



URBANA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Monday, January 7, 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 January 7, 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), Bill Brown (Ward 4), Dennis Roberts (Ward 5), Dean Hazen, (Ward 6,) Jared Miller (Ward 7), Diane Wolfe Marlin (Mayor), Charles A. Smyth (City Clerk)

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Ward 3 – Vacant;

STAFF PRESENT: Carol Mitten, Lorrie Pearson, Jim Simon, John Schneider

OTHERS PRESENT: News-Gazette, Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood, Theodore Gray, Courtney Caruthers, Shirese Hursey, Melinda Carr, Stacie Burnett, Aaron Ammons

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

There being a quorum present, Mayor Marlin called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:03 p.m. following a Public Hearing.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

City Council Member (CM) Roberts made a motion to approve minutes from the December 10, 2018 Joint meeting with Cunningham Township and the December 17, 2018 regular meeting, seconded by CM Miller, and passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Marlin proposed a closed session be added to the end of the agenda for the purposes of sale or lease of city property. CM Miller moved the addition as Item 3 of New Business, seconded by CM Wu and passed by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC INPUT

Theodore Gray spoke to a possible ordinance to allow the use of “low speed electric vehicles” or “neighborhood vehicles” on city streets. He provided a variety of electric mini-car pictures and a video of the vehicle that he has on order from China. He described the use of such vehicles in China, their use on the University of Illinois within a campus zone, and compared them to golf carts though these models include windshield wipers, headlights, seat belts, and are enclosed. Discussion and questions followed with City Council Members. In response to CM Brown, Mr. Gray indicated the shipping weight of his vehicle at 420 kg. Mr. Gray also described possible methods for getting a valid license plate from the state. In response to CM Roberts, Mr. Gray described the vehicle for his use as a neighborhood one, providing convenience between his home and downtown Urbana office. Mayor Marlin noted that vehicles of this kind are being used in New Orleans, LA.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

F. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

There were none.

G. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There were none.

H. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

There were none.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Ordinance No. 2019-01-001:** An Ordinance Approving a Major Variance
(Cunningham Children's Home Sign / 1301 North Cunningham Avenue / ZBA Case No. 2018-MAJ-11)

Planning Manager Lorrie Pearson presented the staff memo for a major variance request from Cunningham Children's Home for a larger freestanding sign than is allowed in a residential zoning district. The request was made out of a desire to mark the entrance as private and due to a significant dedication of a sanitary sewer easement and public right-of-way. At its December meeting, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) held a public hearing and voted unanimously to recommend that City Council approve the variance request. The reason for the request is due to the greater distance from the street due to new sanitary sewer easements and multiuse path. Ms. Pearson provided several views of proposed location of the sign on the brick wall entrance along the driveway of the facility showing the distances from the road, the new easement and right of way lines, as well as the new multiuse path.

CM Roberts asked for additional clarification of the new right of way to which Ms. Pearson further described the location and layout. CM Brown asked about the sight lines and location of a driveway stop sign. Ms. Pearson indicated she would follow up with engineering staff. With no further questions or discussion, a motion to approve Ordinance 2019-01-001 was made by CM Miller, seconded by CM Jakobsson and passed by roll call vote (6-0): Brown – Aye; Hazen – Aye; Jakobsson – Aye; Miller – Aye; Roberts – Aye; Wu – Aye.

2. Ward 3 - Applicant Statements

Four of five applicants for the vacant Ward 3 City Council seat made statements to City Council, Josh Acree did not speak. Mayor Marlin provided the opening context thanking the applicants for their willingness to serve the community. Mayor Marlin noted that the seat became vacant on the election of Council Member Ammons to County Clerk effective November 30th. She reviewed the statutory process and requirements related to filling and being qualified for the position. She has interviewed the five applicants and invited them to speak. She indicated that she plans to make a recommendation to council next week.

County Clerk Aaron Ammons thanked council for the process in use to fill the Ward 3 seat, indicating the importance of having a voice to represent the residents of the ward. He indicated there were three community meetings encouraging folks to get involved. He spoke about four of the five candidates who attended those meetings. He encouraged council to maintain diversity if not increase diversity on the council.

Rev. Courtney Caruthers described himself as a recent transplant to the community, described his family, his plans to retire in the community, and his employment as a local pastor. He stated that his background as a pastor working with the community as well as having been a deputy in Texas gives him a unique perspective. He noted the diversity and potential with respect to both residents and businesses, the existence of poverty and the need for jobs, as well as growth of Ward 3.

Ms. Shirese Hursey introduced herself as someone who grew up in the 3rd Ward and then lived LA for almost 30 years. She noted living in different communities there gave her opportunities and perspectives. She stated that she is dedicated to improving and continuing to build on what has been going on in the 3rd Ward noting the need for a grocery store, neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch recognizing that people want to feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods. She noted the historical importance of a progressive 3rd Ward dragging Urbana into the 21st Century. Given the opportunity to serve, she will serve and inform all.

Elderess Melinda Carr noted her advocacy for the Dr. Ellis Subdivision and began by reading Psalm 15. She indicated that it epitomizes why she wishes to serve, to do the right thing. She noted historical neglect of the 3rd ward and a need to survey residents for needs.

Ms. Stacie Burnett noted that she is a 40-year resident of the community and described her employment, family, and educational background. She indicated that as a single mother she has raised four children in the city. She's a current member of the Human Relations Commission and has been active with the Martin Luther King Jr Celebration planning committee as well as the Black Chamber of Commerce and other volunteer activities. She also has an ongoing home-based business. She stated that as a life long resident, researcher, and problem solver, she is prepared to work with the residents to address issues. She acknowledged past representatives of the Ward and indicated that more work needs to be done with respect to gun violence, minority business development, home ownership, and mental health and drug detox. She stated that she's ready to be the voice for those calling for action.

Mayor Marlin thanked everyone for their time and thought put into their applications and presentations.

3. **Closed Session** to consider the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)6.

A motion to go into closed session as stated was made by CM Miller, seconded by CM Roberts and passed by roll call vote (6-0): Brown – Aye; Jakobsson – Aye; Hazen – Aye; Miller – Aye; Roberts – Aye; Wu – Aye. Mayor Marlin noted that there would be no additional city business following a return to open session. City Council and staff moved to the Executive Conference Room, 2nd Floor at 7:52 pm.

City Council and staff returned to Council Chambers at 8:24 pm. CM Miller moved to return to open session, seconded by CM Wu, and passed by unanimous voice vote.

J. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Charles A. Smyth

City Clerk

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

<https://www.urbanaillinois.us/node/7543>

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

<http://urbanaillinois.us/uptv>

Minutes Approved: January 22, 2019