CITY OF ROCK ISLAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
City Hall
1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

7/22/2019 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Mayor Thoms asked the City Clerk to call the roll.

Present: Mayor Mike Thoms, Alderman Dylan Parker, Alderman Mark Poulos, Alderman Dave Geenen, Alderman Randy Hurt, Alderman James Spurgetis, and Alderwoman Jenni Swanson

Absent: Alderman Ivory D. Clark

Staff: City Manager Randy Tweet, City Attorney Dave Morrison, City Clerk Judith Gilbert, and other City staff

3. Pledge of Allegiance

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

4. Moment of Silence

Mayor Thoms asked for a moment of silence. A moment of silence was observed.

5. Public Comment

Doug Womack, Rock Island resident, said his neighborhood (Habitat Park) created a Neighborhood Watch on July 15. They would like Council’s approval and support. Kevin Richardson, neighbor, related their concerns for their neighborhood: lack of adequate street lighting, need for tree trimming, a 4-way stop on 8th Street and 9th Avenue and or speed bumps (something to slow the traffic down), and filling of potholes in their unpaved alleys. Alderman Hurt asked where their neighborhood is. Habitat Park is between 9th and 11th Avenues and 8th Street. Mr. Richardson said abandoned houses in their neighborhood are attracting all kinds of bad elements including children who are playing in them. They would like more demolition of vacant homes. They asked Council to look into these issues and address them. City Manager Randy Tweet pointed out Chandler Poole to talk to about the abandoned homes and Mike Bartels from Public Works for their other issues. Alderman Poulos applauded the neighbors for
forming the neighborhood watch and encouraged them to work with the Police Department to make their neighborhood safer. Mayor Thoms thanked the neighbors too.

Mr. Womack brought up the recent sprinkler ordinance for all new residential housing. He said Habitat for Humanity hasn’t built a home since the ordinance was passed. Mayor Thoms said Habitat has built one with sprinklers. Alderman Geenen stated Habitat worked with the City to mitigate the additional costs. Mayor Thoms added there is another Habitat home underway.

Kevin Matter, Rock Island resident, said his street is a brick road. He was told that a variance was granted for semi trucks to drive down the street for deliveries. Mr. Matter said there are two big potholes in the street. He asked for the ordinance to be revoked and for the trucks to use 31st Avenue for deliveries. Mr. Matter also said the property next door to him has become a mess. Mr. Tweet said they will look into the issue of the neighbor’s property; he also referred Mr. Matter to Mr. Bartels for the potholes. Mr. Tweet said they will look into the issue of the semis.

Tim McGuire, Rock Island resident, gave his views on Council’s expenditures that have been in the media and discussed by Council. He doesn't understand what the issue is or why they are spending so much time on the topic. He recommended the City charge for parking in the downtown parking garage.

6. Minutes of the July 8, 2019 meeting.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to approve the minutes as printed; Alderman Parker seconded.

VOTE:


7. Minutes of the Executive Session of July 8, 2019.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to approve the Executive Session minutes; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:


8. Update Rock Island by Mayor Thoms

Starlight Revue – Lincoln Park and the City’s Parks and Recreation Department will continue its concert series this Tuesday, July 23, 2019 with Crooked Cactus Band. Dance lessons will start at 6:30 p.m. with the concert at 7:00 p.m. Hy-Vee Grill will provide food and drink for purchase starting at 5:00 p.m. For event status, please call (309) 732-7246 in case of inclement weather.

Outer Space Escape Room – Registration in the free Outer Space Escape Room is free and open to teens ages 12 to 18, and adults. The event takes place from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 23 in the Rock Island Downtown Library community room, 401 19th Street. Escape rooms are live-action team-based games that challenge participants to solve a series of
clues, puzzles, or tasks needed to accomplish a mission in a limited time frame. In the Rock Island Library’s game scenario, participants will have 30 minutes to find the clues in the room, open the boxes, and solve the mystery of how to escape the planet. Teams who succeed will get home to earth, and avoid being lost in space. To register for the free event, sign up at the Rock Island Library website, www.rockislandlibrary.org, or call 309-732-READ.


City Clerk Judith Gilbert read the proclamation. Marisa Cantu, Community Education Advocate with the IL/IA Center for Independent Living, accepted the proclamation. She thanked the City of Rock Island for recognizing the ADA legislation. She invited everyone to attend their annual ADA block party on Friday, July 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. A picture was taken with Mayor Thoms.


City Clerk Judith Gilbert read the proclamation. Ethel Bassett, Community Caring Conference board member, invited all of the neighborhoods to come out for the National Night Out event the evening of August 6. They will have food, face painting, and a tug of war with the Police Department. They want neighborhoods to work with the police officers. The event is at upper Longview Park. Mattie Seward, CCC board member, said they would like the City to join them for the event. Mayor Thoms thanked Community Caring Conference for all they do. A picture was taken with Mayor Thoms.

11. A Special Ordinance establishing two (2) handicapped parking spaces in front of Rocky Field House at the bus stop location on 25th Avenue.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to consider, suspend the rules, and pass the ordinance; Alderman Hurt seconded.

VOTE:


12. A Resolution adopting an internal operations policy on Council pay and expenses.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to adopt the resolution; Alderman Hurt seconded.

Aldermanwoman Swanson gave a few comments. She stated while the policy is not ideal, it is progress. She added it’s the discretion and choice of each alderman how they choose to spend their funds for their ward; they do not have to spend all of the money budgeted. She asked residents to hold their alderman accountable for their spending including herself.

VOTE:


13. Claims
a. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment #2 in the amount of $85,095.00 to Putnam County Painting, Inc. of Mark, IL for the Ridgewood Water Tower Rehabilitation Project for services provided from June 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019.

b. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of $67,500.00 to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency of Springfield, IL for NPDES permit fees for the Mill Street Wastewater Plant and the Southwest Wastewater Plant.

c. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of $73,017.99 to the Illinois Department of Transportation of Springfield, IL for the 38th Street Resurfacing: 7th Avenue to 46th Avenue Project.

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to accept the reports and authorize payment as recommended for Claims items a through c; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

VOTE:


d. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment #1 and final in the amount of $42,907.18 to Langman Construction, Inc. of Rock Island, IL for the 12th Street Sanitary, Between 3rd Avenue and Alley to the North Project for services provided from June 24, 2019 through July 2, 2019.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to accept the report and authorize payment as recommended; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

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

VOTE:


14. Claims for the weeks of July 4, 2019 through July 11, 2019 in the amount of $1,554,292.08 and July 12, 2019 through July 18, 2019 in the amount of $355,600.38; and payroll for the weeks of July 1, 2019 through July 14, 2019 in the amount of $1,573,221.42.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to allow the claims and payroll; Alderman Parker seconded.

VOTE:


15. ACH payments for the month of June 2019 in the amount of $5,037,853.10.
MOTION:
Alderman Parker moved to approve the ACH payments; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

16. Purchase Card Claims for the period of May 27, 2019 through June 26, 2019 in the amount of $57,070.68.

MOTION:
Alderman Hurt moved to approve the purchase card claims; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

17. Report from the Information Technology Department regarding the purchase of the HPE Nimble shared storage system from IT Savvy of Chicago, IL utilizing the State of Illinois Master Contract in the amount of $34,788.01.

MOTION:
Alderman Parker moved to approve the purchase as recommended; Alderman Geenen seconded.

VOTE:

18. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding bids for the demolition of one commercial property, recommending the bid be awarded to the second lowest bidder, McAdams Inc. of Rock Island, IL, in the amount of $80,118.50.

MOTION:
Alderman Spurgetis moved to award the bid as recommended and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

Alderman Parker recused himself from the vote due to his employment.

VOTE:

19. Report from the Public Works Department regarding bids for the MFT Funded 11th Street Lighting Repairs Project, recommending the bid be awarded to Precision Utility Dynamics Corporation of Oswego, IL in the amount of $97,147.00.
MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to award the bid as recommended and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

VOTE:


MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to adopt the amended resolution as recommended; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:


MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to adopt the resolution as recommended; Alderman Poulos seconded.

Discussion followed. Alderman Spurgetis noted that it is an increase of $135,890 over last year's MFT funds.

Alderman Parker asked if it is a request from DOT and asked about the increase from last year. Public Works Director Mike Bartels responded the 2019 funds are just an estimated request. It is an annual request for what they think they are going to use. He explained they amend the resolution the following year to the exact amount of MFT funds used. He added some funds carry over from year to year. They are holding funds for residential street reconstruction in 2020.

Alderman Geenen asked if they purchased more salt last year. Mr. Bartels replied they did; approximately 1500 more tons. He explained the cost in the resolution is an estimate ($90/ton). They won't know until October how much salt will cost.

Alderman Swanson asked if the MFT funds were coming from the $0.19 gas tax increase. Mr. Bartels responded it is not coming from the increase. These are just the MFT funds they currently receive. There has been no update yet on how the funds from the new gas tax increase will be distributed. Alderwoman Swanson asked for confirmation that residents who buy their gas in Rock Island are helping to repair the streets in Rock Island. Mr. Bartels said that is correct.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 6-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Hurt, Spurgetis, and
22. Report from the Finance Department regarding pension assumptions for the Firefighters Pension Fund and the Police Pension Fund.

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to approve the pension assumptions as recommended; Alderman Spurgetis seconded.

Finance Director Stephanie Masson spoke about the last agenda item. She said there is a separate fund for the gas tax distributions the City receives from the state. Those funds are used for the expenditures in the resolution. It reimburses the General Fund for the expenditures. There is a complicated state formula for calculating the municipal portion of the gas tax. She said it will go up a little bit.

Ms. Masson explained they are asking for approval of the pension actuarial assumptions. Mr. Heath Merlak from Nyhart reviewed the assumptions at the July 8 study session. The change in the assumptions began in 2018. The City is required to do an actuarial study every five years. The City is incrementally making changes. The Illinois Department of Insurance did a study in 2017 and the City had to make more changes. Ms. Masson reviewed the detail of the pension assumptions and the action steps the City is taking. She also stated the City made a change from funding 100% by 2041 to 90% by 2041 as allowed by the state.

Alderman Parker asked if it was a fair summary that the City is changing formulas so there will be enough funds to pay retirees to reflect the reality. Ms. Masson replied yes; it reflects more accurately the liabilities the City has with the pension funds. She added the City should be making improvements for funding. Alderman Parker said the market reality is the funds won't make 12% so the City must make sure the pension funds are funded. Ms. Masson said it is the City's responsibility to do that.

Alderman Poulos recused himself from the vote because he is a pensioner.

VOTE:


23. Report from the Traffic Engineering Committee regarding a request for the removal of the handicapped parking space at 1212 9th Street.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to approve the request as recommended and refer to the City Attorney for an ordinance; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:


24. Report from the Mayor regarding an appointment to the Rock Island Housing Authority Board.

MOTION:
Alderman Geenen moved to approve the appointment as recommended; Alderman Poulos seconded.

Dytanya Robinson is being appointed to the Rock Island Housing Authority Board. Alderman Hurt said it is a great choice. Alderman Poulos said he has worked with Officer Robinson for many years and commended her; he said it is a phenomenal appointment to that position.

Alderman Parker asked if the person’s name could be included in the agenda item especially when there is only one name. City Attorney Dave Morrison said it is public knowledge so he does not see any harm. It would be up to the Clerk.

VOTE:


25. Report from the City Clerk regarding an Activity / Event application from Quad Cities River Bandits to hold their Race to Home 5K event on Saturday, September 7, 2019 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and a Resolution authorizing the temporary closure of the easternmost northbound lane of Highway 67 (Master Sergeant Stanley Talbot Memorial Bridge) to 2nd Avenue and IL Highway 92 from 16 1/2 Street to 18th Street.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to approve the event as recommended and adopt the resolution; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

VOTE:


26. Report from the City Clerk regarding a request for sound amplification from Mike Thoms on Saturday, August 17, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. for a wedding reception at 4205 14th Street.

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to approve the request as recommended; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:


27. Other Business

Alderman Spurgetis said he received an email regarding graffiti in various places around the city; he knows the police have a list. He would like to know what is happening with the removal of the graffiti. Mr. Tweet responded he can give him an update tomorrow once he knows the locations. Alderman Poulos said the Police Department is aware of many of the locations; he asked residents to contact either the Police Department or the City Manager regarding new graffiti. Alderman Parker asked about the updated graffiti ordinance to abate quicker. Mr. Tweet said the
ordinance allows City crews to abate the graffiti. He said there hasn't been any tagging in awhile. Alderman Poulos asked if the abatement was just for public property. Mr. Tweet responded the City can abate on private property too after proper notification to the property owner.

Mayor Thoms said he attended an Immigrants Entrepreneurs seminar this weekend which was very interesting and there was a good sized crowd. Alderman Geenen also attended and said it was well received and there were great ideas.

Alderman Poulos and Mayor Thoms attended the Moline City Council meeting last week to learn more about how Moline does things. Mayor Thoms also attended the Davenport Meeting of the Whole at the invitation of Mayor Klipsch. Mayor Thoms encouraged people to go to other meetings.

Alderman Poulos reached out to the Parks Department regarding a situation in a City park; he said the matter was rectified almost immediately. He also reached out to the Police Department regarding an issue with a constituent and Deputy Chief Foy reported to Alderman Poulos they are working on the matter. He offered kudos to both departments.

Alderman Geenen thanked Mayor Thoms for his support regarding the 2020 Census. Alderman Geenen reported that the Census Bureau said Rock Island has the first Census committee out of all of the Quad Cities communities. He thanked Mayor Thoms for taking the leadership on that. Alderman Geenen said the Census will be here in nine months.

28. Motion to Adjourn

MOTION:

Alderman Parker moved to adjourn; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:


The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Judith H. Gilbert, City Clerk