

CITY OF ROCK ISLAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

1/23/2023 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 6:45 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 (virtual), 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

Tom Unley approached Council to address his concerns regarding Del's Metal. As the owner of Unley Marine and neighbor to Del's Metal, he has concerns regarding air quality due to the cutting and burning taking place. He said he has attempted to address this by calling the Fire Department and other agencies to no avail. Mr. Unley said Del's Metal is bringing in approximately 200 windmills over the course of the year, which they cut down with fluids still in them causing toxic smoke that makes it unbearable to be outside. He said he purchased an air quality meter due to his concern about what particulate matter he is breathing in. He said normal levels are 13 and below and he has recorded levels of 171, 192, and 202. He said the levels the previous Friday were 500, when the wind was blowing directly across from them. Mr. Unley said his customers were forced to cover their faces with their shirts because the air was hurting their throat and caused headaches and watery eyes. He said Del's Metal employees are wearing PPE equipment to protect their employees from the toxic fumes.

He expressed additional concern regarding Del's Metal recent purchase of property south of 18th Avenue which is obvious due to the amount of mud on the roadway. He said this causes burdens to area businesses due to the dust created and the debris trafficked onto other roadways. He is concerned that the property recently purchased will also become a junkyard. Mr. Unley said he is seeking support from the City to address the issues occurring. Alderperson Randy Hurt confirmed that Mr. Unley has been in contact with Community Economic Development Director Miles Brainard regarding his concerns. He said he received notification from the City in 2017 prohibiting the storage of anything on a non-approved surface which includes gravel. He said Del's Metal is putting 20-30 tractor trailers onto the new property without approved surfacing.

Rick Jackson, owner of Jackson Auto Body and Custom Paint, addressed Council regarding his concerns as a neighboring business to Del's Metal. He said he is concerned about air quality as smoke enters his shop from the cutting of metal which causes scratchy throats. He said tractor backhoes travel on the road which cause damage and shake the buildings as they travel. He shared concerns for safety because mud accumulates on railroad tracks that does not have crossing arms.

Mayor Thoms called Shannen Bunley, she was unavailable to speak.

Mark Chronister with Custom Covers addressed Council regarding concerns related to Del's Metal and the traffic of semi-trailers and a large forklift traveling on the road way several times a day. He said he has experienced headaches due to the fumes affecting the air quality at his shop and requested assistance from the City or the EPA to address it.

Barb Bernamer addressed Council regarding Del's Metal. She said she lives across from the property recently purchased by Del's Metal and has witnessed them pulling up trees on the property. She said she has also observed large machinery traveling on the roadway and causing damage to the road as well as the stacking of the semi-trailers. She said she is concerned about flooding with the removal of the trees from across the street.

Debra Bernaier addressed Council regarding concerns of the property recently purchased by Del's Metal as she also lives across the street. She said she is concerned about potential flooding as there has been flooding in the street in recent years. Ms. Bernaier said she is aware that Quad City Towing was required to follow guidelines with installing gravel and fencing. She said she is also concerned about the impact on the ground and the environment. She said there was supposed to be gravel installed when the dike was put in but was not put in at the time due to a lack of funding. She said she is concerned that the removal of the trees may negatively impact the levy and cause the flooding water to enter her home.

Shawn Wolking, the owner of Wolking Window Tinting, addressed Council regarding the air quality concerns created by Del's Metal. He said the issues with the fumes and the quality of the road have caused him to lose business, which is forcing him to consider relocating his business. He said the area used to be quiet but now the semi traffic shakes the buildings.

7. Minutes from the December 19, 2022 City Council Meeting Closed Session.

MOTION:

Alderperson Gilbert moved to approve the minutes; Alderperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

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

8. Minutes from the January 9, 2023 Study Session and City Council Meeting.

MOTION:

Alderson Hurt moved to approve the minutes as printed; Alderson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

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

9. Update Rock Island

The Rock Island Public Library has gone Fine Free in 2023 Late fines for Rock Island Public Library cardholders will become a thing of the past beginning with items checked out this year. Items still need to be returned and anything checked out in 2022 may still accrue late fees. The fine free policy does not include replacement costs or damaged items. Visit the Downtown library branch, the Southwest Library branch or the soon-to-open Watts-Midtown branch for all your library needs and programs.

Attention all Fifth Ward residents Alderman Dylan Parker is holding a Ward meeting at the Hauberg Estate, 1300 24th Street, on Monday, January 30th at 5:30 p.m. Free pizza will be served as Alderman Parker and City staff present updates on city business and opportunities. Members of the public are encouraged to ask questions and discuss matters.

Drink wine while contributing to a good cause Join the Rock Island Parks & Recreation Foundation for their upcoming wine tasting dinner and fundraiser on Thursday, February 2nd. With generous sponsorship by Dimitri Wine & Spirits, enjoy a fantastic dinner at the QC Coffee and Pancake House in Rock Island. Food will be paired with a themed wine. Register by Tuesday, January 31 by calling 309-788-9589. All proceeds benefit Rock Island parks for the betterment of our community.

Mayor Thoms announced item 20 would immediately follow Update Rock Island.

10. Presentation of the 2022 Bob Towler Memorial Residential Beautification Award.

Mayor Thoms provided background information of the award as an honor to Bob Towler through the recognition of a Rock Island resident for their exceptional attention to the overall property aesthetic of their home, thus beautifying our Rock Island community. Mr. Towler worked for the City of Rock Island for 26 years as the Chief Horticulturalist. He continually involved the community in public and private gardens as well as taught gardening classes. He was a founding member of the Rock Island Horticulturalist Club and of the Quad City Botanical Center, and an active member of the Beautification Commission. There were several nominations for the 2022 award. Mayor Thoms announced the recipients of the Bob Towler Memorial Residential Beautification Award were Bill and Tommi Crampton at 7916 9th Street West.

Mayor Thoms congratulated Mr. and Mrs. Crampton as he presented their award, and a photo was taken.

11. Presentation of the 2022 Commercial Beautification Award.

Mayor Thoms said the Commercial Beautification Award is a long-standing award that began in the 1980s. This award is to recognize a Rock Island organization or business for its outstanding landscaping exterior renovations or new construction. There were 14 nominees submitted for businesses that have helped to beautify their property, the surrounding neighborhoods, and our City. Mayor Thoms announced Holy Grinds Coffee Shop at 2409 11th Street as this year's Commercial Beautification Award winner.

Mayor Thoms congratulated Wholly Grinds Coffee Shop as he presented their award, and a photo was taken. Darryl Thompson thanked God, Brian Hollenback with Bridge Investments, Economic Development Manager Tarah Sipes, Mayor Thoms, Alderson Judith Gilbert and other Council members for their support.

12. Consent Agenda.

- a. Claims for the week of December 30, 2022 through January 5, 2023 in the amount of \$338,928.04, the week of January 6 through January 12, 2023 in the amount of \$599,563.55; and payroll for the weeks of December 26, 2022 through January 8, 2023 in the amount of \$1,618,436.62.
- b. International City/County Management Association (ICMA) claims for January 12, 2023 in the amount of \$32,404.73.
- c. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$21,750.00 to Environmental Dynamics International, Columbia, MO as part of the aeration diffuser maintenance contract.
- d. Report from the Public Works Department regarding the purchase of two (2) mobile column lifts through the Sourcewell cooperative contract from Steril-Koni, Stevensville, MD in the amount of \$33,378.52.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve consent agenda items a through d; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

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

13. Claims

- a. Claim - Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$152,415.54 to McClintock Trucking & Excavating, Inc. of Silvis, IL for repairs at multiple locations as part of the Water Service Repair (Project 2526) and Sewer Lateral Repair (Project 2564) programs.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to allow the claim; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Parker recused himself from the vote due to the nature of his employment.

VOTE:

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

14. Report from the Public Works Department regarding bids for the 11th Street (US-67) water main replacement project from 25th Avenue to 42nd Avenue (Project 2736), recommending the bid be awarded to Langman Construction, Inc., Rock Island, IL in the amount of \$2,714,501.30.

MOTION:

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

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Parker recused himself from the vote due to the nature of his employment.

Aldersperson Gilbert requested the City Manager identify funding for the shortfall rather than pushing projects into the future to remain on schedule with the Capital Improvement Plan.

City Manager Todd Thompson said alternatives are being considered to keep projects on track and the potential to utilize ARPA funds is being assessed.

VOTE:

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

15. Report from the Public Works Department regarding a request to extend the 2022 Sidewalk and Pavement Patching Program contract through 2023 with Centennial Contractors of the Quad Cities, Moline, IL for the amount of \$563,251.20.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve the extension of the contract through 2023 as recommended; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Parker recused himself from the vote due to the nature of his employment.

VOTE:

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

16. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding a renewal of the Arts Program Services Agreement with Quad City Arts in the amount of \$20,000.00.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to approve the adjusted agreement and direct the City Manager to execute the agreement; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

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

17. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding the single source procurement of the cultural liaison.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to approve the procurement of the liaison and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

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

18. Report from the Parks & Recreation Department requesting approval to allocate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the amount of \$200,000.00 for the lighting project on the multi-use sport field at Douglas Park.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the allocation of ARPA funds; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

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

19. Report from the Police Department regarding incentive bonuses for new police officer applicants and lateral entry applicants.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to approve the proposed incentive packages for police officer recruitment and authorize the Chief of Police to direct the disbursements of prescribed bonuses to new police recruits hired in CY 2023; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

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

20. Report from the City Manager regarding the appointment of Robert Graff as Fire Chief.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve the appointment as recommended; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

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

OATH OF OFFICE: City Clerk Samantha Gange administered the Oath of Office to Robert Graff, Fire Chief. Chief Graff thanked members of Council and said he is looking forward to serving the Rock Island Fire Department so that they can diligently serve the needs of the public.

Mayor Thoms congratulated Chief Graff and recognized the support of the fire department. A photo was taken.

21. Report from the Mayor's Office regarding appointments and reappointments to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Board and an appointment to the Police Community Relations Commission.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to approve the appointments and reappointments as recommended; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

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

22. Other Business

Alderson Robinson asked if Update Rock Island could include information from each Ward or if Other Business can be moved up in the agenda. Mayor Thoms said additional information could be added to the Update Rock Island.

Alderson Robinson shared concern about the residual smut as a resident of 6th Street. He asked if Del's Metal identified their use for the property when they purchased it. Mr. Brainard said property owners do not always verify with the City that they can do what they plan to do on their property. He said the properties along 1st Avenue are zones for light industrial junkyard or scrapping. He explained that if the area were zoned for higher intensity industrial district use, they would require authorization from the City. Mr. Brainard said that staff will be investigating and following up on the information that has been provided by other concerned citizens.

Alderson Robinson asked if Del's Metal needed to contact City staff. Mr. Brainard said a discussion is needed with the City Manager, legal team, CED, and other city departments to identify who is responsible for what type of enforcement. He said the zoning enforcement is within the CED department but that other issues such as the junkyard permit would require follow up specific to their operation. He said the environmental regulations require follow up with other agencies at the state and federal level if concerns are substantiated to their satisfaction.

Alderson Hurt requested staff members keep Council informed and thanked community members for bringing this issue forward to make the City aware of the severity of the issue.

Mr. Brainard said the Planning and Zoning Manager Tanner Osing collected contact information of citizens who voiced concerns if follow up is needed. He explained that partnership with the citizens is necessary for problems to be brought to staff's attention to be addressed.

Alderson Robinson said he was unaware of the process of contacting CED during a purchase of property. Alderson Poulos shared his observations from collecting water samples and the difference in the dirt from 1st street and 18th Avenue, which identifies the issue as occurring north of 18th Avenue. He opined he would like the City Manager, Public Works, and CED to work to address this issue for Unley Marine and other area businesses. Alderson Robinson said his concern is regarding the air quality for those in the surrounding area.

Mr. Brainard said there are a broad range of concerns that fall into a number of different categories. He said the most marginalized of the City's population is in the surrounding area and are deserving of action to mitigate concerns. Alderson Poulos said businesses in that specific area have achieved a neighborly connection with the exception of Del's Metal.

Alderson Hurt asked if construction has already begun on adjacent properties to enable staff to proactively address potential concerns. Mr. Brainard said a considerable number of trees have already been cleared and semi-trailer containers are being stacked to form a containment wall. Alderson Hurt asked if that could be stopped. Mr. Brainard said this is unlike a building where a stop work order could be issued but a citation could be issued under the zoning code if the action taking place does not comply with the zoning code. He reiterated that there are several municipal codes and applicable regulations which may require different types of enforcement to occur concurrently.

Mr. Thompson said he will work to coordinate addressing and prioritizing the range of issues presented at different locations that involve different departments and agencies. Alderson Poulos asked if there are hazmat concerns that Council should be aware of from the windmill motors and with which department that would fall under. Alderson Robinson said they also have the contract for the I-74 bridge and all of the beams have been going to their facility. Mr. Brainard said the issues still need to be defined and identify the responsible parties for them such as the health and welfare of the daycare. Mr. Thompson said that some of these issues may fall under the purview of both state and local bodies so staff will work to address them from all angles and engage the property owner.

Aldersperson Poulos asked what department within the City is responsible for the debris on 18th Avenue. Mr. Thompson said Public Works is usually responsible for sweeping the roads and keeping dirt off of them but if someone is creating an undue burden then it is a Code Enforcement issue. City Attorney Dave Morrison said matters concerning public safety on multiple levels warrant the necessity for the City to become involved to take steps to protect the public. He said if the evidence rises to a certain level, a temporary restraining order without notice can be implemented and a hearing is scheduled to determine it to be a preliminary or permanent injunction.

Aldersperson Poulos asked if surrounding property owners could report unsafe roadway conditions by submitting photos to Public Works or photos of the smoke in the air. Mr. Morrison confirmed that both of those could be reported by a neighbor for Code Enforcement. Mr. Brainard said a partnership between staff and adjacent property owners would be advantageous to collect evidence of reported concerns. Mr. Morrison encouraged residents to contact local and state representatives or their congress representative to inquire about their awareness of the issue and ask what can be done to address it. Mayor Thoms said it may be necessary to make the Railroad aware of the windmill motors as they are in close vicinity to the railroad. [inaudible speaking]

Aldersperson Healy thanked City staff that participated in the Unplugged event.

23. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to adjourn until February 13, 2023; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

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

Meeting ended at 7:42 p.m.

Naomi Torrence _____

Naomi Torrence, Deputy City Clerk