

CITY OF ROCK ISLAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

12/19/2022 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 6:46 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. This meeting will also be conducted by audio and video conference without the requirement of a physically present quorum of the Rock Island City Council due to the disaster declaration issued by Governor Pritzker.

3. Roll Call

Mayor Thoms asked City Clerk Samantha Gange to call the roll.

Present: Mayor Mike Thoms, Alderpersons Moses Robinson, Randy Hurt, Judith Gilbert, Jenni Swanson, Dylan Parker, Mark Poulos, and Bill Healy.

Absent: None.

Staff: City Manager Todd Thompson, City Attorney Dave Morrison, City Clerk Samantha Gange, and other City Staff.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Thoms led in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Moment of Silence

Mayor Thoms requested a moment of silence. A moment of silence was observed.

6. Public Comment

Mayor Thoms asked if anyone in the public would like to speak. No one volunteered in person or virtually.

Mayor Thoms announced the State of the City address will take place on January 9, 2023, at the combined Kiwanis-Rotary meeting at Noon and again during the City Council meeting that evening.

7. Minutes from the November 21, 2022 City Council Budget Session.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to approve the minutes as printed; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

8. Minutes from the December 12, 2022 City Council Meeting.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the minutes as printed; Aldersperson Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

9. Update Rock Island

Join the City of Rock Island as it celebrates the legacy of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Martin Luther King Center will host the 40th Annual Memorial Service and Awards Celebration in honor of Dr. King on January 16 from 10:30 a.m. to noon. KWQC TV6 news anchor Redrick Terry will emcee the event, with a keynote address by Quad Cities Chamber CEO Dr. LaDrina Wilson.

The King Center is requesting nominations for the "I Have a Dream" Award, which will be presented to a Rock Island citizen for exemplary community service and contributions made to the community. Nominations are due by January 6.

Kick off 2023 by picking up some great book bargains! The Rock Island Public Library will hold its monthly book sale on Tuesday, January 3 at the Southwest Branch library, 9010 Ridgewood Road, from noon to 3 p.m. Proceeds will benefit special library projects.

Bald Eagle Days returns to the QCCA Expo Center Bird and wildlife enthusiasts can flock to the QCCA Expo Center in Rock Island from January 6 thru January 8 to witness birds of prey from the World Bird Sanctuary of St. Louis and other live animal presentations.

Holiday closings Rock Island Public Libraries and City Hall will be closed Friday, December 23 through Monday, December 26. Libraries will also be closed Friday, December 30 through Monday, January 2. City Hall will be closed Monday, January 2.

10. An Ordinance adopting the budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2023. (Second Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

11. An Ordinance for the levy, assessment, and collection of property taxes for the City of Rock Island for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2023. (Second Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

12. An Ordinance for the property tax levy of the downtown Special Services Area (SSA), providing \$310,613.00 in property taxes for collection in the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2023. (Second Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 6-1-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: Gilbert. Absent: None.

13. Claims

- a. Claims for the week of December 2 through December 8, 2022 in the amount of \$796,967.96; for the weeks of December 9 through December 15, 2022 in the amount of \$945,827.44; and payroll for the weeks of November 28 through December 11, 2022 in the amount of \$1,584,984.38.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to allow the claims and payroll; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

14. Report from the Public Works Department regarding regarding a bid for consulting services to create a Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) for the City's two wastewater treatment plants, recommending a contract be negotiated with Geosyntec Consultants, Oak Brook, IL.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to award the bid and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents; Aldersperson Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

15. Report from the Public Works Department regarding a bid for yearly maintenance from 2023-2026 on six pump engines for the Wet Weather Treatment System, recommending the bid be awarded to Kraft Power Corporation, Gaylord, MI in the amount of \$182,493.54.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to award the bid and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

16. Report from the Public Works Department regarding a Local Agency Agreement and Resolution with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to make improvements to the pedestrian curb ramps on US-67 (15th Street) between 2nd and 5th Avenues.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the Local Agency Agreement and adopt the Resolution; and authorize the Mayor to execute the documents; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

17. Report from the Finance Department regarding bids for actuarial valuation services, recommending the bid be awarded to Lauterbach & Amen, Naperville, IL in the amount of \$23,380.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to award the bid for the fiscal years ending December 31, 2022 and 2023 with the option to renew annually through 2026; Aldersperson Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

18. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding a renewal of an intent to sell letter for Gorman & Company, Oregon, WI, setting the price for the entire Solomon Site at \$60,000 with a two-year term ending on December 31, 2025.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the new intent to sell letter subject to minor attorney modifications; authorize the City Manager to execute the letter; and authorize staff to negotiate a purchase agreement for future Council consideration; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Parker requested an update for the project. Community Economic Development Director Miles Brainard said there have been delays in the project due to the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) tax credit application changes. He said these tax credits are an important part of the funding for this project. Additional information is needed including site readiness and surveys for environmental remediation to reduce ponding.

Mr. Brainard said that Gorman & Company has been coordinating with the West End Renaissance Consultants to discuss working together. He said the project is still on track, but additional steps have been added due to the changes in the application process. He referenced packet materials and explained staff have finished acquisition of the lower block and Gorman will be utilizing additional time to shift the layout of their proposed development.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

19. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding an amendment to the Annual Action Plan, recommending the allocation of \$163,791.29 in remaining Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds be allocated to Friendship Manor, 1209 21st Avenue.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to approve the disbursement of the remaining CDBG-CV funds to Friendship Manor; and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a grant agreement; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Robinson asked if there was an application process for these funds. Mr. Brainard explained that these funds are COVID relief funds, and the City previously chose to disperse these funds as small business assistance grants. Funds were awarded to businesses who suffered losses related to the pandemic as operation costs. As required, 80 percent of the funds were dispersed in the first two years and staff received feedback from Council to wait until an additional need was presented. He said ARPA fund discussions prompted discussions of the remaining COVID funds.

Mr. Brainard said dispersing funds requires the demonstration of how the pandemic impacted and the more time passes the more difficult that will become. He said the City needs to expend these funds and someone has come forward who is able to demonstrate high levels of ongoing impact from the pandemic and can provide needed documentation to staff. He said there was not an application submitted rather an expression of strong interest.

Aldersperson Robinson asked how this entity was selected. Mr. Brainard said it is the only entity that has come forward in the last year that has been eligible. Aldersperson Robinson opined there would have been additional interest if businesses were made aware of available funds. He expressed concern due to the lack of a project proposal or application for funds. Mr. Brainard said staff will follow Council's direction for how funds should be dispersed. He said at this time staff are recommending this expenditure of funds as it is an eligible use of funds that can be clearly documented.

Aldersperson Hurt said he was also concerned that others were not given the opportunity to apply for available funds. Mayor Thoms said funds were previously dispersed to businesses through the Forward program. Aldersperson Robinson said distribution was paused and now the funds are being allocated. He said resources were not used to generate interest in available funds. Mayor Thoms said a recommendation can be made by staff and funds can be allocated by Council without the requirement of a formal application process available to all.

Aldersperson Robinson said a discussion should take place before items for expending funds are added to the agenda to protect staff and Council. Mayor Thoms said Friendship Manor is a major employer in the City and employees could be at risk if the agency does not receive support. Aldersperson Hurt said there is inconsistency with implementing application processes and acknowledged Friendships Manor's need. Aldersperson Robinson said he would like consistency with expending funds to assist small businesses.

Aldersperson Parker said this feedback was a fair critique and has been previously discussed with regards to Community Development Block Grant funds and staff are working to develop better processes like the Community Development Commission which is unfortunately not in place yet. He said staff is responding to Council's suggestion to develop policies and program manuals to avoid similar situations in the future.

Aldersperson Swanson asked the amount of funds that were initially available. Aldersperson Healy estimated roughly \$879,000.00. Mr. Brainard said he did not recall the original amount but that the proposed expenditure amount was roughly 20 percent of the total amount. Aldersperson Swanson asked how many businesses received funds during the initial two rounds of expending of funds. Mr. Brainard

said that he was not certain of the number but commended the City for expending funds as grants and the amount of funds expended to businesses when they needed it most. He said processes for expending this money differs from other funds due to the nature of the funds and the sensitivity in timeliness in expending them.

Aldersperson Swanson asked if Friendship Manor received these funds previously. Mr. Brainard said they did not. Aldersperson Swanson said she will vote yes due to Friendship Manor's continued restrictions for testing and masking, unlike any other business in Rock Island. She agreed that updated processes and required applications are necessary but that Friendship Manor has been disproportionately impacted due to continued mandates related to the pandemic.

Friendship Manor Marketing and Sales Director Heather Stancliff thanked Council for these funds as they have and continue to be impacted by the pandemic.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 6-1-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, and Healy. Nay: Robinson. Absent: None.

20. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department requesting approval to purchase the former Bear Manufacturing Building located at 2016 5th Avenue from Rock Island County for the purpose of future demolition and redevelopment of the site. (First Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to approve the purchase; authorize the City Manager to execute the purchase agreement; consider, suspend the rules and pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Gilbert said the City could potentially pay \$175,000 to \$200,000 in demolition costs due to the safety issues with the building. She proposed staff negotiate the purchase of such properties in the future for \$1 from Rock Island County instead of the county's frontage formula.

Aldersperson Parker asked about accessibility to the building since it was previously limited due to the City not owning the building. Mr. Brainard said that no one should enter the building since it has been deemed dangerous by the building official, and he deferred the question to the legal team. Mr. Morrison said alternative forms of access with the use of technology could be used such as a drone to avoid putting interested parties at risk. Mr. Brainard said 40 photos were included in the packet provided to Council that illustrate the condition of the building. He said 250 photos were taken and could be shared with potential developers.

Aldersperson Parker said he would like to ensure the opportunity is presented to the private sector. Mr. Thompson said the City would work with parties with legitimate interest in redevelopment of the property. Mr. Brainard said the goal is for the City to intervene in the cycle of abandonment and take steps to reintroduce the site to the private market.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

21. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department requesting the dissolution of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and the establishment of a Community Development Commission. (First Reading)

MOTION:

Alderson Gilbert moved to approve the dissolution of the Citizen Advisory Committee and establish the Community Development Commission; consider, suspend the rules, and pass the ordinance; Alderson Healy seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Mayor Thoms asked if the board members from the CAC automatically transition to the Community Development Commission (CDC). Mr. Brainard explained that the CAC ordinance was responsible for distributing gaming funds and is being replaced by the Community Development Commission. The new commission will be more broadly focused on the management CDBG funds, hold public hearings for the annual action plan, represent constituencies that benefits from those funds, give input to staff regarding programs and program performance. He said Council could task the commission with dispersing gaming funds if they become available and other similar tasks as Council sees fit.

Mr. Brainard said CAC members are invited to apply for appointment to the CDC and may be appointed by the Mayor if they meet the membership criteria. Alderson Swanson said this is a good opportunity for new commission members. Mr. Brainard said the CAC has not met since 2019. Clerk Gange responded affirmatively. Alderson Parker asked if existing members of the CAC have to apply regardless of their terms. Mr. Brainard said current members are invited to apply and follow the process for appointment to a commission. Alderson Gilbert asked if CAC members would have to meet the new requirements. Mr. Brainard said the CDC will consist of nine members and require three of the members to be of low to moderate income and six members to broadly represent non-profits and other agencies that focus on assistance low to moderate income residents.

Alderson Healy asked if applications are available online. Mr. Brainard responded affirmatively. Clerk Gange said announcements would be made by Community Engagement Manager Sarah Hayden to Facebook and the City's website with the application. Alderson Gilbert asked if former CAC members would be contacted. Mr. Brainard responded affirmatively and explained the purpose of bringing this to Council at this time was to allow for members to be established prior to the beginning of the annual action plan process. Alderson Parker asked if Council members were able to attend CDC meetings. Mr. Brainard said as a Commission of the City, it is a public body as defined by the Open Meetings Act and Council may attend.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

22. Report from the Fire Department requesting approval to allocate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the amount of \$106,690.77 for battery-powered extrication equipment.

MOTION:

Alderson Poulos moved to approve the allocation of \$106,690.77 of ARPA funds for battery-powered extrication equipment; Alderson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

23. Report from the Parks & Recreation Department requesting approval to allocate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the amount of \$600,000.00 for the new clubhouse at Highland Springs.

MOTION:

Alderson Hurt moved to approve the allocation of \$600,000.00 of ARPA funds for the Highland Springs Clubhouse project; Alderson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

24. ARPA Budget Adjustments

- a. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Rock Island Fire Department, increasing the ARPA Fund (248) expenditure budget for CY 2022 by \$106,690.77.
- b. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Parks & Recreation Department, increasing the ARPA Fund (248) expenditure budget for CY 2022 by \$600,000.00.
- c. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Parks & Recreation Department, increasing the ARPA Fund (248) expenditure budget for CY 2022 by \$254,967.47.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve budget adjustments a, b, and c as recommended; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

25. Report from the Human Resources Department regarding a General Wage Increase for unaffiliated employees.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to approve the General Wage Increase in the amount of 2.75% for non-affiliated employees; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 5-2-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Parker, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: Swanson and Poulos. Absent: None.

26. Report from the Mayor and City Clerk's office regarding a resolution to extend the moratorium on vape shops within the City through March 31, 2023.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to adopt the resolution as recommended; Aldersperson Gilbert seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Hurt asked how the extension date was determined. Mr. Thompson said this time frame would allow time for staff to conduct additional research to address Council questions. Mr. Brainard said the timeframe was delayed by one meeting cycle for the planning commission to receive feedback regarding additional zoning amendments and to allow for time to consult with Council for additional feedback.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

27. Other Business

Aldersperson Robinson said he is concerned about semi traffic on 7th street and 4th Avenue as previous traffic caused vehicle damages and wire damage, which warranted signs being posted to prohibit semi traffic on those roads. He said truck drivers are utilizing those streets as a short cut to Dohrn Trucking and residents have confirmed the trucks are not Dohrn Trucks but are making deliveries to them. He requested the City address this concern as the roads are being damaged. Mr. Thompson stated agreement.

Police Chief Richard Landi said he has been in communication with a resident regarding concerns of the narrow road way due to parking and was able stop a truck driver while visiting with her. He said adding an additional sign may have positive results. Chief Landi said drivers are following Google Maps and GPS which is contributing to the issue as well. Mr. Thompson said information could be provided to mapping services. Chief Landi said the problem is that the drivers are not utilizing truck specific GPS services. Aldersperson Robinson responded affirmatively.

Mayor Thoms said he has been making phone calls at Aldersperson Robinson's request for delivery services and those services were unlikely to be restored. Aldersperson Robinson asked what reason was given. Mayor Thoms said concerns of security but one of the owners he reached out to said he would consider it. He is attempting to reach the corporate office for another business since the decision to discontinue deliveries was made at the regional level.

Aldersperson Swanson asked if City staff have followed up with MetroNet services. Aldersperson Robinson reported there was an update on proposed construction during a meeting the previous week which still did not include the First Ward. He said there is not current timeline for when services will be established for the First Ward and that MetroNet plans to get back to Rock Island regarding the specific information in the signed agreement. Mayor Thoms said this has been a learning experience as the MetroNet representative worked to locate 75 work orders which identified an issue for their current processes.

Aldersperson Robinson said a link for signing up for services was shared and will be distributed to constituents. He said the service map consisted of the areas where services are currently being implemented. Aldersperson Poulos proposed the service link be shared via the Simplicity application. Aldersperson Robinson said the purpose of the service link is for MetroNet to assess the cost-effectiveness of implementing services outside of the agreed area. Mr. Thompson said the link will be shared and that constituents could sign up for notification when services are available at the website. Aldersperson Robinson said this is the same for Mediacom services. Mr. Thompson noted the concern that MetroNet would not provide services in certain areas regardless of persons signed up for services.

Aldersperson Parker asked what the agreement was with the City. Aldersperson Robinson said it is a 10-year franchise agreement. Mr. Thompson said the agreement is similar in nature to a franchise agreement but differs as it is regulated under state law and describes when and where specific services will be provided. He said the problem is that there are specific areas including, part of the west side that MetroNet is not obligated to provide services unless a number of people sign up.

Aldersperson Parker asked what enforcement mechanisms were in the contract for services. Mr. Thompson said the City is unable to identify how many people are signing up for services so they are unable to enforce expanding the service area. Aldersperson Gilbert asked if Rock Island was the first to sign a contract with MetroNet in the Quad Cities. Mayor Thoms responded affirmatively.

City Attorney Dave Morrison said the specific language in the agreement regarding persons interested in services within a certain distance of an area where services are provided could provide an opportunity to request specific services. City Attorney Hector Lareau responded affirmatively and said the difficulty is with effectively identifying the specific number of consumers seeking services within the specific distance of the service area.

Aldersperson Gilbert asked if the City could be notified so that the information could be tracked. Mr. Morrison said that if constituents can identify that they are within the specified distance to the trunk and have 10 interested consumers, the City would send notice to MetroNet to provide service. Aldersperson Robinson said this would be difficult in the west end of the City because there isn't a trunk in the area. He identified that the locations of the trunks are needed to organize consumer interests to expand the service area. Mr. Morrison said this would be a reasonable request of MetroNet. Mr. Thompson asked Mike Bartels if maps of the installed systems had been provided. Mr. Bartels responded they have not but they are anticipated to be received in the future.

Mayor Thoms said financial assistance programs are available if the rate of service is not affordable for consumers. Aldersperson Gilbert suggested the Community Engagement Manager Sarah Hayden share the information for requesting services.

Aldersperson Hurt thanked Rock Island First Responders for their attendance at the 20th Annual Police and Firefighters for Christmas shopping event.

28. Closed Session

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to go into Closed Session for the exceptions cited; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

29. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to adjourn until January 9, 2023; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Gilbert, Swanson, Parker, Poulos, Healy, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Meeting ended at 8:06 p.m.

Naomi Torrence_____

Naomi Torrence, Deputy City Clerk