
DATE: Monday, February 03, 2025
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, February 3, 2025, 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 Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Demond Dade, Elizabeth Hannan, Steve Doggett, Tal Prendergast, Seok Hyun Cho, Matt Roeschley, Mike Cervantes, Will Kolschowsky, Dave Smysor, Carol Mitten, Don Ho, Larry Boone

OTHERS PRESENT: Tracy Dace, CEO of Driven to Reach Excellence & Academic Achievements for Males (DREAAM); Scott Dossett, Member of Urbana Sister City Committee;

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Mayor Marlin called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:00p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

a. 12-09-2024 City Council Minutes

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

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. DREAAMers Trip to Malawi – Tracy Dace of DREAAM

Introduction provided by Scott Dossett, Member of Urbana Sister City Committee. Presented by Tracy Dace, CEO of DREAAM and Mycal Turner, Senior at Urbana High School. Tracy Dace shared the background of DREAAM as well as the programs and services they offer. Stated DREAAM was able to bring five youth from local high schools on a trip to Malawi to conduct community engagement work in partnership with the Urbana Sister City Committee,

strengthen relationships with community organizations similar to that of DREAAM, and engage in cultural exchange programs with local youth. Stated the trips also provide deeper cultural understanding and global awareness to those who participate in DREAAM and their families. Mycal Turner spoke on the incredible food and hospitality seen immediately upon arrival in Malawi and hoped to share those experiences to further the Urbana community. Stated Tracy Dace facilitated meetings with community leaders who have had profound impacts on their communities. Shared how himself alongside his fellow DREAAMers were able to connect with the youth through their STEM Camp where they shared with each other how solar energy is utilized in their communities and where technology is being innovated on and utilized in Malawi. Spoke on the incredible environments, landscape, and people they were able to experience and meet throughout the trip. Shared how they were able to meet with the local churches and see the high youth engagement they have within their membership as well as their pastors. Stated the trip changed his perspective on what struggle means and expressed thanks for the opportunity to go on the trip. Expressed how participating in the construction of homes during the trip has been a great experience. Spoke on how he learned about how education and hospitality are central pillars to Malawi culture, witnessing firsthand how it materializes. Thanked Tracy Dace and DREAAM for their support and the work that they do. Tracy Dace shared the next trip to Malawi is planned for August 2025 with ideally 10 DREAAMers and five adults with at least 4 of the DREAAMers being high schoolers from the Urbana School District. Stated DREAAM is partnering with Habitat for Humanity to conduct service locally in addition to a build in Malawi. Stated DREAAM will also be hosting activities such as the Girl Empowerment Workshop, Adopt a School, Safari, and a Youth Talent Show in their next trip. Questions and discussion followed.

b. Public Input

Brian Dolinar spoke in support of Ordinance No. 2024-12-042. Stated the community is currently facing significant fear in the face of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and calls for a greater understanding on the surveillance technologies being potentially deployed in the community. Stated the City of Urbana has contracted the Israel-based company, Cellebrite for \$9,000 for cellphone hacking technologies. Stated Cellebrite has a \$54,000,000 contract with ICE and the technology has been reported to be used in violating human rights in the Country of Serbia was reported on by Amnesty International. Emphasized the importance of reviewing policing technologies, maintaining transparency regarding those technologies, and providing the opportunity for public input when considering their adoption. Noted the contradiction in Urbana being a Sanctuary City while contracting with Cellebrite who is assisting in the deportation of undocumented residents. **Steven MacGuire** stated after personally reviewing Ordinance No. 2024-12-042, it seems like a good measure to increase transparency in line with Police Chief Larry Boone's statements in support of improving transparency for the Urbana Police Department (UPD). Stated checks and balances are necessary to ensure transparency. Voiced that surveillance technology impacts the community the greatest and they should be given a say in their consideration process. Stated if the technology is so necessary as people say it is, then it should be easy to make a persuasive case to Council for its adoption. Stated oversight is needed because of the ongoing ICE raids, fear felt by the community, and the inaccurate nature of algorithmic technologies. Urged for a complete divestment from Israel-based companies until Israel complies with international law due to the ongoing genocide of Palestinian people. **Christopher Zelle** stated the UPD would do well to generate good will through data-driven and transparent practices, but there is no record of them doing so yet. Stated a checks and balances system relies on good faith to operate, but Police Chief Boone has not yet done so. Stated Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 would require arguments backed by data for the implementation of surveillance technologies and not skew data in their favor. Voiced a desire to see the Ordinance be made more robust to prevent the abuse of technologies behind closed doors and prevent the misrepresentation of data in arguments for the adoption of

surveillance technologies. Noted facial recognition software makes many mistakes in recognizing faces of people of color. Stated the City of Urbana should also not contract with companies that have violated human rights or companies that are based in countries condemned by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity. **Camille Cobb** spoke in support of Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 as it has been developed with the support of people who are knowledgeable on the subject and is a good measure. Expressed disappointment in the complacency toward mass surveillance shown in the discussions. Stated the Ordinance accepts the fact that problematic surveillance technologies will continue to be adopted, but at least provides the public an opportunity to voice their opposition and concerns to Council. **Dr. Reverend Evelyn Underwood** stated she has spoken with various people across the community, and they call for Council to take responsibility for their actions and to approve Ordinance No. 2024-12-042. Stated people are feeling the same fear from the 80s and 90s of being targeted by the UPD for advocating on the community's behalf in front of Council. Voiced a need for sufficient checks and balances especially under the current Trump Administration. Stated accountability for Council and measures for oversight are necessary.

5. Council Input and Communications

CM Wilken thanked the public for their continued engagement. Acknowledged the changes in the federal administration impacting everyone. Shared she has been able to find comfort in the local demonstrations for human and trans rights as well as the local organizations that support the most vulnerable in the community. Stated the UPD have reaffirmed their commitment in upholding the City's Human Rights Ordinance and that community members have requested the City to reaffirm their commitment to human rights and being a Sanctuary City. Voiced support for a reaffirmation and welcomed people to contact her at grace.wilken@urbanail.gov to help develop the Ordinance. **CM Quisenberry** addressed the recent antisemitic comments made by a City of Champaign Councilmember, stating those statements have generated fear in the community and hatred is unwelcome in Urbana. Stated there is no option for residents to hold their elected officials accountable and voiced support for implementing a public method to recall elected officials. **CM Evans** stated he attended a concert at the Urbana Middle School on the previous Thursday with three ensembles consisting of hundreds of students and they put on a great performance. Stated it was a tremendous display of talent from the youth and represents the good ongoing within the community. **CM Kolisetty** stated there is a lot of good within the community, but hate has been appearing in the community and is wholly unwelcome. Stated that hate must be addressed not with gestures, but a strong reaffirmation of human rights and the Sanctuary City status of Urbana. Thanked CM Wilken for putting the idea forward and stated she will assist in the development of that Ordinance. **Mayor Marlin** that the City, in response to the federal funding freeze, contacted Representative Budzinski's office and Deputy Governor Andy Manar's office for guidance on how to proceed. Stated a list of impacted programs from the freeze is being compiled which included programs utilizing HOME Funds, HOME ARP Funds, CDBG Funds, and the RAISE Grant. Stated the current impact on the budget is around \$7,400,000 and will be closer to \$18,000,000 in the next year's budget. Stated a county-wide response must be coordinated to prioritize the greatest needs first. Shared there has been an arrest in the hit and run that occurred recently of a Guatemalan citizen in the State of Texas and will be returned to Champaign County to be charged. Requested more time to speak to finish the update.

Motion to extend speaking time by 2 minutes by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wu.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: Wilken

Stated Detectives Paige Bennett and Corey Pankow are leading the investigation with support from Lieutenants Cory Koker and Brian Hoff. Thanked the University of Illinois Police Department for their

sharing of drone technology to photograph the area as well as the City of Champaign Police Department and the Illinois State Police for their equipment which assisted processing the vehicles as evidence. Stated the City continues to meet with the families of the victims.

6. Reports of Standing Committees

None.

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

1. Consent Agenda

- a. ~~**Ordinance No. 2025-01-001:** An Ordinance Establishing Authority to Execute Municipal Electric Aggregation Agreements – PW~~

~~The Ordinance amends City Code to provide for the Mayor or City Administrator the authority to execute electricity supply agreements and renewable energy credit agreements.~~

Item moved to Regular Agenda by CM Wilken.

- b. **Resolution No. 2025-01-010R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Grant Agreement for the FY23 Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant between the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission and the City of Urbana – PW

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a grant agreement with Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) for the FY23 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant, which includes the City of Urbana as a subrecipient for the Lincoln Avenue (Wascher to Killarney) road diet demonstration.

- c. **Ordinance No. 2025-01-002:** An Ordinance Amending Chapter 9 of the Urbana City Code Concerning Food Licenses – HRF

The Ordinance amends City Code regarding exemptions to the license fees for food establishments.

- d. **Resolution No. 2025-01-009R:** A Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Champaign-Urbana Public Health District to Jointly Issue Health Permits and City Food Handling Licenses – HRF

The Resolution approves the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to update the food handling licensing agreement with the Champaign Urbana Public Health District (C-UPHD).

- e. **Resolution No. 2025-01-001R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods Grant Agreement – Cunningham Children’s Home (FY 2024 – 2025) – CD

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a subrecipient agreement as part of the City’s Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) grant program to the Cunningham Children’s Home for the Washington Street Pollinator Pathway project in the amount of \$10,000.

- f. Resolution No. 2025-01-002R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods Grant Agreement – Cunningham Township (FY 2024 – 2025) – CD

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a subrecipient agreement as part of the City’s Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) grant program to Cunningham Township for the Solidarity Gardens project in the amount of \$18,700.

- g. Resolution No. 2025-01-003R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods Grant Agreement – Sola Gratia Farm (FY 2024 – 2025) – CD

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a subrecipient agreement as part of the City’s Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) grant program to Sola Gratia Farm for the Community Classroom Improvements project in the amount of \$10,000.

- h. Resolution No. 2025-01-004R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods Grant Agreement – STEAM Genius (FY 2024 – 2025) – CD

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a subrecipient agreement as part of the City’s Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) grant program to STEAM Genius for the Street College Course project in the amount of \$13,000.

- i. Resolution No. 2025-01-005R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods Grant Agreement – Urbana Park District (FY 2024 – 2025) – CD

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a subrecipient agreement as part of the City’s Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) grant program to the Urbana Park District for the FRESH Crew Teen Stewardship Program project in the amount of \$10,000.

- j. Resolution No. 2025-01-006R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods Grant Agreement – Urbana School District #116 (FY 2024 – 2025) – CD

The Resolution approves and authorizes the execution of a subrecipient agreement as part of the City’s Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) grant program to the Urbana School District #116 for the Farm to School Program project in the amount of \$10,000.

- k. Resolution No. 2025-01-007R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Economic Development Agreement (Champaign County Economic Development Corporation, Fiscal Year 2024-2025) – Exec

The Resolution authorizes the execution of an Economic Development Agreement with the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 for the provision of regional economic development services by the EDC for the benefit of the City and the regional economy.

- l. Resolution No. 2025-01-008R:** A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Community Partnership Agreement (Experience Champaign Urbana, Fiscal Year 2024-2025) – Exec

The Resolution authorizes the execution of a Community Partnership Agreement with Experience Champaign Urbana (ECU) for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 for the provision of marketing and community support services by ECU for the benefit of the City's tourism industry.

- m. Resolution No. 2025-01-011R:** A Resolution Approving an Increase in the Number of Liquor Licenses in the Class R&T-1 Designation for Urbana Gardens Restaurant, Inc. D/B/A Maple & Yolk, 810 West Killarney Street, Urbana, Ill. – Exec

The Resolution increases the number of R&T-1 (Restaurant & Tavern – All Alcohol) liquor licenses in the City of Urbana.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

2. Regular Agenda

- a. Ordinance No. 2025-01-001:** An Ordinance Establishing Authority to Execute Municipal Electric Aggregation Agreements – PW

Presented by Scott Tess, Sustainability & Resilience Officer. The Ordinance amends City Code to provide for the Mayor or City Administrator the authority to execute electricity supply agreements and renewable energy credit agreements.

Council reached consensus to amend to revisit the authority by December 31, 2027.

Motion to approve as amended by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wilken. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- b. Ordinance No. 2025-01-003:** An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #5 – HRF

The Ordinance amends the FY2025 Annual Budget to include additional funding for U-Cycle by \$130,000; rebudget \$65,850 in tree donation funds to FY2025 to be utilized for Spring planting; rebudget \$50,000 of an unused \$59,000 in FY2024 funds for Police Sergeant promotional testing to facilitate the completion of the promotional testing process; correct certain interfund transfers to the Information Technology Fund (610) that were not posted in FY2024 with a one-time adjustment of \$295,000 with \$277,500 to be sourced from the General Fund; and adjust the allocation for an interfund transfer from the ARPA Fund (350) to the Local Motor Fuel Tax (LMFT) Fund to \$0.00 from \$115,000 as it was determined to be unnecessary for FY2025.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- c. **Resolution No. 2025-01-012R:** A Resolution Authorizing Intervention Before the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board – Exec

The Resolution authorizes the City’s representative to intervene in appeals before the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB).

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

8. Reports of Special Committees

None.

9. Reports of Officers

- a. **Financial Forecast for FY2026 – FY2030 – HRF**

Presented by Don Ho, Senior Finance Analyst / Budget Coordinator and Elizabeth Hannan, HR & Finance Director / CFO. In accordance with the City’s Financial Policies, the Finance Department staff annually prepare a five-year financial forecast for the City’s General Operating Fund to be presented before Council. Elizabeth Hannan shared Don Ho was previously employed with the City from 2015 to 2020 and has been rehired recently in November 2024 and spoke on his qualifications. Noted this marks the 11th year she has worked on a Financial Forecast for the City of Urbana and has been one of the most difficult due to the current circumstances under the federal administration. Stated the report contains unprecedented levels of uncertainty. Provided background on the roles of the Financial Forecast in beginning the development of the annual budget and focuses on the General Operating Fund as it covers most City services such as police, fire, and Public Works. Spoke on the methods on how risk is assessed and monitored in the forecast as well as how it is factored into the range of projections. Stated the risk is currently higher compared to previous years due to uncertainties at the state and federal levels impacting policies, regulations, and funding. Stated the risk level was increased due to pauses on Federal Grants and Loans, impacting multiple programs and agencies; the pause was shortly rescinded after its announcement; the Department of Transportation published an order to prioritize projects based on new criteria such as assisting ICE with detentions as well as marriage and birth rates of an area; the tariffs announced on Mexico, China, and Canada with those later being delayed by a month; and the potential for tariffs to be placed on countries within the European Union (EU). Shared the risk level has increased from State level activities such as efforts to roll back Tier 2 pensions; the lack of legislated appropriation for income tax; and the potential for efforts to place property tax caps on Home Rule municipalities.

Don Ho noted the economic outlook contains a high degree of uncertainty due to the several factors discussed. Stated the forecast relies on the Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank’s

economic forecasters for the long-term projections and the data contains some positive points. Stated the forecasters do not anticipate a near-term recession and expect for inflation to ease and eventually stabilize with a long-term inflation projection of 2.3%. Stated there are also many negative indicators in the forecast such as the loss of the Grocery Tax in January 2026, which is expected to reduce revenue by \$1,000,000. Emphasized the importance of maintaining reserve funds in line with the City's Financial Policies to have a flexibility in responding to emergencies or unexpected economic downturns.

Shared the forecast makes key assumption on the population count returning from the Special Census will be near 41,000 and the City will receive \$4,500,000 in one-time funding for capital improvement projects and \$532,000 in one-time funding for the second and third year of the UPD's Community Engagement Team within FY26 and FY27.

Stated the main indicators of fiscal health were the percentage of recurring expenditures to recurring revenue and the fund balance percentage as part of recurring expenditures. Stated viewing the percentage of recurring expenditures to recurring revenue shows how the City will be able to sustain programs and services as well as ensure commitments can be maintained. Stated the City's current policy is to not allow for recurring expenditures to not exceed 98.5% of recurring expenses to account for slight variations in revenue to continue providing services. Stated viewing the fund balance as a percentage to the recurring expenditures is crucial as it shows the City's flexibility as well as resilience in times of disaster or economic downturn. Stated the City's Financial Policy is to retain a fund balance of at least 25% of the recurring expenditures.

Shared a chart displaying recurring revenues and expenditures across FY25 to FY30 in the most likely scenario. Pointed to the revenues and expenditures equaling out by FY28 and then the expenditures exceeding revenue in FY29 and FY30. Stated this illustrates the City's need for additional revenue to maintain current services. Displayed a graph covering growth in recurring revenue and expenses from FY26 to FY30. Stated the projected growth rate of expenditures outpaces the projected growth for recurring revenue year over year and methods to increase revenue may be necessary in the future. Shared a chart projecting the fund balance amount from FY25 to FY30 in the best-case, likely-case, and worst-case scenarios. Stated the best-case scenario displays a modest increase in the fund balance and the worst-case scenario sees the fund balance significantly decrease. Stated the worst-case scenario assumes Tier 2 Pensions are eliminated, inflation is extremely high, and revenue sources significantly underperform.

Shared a graph tracking the likely fund balance from FY25 to FY30, noting fund balance in the likely scenario continues to remain above the 25% required by the Financial Policy until FY29 without any budget adjustments which indicates no immediate action is necessary. Elizabeth Hannan stated the forecast assumes the payments for the Hotel Royer project will be a loan from the General Fund, but an issue is that the loan cannot be tax-exempt due to specific terms within the development agreement. Don Ho stated further predictions would be unreliable as the further into the future you try and forecast, the more unreliable data becomes.

Elizabeth Hannan recommended the City maintain its current level of services, continue preparing for potential reductions in Federal funding, plan to increase revenue, and continue prioritizing economic development. Provided potential options for increasing revenue such as: a "Cloud" tax on streaming services with the potential to generate \$300,000 a year; a Home Rule grocery tax with the potential to generate \$1,000,000 a year; and increasing the local food and beverage tax by 0.5% to 2.5% which could generate an additional \$500,000 per year. Stated there are other options available, but those are the most likely to generate significant recurring revenue.

Spoke on the efforts in continuing to prepare for reductions in federal funding as the City of Urbana and the State of Illinois are likely targets under the current Federal Administration. Stated even with no new programs or services in the budget, it would be impossible to absorb the cost of the programs, services, and projects that use federal funds. Recommended for financial stability to be prioritized by the City and continue evaluating potential revenue sources. Stated there may be further efforts from the Federal level to recall funds that were already awarded to cities despite the negative impacts that will have on residents and organizations.

Questions and discussion followed.

10. Mayoral Appointments

a. **Mayoral Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

Urbana Tree Commission

– Stewart Berlocher (term ending June 30, 2028)

Mayor Marlin introduced the candidate and spoke on his background as well as his accomplishments.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

11. **Adjournment**

With no further business before the Urbana City Council, Mayor Marlin adjourned the meeting at 8:48p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 3/3/25