
DATE: Monday, July 1, 2019
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Urbana City Council Chambers, 400 S. Vine St, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session July 1, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Urbana City Building.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: City Council Members (CM) Maryalice Wu (Ward 1), Eric Jakobsson (Ward 2), Shirese Hursey (Ward 3), Bill Brown (Ward 4), Dennis Roberts (Ward 5), Jared Miller (Ward 7), Charles A. Smyth (City Clerk)

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Dean Hazen (Ward 6), Diane Wolfe Marlin (Mayor)

STAFF PRESENT: Carol Mitten, John Schneider, James Simon, Chuck Lauss, John Schneider, Sheila Dodd, Brandon Boys

OTHERS PRESENT: News-Gazette, Bishop King James and Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood, Elderess Melinda Carr, Allan Axelrod, Jane McClintock, Karen Medina, Al Kagen, Mike Ingram, Stuart Levy, Olly Greer, Carol Inskeep, George Hardebeck, Ann Quackenbush, Rebecca Obuchowski, Barry Isralewitz, David Cisneros, Susan Parenti

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

There being a quorum present, Mayor Pro Tem Roberts called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:55 p.m. following a Cunningham Township meeting.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

City Council Member (CM) Miller made a motion to approve minutes from the June 17, 2019 regular meeting, seconded by CM Jakobsson, and passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

At staff request, New Business Item 1, Ordinance 2019-07-037, was moved to July 15 Council meeting by CM Miller, seconded by CM Hursey and approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC INPUT

Bishop King James Underwood and Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood did not wish to speak but asked that their concerns regarding the Dr. Ellis Subdivision sewer issues be entered into the record.

Elderess Melinda Carr did not wish to speak but asked that her position in support of the acting program director of the IMC's concerns about recent changes to the IMC.

Allan Axelrod did not wish to speak but asked that his position be entered into the record: The City of Urbana should be cooperatively engaged with community centers such as the IMC

Jane McClintock did not wish to speak but asked that her position be entered into the record: As a high school student, she valued the IMC as a safe all ages venue. She learned important skills hosting shows and the IMC served as a safe place for kids. She also noted the IMC's historical building designation, how restrictions on the IMC could stifle art and culture in Urbana, and the need for safe events that do not exclude vulnerable populations from contributing to a vital and diverse downtown.

Karen Medina, Board President of the Urbana Champaign Independent Media Center (IMC) read a prepared statement on behalf of the board. Her statement provided background and history of the IMC, described the many partnerships with the city over past years, work with city staff and the police department to develop security plans in the past and for current help, and provided their perspective on the impact of newly imposed regulations on the IMC.

Kendal Arrington spoke about the events that he holds at the IMC. He noted time lag problems between booking and processing of paperwork by the city. He uses the facility about seven times a year and never had problems in the past.

Carol Mitten, City Administrator told City Council that this topic warrants a detailed response.

Al Kagen, a Champaign resident stated that the IMC is a regionally important resource and as someone working on the newspaper the Public Eye, thinks there is a need for independent media. He provided a Thomas Jefferson quote.

Mike Ingram, a Champaign County board member, stated that his entire career is as booker, promoter, and musician. He noted spending a lot of time at the IMC and books the Canopy Club and other small venues. He noted that there are few spaces in town for live music and it's diminishing which limits what people can do.

Stuart Levy agreed with past speakers and yielded his time.

Olly Greer noted that she recently moved to town, teaches at the University and is a user of the IMC. The IMC should be respected as a community center and as a safe place for black and queer communities free from harassment. There's a problem if a permit is needed to drink ginger ale.

Carol Inskeep urged the city council and mayor to take an active interest and not let the IMC be undermined by onerous regulations. She noted that the IMC is volunteer run, is a welcoming place, is affordable spaces that support artists, and draws people to downtown. She lives and works just blocks from the IMC and attends IMC events.

George Hardebeck, a board member of IMC described his involvement with the IMC with a radio show since 2013. He found an open door and welcoming community and described the IMC as one of the places a lot of places do not have.

Anne Quakenbush, a resident for over 20 years, stated that she values the IMC for action, education, and relationships. She noted attending numerous events utilizing the IMC as teacher and mother. She expressed concern about the chilling effect of 45 day notice and fee.

Rebecca Obuchowski described organizing of the unconference event at the IMC which supports adults with developmental disabilities. She spoke of the months of planning and co-sponsorship with others including the Urbana Park District for events on June 7 and 8 and did not have confirmation until June 1. She noted that there are few places that a non-profit can use for a low cost and very few events are planned 45 days out. She also noted that the IMC has received a grant for \$75K from the state for accessibility improvements and concluded that the IMC is extremely important to the community.

Council members questioned Ms. Medina about certain types of events that did not need a permit. CM Brown noted his attendance at events, that action couldn't be taken tonight, but that this could be put on next week's agenda.

Barry Isralewitz spoke in support of the IMC as one of the founders of the Bike Project (TBP). He described the organization and its positive impact on the community. They are an independent center but rent space in the IMC. They have had more than 2,000 open hours over 13 years but only called police a couple times, using nighttime hours until 9pm or later. He described how the IMC was their incubator and how their mission requires late night hours. He expressed his concern about late night restrictions on the IMC.

David Cisneros made three points that echo and support of all the wonderful things at the IMC: concerts, community meetings, activist meetings, and maker space. He opposes the way the city has approached this issue which seems draconian. He noted that the staff are taking proactive

steps to prevent the problems. He expressed support for negotiations between the IMC board/executive team and the city for the good of the IMC and the community.

Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood, a 66 year resident of Urbana, stated that she goes to the IMC every week for group meetings of citizens for peace and justice. She noted the IMC as an inclusive place and hopes it stays that way. She stated that as people of color, for activities there, the IMC is mindful of having security and provide their own.

Susan Parenti noted that Margaret Mead in 1978 predicted the IMC and described the actions possible by a small group. Ms. Parenti described IMC is a warm nest for small groups of people with no bureaucracy and noted that people who are trying to change something do not have a secretary or a planning committee, need a space, and it should not be expensive. She noted previous arguments for the work that the IMC is doing. She stated that the city should apologize for abominable behavior.

Chair Roberts stated that the city would address the issues raised and council members requested that this topic be placed on the next committee agenda.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

F. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Committee Of The Whole – (Council Member Maryalice Wu)

- a. **Resolution No. 2019-06-025R:** A Resolution Relating to Participation by Elected Officials in The Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (2019)

For the committee, CM Wu moved approval of Resolution 2019-06-025R, seconded by CM Miller. With no discussion, the motion passed by roll call vote (6-0): Brown – Aye; Hursey – Aye; Jakobsson – Aye; Miller – Aye; Roberts – Aye; Wu – Aye.

- b. **Ordinance No. 2019-06-036:** An Ordinance Approving a Redevelopment Agreement with Marksons Affiliates, LLC (Urbana Landmark Hotel - 2019)

For the committee, CM Wu moved approval of Ordinance 2019-06-036, seconded by CM Miller. Brandon Boys, Economic Development Manager provided a summary of revisions to the agreement per the updated memo. These included clarification of eligible redevelopment projects July 1, 2020 to deadline to start the project, clarified minimum equity participation of \$3.025 Million, and added city responsibility for the Green Street Stub (a TIF expense). The restaurant requirement was replaced by Hilton Tapestry brand requirements, and once the city bonds are paid, that can trigger the end of the term of the agreement. Staff recommends approval. Questions and discussion followed.

Mr. Boys explained that prior agreements with other developers had the restaurant agreement but as this new project has a brand association, this adds flexibility though the catering option is not defined. He also described how the project does not include a developer's fee in the total budget. Under this agreement, the full project needs to meet minimums and if there is left over contingency that can be used for paying a developer's fee.

The bond payment and repayment scenarios were discussed. The bonds will be paid over a ten-year period. The city's guarantee is based on the Hilton Hotel requirements and any change in brand will require city approval. The impact of the agreement on potential catering and convention revenues is minimal and represents 4% of the potential income. CM Wu noted that the city has invested a lot of time and resources. Part of that investment is money but there is also staff time invested, and that is worth something. City Attorney Simon stated that the city controls the payment of the bonds within 10 years and it would be up to the city to pay them off early. The stipulations related to assigning the agreement without city approval within the ten year time frame were also clarified by Mr. Boys, noting the conditions include the continuation of the Hilton Brand.

As 10:30 PM was approaching, CM Miller moved to extend the meeting an additional 10 minutes, seconded CM Wu and passed by unanimous voice vote. CM Brown asked that council get a copy of the final agreement and post it as an informational item at a following meeting.

With no further discussion, the motion was approved by roll call vote (6-0): Brown – Aye; Hursey – Aye; Jakobsson – Aye; Miller – Aye; Roberts – Aye; Wu – Aye.

c. **Discussion:** Consolidated Social Service Subrecipient Agreements

Due to the time, council members moved this item to the next committee meeting.

G. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There were none.

H. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

There were none.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Ordinance No. 2019-07-037:** An Ordinance Approving A Major Variance (201 West University Avenue / ZBA Case No. 2019-MAJ-02) – CD

This ordinance was moved by earlier action to Council, July 15, 2019

2. **Mayoral Reappointments to Boards and Commissions**

a. **Design Review Board – term ending June 30, 2022**

1. Nancy Ouedraogo
2. Adam Rusch
3. Appointments date correction (Kunkel and Cho)

b. **Historic Preservation Commission – term ending June 30, 2022**

1. Gina Pagliuso

Mayor Pro Tem Roberts read the list of appointments and noted the correction to previous appointments. CM Miller moved approval, seconded by CM Wu. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

J. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the council, Mayor Pro Tem Roberts adjourned the meeting at 10:33 p.m.

Charles A. Smyth

City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded with website link (viewable on demand):

<https://www.urbanaininois.us/node/7615>

This meeting was broadcast on cable television (UPTV) and streamed live:

<http://urbanaininois.us/uptv>

Minutes Approved: July 15, 2019