
DATE: Monday, December 9, 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, December 9, 2024, at 7:14 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 Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken*, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Breaden Belcher, Bourema Ouedraogo, Nick Olsen, Will Kolschowsky, Larry Boone, Thomas Webb, Elizabeth Hannan, Carol Mitten, Matt Roeschley, Tim Cowan

OTHERS PRESENT: Audrey Ishii, Acting Chair & Vice Chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission; Annie Adams, Acting Vice Chair of the Bicycle and 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 7:14p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

a. 11-18-2024 City Council Minutes

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

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. BPAC Annual Report

Presented by Audrey Ishii, Acting Chair & Vice Chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) and Annie Adams, Acting Vice Chair of BPAC. Audrey Ishii provided and overview of the report spanning back to the beginning of 2023. Displayed a photograph of a full bike rack outside of the Urbana High School, stating it is the future for the City of Urbana as students are utilizing bicycles at a high rate due to Urbana providing safer routes to schools. Noted that in its by-laws, BPAC advises the City Council on bicyclist and pedestrian issues and

develops action plans for the implementation of improvements to the City. Stated between 2007 and 2022, excluding short periods, BPAC has been chaired by either a current Urbana City Councilmember or a former Councilmember and that has previously helped organic input to arise from the commission. Stated they now must create resolutions to send to City Council as the situation has changed. Stated BPAC has recommended by vote, an application for a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Federal grant for a speed management study (Vision Zero Action Plan) and the Resolutions previously forwarded by former Chair of BPAC, Bill Brown are seeing great progress with the City's support. Stated John Zeman, City Engineer will be leaving BPAC after serving on the commission for three years and helping develop the proactive goal framework for BPAC. Displayed the 2024 and future goals for BPAC and credited John Zeman for his assistance in helping gather feedback for forming the goals. Stated BPAC continues to serve as a Vision Zero Task Force to promote strategies endorsed by the Vision Zero network. Stated their current challenges for Vision Zero are to prioritize equity and community engagement in addition to managing speed to safe levels. Emphasized the importance of traffic calming as people killed by drivers increased in 2023 to 44,450 people; the pedestrian death rate increasing by 45% over 2010-2019 now accounting for 20% of national traffic deaths; and lack of access to vehicles and the segregation of low-income and Black neighborhoods by dangerous roadways have severely increased pedestrian danger to Black people and Indigenous people. Stated the division of resources from Black neighborhoods by dangerous roadways can be seen in the City of Urbana, pointing to the speed limit of 35-mph for East Main Street. Annie Adams provided background on the hazardous conditions and pedestrian use of East Main Street in the housing dense sections from data collected through the Examine Urbana Comprehensive Plan. Called for the City of Urbana to reduce the speed limit on East Main Street to reduce the likelihood of drivers killing pedestrians. Stated the trend of vehicles being built larger, heavier, and having integrated screens are leading to more deadly conditions for pedestrians. Stated the National Association of City Transportation Officials calls for a statutory speed limit of 20-mph or 25-mph for residential and business urban areas. Stated 22 states across the United States have set statutory speed limits of 20-mph or 25-mph for their urban districts. Audrey Ishii stated the privatization of vehicle crash insurance by the automobile industry has shifted the blame and cost to individuals rather than cities. Stated if the cities had to bear the costs of vehicle crashes, all cities would be made crash proof with speed limits of 10-mph to 15-mph to ensure safety. Stated the cost of vehicle crashes can be seen in the budget of the Urbana Police Department as responding to them accounts for the work hours of three police officer FTE's. Stated unsafe streets are of highest risk to school children at the pickup time of 3:00p.m. and UPD data shows that 3:00p.m. has had the highest rate of crashes per hour.

Motion to extend the presentation time by 5 minutes by CM Wu, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Stated between the average total traffic fatalities in Urbana per year between 1998 and 2007 was 1.2 and between 2008 and 2017 it increased to 2.1 according to the 2011-2015 and 2017 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Reported 3 pedestrian deaths out of 12 total traffic deaths were recorded from 1998 to 2007, but in the 2008 to 2017 period it had increased to 10 pedestrians and 1 bicyclist out of 21 total traffic deaths. Shared that according to the LRTP 2050, 21% of workers in Urbana commute to work by walking or biking while 12% of workers in the City of Champaign commute by walking or biking. Stated 19.2% of households in the City of Urbana lack access to vehicles while in the City of Champaign 15.2% lack vehicle access. Stated the City of Champaign witnessed a decline in average pedestrian death rates per 100,000 people in the 2008 to 2017 period from 8 in the previous 10 years down to 6. Annie Adams

stated if all traffic deaths were recognized in the same way as the state trooper who was recently killed by a driver, a solution would be found sooner to end traffic deaths. Questions and discussion followed.

b. Public Input

Bryan Maxwell encouraged the City to reconsider the reallocation of funds for the Community Engagement Team Pilot Program in Ordinance No. 2024-11-036 and redirect those funds to other programs that could be more beneficial to the community. Stated the Community Engagement Team Pilot Program seems to add onto the over-policing of low-income neighborhoods. Spoke in support of the feedback gathered through the Alternative Response Task Force discussions, the presentation from The Well Experience which compiled the local community's opposition to an increased police presence in their neighborhood, and shared conversations recorded by the local Party for Socialism and Liberation chapter with residents in around the Silver and Vauter area. Stated over-policing may seem like a short-term solution, but it often leaves them worse off, and the community can instead or also receive support through additional funding for programs within the community, resources for programs, and job opportunities. **Child accompanied by Giovanna DiBenedetto** stated more police officers should be present in the community so they can respond to incidents and shootings faster. Stated the police are trusted because they appear at block parties and play with children at ice cream socials despite being on-duty. Stated the police officers are truly kind and asked City Council to approve Ordinance No. 2024-11-036 so her and her friends can be safer. **Giovanna DiBenedetto** stated the Silver and Vauter area was plagued by crime 9 years ago and the Silver Hearts organization was formed in response to connect the neighborhood with social services. Stated Silver Hearts coordinated block parties and ice cream socials so the community could get to know each other better while also getting to know Urbana City staff. Stated their work helped victims of domestic violence, build trust between the community and the Urbana Police Department, and provide a safe space to write police reports for community members. Stated after she moved out of the Silver and Vauter area, things began to fall apart again, and people feel fear to live in and visit the area. Asked City Council to honor their decision to fund the Community Engagement Office and pass Ordinance No. 2024-11-036. **Jeremy Overman** stated despite living in the City of Champaign, he has volunteered in the Silver and Vauter area and has personally seen the positive impact of community events to the area. Stated people used to live in fear because of the crime and violence in the area and a Community Engagement Office would help people feel safer while also deterring crime. Advocated for the approval of Ordinance No. 2024-11-036 and the development of the Community Engagement Office. **Larry Lister** spoke in support of Ordinance No. 2024-11-036 and the approval of the fund correction for the Community Engagement Office. Stated the Community Engagement Team is important because many resources were used to hire Police Chief Boone for his expertise. Listed the benefits of a Community Engagement Office, stating it would spare his friends that live close to City Hall from having to hear police cars travel southward to respond to calls for service, spare his friends from the dangers of fast driving police cars, allow for the UPD to respond to calls for service faster, and build relationships within the local community. Called on his experience as an engineer to note that the price estimate for establishing the substation is half as much as he had personally estimated. Suggested City Council defer decision making regarding the management of the police department to Police Chief Boone, citing his experience.

Written Public Input in support of the Alternative Response Taskforce was received from the following individual, but was not read: Lilah Leopold.

5. Council Input and Communications

CM Evans read a statement from Dr. Stephanie Cockrell, Executive Director of The Well Experience expressing concern with the decision to place the police substation in a neighborhood already dealing with high rates of poverty. Read from the statement how an increased presence of police adds onto the systemic stressors such as a saturation of liquor stores. The statement continued to say how the Community Engagement Office is contradictory to caring for the community's well-being and bears resemblance to the Jim Crow laws which sought to legalize the marginalization of African American people. Further stated how the UPD's lack of engagement with The Well Experience is alarming as they are a resource within the community which focuses on mental health and family services to provide meaningful solutions to the community. Stated the UPD should focus on connecting with local organizations and families. *CM Bishop* stated she attended the recently held Shop with a Cop event and it went well as the families that attended had a lot of fun. Expressed gratitude for UPD hosting this yearly event. *CM Hursey* stated City Council should uphold their decision to fund the Community Engagement Team and that Police Chief Boone has already attempted to engage with local organizations to settle their fears regarding policing. Stated the City has already lost a significant number of police officers, impacting their ability to respond to calls for service. Shared personal, frightening experience of calling for the police but they were unable to respond. Stated Police Chief Boone is not attempting to over-police anyone, and he wants to improve public safety across the City. *CM Kolisetty* stated how damaging the framing of discussions on policing into an "us versus them" scenario can be. Expressed gratitude for the police officers and police leadership within the City but noted that community members are displaying an interest in exploring other options for public safety and the police department's role in that. Stated the importance of acknowledging the good that UPD has done within the community and the greater importance of listening to questions and voices from the community. Affirmed the organizational chart for the City which places its residents above all else, stating her decision making has always been informed by the voices of residents of the City. *CM Quisenberry* expressed gratitude for City staff in the work that they do to provide services for the residents of Urbana. Stated the staff have performed well despite not having as much staffing as other municipalities and more time should be taken to say thanks for their work. Voiced appreciation for Fire Chief Dade bringing the promotions to Council meetings and similar activities should be brought to Council. Shared concern for the Community Engagement Office regarding the selection of the location and discussions as residents have voiced their fears. Stated the City should honor its commitment to improve the UPD's engagement with the community and that there are currently not enough police officers to meet the level of service required for the City.

6. Unfinished Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2024-11-036:** An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #2 – Omnibus) – HRF

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, HR & Finance Director / CFO. This Ordinance seeks to amend the FY2025 Annual Budget to provide additional funding for the City's recycling programs, reallocate funds for the Community Engagement Team Pilot Program, allocate grant funds for Hope Village, and fund a study on fire protection services in the campus area. Elizabeth Hannan provided an overview of the items contained within the omnibus. Stated the items relating to the Community Engagement Team were approved within the budget by Council decision, but a data entry error has placed the funds into incorrect line items.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Motion to divide the question to consider the 5 budget line items relating to the Community Engagement Team separately by CM Evans. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve the 5 budget line items relating to the Community Engagement Team by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Hursey.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Wu, Hursey, Bishop, Quisenberry, Marlin

NAY: Evans, Kolisetty, Wilken

Item failed.

7. Reports of Standing Committees

None.

8. Committee of the Whole (*Council Member Jaya Kolisetty, Ward 4*)

1. Consent Agenda

- a. **Resolution No. 2024-12-080R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Design and Construction of Improvements to Wright Street between the City of Champaign and the City of Urbana – PW

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the City of Champaign for the design and construction of improvements to Wright Street, from Church Street to Dublin Street (Columbia Avenue).

- b. **Resolution No. 2024-12-082R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement Regarding the use of HOME Funds on Behalf of the City of Champaign, Illinois (Parker Glen Phase II, FY 2024-2025) – CD

The Resolution authorizes the execution of a HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement on behalf of the City of Champaign.

- c. **Resolution No. 2024-12-083R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana HOME Consortium Rental Housing Developer Agreement (Woda Cooper Companies, Inc. FY 2024-2025) – CD

The Resolution authorizes the execution of a HOME Consortium Rental Housing Developer Agreement with Woda Cooper Companies, Inc.

- d. **Resolution No. 2024-12-084R:** A Resolution Approving an Increase in the Number of Liquor Licenses in the Class P Designation for Cetara Gas Inc D/B/A Cetara Gas Inc, 1821 South Philo Road – Exec

The Resolution increases the number of Class P liquor licenses in the City of Urbana.

- e. **Resolution No. 2024-12-085R:** A Resolution Approving an Increase in the Number of Liquor Licenses in the Class P Designation for H Mart Urbana, LLC D/B/A H Mart, 220 North Broadway Avenue – Exec

The Resolution increases the number of Class P liquor licenses in the City of Urbana.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

2. Regular Agenda

- a. **Resolution No. 2024-12-081R:** A Resolution to Endorse the Champaign Urbana Urban Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2050 – PW

The Resolution endorses the Champaign Urbana Urban Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2050.

Motion to approve by CM Kolisetty, seconded by CM Hursey.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- b. **Ordinance No. 2024-12-038:** An Ordinance Amending the Urbana City Code, Chapter 14, Section 14-7 and Chapter 22, Section 22-102 (Food Licenses and Recycling Tax) – HRF

The Ordinance amends the City Code to make recycling taxes consistent with direction received from City Council on November 18, 2024, and certain fees regarding food licenses would be amended to conform to new Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (C-UPHD) processes.

Motion to approve by CM Kolisetty, seconded by CM Wilken. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: Wu, Hursey

- c. **Ordinance No. 2024-12-039:** An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #4 – Omnibus) – HRF

Presented by Tim Cowan, Public Works Director. The Ordinance amends the FY2025 Annual Budget to reallocate funds between capital improvement projects, increase the budget for equipment in the Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Fund (VERF) for a vehicle not replaced as scheduled, fund the demolition of the old Fire Station 3 on North Lincoln Avenue, and support the implementation of new permitting and licensing software. Tim Cowan spoke on the background of the construction of Windsor Road and the litigation with the developer that followed. Stated the awards from the litigation did not cover the legal fees and the contractual

obligation with IDOT and the federal government that called for a repayment of a portion of the federal funds provided which totals to \$512,537. Stated due to the outstanding balance owed, IDOT is not authorizing fund withdrawals from the State Motor Fuel Tax (SMFT) funds. Stated City staff have discussed the issue and recommended repaying the balance owed to allow future withdrawals from the SMFT. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve, with revision of Exhibit A to reflect the repayment of federal funds in the amount of \$512,537 relating to the Windsor Road project, by CM Kolisetty, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

9. Reports of Special Committees

None.

10. Reports of Officers

a. Announcements

Carol Mitten, City Administrator announced the Lincoln Avenue Corridor Study is currently open for public comment until January 3, 2025 and those who wish to review it can find it on the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) website [here](#).

Mayor Marlin stated the partial Special Census is concluding within this week and the results will be made available within the next 90 days. Shared the Illinois American Water Company was awarded a rate increase, and the City of Urbana has intervened in that case regarding the reallocation of regional wastewater treatment costs to local rate payers, having water customers pay into a \$5,800,000 incentive program for company executives, the implementation of a 2-step rate increase over the next 2 years, the addition of fees for customers to cover the cost of environmental regulation compliance, and advocated for the successfully adopted increased discount for low-income customers below 150% of the federal poverty level effective July 1, 2025. Stated individual customers who are using over 5,000 gallons a month will see an increase in their bill from \$76 a month to \$97 a month which follows market trends caused by private water companies being able to purchase public water systems. Shared City staff have completed a draft of the Alternative Response Task Force Facilitator RFP that is currently undergoing internal review before being circulated to City Council.

b. Social Services Funding Report and Youth Services Grant Annual Report – CD

Presented by Breaden Belcher, Grants Division Manager and Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator. Breaden Belcher provided an overview of the presentation which will cover the Youth Services Grant Annual Report for FY 2024 and provide recommendations for use of additional social service funding. Nick Olsen stated the funding available for the Youth Services Grant Program in FY 2024 was \$300,000 with \$200,000 sourced from the Violence Prevention Grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO); \$75,000 sourced from the City's General Fund; and \$25,000 sourced from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Stated the Youth Services Grant program has

awarded funding to 17 programs across 13 different organizations in the local community, but 2 programs were unable to utilize the funds due to operational issues. Shared that the programs are providing service in the following categories: Healthcare, Job Training, Mentoring, Workforce Development, After-School Program, Mental Health Resource/Trauma Support, Recreation, Education, and Violence Prevention. Shared a chart displaying the total amount of youth being assisted in each quarter, but due to the way the data was collected it does not note how many new, unique youth are being assisted from quarter to quarter (Q1, 245; Q2, 524; Q3, 443; Q4, 455). Noted the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District's CU Farm to School program was not included in this dataset as their large numbers are reflective of the populations of the several schools in which they serve. Shared the demographic information collected from the programs that were able to do so, they saw the following percentages of youth being served across race and ethnicity: 51% Black/African American, 20% White, 14% Hispanic of any race, 11% Multiple Races, 3% Asian, 1% Native American/Alaska Native, and 0% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Stated the income levels of youth being served were reported as the following: 36% Extremely Low (0-30% Median Family Income) (MFI), 34% Low (51-60% MFI), 21% Very Low (31-50% MFI), and 9% Moderate (61-80% MFI). Shared the gender identity of youth being served were reported as the following: 50% Female, 48% Male, 1% Non-binary/non-conforming, 1% Prefer not to respond, and 0% Transgender. Stated the programs are having a large impact on the youth being served and there is much being considered for the future of the program in strengthening the data collection and better setting up the grantees for success.

Breaden Belcher stated since the beginning of the Youth Services Grant program in 2021, the organizations reapplying for funding have built a good working relationship with the City while also seeing new organizations apply for funding, indicating a healthy mix of new and established organizations participating in the grant program. Stated for the FY 2025 budget, City Council increased the recurring social service funding to \$300,000 from the General Fund to support the annual Youth Services Grant Program, an additional \$400,000 in one-time funding was also provided by Council to address social service needs, and Council recommended committing \$300,000 in unspent ARPA funds to social services to encumber the funds before their expiration. Asked for direction from Council on how best to utilize the \$700,000 available in one-time funding for social services to respond to community needs in a timely fashion. Asked for Council to consider the ARPA expenditure deadline and eligibility criteria, how best to address community needs, and consider staff capacity for projects.

Recommended the Youth Services Grant Program funding be maintained at \$300,000 annually and for the \$700,000 in one-time funding to fund a second round of the Housing & Homeless Innovations Grants Program (HHI). Provided background on HHI, which provided funding sourced from HOME-ARP funds from HUD to organizations for services to aid households and individuals experiencing homelessness. Stated the former HHI grantees were Cunningham Township, CU at Home, Champaign County Healthcare Consumers, CCRPC, Housing Authority of Champaign County, and Strides Shelter. Stated eligible categories under the program were the following: Housing navigation, Supportive services, Rental assistance, Transitional housing, Non-congregate shelter development, and Operating/capacity building support. Shared the current community need seems to be in housing and homeless services due to the persistently increasing number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Champaign County. Stated service providers and non-profit organizations within the community are reporting that they are operating at, near, or over full capacity that are hoping for funding through another round of HHI. Stated \$1,200,000 in funds could be available for the second round of HHI through the use of the one-time allocation of \$400,000 in the City's General Fund for social services, the uncommitted \$300,000 in ARPA Funds, and \$500,000 from the uncommitted HOME ARP funds. Expressed a second HHI round would have a profound impact on the local community and requested Council feedback regarding the matter. Stated

previously utilized infrastructure for the original round of HHI could be reused and it would not be a significant burden upon the Community Development department.

Council asked regarding the partnership with a coalition of organizations, including the City of Champaign, during the original round of HHI to form a larger pool of funding and if there is any discussion going on to form a similar coalition for the second round. Breaden Belcher stated there is potential for it as the original HHI had funds from the City of Champaign's general fund in addition to multiple other pots of funding to make the program more accessible to organizations in the area. Stated the use of the HOME ARP funds would bring the City of Champaign into the development of the program as those funds are managed in cooperation with the City of Champaign. Council further asked regarding the deadline for committing the unused ARPA funds. Will Kolschowsky stated the funds have to be committed, but they can be considered committed through an inter-department memorandum of understanding. Mayor Marlin further clarified the funds must be spent by 12/31/2026.

Council discussed the proper procedures to adequately encumber the unallocated ARPA Funds.

Council discussed the eligible programs under HHI, how the funding is awarded, and how programs are determined to fit into eligible categories.

Council asked what the "Operating/Capacity Building Support" category for HHI entailed. Breaden Belcher stated this could cover ongoing items such as payroll, office leasing, adding staff, and investments that help expansions in offered services. Nick Olsen further stated under HOME ARP, this category must be paired with another eligible service category as per HUD guidelines.

Council asked what happened to the funds that were unable to be drawn by the programs that did not have capacity to be operated. Breaden Belcher stated the funds were returned to the pot of funding to be reallocated. Elaborated that the specific programs that were unable to begin were funded through the DCEO funds, so those were returned to that pot to be used for other violence prevention programming.

Council asked why there is \$500,000 in unspent funds from the initial HHI round. Breaden Belcher stated the \$500,000 uncommitted HOME ARP funds were from not receiving enough applications to fully utilize those funds and expire by 2030. Noted there were no cancelled projects which were funded through the HOME ARP funds. Council further asked if there are already projects that are interested in applying for the second round of HHI. Breaden Belcher stated there is already a community need and the funds should be able to be committed and spent quickly based on what is being heard from organizations as well as the rapidly growing need for these services.

Council asked for clarification on if the ARPA fund allocation requirement was satisfied already through the allocation of the funds toward social services. Will Kolschowsky stated the ARPA funds require an official mechanism of encumbering the funds through an interdepartmental memorandum of agreement despite Council having already provided direction to put the ARPA funds toward social services.

Council discussed potential other uses for the \$400,000 for social services funding from the General Fund rather than be entirely committed to a second round of HHI. CM Wu spoke in support of putting some of the \$400,000 toward social services to support workforce development and adult supportive services. CM Evans asked how a proposed set of funding use categories from City Council can be put toward a vote by City Council. Breaden Belcher stated all grant agreements ultimately come to Council for approval and proposals from Council

can be sent to him for further development. CM Kolisetty asked the feasibility for finding another way to distribute the \$400,000 outside of the HHI infrastructure. Breaden Belcher stated designing a new grant program will be time consuming and challenging due to current constraints, but not outside the realm of possibility. CM Kolisetty stated the categories under HHI address community needs widely in actionable and meaningful way given the constraints with staff workload and timelines and voiced support for a second round of HHI. CM Bishop agreed a wider range of funding categories would be nice, but given the time constraints a second HHI program would yield the greatest long-term impacts.

Council asked if a different need in the community arose in the near future after direction is given to proceed with a second HHI round, would it possible to divert funds to support that need? Breaden Belcher stated the direction provided tonight would prompt staff to update the HHI portal, conduct outreach, and advertise the amount of funding available. Stated a diversion of funds would be difficult due to having already advertised the pot of funding. Stated if funds were leftover after reviewing the grant agreements, a discussion could be had regarding diverting the remaining funds.

CM Wu clarified her proposal was to not create a new grant program, but to expand a given eligible category under social services to include a wider demographic.

CM Wilken spoke in support of committing at least the \$500,000 unspent HOME ARP funds and \$300,000 ARPA funds to a second round of HHI with an option to potentially split the \$400,000 in the General Funds available to provide \$200,000 to the HHI and \$200,000 to a flexible City grant pool.

Council discussed the goal of encumbering the social services funding within the current fiscal year as it could change from this Council to the next elected Council and should be encumbered within this fiscal year unless there is a way to roll over the funds into the next fiscal year. Elizabeth Hannan stated it is possible to roll the funds over into the next fiscal year and the funds can be committed before the next fiscal year through a grant agreement, encumbering the funds and automatically carrying the funds forward to the next fiscal year.

Breaden Belcher summarized the discussion, stating Council has an interest in seeing the Youth Services Grant Program expanded to also include services aimed toward adults with the support of \$200,000 from the one-time social services funds from the City's General Fund and Council is interested in allocating \$1,000,000 total to the HHI via \$300,000 in ARPA funds, \$500,000 in HOME ARP funds, and \$200,000 from the one-time social services funds allocated from the City's General Fund.

Council reached consensus on the direction provided as summarized.

11. New Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2024-12-040:** An Ordinance Levying Taxes for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2024 and Ending June 30, 2025 – HRF

Presented alongside Ordinance No. 2024-12-041 by Elizabeth Hannan, HR & Finance Director / CFO. The Ordinance approves the 2024 property tax levy. Elizabeth Hannan stated the Ordinance is the final step for levying property taxes and is consistent with what has been previously discussed in front of Council. Stated the second Ordinance abates the tax levy and directs the Champaign County Clerk to maintain the City's current property tax rate of \$1.3499. Stated at this rate the owner of a home valued at \$180,000 would pay \$729 in property taxes to the City of Urbana annually. Questions and discussion followed.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- b. Ordinance No. 2024-12-041:** An Ordinance Directing the Champaign County Clerk to Abate the Tax Levy for the General Corporate Fund for the Tax Year Beginning July 1, 2024 and Ending June 30, 2025 – HRF

Presented alongside Ordinance No. 2024-12-040 by Elizabeth Hannan, HR & Finance Director / CFO. The Ordinance abates the levy and directs the Champaign County Clerk to adjust the corporate levy to achieve a total tax rate of \$1.3499 to maintain the City's current property tax rate.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

12. Adjournment

With no further business before the Urbana City Council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the meeting at 9:56p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 2/5/25

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Lilah Leopold <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2024 2:13 PM
To: !City Council; Marlin, Diane
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT 12-9-2024

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Marlin and Council Members Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry,

I submit the below as Public Comment for tonight's council meeting. Please read aloud if time permits (thank you in advance!):

My name is Lilah Leopold and I am a resident of Urbana (Ward 4). I would like to add my voice to those working in support of an Alternative Response Taskforce. I understand that during tonight's meeting there will be a discussion of the satellite police station that is proposed for the Philo Road business district as it relates to a proposed budget amendment that would draw on HR and vehicle replacement funds.

Given that no coherent plan for this office or engagement team has been presented, and given the time and effort spent in council discussions and across the community in developing an Alternative Response Taskforce and its included community partners, it would make sense to draw on and develop this resource at the earliest possible opportunity. We all seem to agree that ongoing dialogue between police and community is necessary to keep us all safe and to build lasting relationships across our city.

The moment of considering a new plan, such as that related to the satellite police station, is an ideal opportunity for putting the Alternative Response Taskforce into action: the plan should be developed through the work of this taskforce. This is a winning recipe for Police Community Engagement, an opportunity to chip away at stereotypes on all sides and join forces to serve the community with all the tools at our disposal, with solid relationship-bound metrics for success.

I support the allocation of funds proposed for the satellite station to the budget for Alternative Response. Before funds go toward a satellite station, it would make sense to work with the community partners who are already up to the task and figure out what kind of office space and accoutrements are needed before any formal station investments are made. I hope that all members of our police force understand this for what it is: a true desire to support them and our entire community in good relations.

Thank you,

Lilah Leopold (Ward 4)



CM EVANS
Council input
12-9-24
CL

December 6, 2024

Subject: Continued Concern Regarding Increased Systems Affecting Families in Urbana

Dear City of Urbana Officials:

I must continue to express my deep concern regarding the decisions that have been made, particularly in light of the historical context surrounding policing in communities of color and the ongoing challenges faced by families living in poverty.

The decision to place a satellite police station in an area already grappling with high poverty levels raises several troubling questions. It's disheartening to see a continuation of policies that could lead to increased policing in neighborhoods already under stress, especially when the same communities are simultaneously being subjected to an increase in alcohol availability, potentially exacerbating substance abuse issues. We cannot overlook the tragic implications of such measures, which seem contradictory to any claims of caring about genuine community well-being. It sounds very 'Jim Crow' to me, and I do not see good things coming from this. I say this with the understanding that the main purpose of Jim Crow laws was to legalize the marginalization of African American people, and these recent decisions remind me of this despairing system we know and experience all too often.

The Urbana Police Department's lack of engagement with me and my team at The Well Experience is particularly alarming. As the Executive Director of an organization dedicated to mental health and family services and serving families in the heart of the community impacted the most, I believe our insights and experiences are vital in shaping meaningful solutions. If community engagement and healing are genuinely the mission, working with organizations on the ground and connecting with the families in this community should be considered a priority.

I would like to understand better the Urbana Police Department's definition of "community engagement" and the purpose of a proposed community engagement officer. Successful engagement requires relationships with those you choose to engage. Specifically, what kind of training will its members receive in areas such as:

- Family Engagement
- Cultural Awareness and Humility
- Racial Equity
- Understanding Poverty
- Understanding Trauma

- Healing-Centered Engagement
- Resource Finding and Management

Without comprehensive and relevant training and a commitment to transforming traditional policing practices, I fear we will see the same cycles of mistrust, racial disparities in policing, and systemic issues persist. We need to shift our focus from punitive measures to investing in proactive, community-based solutions that have been shown to support Black families and individuals living in poverty most effectively.

The overrepresentation of Black individuals in school disciplinary actions, the juvenile justice system, and the ongoing profiling by law enforcement are long-standing issues in our community that demand immediate attention. Organizations like The Well Experience are already working diligently on the ground, providing vital support to families most affected by these systemic challenges. We have witnessed families making positive changes as their economic opportunities, education, and access to mental health care increase. However, we require additional resources and support to deepen our impact and foster sustainable change.

If we are serious about breaking the cycle of violence and mistrust, we must embrace transformative, community-driven strategies that prioritize prevention and restorative approaches. Only then can we hope to build authentic trust between law enforcement, the City of Urbana, and Black families, leading to a safer and more just Urbana for everyone.

I urge the city and the police department to consider investing in the resources and partnerships needed to create meaningful change in our community and focus on dismantling inequitable systems. I am more than willing to facilitate and participate in discussions between community organizations and law enforcement to foster the collaborative work necessary for achieving these goals.

Thank you for considering my concerns. If you have any questions, please contact me at 217-530-0147 or scockrell@thewellexperience.org. I look forward to your response.

Warm regards,

Dr. Stephanie Cockrell, Ph.D.



Executive Director

The Well Experience