
DATE: Monday, September 16, 2024
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, September 16, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey*, CM Jaya Kolisetty, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: CM Chaundra Bishop

STAFF PRESENT: Carol Mitten, Matthew Roeschley, Elizabeth Hannan, Demond Dade, Larry Boone, Rich Surles, Michelle Brooks, William Kolschowsky, Femi Fletcher, Kevin Garcia

OTHERS PRESENT: Audrey Ishii, Acting Chair of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Mayor Marlin called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:09p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

James Quisenberry asked for clarification regarding Resolution No. 2024-09-062R's status either as a Resolution or Ordinance. Mayor Marlin stated the item has been determined to be a Resolution.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Audrey Ishii thanked Mayor Marlin and City Council for their continued support for Bike Month and Bike to Work Day which began in 2010. Stated the City of Urbana is one of 34 bike friendly communities in the United States and the only one in the State of Illinois. Spoke on the sponsors and people who have helped support and organize Bike to Work Day and Bike Month. Shared registration for Bike to Work Day are still open, stations in Urbana are outside of Brookens, downtown at Main Street and Race Street, and the event will be from 7:00a.m. to 10:00a.m. on Wednesday, September 18th. Shared on Thursday evening from 4:00p.m. to 7:00p.m., there will be free front and rear lights for bicycles at Ikenberry Commons. Shared Safe Routes to School will be having an enrollment on Wednesday with further updates to come. Expressed thanks on behalf of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission.

b. Mayoral Proclamation: Bike to Work Day

Mayor Marlin presented the proclamation to Audrey Ishii, Acting Chair of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission. Proclaimed September 18th as Bike to Work Day in the City of Urbana.

5. Council Input and Communications

CM Wilken expressed hope to see a public statement from the Urbana Police Department regarding the mishandling of the attempted abduction of a child, as per the Mayor's statements from the previous week. Shared there will be public meetings for the Comprehensive Plan with multiple on Wednesday at various times and one on Thursday, September 19th, from 6:00p.m. to 7:00p.m. at St. Matthew Lutheran Church for residents of Ward 6 and 7. **Mayor Marlin** stated Chief Boone will be speaking during the Reports of Officers. **CM Wu** shared the Comprehensive Plan (Imagine Urbana) will have public information sessions on Wednesday, September 18th, from 7:00p.m. to 8:00p.m. at The Urbana Free Library as well as another session on Wednesday, September 18th, from 6:00p.m. to 7:00p.m. at USD#116 Tiger Academy. **CM Kolisetty** expressed desire to hear the public update from the Urbana Police Department regarding the recent mishandling of an attempted abduction of a child. Highlighted the upcoming events this weekend in the City of Urbana ranging from the Pygmalion events, Pride Fest, and the welcome week events.

6. Reports of Standing Committees

None.

7. Committee of the Whole (*Council Member James Quisenberry, Ward 7*)

1. Consent Agenda

None.

2. Regular Agenda

- a. Resolution No. 2024-09-060R:** A Resolution Approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Council 31, Local 1331 – HRF

Presented by Michelle Brooks, Labor & Employee Relations Manager. The Resolution authorizes the Mayor to execute a new collective bargaining agreement with the City's employees who are members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Council 31, Local 1331 (AFSCME) for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027.

Motion to approve by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wu. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- b. Resolution No. 2024-09-062R:** A Resolution Approving an Increase in the Number of Liquor Licenses in the Class R&T-1 Designation for Cochran & Heller INC d/b/a Black Dog Smoke & Ale House, 201 North Broadway Avenue, Urbana, Ill. – Exec*

*Item was reverted to Resolution from an Ordinance as per guidance from the City Attorney.

The Resolution increases the number of Class R&T-1 liquor licenses in the City of Urbana.

Motion to approve by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wu. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- c. Resolution No. 2024-09-061R:** A Resolution Authorizing an Interfund Loan from the Retained Risk Fund to the Motor Fuel Tax Fund – HRF/PW

The Resolution approves an interfund loan of up to \$2,000,000 between the City's Retained Risk and Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) Funds to allow for the payment of invoices while staff is working with IDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to resolve restrictions placed on these State MFT funds by IDOT.

Motion to approve by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wu. Questions and discussion ensued.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

8. Reports of Special Committees

None.

9. Reports of Officers

Carol Mitten stated there are two items being reported on tonight with Will Kolschowsky providing an update on the Special Census followed by a statement from Chief Boone.

Will Kolschowsky stated the Special Census is underway and the first round of mailings to residents have been sent. Stated further rounds of mailings will continue through September and field representatives will be going to count those who did not respond through the mailings. Shared details on the promotion of the census through various avenues of advertisement and groups. Mayor Marlin stated a flyer with a QR code and a map for constituents will be made available within the coming week, and field representatives are still being hired. CM Wu asked how many field representative positions need to be filled. Will Kolschowsky stated field representatives have been hired, but the Census Bureau always welcomes more. Mayor Marlin shared the official census date is the 15th of October and the Census Bureau hopes to conclude the Special Census by the end of November. Thanked Will Kolschowsky, Tarek Azim, and Bridget Broihahn for their work on the Special Census.

Chief Boone shared that on August 6th, 2024 the department received a call and report about an attempted abduction involving the reporter's 11-year-old daughter. Stated the Police Services Representative misunderstood the call to be a vehicle accident and did not forward it to a Police Officer, resulting in a delay in the investigation. Clarified the misunderstanding most likely arose from having to perform multiple tasks at the same time. Stated on August 10th, 2024, an Interim Deputy Chief was made aware of the situation by a citizen on Facebook through a post criticizing the Urbana Police Department's response. Stated the Interim Deputy Chief contacted a Police Officer who had worked that day to research the call log who had found that there were no calls in the log related to that report. Stated on August 11th, 2024, Deputy Chief Surles and himself were informed of the Facebook post and Deputy Chief Surles had contacted the Interim Deputy Chief to take over the investigation into the report. Stated on August 12th, 2024, the Interim Deputy Chief conducted an investigation into the incident and did not find any further information. Stated on August 13th, 2024, it was discovered that a School Resource Officer received a report from a citizen regarding the incident with unclear details and unsuccessful follow-up attempts. Stated the Interim Deputy Chief's investigation led to searching for similar calls and attempting to contact the citizen through Facebook, with no results. Stated on August 15th, 2024, the Interim Deputy Chief spoke with all Police Services Representatives and confirmed with them that they had no record of receiving the initial call. Emphasized that the Interim Deputy Chief spoke with all Police Services Representatives except for the Police Services Representative that had taken the original call, also emphasized that the representatives are non-sworn employees. Stated the Interim Deputy Chief posted on Facebook detailing the investigative efforts into searching for the original call with unprofessional language and had criticized the citizen who made the original Facebook post to some degree. Stated an administrative investigation followed after the post and Deputy Chief Surles will provide further information on the outcome. Deputy Chief Surles stated the civilian Police Services Representative has been counseled on their errors made and information on which calls require an Officer response was reiterated to them, reiterated active listening techniques, reiterated proper handling techniques for emergency calls, and reiterated proper protocol for calls that call takers are uncertain of. Stated the Division Supervisor will be implementing division-wide active listener training, re-training on call triaging, developing annual training refreshers for all call takers at the Urbana Police Department, and an audit process for all front desk calls is being developed. Stated the Interim Deputy Chief has been counseled and instructed to take additional professional coursework regarding communications involving external and internal stakeholders. Stated the Interim Deputy Chief was instructed to gather a list of all open projects, investigations, and general work that needs to be assigned to someone at the rank of Deputy Chief and was instructed that upon the assignment of another Deputy Chief they will be assigned to the Patrol Division.

Mayor Marlin announced the first meeting of the Alternative Response Task Force has been postponed to October 15th, 2024 to provide further time to resolve meeting logistics and processes. Further stated Volo Broadband Services, Champaign County, and the Housing Authority of Champaign County have announced an initiative to provide wireless internet to 300 units in the housing authority's system which includes units at Pinewood Place and Crystal View in the City of Urbana. Stated this initiative is part of a larger project to providing wireless internet throughout the housing authority's properties. Stated County ARPA funding was used for this initiative. Announced Coffee with the Mayor at the south lawn of the City Hall building will be occurring on Tuesday, September 17th from 9:00a.m. to 11:00a.m.

10. Mayoral Appointments

a. Mayoral Reappointments to Boards and Commissions

Historic Preservation Commission

– Kathryn Holliday (term ending June 30, 2027)

Mayor Marlin provided an introduction to the candidate and read her qualifications.

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

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

11. Discussion

a. Airbnb Zoning Language

Presented by Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner & Zoning Administrator; and Carol Mitten, City Administrator. Carol Mitten provided a background on the discussion. Kevin Garcia stated the current regulations on short-term rental units requires further development and clarification. Requested direction from City Council on how to proceed. Stated the current regulations are based on “classic conceptions of bed and breakfasts” which don’t take into consideration the current rental landscape that has single-unit apartments and sometimes whole houses available for short-term rentals. Stated complaints received regarding short-term rentals center on people who are “breaking rules”, not in the sense of throwing parties or causing issues with parking. Stated short-term rentals are currently not problematic and limited staff time is available to dedicate toward this issue. Stated short-term rentals are not defined as a specific use or term in the zoning ordinance and there are currently two types defined as “Owner Occupied Bed & Breakfast” and “Bed & Breakfast Inns”. Stated the current approach toward short-term rentals is to interpreting how they fit into one of those two definitions rather than approaching them directly. Shared three approaches have been considered: The less desirable approach where the current method is maintained, an approach where enforcement heavy compliance is implemented, and the most desirable approach where the zoning ordinance is amended to make compliance easier by directly addressing short-term rentals. Stated enforcement heavy compliance would continue treating the short-term rentals as they have currently been, but enforcement of regulations would be done more heavily. Stated it could lead to legal challenges in the future. Elaborated on the third option, stating it directly address short-term rentals by folding their registrations into the currently existing rental registration program. Stated it would make compliance easier for rental property owners and it would not require a significant amount of additional staff time dedicated to it. Stated the potential zoning ordinance amendment could take the form of adding short-term rental specific definitions, amending currently existing definitions to be clearer, and removing one of the existing definitions.

CM Evans asked regarding the third option and if the short-term rental owners would have to pay a fee to register their short-term rentals into the registry. Kevin Garcia confirmed that they would have to pay the fee for the registration.

CM Wu agreed with the idea of defining short-term rentals more explicitly and asked for the expectations on parking to be addressed. Kevin Garcia affirmed parking will be addressed.

CM Hursey asked for the definition of short-term rentals. Kevin Garcia stated short-term rentals would be considered a stay of 30 days or less to comply with building safety rules that define a stay longer than 30 days as long-term or permanent with stays less than that being defined as “transient”. CM Hursey asked how a person with an Airbnb would be able to accommodate stays for people who intend to stay longer than 30 days. Kevin Garcia stated that scenario needs further investigation and currently any stay further than 30 days would fall within the current rental registration program. Stated there is nothing currently preventing anyone from staying longer than 30 days, but further work needs to be done on clarifying those situations.

CM Quisenberry asked what the distinction would be between a short-term rental and a hotel suite with a weekly rate. Kevin Garcia stated there is currently no distinction within the zoning ordinance. Elizabeth Hannan stated the City Code contains provisions to capture hotel and motel taxes from Airbnbs and from other “facilitators”. CM Quisenberry asked regarding short-term rentals in the Stonecreek area being requested to cease operations due to noncompliance with City Code and how that relates to the current discussion. Kevin Garcia stated the issue there was that an entire house could not be rented for less than 31 days. CM Quisenberry asked for further clarification on the distinction between renting a whole house or half a duplex. Kevin Garcia stated the current distinctions do not contain a distinction for half a duplex as it is not within the single-family category.

CM Wilken agreed with the third option proposed and expressed hope to see further options once this item develops further. Asked for further specificity to be brought forward on a later date on the process of how taxes are collected from short-term rental units.

CM Quisenberry asked if Airbnb tenants through short-term rentals who are provided the opportunity to become long-term renters have been found to skirt around rental registration. Kevin Garcia stated it is a possibility.

CM Kolisetty voiced support for the third option proposed, citing positive experiences of being in other cities that certify short-term rental units.

12. Closed Session per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) – Regarding Personnel

Motion to enter closed session by CM Wu, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Entered closed session at 8:55p.m.

Motion to return to open session by CM Wu, seconded by CM Wilken.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Returned to open session at 9:48p.m.

13. Adjournment

With no further business before the Urbana City Council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the meeting at 9:48p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 10/7/24