

---

**DATE:** Monday, July 27, 2020  
**TIME:** 7:00 P.M.  
**PLACE:** \*Held virtually due to Governor's Stay at Home order

---

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session July 27 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT:** Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor; Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA ZOOM:** City Council Members (CM) Maryalice Wu; Shirese Hursey; Dennis Roberts; Bill Colbrook; Jared Miller; Ward 2 Vacant

**ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:** Bill Brown; Ward 2, Vacant

**STAFF PRESENT VIRTUALLY:** Elizabeth Hannan; Kay Meharry; Carol Mitten; Lorrie Pearson; Bryant Seraphin; James Simon

**OTHERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM:** Christopher Hansen; Julie Laut; Ricardo Diaz; Sam Stewart; *Public Input via Zoom:* Jennifer Straub; Mike Thiessen; Fiona Munro; Ben Joselyn; Jon Hays; Melissa Schoeplein; Tracy Chong; Austin Hoffman; Christopher Hansen; Giovanna; Meghan McDonald; Charlotte G; Christopher Hansen; Sarah Nixon; Allan Axelrod; Drake Materre

#### **A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

With a quorum present, Mayor Marlin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

#### **B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

There were two sets of minutes to be approved. CM Roberts moved to approve the minutes from the July 13, 2020 meeting. Motion seconded by CM Hursey and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Roberts, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

CM Wu moved to approve the minutes from the June 22, 2020 meeting. Motion seconded by CM Roberts and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Roberts, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

CM Roberts said Community Development would like to take Ordinance No. 2020-07-038 off of the agenda to make some changes and bring it back to City Council on August 10, 2020.

#### **C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no additions.

#### **D. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC INPUT**

1. [City Council Applicant Statements](#): Christopher Hansen, Julie Laut

Mayor Marlin introduced Julie Laut and Christopher Hansen, who were candidates for appointment to the Ward 2 council seat vacated by Eric Jakobsson. Each candidate spoke to council for about three minutes.

2. [Census Presentation](#) – Ricardo Diaz

Ricardo Diaz, with the New Welcome Center and Sam Stewart, with the Regional Planning Commission presented information about the 2020 Census. Mr. Diaz said Illinois is about eighth in the nation as far as response. He said about 63% of Urbana households have been counted. In 2010 about 80% of households in Champaign County self-responded, and brought in \$62,671,500 in federal dollars for social services. If the census were to end now, Urbana risks losing \$23,041,380 in federal dollars. He said it would be best if people self-respond, but census takers will begin to go out door to door to the residences that have not yet responded. Mr. Diaz responded to questions from council members.

3. [Public Input](#)

*Public input via Zoom:*

Public comment via Zoom included: there should be transparency in city council appointments and FOIA requests and city staff seem to make their own rules concerning FOIA requests; calling to support Julie Laut for Ward 2 council seat; calling to support Christopher Hansen for Ward 2 city council seat; council should approve a sixth video gaming terminal; great interest in policing discussions; there is a housing crisis; drop charges against Aleyah Lewis and the 27 protesters; defund police and reallocate funds to social services; remove SROs from schools.

*Public input via email:*

The following submitted public input via email: Aaron Umbarger, Ameena Payne, Anne Marie Esposito, Cherryl Brooks, Durl Kruse, Janice Walker, Jeffrey Putney, Jen Roth, Jessie Gonzalez Cruz, Lara Jobe, Michelle Plante, Mike Thiessen, Naomi Paik, Rohn Koester, Steven Cobb.

[Additional Public Input via Zoom](#)

Disappointed in people turning to current system when experiencing violence in the neighborhood, and publically voicing support for the current system.

## **E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. [Discussion](#) – Future of Public Safety and Policing – Next Steps

Mayor Marlin began the conversation by saying she appreciated the comments and input on this subject over the past weeks. She said the City is committed to the work of making changes in Urbana, with a plan that is thoughtful, intentional and sustainable, and that takes time. Any systemic changes will cost more. She said police officers will be needed to respond to people in danger and crimes and should be included in this discussion so they can provide their experience and ideas. She went over what is currently underway by the City:

- Independent review of Aleyah Lewis arrest
- Civilian Police Review Board “Re-booting”
- Human Relations Officer will be restored to full-time position and the position will be renamed to reflect human rights and equity. Addition of Community Engagement Coordinator.
- City Council passed 10 Shared Principles resolution. A workshop hosed by the NAACP and Illinois Association of Police Chiefs will be held on September 17, 2020.
- Pilot program is in the works for alternative emergency response calls to mental health calls for service called One Door, which will be presented to council on August 17, 2020.
- Internal review of UPD policies, including redactions

- Discussion at upcoming council meeting of traffic stop racial disparities – 2019 report.
- Form an advisory committee on public safety and policing that would discuss topics such as UPD policy review, re-allocation of non-core police functions, long-term sustainable plan for One Door.

Ideas and concerns from council members included access to the unredacted police policies, improving the City website with more information and easier navigation, available resources for citizens with mental health issues, more discussion and resolving of racial disparity in traffic stops, add civilian to use of force committee, a resolution to end structural racism and achieve racial equity, and putting public safety and policing on future council and committee agenda for discussion.

## **F. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Committee Of The Whole** – *(Council Member Shirese Hursey)*

#### **1. CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **2. REGULAR AGENDA**

- a. **Ordinance No. 2020-07-038**: An Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan (Urbana Pedestrian Master Plan / Plan Case 2401-CP-20)  
Community Development Director Lorrie Pearson asked for more time to finalize the changes under discussion for this ordinance and asked to put it on the agenda for the August 10, 2020 Council meeting. CM Roberts made a motion to send Ordinance No. 2020-07-038 to the August 10 City Council meeting. Motion seconded by CM Wu and carried by roll call vote as follows:  
Aye: Wu, Hursey, Roberts, Colbrook, Miller  
Nay: None
- b. **Ordinance No. 2020-07-039**: An Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan (Urbana Bicycle Wayfinding Plan / Plan Case 2402-CP-20)  
On behalf of the committee, CM Hursey moved to approve Ordinance No. 2020-07-039. Motion seconded by CM Wu and carried by roll call vote as follows:  
Aye: Wu, Hursey, Roberts, Colbrook, Miller  
Nay: None
- c. **Resolution No. 2020-07-033R**: A Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of a Grant for Market at the Square (LINK Up Illinois Grant – SNAP Double Value Program – 2020)  
On behalf of the committee, CM Hursey moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-07-033R. Motion seconded by CM Miller and carried by roll call vote as follows:  
Aye: Wu, Hursey, Roberts, Colbrook, Miller  
Nay: None

## **G. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

There were none.

## **H. REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Mayor Marlin reported there would be a budget amendment on the agenda for next week which will include additional funding for the Human Relations position, which will go from part time to full time among other things.

Community Development Director Lorrie Pearson reported there would be a report at the August 3 committee meeting on the disbursement of the CDBG grants and the housing assistance grants.

**I. NEW BUSINESS**

1. [Ordinance No. 2020-07-040](#): An Ordinance Naming a Street, Avenue, Alley, or other Public Place (Changing “Plantation Point” to “River Birch Lane”)

City Administrator Carol Mitten said this came to her in her role as interim public works director. She said some residents had asked for the change because of the inference of slavery in the name “Plantation”. CM Colbrook said he went from door to door, since this is in his precinct, to talk to each resident on the block, and there is support for this change from all except one resident, who objected because of the time it would take to change legal documents and anything displaying an address.

A certified copy of this ordinance will be sent to the post office and county office after it is approved.

CM Colbrook moved to approve Ordinance No. 2020-07-040. Motion seconded by CM Hursey.

After further discussion, the motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-07-040 was carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Wu, Hursey, Roberts, Colbrook, Miller

Nay: None

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the virtual meeting at 10:54 p.m.

Kay Meharry  
Assistant City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is [viewable on-demand](#).

Minutes Approved: August 12, 2020

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [!City Council](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT 7/27  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 12:25:36 PM

---

My name is Jesann Gonzalez Cruz. I am a graduate student at UIUC, and I have two comments directed towards today's scheduled conversation on the future of public safety and policing. First, the city of Urbana should drop all charges against Aleyah Lewis and the 27 protesters arrested at the end of May. This past weekend I witnessed a man actively try to harm peaceful protesters by attempting to run them over - and despite having his license plate, and footage confirming his vile actions, the police have yet to press charges. Meanwhile, Aleyah Lewis was brutally pinned to the ground for WALKING AWAY from police officers. Can you see the discrepancy here? The adoption of the NAACP ten principles and increased bias training won't solve the systemic issues that allow for a violent extremist like the man in his truck to gallivant through town unchecked, while an innocent black woman sits behind bars. Demonstrate to the public that you understand these systemic discrepancies and that you believe that Black Lives Matter. Drop the charges. Second, Urbana has to take larger strides to defund the police. Police are generally reactive to crime not proactive, and this weekend - they were actually inactive. Furthermore, the state of IL is pushing to lift eviction bans and Ameren is scheduled to begin utility shutoffs when the pandemic is far from over. Urbana wants to know how to lower crime rates? It begins with ensuring needs are met - housing, water, education, etc. We may not "have" the money now but I know where we could get some to ensure these needs are met: the police budget! You can't truly commit to building a new system when you continue to invest in the old one. Please remember, you are representing us in these positions of leadership - not yourselves. Thank you.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [!City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Silverwood shooting  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 6:10:38 PM

---

I first of all would like to thank you all for the time you put in and helping Urbana. Tonight I would like to take a few minutes to be able to address the shooting over and Silverwood early this morning. As a part of what I'm going to share I would like these pictures to be put up at the beginning.

Thank you

Giovanna Dibenedetto  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT 7/27/2020  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 12:39:29 PM

---

Hello,

My name is Anne Marie Esposito and I am a resident of Urbana, ward 7, and a graduate student at UIUC. I would like to bring an incident to your attention that occurred this weekend. While participating in a protest at Rogue Barber Co. against their policy that names the black lives matter movement as a violent organization, someone who came out of that establishment proceeded to drive his car into a group of protesters. He was not patient, he did not wait to see if we would let him pass, he ignored the direction we gave to allow him to leave easily. He instead **chose** to drive through peaceful people. He chose to commit a violent act. I bring this incident to your attention for multiple reasons. First, to show that racism is alive and well in Champaign-Urbana. To say that 'we are not like Chicago' or other populous cities is to try and say that racism is not a problem here, but it clearly is. Second, to note that to my knowledge there have not been charges brought against this man who was pulled over by police, so they do know who he is, there were tens of witnesses, and there is video evidence of the incident. **I support defunding the police**, however, I wish that when asked to do their job to protect the community they actually do that. This event shook me to my core and has expanded my personal understanding that the police are not someone I can turn to when I feel threatened, the way that many Black people have felt for centuries. This is happening in your community, please do something about it.

Thank you,

Anne Marie Esposito  
PhD Candidate  
Gewirth Group  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
She/her/hers

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [!City Council: ! Roberts, Dennis](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT-July 27th 2020  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 8:33:37 AM

---

The connection between academic underachievement and student involvement in the justice system needs to be highlighted and addressed; when students do not graduate from high school and obtain the skills to procure adequate employment, they are more likely to also be involved in the justice system at later stages in their lives.

What educational values and beliefs underpin a decision to have SROs in our schools? Policing was never meant to solve all problems.

School Resource Officers (SROs) do not have specialized training in adolescent or childhood development. They are not mental health experts, social workers with licensed degrees, psychologists, or school counselors. They are not educators. To be clear, school resource officers are career law enforcement officers, with arresting authority, and a license to carry a weapon (paid for by the school district). Police officers patrol school hallways just like they do city streets. There are better, safer, and cheaper alternatives.

We must end the Intergovernmental agreement with the Urbana Police Department and remove SROs from Urbana's public schools.

Respectfully,

Lara Orr  
Ward 5



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Urbana City Council -- July 27, 2020 meeting -- public input  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 4:02:41 PM

---

To the Mayor and Urbana City Council:

Community Courtwatch is a local activist group that follows felony cases in the Sixth Circuit Court by attending hearings, getting to know the accused and family members of the accused, and following the cases to their conclusions, which often involves a prison sentence.

As you evaluate policing and public safety in Urbana this evening, please consider a few important lessons I've learned in my 10 years as an activist and organizer with Community Courtwatch:

-- The News-Gazette is the only outlet for news about the police and courts, and its editorial position is emphatically uncritical of the state and the police. In truth, poor policing and poor prosecutorial performance are common aspects of felony cases that go before the Sixth Circuit Court, but all of this is left out of the news stories that are written. Consequently, a common perception is that the police are the "good guys," and those who are convicted are the "bad guys." We need to see through this perception.

-- The state does not promote fairness through the court system. More than 90% of the cases that appear in felony court are settled through plea agreements – the accused agrees to plead guilty in order to receive less severe treatment. In order to maintain this workflow, those who are accused are overcharged so that charges can be reduced later. Many are kept in jail in order to erode their mental health and force them to make desperate choices. According to the state's own figures, an estimated 10% of those who plead guilty are not in fact guilty.

-- The police do not promote fairness through the court system. When the police are interacting with the public around a criminal matter, they are collecting evidence and building cases that the state can win. In the course of doing this, they routinely lie, coerce, and intimidate to get what they want. Sometimes they fabricate evidence, and the evidence is ruled inadmissible. Sometimes they fix a story among themselves that is contradicted by other witnesses on the scene.

-- The state and the police do not have the support of a large percentage of the African American community and people living in low-income neighborhoods in Urbana. One of the most telling patterns I've witnessed over the years is the number of serious cases that the state fails to close because literally no witnesses will cooperate. In some of these cases the witnesses have no faith that the police can protect them. In other cases, the state and the police are considered completely untrustworthy under virtually any circumstance.

This last point should give us all pause. When a significant percentage of the population in Urbana feels alienated from the police and courts, more than a public relations campaign is needed to change

that. I believe we need to defund the police and build a new approach to civic authority that is radically inclusive.

Sincerely,  
Rohn Koester

  
Urbana

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Public Input  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 11:22:57 AM  
**Attachments:** [Policing Next Steps.docx](#)

---

Please read in the record tonight, Thank you

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Public Input: July 27, 2020 meeting  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 12:06:53 PM

---

Dear Mayor, City Council Members, City Administrator, and City Clerk,

I am pleased to write in support of Julie Laut as a potential member of the Urbana City Council. Julie is a kind, generous, and compassionate problem solver who is passionate about building community.

As a former member of the Urbana Public Arts Commission I know first-hand that being a member of an Urbana committee involves listening carefully to multiple viewpoints, working collaboratively, and putting the public interest first. Her many examples of service show that Julie Laut is well-suited to just this kind of work. In addition to serving on the board of the Unitarian Universalist Church, serving as an advocate for new mothers, bringing people together for a weekly trivia game open to all comers, she has offered a platform, through the game, for causes which deserve support including the Eastern Illinois Foodbank, the University YMCA New American Welcome Center, RACES, childcare for essential workers at the Orpheum, CU Black Lives Matter, and more, raising over \$7,000 for worthy causes.

In her work at the University Press, Julie was an accomplished fund-raiser and community liaison. She worked with multiple colleges including the School of Information Sciences where I currently work, and the College of Fine and Applied Arts, where I studied and worked, to provide experiential learning opportunities for young soon-to-be-professionals, offering critical experience for students.

As shown by her curbside pantry and the Friday trivia which hosts over 125 participants each week, Julie is one of the most welcoming people I have ever met. It takes a while to walk through Urbana with Julie as she greets every adult, child, dog, and chicken as an old friend and takes joy in each connection.

I am honored to recommend my neighbor Julie Laut for a seat on the Urbana City Council.

Best regards,  
Michele Plante

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT - 27 July 2020  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 10:19:02 AM

---

Hello,

The connection between academic underachievement and student involvement in the justice system needs to be highlighted and addressed; when students do not graduate from high school and obtain the skills to procure adequate employment, they are more likely to also be involved in the justice system at later stages in their lives. What educational values and beliefs underpin a decision to have SROs in our schools? Policing was never meant to solve all problems.

School Resource Officers (SROs) do not have specialized training in adolescent or childhood development. They are not mental health experts, social workers with licensed degrees, psychologists, or school counselors. They are not educators. To be clear, school resource officers are career law enforcement officers, with arresting authority, and a license to carry a weapon (paid for by the school district). Police officers patrol school hallways just like they do city streets. There are better, safer, and cheaper alternatives.

We must end the Intergovernmental agreement with the Urbana Police Department and remove SROs from Urbana's public schools.

Respectfully,

--

A. Naomi Paik  
Associate Professor  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign  
<http://www.naomipaik.com/>  
(she/her/hers)



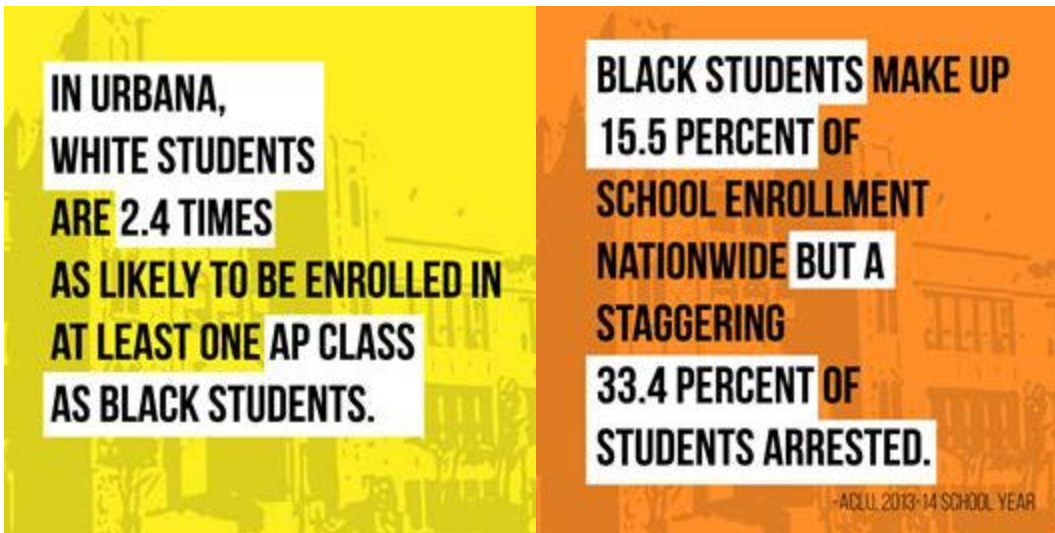
*Rightlessness: Testimony and Redress in U.S. Prison Camps since World War II*  
<http://uncpress.unc.edu/books/11907.html>

*Bans, Walls, Raids, Sanctuary: Understanding US Immigration for the 21st Century*  
<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520305120/bans-walls-raids-sanctuary>

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT - 27 July 2020  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 8:05:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)

---

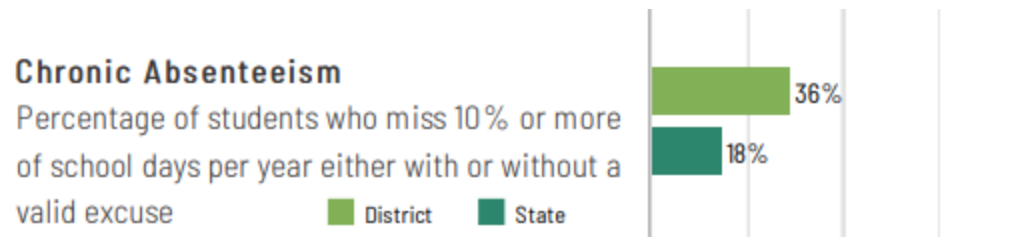
**Urbana City Council**, the connection between academic underachievement and student involvement in the justice system needs to be highlighted and addressed; when students do not graduate from high school and obtain the skills to procure adequate employment, they are more likely to also be involved in the justice system at later stages in their lives<sup>1</sup>.



Student underachievement often leads to student misbehaviour in the classroom. Empirical studies show that it is common for low-performing students to misbehave out of frustration or embarrassment when they are unable to learn the academic material and meet grade-level expectations.<sup>2</sup> As many educators well understand, when students begin to comprehend that the educational process is not working for them, they have fewer incentives to obey school rules.



And although federal and state laws require educators to suspend, expel, or refer a student to law enforcement for certain offenses, many educators choose to employ such harsh measures for more trivial matters, such as minor disturbances in the classroom. Below, you'll notice that the **Urbana School District** chronic absenteeism percentage (36%) in comparison to that of the entire state of Illinois (18%):



Source: [Illinois State Board of Education](#)

What educational values and beliefs underpin a decision to have SROs in our schools? Policing was never meant to solve all problems. School Resource Officers (SROs) do not have specialized training in adolescent or childhood development. They are not mental health experts, social workers with licensed degrees, psychologists, or school counselors. They are not educators. To be clear, school resource officers are career law enforcement officers, with arresting authority, and a license to carry a weapon (paid for by the school district). Police officers patrol school hallways just like they do city streets. There are better, safer, and cheaper alternatives.

We must **end the Intergovernmental agreement with the Urbana Police Department and remove SROs** from Urbana's public schools, Urbana City Council.

Respectfully,  
Ameena

<sup>1</sup> See CLIVE R. BELFIELD ET AL., THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF OPPORTUNITY YOUTH 20 (2012); MELISSA SICKMUND & CHARLES PUZZANCHERA, NAT'L CTR. FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE, JUVENILE OFFENDERS AND VICTIMS: 2014 NATIONAL REPORT 14–15 (2014)

<sup>2</sup> See MATTHEW P. STEINBERG ET AL., CONSORTIUM ON CHI. SCH. RESEARCH, UNIV. OF CHI. URBAN EDUC. INST., STUDENT AND TEACHER SAFETY IN CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS: THE ROLES OF COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND SCHOOL SOCIAL ORGANIZATION 46 (2011), available at [http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/downloads/8499safety\\_in\\_cps.pdf](http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/downloads/8499safety_in_cps.pdf)

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Public Input for Urbana City Council (7/27)  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 6:49:12 PM

---

My name is Jeff and I live in Champaign.

I would like to mention 3 recent events that have involved cops in our community and then discuss what these incidents might tell us about the nature of police in our community.

First, for those who may not be aware, the Rogue Barber shop in downtown champaign has become a private "men's club" requiring a pledge to not support anti-fascist movements or groups like Black Lives Matter.

On saturday I witnessed a member of the private club try to murder or mame protestors in downtown champaign with a truck. He put on a Rogue Barbershop shirt, walked out of the barber shop, smiled at a protestor, got in his truck, backed out of a parking space, drove right into the crowd, hit multiple people who were trying to protect the crowd, ran over a bike, and all without touching the brakes.

He created an intentional threat to human life using vehicular assault. An increasingly popular tactic of right wing extremists. The media reported that the cops were aware of the incident, had seen the video, and had chosen to do nothing of their own accord.

Second, on May 31st the comfort of the predominantly white Champaign community was disrupted in solidarity with nationwide anti-racism uprisings following the death of George Floyd. In this instance there was only a threat to private property. Yet 26 Black people were arrested and charged with felonies and are still suffering further white supremacist state violence through the threat of prison time

And finally, on good friday, when a community member was concerned that a neighbor had injured himself with an accidental gun shot and called 911, we saw how the police responded. All they seemed to hear from that 911 call was that there was a Black man with a gun, and they came armed for war. When a young woman got caught up in their excitement for violence, and responded poorly to being touched by an officer, they assaulted her, taunted her, and beat her. After which they handed her over to the jail where she was further assaulted multiple times with tasers. And finally our state's attorney took over to continue the violence. Choosing the path of felony prosecution and the threat of prison time, under which she is still suffering today.

I am not pointing out the stark difference in how police responded to these events as a call to further involve them. But I believe these differences speak to the roots of policing in our community. As highlighted in a panel discussion attended by both Mayors last week,



policing started as a way to uphold the systems of capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy. And at no point since have we been able to pinpoint a time at which reforms have fundamentally transformed this.

And so we see how even today challenges to these systems will still elicit the harshest police violence against our community members. On May 31 when property of the wealthy was at stake we saw police violence and felony prosecution. On good friday when a Black woman decided she didn't want to be touched by a cop, again police violence and felony prosecution. But on saturday, when protesters and Black life was threatened by white man, the police seemingly felt no pressure to act. The idea that the police provide public safety is a lie that we have stop telling ourselves. This is why we will fight to abolish them and build life affirming institutions instead.

If you understand the unjust nature of our system, I would ask that each of you call our state's attorney and demand the charges against Aleyah Lewis and the May 31 political defendants be dropped immediately.

Thank you.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT - 27 July 2020  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 3:14:08 PM

---

No connection has been documented between police presence in schools and increased student safety or academic performance. However, a connection has been documented between police in schools and an increased likelihood of being involved in the criminal justice system (the “school to prison pipeline”), especially for students of color. In addition, a number of incidents of shocking violence against students by police officers have been recorded in schools around the country—even for relatively minor offenses such as talking back or refusing to get out of a chair. (Did you ever do these things when you were in school? I did.)

With this in mind, I urge the Urbana public schools to removed armed police officers from UMS and UHS and replace them with support staff who have specific training in child and adolescent development, such as social workers and mental health professionals. Nobody is denying that there are problems with drugs and violence in our schools and that discipline needs to be maintained to create an environment conducive to learning. However, these real issues must be addressed in a way that doesn’t jeopardize childrens’ future.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Roth

[REDACTED]

Urbana

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Public Input-Request for a 6th Video Gaming Terminal  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 2:02:37 PM  
**Importance:** High

---

Honorable Urbana Council Members,

Please accept this correspondence as a request for the Council to review and consider allowing a sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) video gaming terminal within Urbana.

I am one of the owners of Emma's. We are located within Urbana Crossing, 114 N. Vine Street, near Schnucks. We have been open and operating since May 2015.

As I'm sure you realize, everyone involved benefits from the 6<sup>th</sup> machine by producing revenue for all parties.

The City of Urbana and the State of Illinois will benefit via increased tax and fee revenue.

The retailer will see an increase in revenue to help off-set the recently increased minimum wage, effective on both January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. The State of Illinois also increased the tax on video gaming effective July 1, 2019 and again on July 1, 2020.

The recent increases, mentioned above, coupled with the complete shutdown of the hospitality industry. The gaming industry went without ANY revenue for close to 14 weeks, over 25% of 2020.

Please consider this request, if you need any additional information please do not hesitate to ask. I'm sure my colleagues in the industry will also help with any needs the Council may have on this issue.

We will be present on tonight's meeting, during the public input section, if you would like to ask any questions.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Mike Thiessen, Partner  
Blackhawk Restaurant Group, LLC.

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Public Input for Monday, July 27th  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 3:45:56 PM

---

Good evening fellow community members,

Pre-arrest diversion programs attempt to reduce the harm inflicted by the criminal justice system on the community by providing law enforcement with an alternative option to arrest and booking. It also has been shown in models across the country to reduce both recidivism rates as well as costs associated with addressing community safety issues. I believe that a program like this in Champaign-Urbana, in the hands of the community, could prove integral in protecting the humanity and dignity of some of the most disenfranchised among us by providing them with solutions instead of just another problem.

I urge you to explore this option for our community and consider your support in moving it forward.

More information can be found at [leadbureau.org](http://leadbureau.org)

Additionally, I would be remiss if I did not use this time to echo the concerns of community members regarding moratoriums on evictions and utility shut-offs. It is entirely within your purview to advocate for your constituents, as a public body, by officially calling on state officials for indefinite moratoriums on both. Moreover, it is possible for you to at least investigate your legal authority in establishing and enforcing city-wide moratoriums. Your obligation to this community requires you to pursue both of these options if your focus is the health and safety of its most vulnerable families.

KEEP OUR LIGHTS ON

KEEP OUR KIDS HOME

CANCEL THE RENT

Thank you for your time,

Aaron Umbarger

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC INPUT - 27 July 2020  
**Date:** Monday, July 27, 2020 1:56:55 PM

---

The connection between academic underachievement and student involvement in the justice system needs to be highlighted and addressed; when students do not graduate from high school and obtain the skills to procure adequate employment, they are more likely to also be involved in the justice system at later stages in their lives.

What educational values and beliefs underpin a decision to have SROs in our schools? Policing was never meant to solve all problems.

School Resource Officers (SROs) do not have specialized training in adolescent or childhood development. They are not mental health experts, social workers with licensed degrees, psychologists, or school counselors. They are not educators. To be clear, school resource officers are career law enforcement officers, with arresting authority, and a license to carry a weapon (paid for by the school district). Police officers patrol school hallways just like they do city streets. There are better, safer, and cheaper alternatives.

We must end the Intergovernmental agreement with the Urbana Police Department and remove SROs from Urbana's public schools.

Respectfully,

**Janice A. Walker**

Former Teacher Aid/ Resource Personnel for Urbana School District 116