voter turnout. He has found it may decrease participation and will have no impact on cost.

Eric Friedman, from the New York Campaign Finance Board, provided a different view reporting on the Mayoral election in New York. He said RCV provided more impact to the voters and encouraged candidates to move towards the middle. The use of RCV in NYC generated high voter turnout. Elisa Kaplan, from Reform for Illinois, challenged the remarks by McDaniel. She said he was the only researcher to find reduced turnout, and other research has identified larger turnout. Research shows most voters understand the new system and fewer voter errors result.

Nieuwsma emphasized that this is just a vote to put the item on the ballot, not a vote for or against RCV. He emphasized that there was plenty of time to educate voters before November. Reid questioned whether this change would bring any benefits, and it could bring legal challenges.

Braithwaite moved to call the question. Reid expressed opposition and lectured council for being irresponsible. Burns said he is always opposed to calling a question and supports discussion. The vote to call the question passed 6-2, 1 abstention. Burns abstained. Kelly and Reid voted no.

The vote on putting the measure on the ballot passed 7 in favor, Reid and Kelly abstaining.

CM1. Minutes of City Council Meeting of June 27, 2022. Revelle made a correction. The item on amending the Noise Ordinance was tabled to August 8, not to July 25 as in the minutes draft. The vote to amend the minutes passed 9-0. The vote to approve the minutes as amended passed 9-0.

A2. Approval of BMO Harris Amazon Credit Card Activity. Passed 8-0, Suffredin abstained.

A8. Authorization of the Transfer of Funds Between the General Fund, Solid Waste Fund, and Capital Improvement Fund. This relates to the funds from the Waste Transfer Station Fees and would allow better tracking. Braithwaite asked questions about priority uses for these funds. Stoneback explained how priorities had been set. Future priorities can be revised. The motion passed 9-0.

P1. Amending the City Code related to "Location Restrictions." P2 Creates a special use permit for 1026 Davis Street for Beacon Academy. Nieuwsma asked to suspend the rules for both items for Introduction and Action. The motion to suspend the rules passed. The motion to approve both items passed 9-0. The change permits this school building to operate within the normal exclusion zone related to tobacco sales.

H1. Amending the City Code section on Hours of Operation for City Parks. The proposal would allow parks to be open 24 hours a day. Reid had proposed this item. He moved to send the issue back to the Human Services Committee for further discussion. The motion passed 6 – 3. Braithwaite, Wynne and Revelle voted no. Apparently those voting against the item wanted to dismiss it altogether.

H2. Amending Portions of the City Code related to Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Consumption or Possession on City Property. Several council members asked about the purpose of this change, and Braithwaite asked Chief Eddington for comment on the impact. Eddington replied that the current ordinance is a useful tool. There have been no complaints that the police are over enforcing the ordinance. Further discussion took place about how useful the current ordinance is. The motion failed, 3-6. Reid, Burns and Geracaris voted in favor.

H3. Amending portions of City Code related to General Offenses, specifically Purchase, Possession or Acceptance of Alcohol or Cannabis by persons under 21 years old. The change would provide alternatives to arrest. Revelle moved to amend to retain “attempt to purchase” in the ordinance. Reid accepted the amendment. The goal is to make the attempt to purchase a ticketable offense. The amendment passed 8-0 (Suffredin was out of the room). The motion as amended passed 8-0.

H6. Deleting part of the City Code related to possession of Burglar’s Tools. Reid asserted that a similar item was found unconstitutional in 1970. The proposed revision is consistent with state law. The motion passed 8-0.

HC1. Approval of \$1 million of ARPA Funding for the One-Stop Shop Housing Retrofit Program. Revelle and Nieuwsma recused themselves because they are connected with the organization. The motion passed 6-0 with two abstentions.

Call of the Wards. Several meetings were announced. Burns said he thought there was insufficient discussion on the Ranked Choice Voting referendum. He believes more voter education is needed and council should support voter education.

Reid agreed that more voter education is needed on Ranked Choice Voting. He also asserted that the discussion on changing the ordinance on carrying alcohol was distorted.

At 10:05, City Council adjourned to Executive Session.