

**CITY OF URBANA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – Monday, November 26, 2018
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 400 SOUTH VINE STREET, URBANA, IL**

The City Council Committee of The Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, November 26, 2018, in the Council Chambers of the Urbana City Building.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Aaron Ammons; Bill Brown; Jared Miller; Dennis Roberts; Dean Hazen, Maryalice Wu; Charles A. Smyth; Diane Wolfe Marlin

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Eric Jakobsson, Ward 2

STAFF PRESENT: Carol Mitten, John Schneider, Lorrie Pearson, Kevin Garcia, John Collins, Bryant Seraphin

OTHERS PRESENT: Ben Chapman, Thomas Burgin, Nathan Poulosky, James Manrique, Elderess Melinda Carr; Rev. Dr. Evelyn Underwood; Bishop King James Underwood, Members of the Media

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

There being a quorum, Chair Aaron Ammons called the meeting of the Committee of the Whole to order at 7:00pm.

2. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

City Council Member (CM) Wu made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on November 13, 2018. CM Hazen seconded. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

3. **Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions.

4. **Public Input**

Ben Chapman and Nathan Poulosky introduced themselves as proponents of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) and provided a handout. They noted their endorsements, thanked those with whom they've met, and claimed local support for their cause. They noted the cities, the State of Maine, and countries as users of RCV. They referred to templates for how RCV is used and spoke of the benefits pointing out that Ranked Choice Voting is tested though used in different variants. They then took questions from the council.

CM Brown asked about the 50% threshold aspect of RCV and indicated his concern about what happens if this is not reached resulting in acceptance of someone from 2nd place winning via the ranked runoff. He stated that this is a hard sell for people and asked if the tradeoff is worth it. Discussion followed with Mr. Chapman viewing this as an asset as it forces candidates to get broader support so getting the 2nd choice appeals to broader range of people and provides protection from polarized candidates. Mr. Chapman gave an example, and explained how the lowest rank drops out and results in new percentages. He also noted that not voting down the ballot was upheld recently in court. In response to CM Wu, he further explained what happens when voters don't rank all the way down the ballot.

Questions and discussion of which local races as well as how RCV would apply to partisan and non-partisan elections followed noting the applicability for races with more than two

candidates. Mr. Chapman indicated that he would respond via email to several questions concerning mock elections, past elections that might have been impacted, and communities who have reverted to traditional voting methods.

CM Ammons, noting his new role as County Clerk asked how this would impact the process, the overtime costs, and the backend work that would need to be done thinking it would be an increase but wanting to discuss further.

Rev. Dr. Evelyn B. Underwood and Bishop King James Underwood did not wish to speak but wanted their concerns about the Dr. Ellis Subdivision sewer problems entered into the record.

Elderess Melinda Carr did not wish to speak, but asked that her concerns about the Dr. Ellis Subdivision sewer problems, equity, and historic impact be entered into the record.

5. **Presentations**

There were none.

6. **Staff Report**

John Collins, Public Works Operations Manager, presented the 2018-19 Snow and Ice Control Plan manual. He described the yearly update process such as adding a separate bike map as well as some new sidewalk crossing maps. He described the primary route redesign based on square feet of roadway which has resulted in better balance. He provide two new pages, a past winter summary as well as a draft flier called “Snow Tips”. Discussion of the timetables and the nuances of the policies followed noting priorities based on equipment limitations. He described the annual rotation through neighborhoods by year, the Business Districts, brick streets (which take more salt to treat), 16 residential, 4 cull de sac routes, and so on. He also provided photos Public Works activities including an end loader with winged blades and the new salt shed which was built in house. He ended his presentation by inviting council members to ride along.

In response to CM Wu, Mr. Collins explained the campus slow zone is where crews try to avoid depositing plowed snow on sidewalks. This work and placement of the snow is coordinated with the University of Illinois. Mayor Marlin noted that page 5 of the manual provides the neighborhood zone schedule which can be used to respond to the frequent resident question of “when will my street be plowed?” Mr. Collins added that there is technology for GPS tracking that informs the driver of what’s been accomplished and can also be shared online. The technology is expensive but is coming and currently being tested by Champaign.

CM Brown commented that the manual is detailed and provides valuable information for constituents. It was also noted that Landis Farm gets cleared when staff are doing Airport Road to minimize distance issues. That University and Cunningham Avenues are maintained by IDOT, and techniques for minimizing the inconvenience of snow being plowed into driveways were discussed.

7. **Ordinance No. 2017-01-004:** An Ordinance Disconnecting Certain Territory from the City of Urbana (2209 E. Perkins Road / Thomas E. Burgin II) [COW 01/23/2017; CCC 02/06/2017]

City Administrator Mitten provided initial background noting that annexation is one of the city’s strategies for increasing tax base to address the budget’s structural deficit and that there is strategic advantage of having this property for future annexations.

Planner Garcia summarized the staff memo noting the timetable of work related to this starting in December 2016. Following City Council action of returning this item to committee in January 2017, staff and Mr. Burgin were to discuss a new annexation agreement but none was reached so this item is still in committee. Mr. Garcia noted that the city is under no obligation to grant the disconnection, that it is completely discretionary, and that the property was in the

city when purchased. Mr. Garcia reviewed the negative impacts of a disconnection and summarized the disconnection request noting that there are other nearby properties that could eventually require new sanitary, adjacent developable land that could be annexed, and that it is in the best interest of the city financially to annex before actual development as this is less costly to the city. Mr. Garcia reviewed the map of properties currently in the city and those that would be annexed with a sanitary connection in the area of discussion. He also stated that the annexation agreement is in effect until 2029, the property is already in Urbana, the surrounding area is mostly single-family homes, and suitable for future annexation. He noted that new annexation agreements will have a stated prohibition on requesting disconnection within twenty years. Staff recommends that council deny the disconnection petition.

Questions of staff followed. CM Hazen asked if other properties would follow suit if the city were to allow this disconnection, setting a possible precedent. Mr. Garcia replied that not in this area but other parcels on the edge of the city could be subject to a disconnection petition. CM Hazen also asked about the future development potential of the adjacent farmland. Mr. Garcia noted that some of the property is platted and set up to be developed. CM Roberts noted the map of the Sanitary District facilities in this area, with Mr. Garcia and City Attorney Simon describing the intergovernmental agreement with the Sanitary District requiring annexation to or annexation agreement with the city for a property to connect to the sewer system.

Mr. Burgin provided a summary document to council members and explained when he bought the property as well as reviewing past council action. He described discussions with staff that involved a new annexation agreement that included his two other parcels. They were unable to reach agreement as he does not want to include the other two properties but is still willing to do this single property. He noted that this is the only parcel in the area that is in the city and that this is not his home address so he does not benefit from city services.

Mr. Simon and Planning Manager Pearson addressed the current annexation agreement noting that it runs through 2029 and is still a valid document. CM Wu asked for an explanation of a new annexation agreement. Ms. Pearson explained how the previous committee of the whole tried to come up with a compromise and the staff tried to do what is best for the city with a proposed new annexation agreement. Mr. Burgin again added that the new potential agreement added two other properties and that he is just trying to get all his property into the county. He reiterated that he was willing to bring the property back into the city when development occurs. CM Ammons stated his understanding of the current situation discussing with Mr. Burgin the communications and process of staff and council to date.

CM Miller asked what happens when the agreement ends to which Ms. Pearson noted that the property is already annexed and stays in the city but that the provisions of the agreement end. CM Miller made a motion to send Ordinance 2017-01-004 to Council with no recommendation, Seconded by CM Roberts. Discussion followed.

CM Brown noted the 2017 discussion of this matter, himself having voted to not send it forward to Council, but having been sent to council, was discussed some more, discussed with staff, and sent back to committee while staff discussed with the petitioner a trigger for annexation with development. He indicated that he was not likely to support disconnection noting that the county would have to accept this and possibly have a zoning hearing. Ms. Pearson indicated that she didn't know exactly what would happen but the property had been zoned CRE, and the city has annexed the street so that aspect would need to be resolved.

CM Hazen asked Mr. Burgin if there was any other reason except saving money on taxes. Mr. Burgin described an incident on the property, which was handled by the county, not the city. CM Wu indicated her hesitancy in making a change when there is no benefit to the City. Mr. Burgin stated that shortly after buying this property, the house next door came up on

foreclosure so he bought it and fixed it up as his residence. CM Roberts noted a similar situation in another development were council supported the city on the agreements that existed requiring annexation. CM Ammons indicated his empathy for Mr. Burgin's situation but that a decision in the best interests of the city had to be made.

With no further discussion, on a show of hands, the motion failed 0-6.

8. **Adjournment**

CM Ammons, noting his upcoming resignation from City Council effective November 30, 2018 to assume his new position as Champaign County Clerk, thanked former Mayor Prussing for nominating him, the former council for affirming that selection, and then the people of Ward 3 for subsequently electing him to City Council. He noted that he has learned much, that it is different sitting on this side of the table and that it is not easy. He stated that he really appreciated understanding how the city works and learning about best practices.

CM Ammons stated his belief that the Council Members are very caring and prepared, and he's been blessed to be part of looking at things deeply even in disagreement, has enjoyed his time on the council, and that city staff is excellent at performing their duties. He noted that we can all grow and develop more and noted the goals he's advocated for; contracts, equity and fairness in stops, and so on. He thanked his colleagues and indicated that there are 4 or 5 people who have expressed an interest in filling his council seat.

Mayor Marlin indicated that applications for the council seat will be available to the public Monday December 3 from the City Clerk or city web site.

CM Roberts thanked CM Ammons for his service on the council, for bringing up the concerns of the African American community, and indicating his hope that the city can continue making progress.

With no further business before the committee, Chair Ammons adjourned the meeting at 8:36 pm.

Charles A. Smyth
City Clerk

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

<https://www.urbanaininois.us/node/7329>

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

<http://urbanaininois.us/upty>

Minutes Approved: December 10, 2018