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**DATE:** Monday, October 6, 2025  
**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

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The City Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, October 6, 2025, at 7:01p.m.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT:** DeShawn Williams, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Jaya Kolisetty, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

**ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:** CM Shirese Hursey, CM Chaundra Bishop

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bourema Ouedraogo, Darius White, Nick Olsen, Zachery Mikalik, Bridget Broihahn, Demond Dade, Tarek Azim, Larry Boone

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Daut'e Martin, Program Specialist, Community Responders of Law Enforcement Action Partnership; Tom Thompson, Chief of Police of Sinclair Community College Public Safety Department and Executive Board Member of Law Enforcement Action Partnership; Danielle Chynoweth, Supervisor of Cunningham Township

**Chair:** *Christopher Evans, Ward 2*

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Chair Evans called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:01 PM.

### 2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

#### a. 09-15-2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve by CM Wu, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

**AYE:** Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Wilken, Quisenberry

**NAY:** None.

### 3. Additions to the Agenda

CM Wu motioned for the removal of Resolution No. 2025-10-079R regarding the acceptance of the Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) funding from the agenda, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

**AYE:** Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Wilken, Quisenberry

**NAY:** None.

#### 4. Presentations and Public Input

##### a. Fire Department Promotions

Demond Dade, Fire Chief presented the promotions of the following individuals: Arnold Fox, Firefighter; Dawson Purvis, Firefighter; Devin List, Firefighter; Nathaniel Mikalik, Firefighter; Robert Hardwick, Firefighter; Andrew Stewart, Lieutenant; and Matt Ennis, Battalion Chief.

Introduced Firefighters Arnold “A.J.” Fox, Dawson Purvis, Devin List, Nathaniel Mikalik, and Robert Hardwick. Spoke on the year of service and commitment the Firefighters have prevailed through and the merits they’ve displayed through their work. Arnold “A.J.” Fox was pinned by his father Arnold Fox; Dawson Purvis was pinned by his wife, Madison Purvis and his daughter, Haddie Purvis; Devin List was pinned by his two sons, Easton List and Carson List; Nathaniel Mikalik was pinned by his father, Fred Mikalik; and Robert Hardwick was pinned by his father Rob Hardwick after being sworn in by Mayor Williams.

Introduced Andrew Stewart, Lieutenant and shared his experience with the City as a paramedic, Treasurer for the Urbana Firefighters Local #1147 Union, Technical Rescue Team member, and participation on the Training Committee. Andrew Stewart was pinned by his daughter, Tate Stewart after being sworn in by Mayor Williams.

Introduced Matt Ennis, Battalion Chief and spoke on his 23 years of service with the City of Urbana becoming a Technical Rescue Team member and an EMT Intermediate. Matt Ennis was pinned by his best friend Kurt Sexton after being sworn in by Mayor Williams.

##### b. Public Input

**Derek Briles** voiced appreciation for the City continuing the efforts to develop the Alternative Response Program. Stated the Alternative Response Program is necessary in response to the increase in poverty and decrease in overall criminal activity. Stated the way to address poverty can be found in providing access to resources and better opportunities as increased policing cannot address poverty. **Reverend Dr. Evelyn Burnett Underwood** expressed her continued goal is for the equal representation of the African American community to be realized in the City of Urbana. Stated an Alternative Response model must be implemented within the City to mitigate the national trends of people undergoing mental health crises being killed by police officers. Expressed the need for greater focus on mental health and reporting on the role of mental illness in fatal law enforcement encounters. Called for the City to take advantage of the energy of the Mayor, Police Chief, and Fire Chief all being Black to improve the lives of the people who are disabled in our community alongside the lives of Urbana residents. **Jane McClintock** thanked the City for continuing the work of developing an Alternative Response model. **Stephen MacGuire** stated an Alternative Response system is necessary to combat the risk of lethal encounters people with disabilities and people of color have when interacting with law enforcement officers. Stated the culture of police agencies and the culture of the illusion of care for people with mental health disabilities create a dangerous environment. Stated social workers are better equipped than a police officer for navigating situations with people in mental crises and a police officer can be present at a distance to ensure the area is safe. Emphasized the need for a less militarized crisis response system. **Paul Meuth** urged that the Alternative Response system to not be housed within the Urbana Police Department as per advice given from representatives of the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP). Suggested a joint Critical Response Training could be held for both the Urbana Police Department and the Alternative Response Unit to promote connections forming between the two agencies. Recommended the Alternative Response Task Force to draw inspiration from models from the City of Minneapolis and other cities. Highlighted the helpfulness of providing counseling

services for police officers. Raised concern for the development of a nuclear microreactor on Oak Street in the City of Champaign. **Chris Zelle** shared that the Alternative Response program must not be housed within the Urbana Police Department (UPD) as others have spoken on before. Stated it should be a different experience from calling police officers and will allow for trust to be rebuilt between the community and the City. Criticized the UPD's inability to explain its overtime accruals during their budget presentations. Stated the Alternative Response model will allow for police officers to focus on more urgent calls and allow for more appropriately trained professionals to respond to non-urgent calls for service. **Danielle Chynoweth** thanked Councilmembers Bishop and Kolisetty for their efforts in beginning the efforts to develop the Alternative Response program, and thanked Council for their support. Thanked Mayor Williams for his support and campaigning on establishing the Alternative Response program. Shared Cunningham Township is receiving around 2,000 calls for service monthly and one of the main issues within the community is poverty. Shared a story on how the township assisted an individual, who had an active arrest warrant, receive mental health assistance she required through working directly with law enforcement officers to facilitate the arrest in a nontraumatic way and transfer them to a mental health facility for her treatment. Emphasized the importance of Alternative Response as it allows for people to be treated in a similar way and deescalate situations where people could be in danger of being seen as a threat. Noted she will send the City information regarding a grant that supports mediation in the field. **Ben Joselyn** thanked the City for developing the Alternative Response program and expressed hope for it to exist outside of the UPD. Highlighted the work of the City of New York's front running mayoral candidate, Zohran Mamdani, as well as the City of Chicago's Mayor, Brandon Johnson, on prohibiting the use of publicly owned properties to stage action for Federal Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Encouraged the City of Urbana to consider if that may be appropriate to enact here as well. Thanked the City of Urbana for voting to support a ceasefire in Gaza as a nearby resident is currently being held in detention by Israel for attempting to provide humanitarian aid to Gaza. **Iri** voiced support for the development of an Alternative Response program as his previous residence, the City of Elgin, pursued the expansion of their police department and the issues within their community has only worsened since. Expressed the actions of Urbana such as supporting an Alternative Response program is what has drawn him to reside here and hoped for that work to continue. Hoped for the Alternative Response program to produce better methods of rehabilitation for people who engaged in criminal acts, and increased education opportunities for the community to participate in to learn skills such as conflict resolution.

***Written Public Input regarding the Alternative Response program and public safety were received from the following individuals and read by Council: Darleen Bailey, Ryan Franks, Rohn Koester, and Lilah Leopold. Written Public Input regarding the Alternative Response program and public safety were received from the following individuals but were not read: Sana Saboowala, Paul Mueth, and Matt Murrey.***

## 5. New Business

- a. **Resolution No. 2025-10-076R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Community Development Block Grant Subrecipient Agreement (Champaign County Regional Planning Commission TBRA Management FY26) – CD

Presented together with Resolution No. 2025-10-77R by Nick Olsen, Interim Grants Division Manager. The Resolution approves and authorizes a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) agreement with Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) for Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) case management. Nick Olsen stated the Urbana HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement provides CCRPC \$300,000 in HOME Investment Partnerships funds to support its TBRA program. Stated the HOME Investment

Partnerships program receives its funds through an annual allocation through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Stated the partnership with CCRPC in support of its TBRA program has been ongoing for around 10 years and shared details on their TBRA program. Shared the CDBG agreement with CCRPC provides \$75,000 in CDBG funds to support case management staff for the TBRA program. Spoke on previous instances of funding case management staffing for CCRPC's TBRA program using CDBG funds. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Wu, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Voice Vote:

**AYE:** Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Wilken, Quisenberry

**NAY:** None.

- b. Resolution No. 2025-10-077R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement (Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Tenant Based Rental Assistance FY26) – CD

Presented together with Resolution No. 2025-10-76R by Nick Olsen, Interim Grants Division Manager. The Resolution approves and authorizes an Urbana HOME Consortium subrecipient agreement with CCRPC for TBRA.

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

Voice Vote:

**AYE:** Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Wilken, Quisenberry

**NAY:** None.

- c. Resolution No. 2025-10-078R:** A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement for Rental Assistance Between the City of Urbana and Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office (FY26) – CD

Presented by Nick Olsen, Interim Grants Division Manager with Danielle Chynoweth, Supervisor of Cunningham Township present for questions. The Resolution approves and authorizes a CDBG subrecipient agreement with Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office (CTSO) to provide emergency rental assistance using \$58,000 in CDBG public service funds. Nick Olsen stated the agreement supports the CTSO's emergency rental assistance program using \$58,000 in CDBG funds. Detailed the guidelines of the emergency rental assistance distribution outlined under CDBG. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Wu, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Voice Vote:

**AYE:** Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Wilken, Quisenberry

**NAY:** None.

~~d. **Resolution No. 2025-10-079R:** A Resolution Accepting the Assistance to the Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) Funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States Department of Homeland Security—UFD~~

~~The Resolution authorizes the acceptance of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the amount of \$67,814.54 for the purchase of eight 800 MHz Portable Radios.~~

*Item removed by vote during Additions to the Agenda by CM Wu, seconded by CM Quisenberry.*

## 6. Staff Report

### a. Council Focus Group led by LEAP

Presented by Daut'e Martin, Program Specialist, Community Responders of Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) and Tom Thompson, Chief of Police of Sinclair Community College Public Safety Department and Executive Board Member of LEAP with an introduction provided by Mayor Williams. Daut'e Martin thanked the City and spoke on her experience working with LEAP on developing Alternative Response models. Tom Thompson spoke on his background as a law enforcement officer and a consultant for LEAP. Shared his personal experience with assisting immigrants through a non-profit organization inspired by the adoption of their son who is from the Country of Central African Republic.

Stated the purpose of the presentation is to establish the scope of work for LEAP, gain an understanding of City Council's priorities, and hold time for questions and discussion. Stated LEAP will recommend an Alternative Response Model (ARM), deliver an in-depth report, provide suggestions for implementation, and gather community feedback to develop the ARM to the community's needs.

Asked what outcomes are desired from an Alternative Response program, what concerns are there about creating an Alternative Response program, and what information would be helpful in making decisions on an Alternative Response program.

Council answered the question regarding what outcomes are desired, stating the following: improving access to resources for the community, making it so mental health professionals respond to mental health crises as part of the ARM, utilizing community input and community needs for the ARM, allowing resources to be shared with neighboring communities, establishing a crisis prevention system, alleviating the non-urgent calls for services from the UPD, providing a feeling of protection to the community, and offering material solutions to issues within the community.

Daut'e Martin thanked Council for their answers and expressed the feedback has clarified what the City is interested to come from the ARM.

Council answered the question regarding what concerns there are about creating an Alternative Response program stating the following: how the program will work with police departments and develop trust between them, how the program will be financed, how the program could be collaboratively built together with neighboring communities, how the program could be incrementally implemented, what the safety implications will be, how the development of the program will ensure community voices are heard throughout the process, and how often responders tend to quit when encountering unsafe circumstances.

Tom Thompson stated from his experience, discussions among alternate responders do not

tend to focus on retention as the potential for unsafe encounters and expectations are established when discussing the work with a potential employee. Stated most people, from his experience, tend to leave due to the work hours, limited time off, and need for better pay. Addressed the concern of safety, noting over half a million calls for service have been responded to by alternate responders for the last few years and only recently has there been a case of harm to a responder. Noted social workers enter unsafe situations and homes of their clients without being harmed. Stated a significant amount of training goes to alternate responders for de-escalation, recognizing dangerous situations, and call-screening to minimize the risk of harm. Stated being injured is possible as with any other job where you must work with people in crisis.

Council answered the question regarding what information would be helpful in making decision about an Alternative Response program stating the following: how much staffing and equipment will be required to operate the program in Urbana, what were previous best practices and lessons learned from other ARMs implemented, how have other cities benefitted from alternative response, what other communities have requested from their input, what options there are for implementation, how the ARM can address systematic issues within the community, when general information can be provided to the public so they can read through resources from LEAP at their own pace, if an analysis of calls for service according to potential for danger can be provided, what protocol will be in place for when a situation requires additional responders from other agencies, and what training will be provided to dispatchers.

Tom Thompson stated implemented alternate response departments will be providing information to LEAP during their development of an ARM for Urbana. Stated after the meetings with the task force, developing potential methods of implementation, and hearing from the community, LEAP will be able to provide a variety of options for how to establish an ARM in Urbana. Daut'e Martin encouraged the community to visit the LEAP website at (<https://lawenforcementactionpartnership.org/community-responder-dashboard/>) to see a map of community responder programs across the United States to see how varied the programs can be. Tom Thompson noted calls for service and the narratives of the calls will be analyzed for their potential for danger to a responder and will be used in designing the ARM to Urbana's wants. Daut'e Martin stated that information will also be shared with the task force for them to assess when determining what kind of response is appropriate for a call. Tom Thompson shared how community responders often only hand calls off to other departments at a rate of 1-3% while law enforcement officers usually have a higher rate of handing their calls to community responders.

Council asked what the next steps will be and when the public will hear back on developments from the task force and LEAP. Daut'e Martin stated LEAP has received logs of calls for service, meeting dates have been set for the Alternative Response Task Force, and outreach has been conducted to community members to gain a better sense of what the community's desires are for an ARM. Stated further discussions will be had with the City on how information on the development of an ARM is shared with Council.

Council asked if LEAP offers any other services advising in holistically addressing community concerns regarding law enforcement. Tom Thompson stated LEAP has not advised on the usage of surveillance technology as part of ARM development but has noted the importance of the issue within Urbana from viewing previous Council meetings.

Council asked if a draft report for an ARM will be available for the community to provide feedback on before a final recommendation is made. Daut'e Martin stated a preliminary report will be presented to the Alternative Response Task Force and community meetings will be

held to discuss the preliminary report as well.

Council emphasized the importance of notifying the public in advance when public meetings are held to allow for community members to make time in their schedules to attend and provide input. Daut'e Martin stated LEAP holds community engagement as a high priority and requested the community to provide their input. City Clerk Sandefur stated the agendas for Alternative Response Task Force meetings will be posted in a similar fashion to City Council agendas and will include public input regarding alternative response in the meeting packet. Requested the public to share feedback on the Alternative Response program at City Council meetings for them to be included in the Alternative Response Task Force meeting packets. Council requested clarification on if only written public input will be able to be provided to the Alternative Response Task Force due to the time constraints of the meetings. City Clerk Sandefur stated the input will not be read out, but it will be compiled and attached as part of the meeting packet for the task force members. Further stated verbal input can be provided at City Council meetings for the City Clerk's office to write as input and written input can be sent to "[citycouncil@urbanail.gov](mailto:citycouncil@urbanail.gov)" or delivered to the City Clerk's office in City Hall. Daut'e Martin added limiting public input to written input for the task force will help in being able to complete their discussions with their limited time.

Tom Thompson thanked the City of Urbana for contracting LEAP and allowing them to work with the Urbana community in developing an ARM. Voiced appreciation for the support from the first responders of the City as well as the support from the community.

Chair Evans directed City Clerk Sandefur to provide LEAP with the link to the recording of this meeting so they can refer to the public input and requests from Council shared tonight.

## 7. Council Input and Communications

**Mayor Williams** reminded the public that the registration for the "Mayor Williams Financial Literacy Program" is open until October 10th and requested those interested in the six-week virtual program enroll at "[go.urbanail.gov/FinLit](http://go.urbanail.gov/FinLit)". **CM Wilken** thanked the public for sharing their input on alternative response over the years of its development in Urbana. Acknowledged the horrors of the genocide committed in Gaza by Israel as well as the horrors of the occupation of Chicago by Federal agents where residents, local law enforcement, and local elected officials have been harmed. Pointed toward the executive order issued in the City of Chicago on how to handle a potential invasion from Federal officers. Emphasized the oath taken by those sworn in to protect the Constitution of the United States and uphold the laws on behalf of the residents of Urbana. Requested a discussion to be placed on the agenda next week for how the City can respond in a similar fashion to the City of Chicago and issue an executive order in addition to another discussion on Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 regarding police surveillance. **CM Kolisetty** seconded putting both of those items onto the agenda for discussion next week. Expressed how serious the oath taken upon being sworn in has become in the last few weeks with Federal actions and considered how actions can be done to better uphold that oath. Expressed sympathy for those in the City of Chicago.

## 8. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Evans adjourned the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#). **Minutes approved: 11/4/25**