
DATE: Monday, June 16, 2025
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, June 16, 2025, at 8:55p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: DeShawn Williams, Mayor; CM Maryalice Wu*, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey, CM Jaya Kolisetty*, CM Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Seok Hyun Cho, Demond Dade, Elizabeth Hannan, Don Ho, Larry Boone, Matt Roeschley, Dave Smysor, Vince Gustafson

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chair: *Maryalice Wu, Ward 1*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Chair Quisenberry, due to CM Wu attending remotely, called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:55p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

a. 05-27-2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Wilken.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

Chair Quisenberry stated the staff report item “Human Resources Staffing” presented by the Human Resources & Finance Department will be replaced with an update from the Legal Department regarding the OSF consolidation announcement.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Isabel Osorio shared her personal experience being sexually assaulted by her former boss and spoke in support of instituting sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention trainings to protect vulnerable members of the community. Expressed gratitude to the community of

Urbana for helping her survive through traumatic events. Called for Council and the community to prioritize the protection and care of survivors of sexual assault. **Adam Nichols** asked for clarification on the disparity between expenditure amounts for FY25 and FY26. Requested Council to not approve regressive taxes, balance the budget, and implement progressive taxes. **Deborah Hollenberg** called for further consideration to be given toward treating people who are disabled in our community with care, dignity, and respect. Reminded the public that disabilities exist visibly and invisibly as people with chronic health conditions deal with the issues internally. Pointed to how prevalent disabilities are by highlighting the number of people in the audience wearing glasses or contacts to correct their vision. Requested funds be put toward social services and addressing material needs of the community to prevent crime. **Gweneth Crepsio** questioned why armed police officers are being sent to resolve nonviolent calls for service that require de-escalation. Stated weapons inherently do not contribute to the de-escalation of conflicts. Urged Council to carefully consider how they will put funds toward improving public safety. **Sean Womack** voiced support for the 1% Grocery Tax and opposed the addition of staffing to the Urbana Police Department (UPD). Stated the revenue from the tax should go toward developing affordable housing and services for the community. Stated solutions to broad community issues can be developed in collaboration with the community.

Written Public Input in opposition to the proposed additions to the Urbana Police Department in the FY26 Budget and the continuation of the 1% Grocery Tax were received from the following individuals and read by Council: Don Owen, Sana Saboowala, Sam Ehlinger, Berry Zhang, Alen Romero, Reverend Dr. Evelyn Underwood & Bishop King James Underwood, Claire Johnson. Written Public Input in support of Community Engagement Officers was received from the following individual and read by CM Quisenberry: Darleen Bailey. Written Public Input in opposition to the proposed additions to the Urbana Police Department in the FY26 Budget were received from the following individuals but were not read: Carol Inskeep, Kelsey Langley, Jamie V. Ryan. Written Public Input in support of the proposed additions to the Urbana Police Department in the FY26 Budget was received from the following individual but was not read: Kanittha Fay.

4. Staff Report

a. Additional City Arborist / Arbor Supervisor – PW

Presented by Vince Gustafson, Deputy Director for Operations. Vince Gustafson stated the Public Works Department is requesting a new full-time position to assist with City Arborist responsibilities and the business management aspects for the Landscape Recycling Center (LRC). Provided an overview of the Mayor/Council Goals regarding upkeep of Urbana's urban forest and how those goals are being met by the Public Works Department.

Provided an overview on former management structures for the LRC and Arbor Division, noting its consolidation from three employees to its current 1.2 employees. Stated the current Arbor/Landscape/LRC Supervisor/City Arborist has been with the City for 28 years and Public Works is now in the process of developing succession planning. Stated the current supervisor position has an excess of responsibilities for a single position and the maintenance of essential services will require revising that position. Proposed the Arbor/Landscape/LRC Supervisor/City Arborist position be divided into a supervisor position for the Operations Division and a City Arborist/LRC Manager position. Stated the additional position will require \$104,550 in recurring expenses for salary and benefits. Questions and discussion followed.

b. Legal Division Staffing – Exec

Presented by Matt Roeschley, City Attorney. Provided an overview of recent staffing structures for the Legal Division. Stated the personnel during his tenure has consisted of one Paralegal, one Administrative Assistant, and a temporary part-time Administrative Assistant. Stated after becoming more familiar with how the Legal Division supports City functions, it was determined that additional staffing is required in the form of a part-time Administrative Assistant (0.5 Full-time Employee, FTE) and a new Law Clerk position (0.25 FTE).

Stated the Law Clerk position would ideally be a law student working hybrid/remote conducting legal research and assisting with large, long-term projects. Stated if approved, the hiring of the position would take place during the school year beginning around the late summer and early fall 2025 time. Stated the position would support the City Attorney and Assistant City Attorney, noting the Assistant City Attorney position is currently fulfilled by an outside legal counsel.

Stated the part-time Administrative Assistant would provide support for the City Attorney and Paralegal through document management, calendar management, and various office support functions. Stated the current full-time Administrative Assistant is occupied by managing the City’s court prosecution work and providing civil litigation support. Stated the position would be ideally filled by the fall to early winter 2025.

Stated the Law Clerk position at 0.25 FTE is an additional \$10,765 in recurring expenses and the part-time Administrative Assistant at 0.5 FTE is an additional \$41,596 in recurring expenses. Stated the positions would enhance customer service, productivity, and responsiveness. Questions and discussion followed.

c. ~~Human Resources Staffing – HRF~~

Item removed during Additions to the Agenda by Chair Quisenberry.

d. Update on OSF Consolidation – Exec

Item added to the agenda during Additions to the Agenda by Chair Quisenberry. Presented by Matt Roeschley, City Attorney. Matt Roeschley stated the process of consolidating OSF’s Champaign campus into their Danville campus requires OSF to file an application with the Illinois Health Facilities and Service Review Board (IHFSRB) and they have not yet filed the application as of this afternoon. Stated they are expected to file that application in the coming weeks. Stated after discussion with the General Counsel for the IHFSRB, the next steps following the application will involve a review from the board that takes about five to seven days. Stated once reviewed, an opportunity for public review and public hearing gets published and anyone can request a public hearing to be held. Stated a public hearing is likely to occur in the community to gather community input that are recorded and transcribed into the record of proceedings for the application. Stated the time to review and issue a final decision for the permit application will likely take 120 days.

Shared the City will continue to monitor the IHFSRB for the filing to appear and look into actions the City can take regarding taking a formal position on the matter. Noted the IHFSRB does not meet for the remainder of the year after their meeting on November 8, 2025. Stated for a review of the application occur in the calendar year, OSF must file their application by July 7 to July 8. Questions and discussion followed.

e. Police Staffing, Hiring Incentives, and Additional Allocations – PD

Presented by Larry Boone, Chief of Police and Dave Smysor, Deputy Chief of Police. Larry Boone acknowledged comments made by the public and agreed armed officers should not respond to mental health crises unless necessary. Agreed City functions should be used to address the deplorable housing conditions residents are facing in Urbana. Stated the UPD draws a significant number of interviews and applicants, noting the UPD is currently fully staffed, and the main challenge is with retention as well as inadequate staffing to create a better work-life balance for its employees. Stated his focus is on the prevention of crime first, then intervention, and lastly enforcement. Stated the prevention and intervention are conducted in partnership with the community. Shared how community partnerships and data-driven policing, criminal activities decreased significantly in the 1990s. Stated the substation is proposed to be in the Vawter and Silver Street area due to crime data. Stated the UPD can be improved to resolve retention issues while also addressing the material needs of communities in Urbana.

Spoke on the current department structure of the UPD primarily divided between the Deputy Chief of Operations and Deputy Chief of Investigations & Administrative Support. Noted the addition of the Training Sergeant position and two Community Engagement Team Officers approved in FY25 were not able to be filled due to retention issues.

Stated the requests for FY26 are for an additional three Patrol Officers and a Community Engagement Sergeant. Stated the recurring expense of three sworn Patrol Officers is \$367,000 with a one-time cost of \$207,000 to support training through the Police Training Institute (PTI) at a cost of \$8,177 per officer; purchase required equipment; expand the vehicle fleet by two vehicles; and support additional trainings after the PTI. Stated the new Patrol Officer positions are required to reduce overtime costs, improve response times, enhance officer safety, allow for staff to be transitioned to other roles, and move the department closer to minimum staffing levels.

Stated the Community Engagement Sergeant has a recurring cost of \$150,000 for the three-year pilot program. Stated the currently unrealized Community Engagement Team requires a supervisor to ensure best practices.

Dave Smysor stated \$112,500 is requested to extend hiring incentives currently in place for the UPD and is necessary for competitively attracting new officers. Shared while recruitment has been successful, the issue still lies in retaining officers. Provided a chart detailing why 15 officers have left since 2024 and the amount of time they served at the UPD. Stated the UPD is currently fully staffed, with one officer set to leave soon; four officers that are currently in the background investigation process of hiring; four officers that are currently in week seven of 16 of their mandatory training with the PTI; and four officers that are currently in the field training process with the UPD. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to extend the meeting time to 11:00p.m. by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Wilken.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

5. New Business

- a. **Resolution No. 2025-06-039R:** A Resolution in Support of Full Federal Funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – Exec

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, Interim City Administrator / Human Resources & Finance Director / CFO. The Resolution writes in support for full federal funding for LIHEAP, a federally funded initiative that helps low-income households pay for heating and cooling costs. Elizabeth Hannan stated the Resolution would express the Council's support for LIHEAP. Shared in program year 2025 for LIHEAP, 2,296 households received around \$1,700,000 in utilities assistance. Stated upon approval, copies of the Resolution will be sent to the President of the United States, members of the Illinois congressional delegation, and other relevant federal agencies. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Hursey.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- b. **Resolution No. 2025-06-040R:** A Resolution in Support of Full Federal Funding for Head Start – Exec

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, Interim City Administrator / Human Resources & Finance Director / CFO. The Resolution writes in support of full federal funding for Head Start, a nationally recognized, federally funded early childhood education program that promotes school readiness for children from low-income families. Elizabeth Hannan stated the Resolution would express their support for the Head Start program that serves over 500 households every year in Champaign County. Stated upon approval, copies of the Resolution will be sent to the President of the United States, members of the Illinois congressional delegation, and other relevant federal agencies.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Wilken.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

Motion to recess and reconvene in City Council Chambers on 06-17-2025 at 7:00p.m. by CM Wilken, seconded by CM Bishop at 10:57p.m.

CM Kolisetty shared concerns for expanding the UPD without developing the Alternate Response system and supported remaining competitive through retention bonuses and incentives. Stated the revenues from the 1% Grocery Tax should go toward supporting the most vulnerable members of the community, not toward additional policing.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

With a majority vote, City Council entered recess at 10:59p.m. and will continue from this point in the meeting on 06-17-2025 at 7:00p.m.

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#).

DATE: Tuesday, June 17, 2025
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in reconvened regular session Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 7:00p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: DeShawn Williams, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey, CM Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: CM Jaya Kolisetty

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Don Ho, Elizabeth Hannan, Larry Boone, Matt Roeschley

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chair: *Maryalice Wu, Ward 1*

With a quorum present, Chair Quisenberry called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:00p.m and returned the Chair to CM Wu.

5. New Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2025-06-019:** An Ordinance Approving the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Annual Budget – HRF

Presented alongside Ordinances No. 2025-06-020 and 2025-06-021 by Elizabeth Hannan, Interim City Administrator / Human Resources & Finance Director / CFO and Don Ho, Senior Financial Analyst / Budget Coordinator, and Mayor Williams. The Ordinance approves the FY2026 Annual Budget. Mayor Williams thanked everyone for providing input on the budget and hoped for continued collaboration. Stated the federal administration has targeted Urbana and similar communities for not cooperating with the federal raids on immigrants. Expressed need to preserve sources of revenue as a City facing federal backlash and continuing the grocery tax to do so. Stated his approach to public safety involves both adequate staffing for the UPD and developing the Alternate Response model. Clarified the four additional positions to the UPD are a compromise from the original request of 15 additional positions. Stated the understanding with Police Chief Boone is that the UPD will be expected to operate with the limited additions while also engaging with the community, developing a successful Alternate Response model, partnering with community organizations, and supporting at-risk youth. Asked for further patience, trust, and collaboration from the community to see the ideas realized.

Don Ho provided an overview of Ordinances No. 2025-06-019, 2025-06-020, and 2025-06-021. Summarized corrections and changes made to the budget since it was presented before Council on June 2, 2025. Stated Ordinance No. 2025-06-020 amends the FY25 budget to reflect the updated estimates from the proposed FY26 budget and includes rebudgets to the Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Fund (VERF). Stated the budget complies with City financial policies with expenditures at 97.8% of recurring revenues, below the required

98.5% threshold and an unassigned fund balance of around \$12,500,000, equaling to 25.7% recurring expenditures.

Elizabeth Hannan stated the continuation of the grocery tax will maintain current taxation rates on grocery store items. Shared 212 other municipalities across the State of Illinois had already passed similar ordinances continuing the grocery tax locally by the middle of May 2025. Acknowledged the regressive nature of the grocery tax and shared information from a study [published by the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois in 2024](#) where an analysis found households in the lowest income bracket paid an average of \$1.64 in grocery taxes after SNAP benefits. Stated the continuation of the grocery tax provides a projected annual revenue of \$1,000,000 that will be put toward the new allocations in the proposed budget. Questions and discussion followed.

Strawpoll: To direct the Grants Division to create a \$45,000 grant agreement for DREAM in FY26

AYE: 5

NAY: 0

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Bishop.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Bishop, Quisenberry, Williams

NAY: Wilken

- i. Motion to divide the question to consider the following items separate from the budget Ordinance by CM Evans:
 1. Addition of two officer positions for the three-year Community Engagement Team Pilot Program
 2. Addition of the Sergeant position for the three-year Community Engagement Team Pilot Program
 3. Addition of three police Patrol Officers
 4. Funding for the leasing of an office for \$30,000 for three years to establish a police substation on South Philo Road

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Wilken

NAY: Wu, Hursey, Bishop, Quisenberry

Motion fails.

- ii. Motion to divide the question to consider the items individually by CM Wilken as the following items:
 1. Addition of three police Patrol Officers. Questions and discussion followed.
 2. Addition of the Sergeant position for the three-year Community Engagement Team Pilot Program
 3. The two currently budgeted officer positions for the three-year Community Engagement Team Pilot Program, the \$30,000 toward leasing an office for three years to establish a police substation on South Philo Road, and any other relevant program expenses

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Wilken

NAY: Wu, Hursey, Bishop, Quisenberry

Motion fails.

- b. **Ordinance No. 2025-06-020:** An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #10 – Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Estimates) – HRF

Presented alongside Ordinances No. 2025-06-019 and 2025-060-21. The Ordinance amends the FY2025 budget to conform to estimates provided in the proposed budget.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Hursey. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry, Williams

NAY: None.

- c. **Ordinance No. 2025-06-021:** An Ordinance Amending City Code Chapter 22 (Taxation) by Adding Article X (Municipal Grocery Retailers' Occupation Tax and Municipal Grocery Service Occupation Tax) – HRF

Presented alongside Ordinances No. 2025-06-019 and 2025-060-20. The Ordinance continues the grocery tax, collected and distributed by the State, to allow for the City to maintain current services and expand some services.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Hursey. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: Wilken

6. Council Input and Communications

CM Hursey voiced appreciation for the input provided and community engagement yesterday regarding the budget. Requested the public to consider the balance between the various branches of government and private businesses. Stated the Council's priority is to maintain the function of City services, maintain the safety of the residents, and ensure business is conducted equitably to the best of their ability. *Mayor Williams* shared on Wednesday, June 18 from 1:00p.m. to 2:00p.m. there will be a presentation regarding Juneteenth and local Urbana history; from 3:00p.m. to 4:00p.m. there will be an interactive workshop on Juneteenth; and a panel discussion on the legacy of Juneteenth from 4:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. held at the Urbana Park District's Health and Wellness Center at 2002 East Washington Street, welcoming members of the public to attend.

7. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Wu adjourned the meeting at 10:28 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#). **Minutes approved: 7/21/25**



Public Comment June16, 2025

From Sana Saboowala [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 10:01 AM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

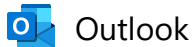
Please read this comment aloud during public comment today:

Dear Urbana City Council,

My name is Sana Saboowala, I am a resident of Urbana and a member of Champaign-Urbana Muslim Action Committee. This time last year I was regularly attending city council meetings to encourage the city to invest in an alternative response to policing task force. Now, I am writing to ask you to use that alternative response task force, see what it is capable of here, before investing more of our city's funds in policing. The Alternative Response Task Force should meet and make its recommendations before the city authorizes more spending on new officers. I believe that the funds that would be allocated to new officers would be put to better use via direct assistance. That money could go a lot further to directly solving the problems that exist in Urbana. The township is doing research on alternative response models that is promising. Let the alternative response task force do its job before hiring more cops. Fill the vacancies that exist in the police department before allocating more money for more hires. Ultimately this council agreed that an alternative response was necessary when you agreed to create the task force—let's see what it can do before we hire more officers and leave alternatives underfunded.

Thank you for your time,

Sana Saboowala



Fw: Community Engagement Officers

From Darleen Bailey [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 3:43 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>; Larry Boone <Larry.Boone@UrbanalL.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

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Read for public input

Sent from Yahoo Mail. [Get the app](#)

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Darleen Bailey [REDACTED]
To: citycouncil@urbanailinois.us <citycouncil@urbanailinois.us>; Larry Boone <larry.boone@urbanail.gov>
Sent: Sunday, June 15, 2025 at 12:09:59 PM CDT
Subject: Community Engagement Officers

TO: Mayor Deshawn Williams and city council members

First, I would like to say Thank You for what you do. I am sure it is not easy to be in that position and try to satisfy everyone's ideas and desires. Which is virtually impossible.

My name is Darleen Bailey and again, I'll say that I am just an ordinary citizen of ward 3 working for a safe and healthy community and I feel strongly that we could benefit greatly from having a community engagement officer working in our community.

I strongly feel we need a community engagement officer to assist the community on a few things for the physical year of 2025/2026 and to work on some preventive measures. I do not have any training in being a law enforcement officer, but I do know that at the moment, there is still a humanitarian side to law enforcement. I understand the police are to enforce the law and maintain safety, and patrol assigned areas to detect criminal activity. I also see that some laws were updated in 2025, and I paid particular attention that police are to ensure citizen "obey" the law and the word "obey" sort of threw me off a bit.

Since most of our police force time is spent on non-criminal calls, it will be very important to have someone participate directly with community safety programs and preventive methods to alleviate hot spots of undesirable community burdens, because people are needed to help residents help themselves and develop the responsibilities of a self-supporting community which will need less police involvement.

Can someone please direct me on the qualifications and procedures for Urbana Citizen Review Board?
I am not so much concerned with misconduct and punishment as I would like to work on solutions to create and promote a much more morally display of etiquette.
I seek no benefits are rewards, but I can offer commitment and objectivity, because I understand both citizens and law enforcement, but we do not want to be cruel with this on either side.

I had the privilege of sitting down with a Sargeant for a few minutes, which was a very productive few minutes, During the entire time he had his eye on his phone constantly checking it and soon they, a person, finally came and completely call him out for assistance on a traffic stop, which I completely understood. So, I have eyewitness knowledge on how things operate in that particular area.

To wrap this up I would like to say, we are going to need our law enforcement team without a doubt, and that's a fact, but citizens also need to be cared for, understood and prepped for disaster. We need to work with the police to help

create an environment where we can morally help take care of ourselves.

Thank you for your time,

Darleen Bailey

Sent from Yahoo Mail. [Get the app](#)

To Be Read Aloud 6/16/25 - Public Comment

From Alen Romero [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 5:03 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

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Good afternoon,

Tonight you will vote on the budget for next year.

As I understand it part of the budget includes spending for new police officers to be paid for by a grocery tax.

As any good student of economics will tell you families with less money spend disproportionately more on groceries. As income decreases people spend more on necessities and less on luxuries.

I can tell you from personal experience I used to work at Schnucks and 10 or 20 cents made the difference between being able to eat lunch or not.

We have seen everywhere the effects of extra police since the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. We know that Black communities across the country are over-policed and these budgets have exacerbated the issue.

To force the poorest and most marginalized people in our community to pay for the police that oppress them is naked class warfare.

Indeed, we have seen the effects of the militarization of the police in Los Angeles last week as police departments collaborate with Immigration officials to separate families and target Latinos regardless of immigration status.

This is where Urbana is headed with these policies, I strongly urge the city councilors to see the writing on the wall and protect the interests of their constituents and vote against this budget.

Thank you, I cede my time to the next speaker.

Sincerely, Alen Romero

PUBLIC COMMENT for JUNE 16 2025

From Don Owen [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 5:24 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting. Please read this into the public record during the meeting:

Dear Mayor and City Council:

I urge you to not vote in favor of the budget as proposed. I suggest one major change and several minor changes before you vote to approve the budget for FY2026.

First, I strongly object to the inclusion of a "Grocery Tax" as a revenue stream. Sales taxes of any type are highly regressive and increase social and economic inequities between haves and have nots. Grocery taxes magnify this injustice and magnify economic inequality. I am highly disappointed that you are considering a grocery tax just months after it was reported that a new grocery store was approved in an area that has been traditionally seen as a food desert. Please look for other forms of revenue.

Second, please reconsider funding the addition of four new positions for Urbana Police, There were several positions that were approved for LAST year that have NOT BEEN FILLED, Why are approving additional positions, when there are unfilled positions from last year? We do not need more cops! We need a fully funded alternative response model that is separate from the Police Department. Please adjust your budget to match your stated priorities. Budgets are moral documents. Please ask yourselves if the budget you see before you tonight aligns with your values and the values of the residents of Urbana.

Sincerely,
Don

Don Owen (they/he)
Educational Equity, Excellence, Engagement, and Leadership
[REDACTED]

Follow me in Instagram: [@ddo_photo](#)
Connect on LinkedIn: [Donald Owen](#)

Public comment for tonight

From Sam [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 5:49 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

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Dear Urbana City Council,

Please read my comment into the public record this evening.

I am an Urbana resident and would like to add my voice to the many other local voices asking you not to authorize the hiring of more police officers for the fiscal year 2026 budget.

The Alternative Response Task Force still needs to make its recommendations and the Urbana Police has not yet filled its currently vacant positions (including the Social Worker who was authorized but never hired).

Furthermore, I do not support more money being spent on police in this town when our community members' needs are not currently being met. Our community members face housing and food insecurity, need support with finding employment, and mental health services. As a library sciences graduate of UIUC and former worker or volunteer at both public libraries in CU, I spoke with community members who asked for more of these services. They did not ask for police.

The police are not equipped to provide these services, and should not be the place we seek them. To support our community we need to be directing more funds to services that help us better care for each other and assist community members in crisis. A police response often escalates or exacerbates these issues, rather than addressing them.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Sam Ehlinger
Urbana Ward 4 Resident

Public Comment 06/16/2025-Police Budget

From Berry Zhang [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 6:23 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

*** Email From An External Source ***

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Please read this message aloud into the record.

Hello,

My name is Berry Zhang and I am a constituent from Champaign. I am writing to oppose the current city budget that would allocate money from a grocery tax to more facilities for police. The police do not keep the community safe and are often the ones terrorizing people in our neighborhoods, especially with the advent of ICE terrorism being rampant in the US. Please revise the budget to be for care, not cops.

Sincerely,
Berry Zhang

Budget: Urbana police

From Evelyn Underwood [REDACTED]

Date Mon 6/16/2025 6:55 PM

To Shirese Hursey <Shirese.Hursey@UrbanalL.gov>; Christopher Evans <Christopher.Evans@UrbanalL.gov>; Grace Wilken <Grace.Wilken@UrbanalL.gov>; Chaundra Bishop <Chaundra.Bishop@UrbanalL.gov>; City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>; Diane Marlin <Diane.Marlin@UrbanalL.gov>

Cc Elder Theodore "Ted" & Lady Tuere Burnett [REDACTED]

***** Email From An External Source *****

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Urbana Mayor, Urbana City Council, Urbana City Clerk,
PLEASE READ Into The Record:

I feel that the positions for police in 2025 was enough. Trying to add more positions for 2026 is overkill because raising taxes on food when the economy is leading towards a recession because of tariffs and trade and because of cuts in the safety net is coming in the federal budget. Since the trump administration cut 1 billion dollars from the USDA program that supports meals on wheels, schools lunch programs, small farmers reimbursement and public food pantries reimbursement. The up coming cuts in Medicaid and the Snap program will push the elderly and the poor in dire straits. We should give the money to help the safety net for the most vulnerable in society for survival.

Reverend Dr. Evelyn and Bishop King James Underwood

public input 6/16/25

From Claire Johnson [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 8:30 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

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Please read my comment into the record.

My name is Claire Johnson, I live at [REDACTED] in Urbana.

I'm writing to urge council members to vote against continuing the 1% grocery tax, which would be used to fund additional police positions. Removing this tax would ease the financial burden on residents who are already struggling to make ends meet as prices for necessities, like groceries, continue to rise. There are already several unfilled positions at the police department that were approved in a previous budget. It seems fiscally irresponsible to approve 4 additional positions now, especially when the city is moving forward with an alternative response model that is likely to decrease the workload for existing officers. If anything, we should be discussing how to support direct service programs that may suffer from federal funding cuts, not increasing the police budget.

Thank you.



Public Comment

From Carol Inskeep [REDACTED]
Date Sat 6/14/2025 9:05 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

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Hello,

My name is Carol Inskeep and I have lived in East Urbana for 30 years.

I want to share my comments on two issues:

- In this time of increasing human need due to so many cuts to our social safety net, **I do not support more budget for policing in our community.** I so wish that we could implement an **alternative response model** which other cities have demonstrated can be more affordable and more attuned to community needs.
- I also urge you to **support the Surveillance Oversight Ordinance.** This commitment to basic community oversight is absolutely vital in this time when we are seeing the breakdown of democratic checks and balances.

Thank you for your service on the Council. And thank you for listening to the concerns of the community.

Carol Inskeep
[REDACTED]

6/16/25 public input

From Kelsey Langley [REDACTED]
Date Mon 6/16/2025 10:02 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

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To Urbana City Council,
I have lived in Urbana for 15 years and we do not need more police officers.
I oppose the grocery tax and I oppose any additional funding or additional staff to the police department.

I would approve the grocery tax if it provided much needed resources to neighbors and community members who need it: children, unhoused people, unemployed/underemployed, or to help feed people. Police do not solve any of these issues or increase safety.

Kelsey Langley

Public Input – Please Read Aloud

From Kanittha Fay [REDACTED]

Date Tue 6/17/2025 5:37 PM

To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>; Larry Boone <Larry.Boone@Urbanall.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

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Dear Urbana City Council,

Let's be straightforward: if the City Council continues reallocating the police budget, residents may not have officers available when they call—especially for critical situations like domestic violence, abduction, or even homicide.

Can you imagine a workplace expected to serve 40,000 people with only 55 to 57 sworn officers, working 24/7, 365 days a year?

The Urbana Police Department has done its best to stay strong and do more with less, despite being severely understaffed. But it's time the community understands the full reality.

This isn't just unfair. It's dangerous. And it's not sustainable.

Sincerely,

Kanittha Fay

Public Input 6/16/25

From Jamie V Ryan [REDACTED]
Date Tue 6/17/2025 3:30 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a resident of Urbana, IL, since 2011, I am writing to encourage the City Council to reject the addition of four more police officers added to the police force as proposed in the new budget. Instead, rigorously invest in and train community support professionals, especially on my eastside area of Urbana, and help low-income families find adequate, comfortable housing. A bigger police force will only inflame tensions and make unhoused and poorly-housed folks go underground.

Thank you.

Jamie V. Ryan
Professor of Percussion
Graduate Coordinator
[REDACTED]