

CITY OF ROCK ISLAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

3/27/2023 - 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, Dylan Parker (virtual), and 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

Larry Hunter, Chief Executive Officer and Board President of the Pro Football Sports Museum thanked Council for the opportunity to speak. Mr. Hunter shared the mission of his organization and their readiness to move forward with building a museum in Rock Island. He requested to meet with the City Manager and the Mayor to discuss utilizing city owned property for the location of the proposed museum. Mr. Hunter opined the establishment would be the first of its kind in our city, state, and region and would support revitalization efforts for the City of Rock Island. Mayor Thoms encouraged Mr. Hunter to schedule a meeting to meet with him or the City Manager.

Mayor Thoms recognized the Boy Scouts Troop 258 in attendance to earn their citizenship and community badge and to learn about City Council meetings. He said several of the members are working toward their Eagle Scout rank and are seeking opportunities to complete civic activities with the City of Rock Island lead by Joe Gusse, a resident and architect in Rock Island. He thanked the troop members for their interest and participation.

Alderson Robinson congratulated Kristen Carr on her wonderful season with the University of Louisville. He said Ms. Carr is a Rock Island High School graduate and her achievement of being a part of the elite eight for the NCAA Women's Championship. Alderson Robinson also acknowledged Brea Beal as a Rock Island graduate and athlete competing in the tournament tonight.

7. Minutes from the March 13, 2023 Study Session and City Council Meeting.

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

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

8. Minutes from the March 13, 2023 Closed Sessions.

MOTION:

Alderson Gilbert moved to approve the two sets of Closed Session minutes; Alderson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

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

9. Update Rock Island

Join Rock Island Parks and Recreation for an Easter Egg Hunt or a Home Bunny Visit! The Spring Egg Hunt is this Saturday, April 1. The hunt is free, but children ages 3-10 will need to pre-register to attend. Hunt for thousands of colorful eggs in Lincoln Park beginning at 9 a.m. Register by calling (309) 732-PARK. Want to have a Home Bunny Visit? For a fee of \$35, the Easter bunny will scatter 20 eggs in your yard and stick around for a quick photo with you. Register by calling the Rock Island Fitness and Activity Center at (309) 732-7275.

For adults who want their own egg hunt with prizes The Hauberg Estate will host Bunnies, Baskets and Brews this Saturday, April 1. Check-in begins at 4 pm and the hunt begins at 5 pm. Hunt for 1,000 eggs hidden over four acres. Prizes include a 65-inch flat-screen TV, Apple Air Pods, and lots of prizes from local businesses. Tickets are \$40 in advance or \$50 at the door. Enjoy a taco bar, bunny photo booth and lots of Easter swag. Proceeds will benefit restoration and programs at the Hauberg Estate.

Free Leaf Collection Program The City of Rock Island is providing free leaf collection from April 10 through April 28. Free leaf bags may be picked up beginning Monday, April 3 at the Public Works Department, South Rock Island Township Office, Rock Island Township Assessor's Office, Highland Springs Golf Course and Saukie Golf Course. Residents must provide proof of Rock Island residence and are limited to 20 free leaf bags per day. Bags will be picked up by the City on normal garbage pick-up days.

10. Proclamation declaring April 6, 2023 as Junior Achievement Day in the City of Rock Island.

Clerk Gange read the proclamation. Mayor Thoms read his declaration. Dougal Nelson accepted the proclamation thanked the City Council, the Mayor and community members for their continued support. Mayor Thoms encouraged people to volunteer and support the Junior Achievement organization. A photo was taken.

11. Mayor Thoms will close the regular meeting and open a Public Hearing on a request from Muda Bruth, Karen Asian Market for a waiver of the signature requirement to secure a Liquor License at 4305 18th Avenue.

Mayor Thoms closed the regular meeting and opened the Public Hearing. He asked if anyone in the audience or virtually wished to speak for or against the request.

Muda Bruth addressed Council in support of obtaining and liquor license for her Karen Asian Market. She said she sent letters to her neighbors but did not receive a response from many of them. She said she also attempted to knock on their doors and many of them did not answer.

Mayor Thoms asked Ms. Bruth how long she has owned the Karen Asian Market. Ms. Bruth said she has owned the grocery store for three months.

Mayor Thoms gave members of the community the opportunity to speak in favor or opposed the liquor license being issued. No one volunteered to speak.

Aldersperson Hurt asked what the business hours would be. Ms. Bruth said 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Aldersperson Healy asked if they would be open Monday through Sunday. Ms. Bruth responded affirmatively.

Aldersperson Healy asked if the grocery store planned to sell beer, wine, and liquor. Ms. Bruth said that she will only sell beer. Aldersperson Healy asked Ms. Bruth how much of her business she anticipated would be beer sales. Ms. Bruth said she is uncertain since this is a new business.

Aldersperson Swanson asked if beer sold will be specialty Asian beer or beer available at other local grocery stores. Ms. Bruth said she will offer both options.

Mayor Thoms closed the Public Hearing, reopened the regular meeting, and entertained a motion.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to recommend to the Mayor/Liquor Commissioner to waive the signature requirement as requested; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Swanson expressed concern regarding waiving signatures for applicants when the applicants are missing more than ten signatures. Aldersperson Healy said he understands the liquor license process from both sides and that the process needs improvement. He said he genuinely believes that applicants are trying their best and is in support of improvements being made to make the process clearer for applicants.

Aldersperson Poulos clarified that Council was recommending a waiver for the signature requirement. Aldersperson Gilbert stated agreement with Aldersperson Swanson and said it is difficult to waive the requirement for signatures without having signatures verified, without dates on the petitions, and without the majority of the signatures acquired. Aldersperson Robinson said he waives the requirement because they are so difficult to obtain for various circumstances and stated agreement with Aldersperson Healy in making changes to the ordinance.

VOTE:

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

12. Consent Agenda.

- a. Claims for the week of March 3, 2023 through March 9, 2023 in the amount of \$644,822.22; week of March 10 through March 16, 2023 in the amount of \$796,351.81; and payroll for the weeks of February 20 through March 5, 2023 in the amount of \$1,593,960.58.
- b. ACH payments for the month of February 2023 in the amount of \$1,646,209.06.
- c. Purchase Card claims for the period of January 27, 2023 through February 27, 2023 in the amount of \$89,849.84.
- d. Report from the Information Technology Department regarding payment in the amount of \$23,089.78 (10% increase) to System Innovators, Chicago, IL for the iNovah System annual support maintenance contract.
- e. Report from the Information Technology Department regarding payment in the amount of \$18,000.00 to Harris GEMS of Chicago, IL for the software update assistance of the financial system.
- f. Report from the Public Works Department regarding bids for the Levee and Right-of-Way Mowing Contract, recommending the bid be awarded to Finer Finish Grounds Care, Newark, IL in the amount of \$83,000.00
- g. Report from the Public Works Department regarding bids for the Water/Wastewater Treatment Chemicals purchase for 2023, recommending multiple bids be awarded in the amount of \$1,010,568.00 for the purchase of chemicals for the water treatment plant and \$211,996.00 for the purchase of chemicals for the wastewater treatment plant.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve consent agenda items a through g; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

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

13. Claim - Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$77,163.62 to McClintock Trucking & Excavation, Inc. of Silvis, IL. for the Water Service Repair Program and the Sewer Lateral Repair Program.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt 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: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

14. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department recommending the approval of the project bids for the 1830 32nd Street Rehabilitation Project for all four phases.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to approve the bids and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Parker said he proudly supports this program which will eventually results in City staff applying for home funding from HUD and asked for an estimated timeline. Community Economic Development Director Miles Brainard said Moline and Rock Island are discussing becoming a consortia so that the cities can apply as a team. He said it may also be beneficial to pull in other smaller cities in the area to assist them.

Aldersperson Gilbert asked if there were any funds available to fund \$20-40,000 per home for needed improvements. Mr. Brainard said that CDBG income qualified household applicants receive assistance in the order in which they applied for services. He said often times not all homeowners in a particular area qualify for assistance and it would be difficult to complete improvements in one area at the same time.

Aldersperson Gilbert inquired about the HUD Home Program funds for 11th Street and said the Decatur, Illinois Housing Study recommended making improvements in a specific neighborhood or block at a time to make a larger impact. Mr. Brainard said this study stated housing assistance programs should be developed for targeted areas which could be achieved with different funding sources. He said CDBG funds are more limited and can be used for rehab and home funds are available for rehab and new construction. He said if funds were secured through consortia, he anticipates new housing development would be prioritized to infill vacant lots. Aldersperson Gilbert said the City of Rock Island should do more to support existing homeowners. Mr. Brainard responded in agreement.

VOTE:

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

15. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding a Special Ordinance requesting the transfer of the City's 2023 Home Rule Volume Cap to Quad Cities Regional Economic Development Authority (QCREDA). (First Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to consider the ordinance; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

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

16. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding the annexation of seventeen (17) City-owned parcels. (First Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to approve the annexation, subject to minor attorney modifications and consider the ordinance; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

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

17. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding a rezoning request from R-1 (one unit residential) district to C-2 (natural conservation) district for seventeen (17) parcels near the City's Southwest Area. (First Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to approve the rezoning request as recommended, subject to minor attorney modifications and consider the ordinance; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

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

18. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding a Resolution for the award of \$300,000.00 from the Illinois Housing Development Authority for the Home Repair and Accessibility Program.

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

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

19. Report from the Public Works Department regarding an amendment to the Motor Fuel Tax Resolution appropriating \$623,022.89 of Motor Fuel Tax funds for street maintenance in 2022

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

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

20. Report from the Public Works Department regarding the Motor Fuel Tax Resolution appropriating \$974,656.00 of Motor Fuel Tax funds for street maintenance in 2023.

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

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

21. Report from the Public Works Department requesting approval of \$24,000.00 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) revenue replacement funds for the Sunset Marina Marketing Analysis

MOTION:

Alderson Hurt moved to approve the allocation of \$24,000.00 in ARPA revenue replacement funds for the Sunset Marina Marketing Analysis; Alderson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

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

22. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Sunset Marina Marketing Analysis increasing the Sunset Marina Fund (541) revenue and expense and decreasing the General Fund (101) (ARPA Revenue Replacement) expense budgets for CY23 by \$24,000.00.

MOTION:

Alderson Hurt moved to approve the budget adjustment as recommended; Alderson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

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

23. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment increasing the General Fund (101) budget for CY 2023 by \$696,000.00 from the unused Motor Fuel Tax Fund.

MOTION:

Alderson Healy moved to approve the budget adjustment as recommended; Alderson Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

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

24. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Martin Luther King Jr. Center increasing the MLK Activity Fund (901) revenue by \$65,000.00 and expense budget by \$159,767.00 for CY 2023.

MOTION:

Alderson Robinson moved to approve the budget adjustment as recommended; Alderson Poulos seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Alderson Gilbert confirmed the information listed in the Finance memo and asked what grant was referenced by Mr. Jones. Finance Director Linda Barnes said the funds were from the John Deere Foundation and the revenue budget was \$195,000 of which \$140,000 was received. She said the expense budget for 2022 was \$207,000 and approximately \$39,000 was expended. Alderson Gilbert asked if all of these funds were from the John Deere Foundation Grant or John Deere Corporate. Ms. Barnes said the document listed John Deere Foundation.

Alderson Gilbert confirmed the revenue was \$65,000 for FY2023 and asked why the \$94,767 being carried over was not included as revenue. Ms. Barnes said Mr. Jones increased his expenses by \$159,000 of unused revenue and increased the revenue by \$65,000. Alderson Gilbert asked why the

revenue and expenditures were not balanced exactly. Ms. Barnes said that more revenue was received and less funds were expended than anticipated.

Aldersperson Gilbert said the grant funds in the amount of \$94,767 to be carried over were not included in the motion for the budget adjustment in terms of revenue. Ms. Barnes said it would be beneficial to reevaluate the memo presented.

Aldersperson Gilbert made a motion to table the item until April 10, 2023; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

Attorney Morrison said the motion to table takes precedence and is non-debatable so it would need to be voted on before the original motion.

VOTE:

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

25. Report from the Mayor's Office and General Administration regarding a Resolution issuing a moratorium on all new Class A, B, C, D, and E liquor license applications for a period of six (6) months, expiring September 30, 2023.

MOTION:

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

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Swanson said this resolution will help to clear up confusion. Mayor Thoms said the ordinance was effective at one time but an in-depth review is needed. Attorney Morrison clarified that pending applications will be unaffected as the moratorium is for new applications. Aldersperson Healy said he is in support of needed changes. Clerk Gange said the Council may still receive requests for signature waivers for classes of liquor licenses that are not included in the moratorium.

VOTE:

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

26. Report from the Mayor's Office regarding the appointments to the Rock Island Downtown Alliance (RIDA).

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve the appointments as recommended; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

DISCUSSION:

Aldersperson Healy said there is a lot of work to do and he is looking forward to seeing the work as a property owner contributing to the SSA.

Mayor Thoms said Jack Cullen was absent due to illness. He said the City posted notices for receiving applications and he personally talked with everyone who completed an application. Of the 28 applications received, two applicants were ineligible as they were not within the district. Mayor Thoms said they discussed the role of board members, fiduciary responsibility, and the needs of the SSA. He said appointed members are diverse in their ownership of business, property, and residence as well as

their professional background. He said appointed members include individuals that were a part of the Downtown Steering Committee and individuals that were not initially in favor of the SSA. Mayor Thoms recognized appointed members in attendance of the meeting. He thanked participants for contributing their time, experience, and effort to support the SSA and said he looks forward to the progress for the area.

VOTE:

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

27. Report from the Mayor's Office regarding appointments to the Arts Commission and Beautification Commission and reappointment to the Fire and Police Commissioners Board.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to approve the appointments and reappointment as recommended; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

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

28. Other Business

Aldersperson Swanson said she has spoken to the Fire Chief regarding constant recreational burning in Ward 4. She said this creates issues for other residents who cannot spend time outdoors due to the smoke causing issues with breathing during activities such as lawn care. She said she is eight blocks away and can smell the smoke at times. Aldersperson Swanson asked if the City Manager and the Fire Chief could work with staff to identify potential changes to the burn ordinance to help residents affected by the persistent burning and smoke. City Manager Todd Thompson said he would work with the Fire Chief to address this issue.

Chief Graff said this has been a contentious issue through the 25 years he has been employed with the City. He said initially the ordinance was open and when limitations were set for certain days, it became confusing and created weather related issues. He said the volume of calls has decreased dramatically since Public Works offers leaf bags and pick up. Chief Graff said complaints have become isolated incidents and staff would compare our ordinance with other area cities. Aldersperson Swanson said the individuals are burning firewood which is unnecessary all day, all night, and all summer long. Aldersperson Gilbert stated agreement and said this greatly impacts residents with breathing issues and limits residents to their homes.

Aldersperson Poulos reported concerns with rental properties not maintaining their properties and are often accumulating trash and asked if this could be monitored and addressed by staff. Mr. Brainard said City Inspectors will investigate specific properties and encouraged everyone to send addresses of complaints be forwarded to CED staff. Mayor Thoms said that there are delays of a few weeks from a complaint to action taken due to backlogs for bulk pick-ups. Attorney Morrison said a notice is sent out to abate the nuisance which allows a period of time for them to address the reported nuisance. If the items are not cleaned up within that period, the owners then appear in MUNICIPALITIES. He said the process takes time but encouraged individuals to report concerns to CED staff so that they can work to rectify the concerns.

Mayor Thoms said that there are properties that are not registered as rental properties within the City as well. Mr. Brainard said one of the primary objectives for the Building Official is to increase the number of building inspections to address issues. He encouraged Council members to report problems to CED staff so that problems can be addressed and staff can keep Council abreast of the process of enforcement.

Alderson Poulos said there are ongoing issues with garbage on business property even though business owners attempt to keep the roadway clear. Attorney Morrison provided an example of his experience. Mr. Brainard said equipment is available through the Beautification Commission if folks would like to organize a neighborhood cleanup event. He said Public Works can assist with picking up bags at a predetermined location for larger cleanup events as well. Alderson Parker said geographic areas can receive services such as garbage pickup as well.

Alderson Gilbert said she would like to remind residents that a week from tomorrow, April 4, 2023, is election day for municipal elections, the Rock Island-Milan School Board, and the Black Hawk College Board of Trustees.

Alderson Hurt asked for an update on progress for addressing signs for mattresses and diabetic test strips throughout the city. Mr. Brainard said that he contacted the mattress company and they stated they were not aware that they needed permission from private property owners to post their signs. He said that the signs may need to be picked up on a continuous basis and encouraged property owners to remove signs that they do not wish to have on their property.

Alderson Hurt opined there should be an alternative solution since these signs are creating a burden for Public Works staff. Alderson Gilbert suggested amending the sign ordinance. Mr. Brainard said citations could be issued but that there would likely continue to be businesses putting up signs. Attorney Morrison said commercial speech is the least protected form of speech and proving these signs were posted with the approval of the business is difficult and explained the process of obtaining a judgement and collecting on it. Alderson Hurt said his biggest concern are the signs posted on poles that are difficult to remove. Attorney Morrison said this can be addressed with the existing ordinance for defacing public property. City Manager Thompson said staff will continue to address this issue and that it is challenging.

29. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION:

Alderson Poulos moved to adjourn until April 10, 2023; Alderson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

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

Meeting ended at 7:49 p.m.

Naomi Torrence _____

Naomi Torrence, Deputy City Clerk