
DATE: Monday, June 17, 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 special session Monday, June 17, 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 Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken*, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Carol Mitten, Richard Surles, Larry Boone, Seok Hyun Cho, Dave Wesner, Elizabeth Hannan, Kyle Kapper, Michelle Brooks, Marcus Ricci, Demond Dade

OTHERS PRESENT: Matthew R. Roeschley

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Mayor Marlin called the special meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:01p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Paul Mewth highlighted previously shared Community Responder model in Minneapolis. Expressed need for an Early Intervention System to alleviate officer stress and reform public safety through community responders. Shared ARPA spending projects from the City of Carbondale and stated the budget is a moral document that is reflective of a City's morals. Urged City of Champaign residents to share with Urbana City Council the results of their intervention programs. *Tamika Davis* urged City Council for further mental health and suicide prevention resources, sharing story of nephew Bennett Ireman where the police department were not able to prevent his suicide at Meijer's. Urged City Council to consider mental health assistance before the expansion of the UPD's budget. Stated police officers draw and show aggression, but a different responder may have had a different outcome. *Janice Walker* shared a story of a client serviced 2 months ago who had been incarcerated for over 5 years with parole in prison due to not having anywhere to go. Stated FirstFollowers and Rosecrance collaborated to provide him care and stable housing at a group home. Stated if people don't have housing, mental health services, and food it exacerbates issues. Questioned what expanding policing

provides as it has been shown to prevent healing. **Sarah Nixon** expressed gratitude to Chief Boone's presence and implementation of impactful practices with an emphasis on minority issues, domestic violence, and family violence. Stated the BerryDunn study is a distraction tactic to delay action and the study is flawed. Shared recent FOIA Request for conversations between City of Urbana and domestic violence agencies. Requested the City of Urbana allow for Chief Boone to continue his work on addressing domestic violence. **Steven MacGuire** stated a budget is a moral document and the preparation displays shifts in morality. Stated Mayor Marlin's promises to Chief Boone during his hire and her intent to leave office after increasing expenditures is indicative of moral disrespect. Raised concern for Chief Boone's militaristic view on policing. Urged City Council to delay voting on an increase in UPD's budget until further information is gathered from constituents and further research is conducted.

Alexandria Stone addressed statements from a police officer from last week's public input. Shared figures from the UIUC Police Training courses and contrasted it to social workers, teachers, and doctors who burden significant debt in comparison. Stated an increase in the UPD's budget is not the solution to alleviate the officer's burden. Proposed the \$2,500,000 be sent to the community to fund social programs to house, feed, and care for the community to decrease violence, improve public safety, and reduce the workloads of police officers. **Chris Zelle** addressed public input from a police officer who urged further research on CAHOOTS and alternative response models. Stated social workers worry about interacting directly with police officers more than the potential for violence on calls. Stated Chief Boone and UPD back their requests not with data, but anecdotes and questioned the validity of their proposals.

Questioned the need for police involvement in the budget of an alternative response model.

Ben Joselyn rejected the anti-transgender rhetoric used when discussing the BerryDunn report earlier. Stated the funds to study police study being transferred to the General Fund should be retained to continue studies on the police. Stated alternatives to policing have been sought for decades. Stated data within the BerryDunn study displays that UPD officers take longer in responding to calls with more backup. Stated alternative response should not be connected to UPD as people would be hesitant to call due to previous negative interactions with police.

Questioned the use of emotional calls in UPD's budget presentation. Stated the request to not expand the police department is not radical compared to the large increase proposed. **Jane**

McClintock provided an update on the petition, stating that there are 618 signatures with most signatures from Ward 5, 4, and 1 with 358 signatures coming from the City of Urbana. Voiced that the level of engagement, knowledge, and ideas was impressive and hoped similar discussions were held between City Councilmembers. Stated the public have a universal understanding that crime is at a low, the BerryDunn study has not been completed, and there is no rush to implement the UPD's budget proposal. Stated the public is not in opposition to police officers, but require different services than the police. **James Kilgore** shared that a client required medication due to having injured himself and the police would not have been able to assist due to his history of incarceration. Requested City Council slow down the approval process for the UPD's budget proposals. Voiced a desire to see the BerryDunn report completed, the recent use of force report be considered, and a survey of the community to their thoughts on the Community Engagement Office from the UPD be conducted. Voiced that people would prefer any alternative to policing to address community violence. Stated

alternative response models should not be embedded within the police department, as per the task force's report. **Anonymous** stated that services and support for mental health within the County have been extended to Chief Boone. Voiced free trainings have been offered within the community. Stated establishing fatherly relationships within the community is a priority. Stated the goals of CU Fresh Start were not fulfilled. Stated the addition of law enforcement will not change the community, but the availability of resources can. Shared personal contact

information: 673-7122, donte@traumaresiliencyinc.org and that he can be found at various community events. Shared the experience of losing a student to gun violence on 10-09-2009

Carrington. **Faith Ryan** requested City Council delay the expansion of the police budget to allow for further community input to be gathered. Stated community members have nothing to

do due to a result of funding being siphoned to militarize the police department. Stated the residents of Urbana require resources to address sources of instability. Requested the traumatic experience with the police department be viewed as a reason to not approve the currently proposed UPD budget. **Caite** requested City Council either delay or deny the expansion to the UPD's budget. Stated that the police department is not trusted due to many being witness to police violence and them being unaccountable. Expressed that, as a social worker, they are unable to fathom working alongside a police department. Stated that situations would not become violent if escalatory police practices were not used. **Anonymous** urged City Council to not increase the UPD's funding. Questioned the loyalty of the City of Urbana to the public. Stated help for communities must be done through preventative care by addressing poverty and bigoted systems. Stated the police do not prevent crime and have committed 73% of their acts of force against African-Americans. Expressed protection of property and infrastructure is being prioritized over the safety of the public. **Danielle Chynoweth** conceptualized what \$1,000,000 could do by sharing hypothetical scenarios and programs. Stated police officers do not address the issue of public health. Stated the 21st Century Report requires community partnership, but City Council continues to move toward further investing into the UPD. Stated the issue of racial equity not being within BerryDunn's scope of study is a problem that should be addressed. Requested City Council slow conversations and involve the community in the budgetary decisions for the UPD. **Elise** requested City Council not increase the UPD's budget, citing that the majority of calls for service in Urbana are non-criminal and non-violent. Stated the increases in light of housing insecurity and food insecurity is distasteful. **Thorn Westfall** shared an Army value of integrity: how one acts when nobody watches. Stated the actions of police officers while people are watching is disgraceful and displays a lack of integrity. Opposed increases in the UPD budget. Urged City Council to listen to their constituents. **Stuart Levy** emphasized the City of Urbana will require further funding in future years and questioned how they would source it. Stated the City of Champaign discussed an increase in taxes to account for increased expenditures and the City of Urbana has not had these discussions. Expressed that the budget is fiscally irresponsible and does not adequately consider the ramifications of its expenses. **Camille Cobb** echoed the statements of previous speakers, opposing the increases in UPD's budget. Asked City Council why the average time spent responding to calls within the City of Urbana is significantly higher than every other City. Stated this question is important as time is being inefficiently used, sharing an experience of seeing emergency response of 5 armed officers to a single unarmed individual at Schnucks that exceeded 100 officer minutes. Asked City Council why they would vote in favor of the UPD budget and what success for a pilot program would look like before they vote upon one. Stated the Norfolk use of force data displays significant discrimination against Black people. **Adam Nichols** stated most people believe police are a part of the solution to address violent crime and Chief Boone is able to run the police department as he would like. Stated the use of tax funds from the City of Urbana is up to City Council. Expressed a desire to alleviate various non-criminal and non-violent calls for services for the police department through services that can adequately address their needs. Stated the proposed budget spends as much as policy allows and does not leave room for further expansions within the budget. Stated it seems more fiscally responsible to leave the funds in the General Fund rather than investing in the UPD. Voiced a desire for investment in economic development as it would increase revenue without increasing taxes. **Luke Lee** expressed that City Council needs to listen to the community's requests and slow the decision making on the UPD's budget. **Gwyneth Crepsio** asked City Council to reflect on their perspective of community involvement. Shared that the City of Urbana is a remarkable, wise, intelligent, and engaged community and the crime rates dropping is a result of community care. Questioned why City Council has not further discussed with experts within the community on how to reduce crime and improve care within the community. Stated City Council has the opportunity to rebuild trust by further involving the community in discussions. **Sana Saboowala** echoed previous points and thanked City Councilmembers that aligned with community requests. Stated funds should be earmarked to fund community services and

alternative response models. Stated alternative response models should not be housed within the UPD. Voiced that the IMC has already began the exploration of community interest in alternative response models. Stated systemic issues are unable to be addressed by police departments. Requested for no increase in the police budget and further discussion on alternative response models. **Anonymous** thanked the City Council and the City Clerk for their work, and those who shared during public input. Expressed that many people between Wards shared various concerns and requested answers for frequently asked questions from the community. Requested better community education on processes that prevent confusion that prevents better communication. Shared personal experience of being a victim of domestic violence that left her traumatized. Expressed helplessness felt at the initial report and the necessity of police officers in issues of domestic abuse. Stated it is the duty of the City to provide information and protection to those who need it. **Ara** voiced that \$2,700,000 is not an insignificant amount of funding with no revenue source to back it is fiscally irresponsible. Questioned why police officers are not held accountable in their budgetary decisions. Expressed resources are not best distributed by the police department as people who require them may have had negative experiences with law enforcement. Stated basic needs, as per Maslow's hierarchy of needs, are necessary for people to thrive. Urged City Council to delay decisions on approving the UPD's proposed budget. **Brian Maxwell** urged City Council to delay decision making on the UPD's proposed budget. Stated the community's opposition to the increases should be considered. Stated community input is invaluable to developing community programs. Stated the budget is unsustainable and questioned why the increases are being considered during a decline in criminal activity. Stated unhoused people are growing and housing instability is rising, and funds could be better used to directly address those issues as Danielle Chynoweth had recommended. Questioned if there would be funds within the future budget to implement recommendations from BerryDunn once the study had completed. **Naima Johnson** stated from personal experience, seeing mothers begging for food on the streets is heartbreaking. Stated there is a cycle of illness and unhousing that requires mental health services to better address the root causes of these issues. Voiced that teachers, children, and schools require a significant number of services to uplift the community. **Reverend Evelyn Underwood** stated America does not work without civic engagement and community input. Expressed the current City Council seems to be listening to the community and the results of community engagement are visible. Voiced that public input and holding elected officials accountable is valuable. Shared that from personal experience on a ride along, police officers seem to be doing their job well, but decisions on the UPD's budget should be done after the BerryDunn study has concluded. Echoed that people who are incarcerated need to have their input elevated as they have been personally impacted. **Melinda Carr** stated the UPD has done a good job in assisting her during a car accident. Stated there were two community meetings where Chief Boone had been involved with, where it was shared that the BerryDunn report was too long and further community involvement is required on the internal structure of UPD. Stated people in the City of Urbana fear reprisal from reporting police officers. **Carmen Gore** recognized the community voicing that they need mental healthcare to address the root causes of resorting to crimes for survival. Stated expansion of policing prevents community healing and emphasized the value of mental health services. Requested City Council slow their deliberations on the UPD's budget proposal. **Marina Minetti** expressed the community is hurting and slow work of investigating alternatives to policing is what will improve care provided for the community. Questioned why the police is further being militarized in a budget before the exit of the incumbent Mayor and City Council. Stated further incarceration is not required, but music, story-telling, poetry, and art is required. Expressed need for change in the world.

5. Council Input and Communications

CM Wilken thanked the public for attending, sharing, and engaging with City Council. Reminded the public that the people of Urbana are at the top of the City's organizational structure and reaffirmed her intent to serve the people of Urbana. Stated an opportunity is present to be able to build a public safety system with the input of community stakeholders. Thanked the Champaign Urbana Trauma & Resilience Initiative for their offer to assist in providing trauma support for the City of Urbana. Noted there are many stakeholders and organizations that were present tonight that are necessary in providing their input on shaping public safety. Voiced that she takes public input into great consideration and noted that, despite the risk of horrific interactions with the public, the police are capable of daily positive interactions and the appropriate response team needs to be dispatched to each situation. Expressed support for a community stakeholder involved development of a community safety response rather than a large taxpayer funded increase of UPD's budget. Stated there must be collaboration with the community in order to better relationships between the UPD and the community. Hoped for the community to further participate in the later meetings in the night and throughout the budget discussions. **CM Wu** shared information from the UPD shared to City Council that broke down violent and property crime statistics within each Ward that occurred from 01-01-24 to 05-27-24. Stated 5 of 7 Wards saw an increase in violent crime with one Ward staying the same and one Ward seeing a decrease. Stated that 1 Ward saw stable rates and Ward 4 saw a decrease. Noted that Ward 7 saw an increase of violent crime increased from 61 instances to 97 instances and Ward 3 increased significantly in rape rates. **CM Kolisetty** clarified that increases in sexual violence reporting does not equate to an increase in incident rates. Further stated a higher rate of reporting may be good as it indicates a trust in law enforcement as the majority of sexual assaults are never reported. Expressed gratitude for public comment and conversations with constituents within Ward 4. Asked why the budget increases need to be now and cannot wait for the BerryDunn study to be completed. Stated the community requires the information behind the reasoning of the UPD's budget proposals if the City of Urbana is considering raising taxes in the future to afford the new programs past their pilot. Expressed disappointment in the side comments made during this evening throughout public input. **CM Hursey** stated the source for her personal confusion has been around the definition of public safety and it needs to be better defined for continued discussion. Stated that her personal experience with public safety is that her personal opinion does not matter and public safety is when police officers promptly respond to calls for service while not leaving calls unanswered. Expressed worry for lack of staffing within the UPD impacting their ability to respond to calls. Acknowledged her personal experience may not align with what other people have lived through. Requested further public input to withhold incendiary language and to be more directly addressed to City Council.

6. Reports of Special Committees

None.

7. Reports of Officers

None.

8. Mayoral Appointments

a. City Attorney

– Matthew R. Roeschley (term ending June 30, 2025)

Introduced by Mayor Marlin and presented by Elizabeth Hannan, HR and Finance Director/CFO. Mayor Marlin stated the effective start date is 07-08-24. Listed the responsibilities of the City Attorney and the accomplishments of Matt Roeschley. Thanked Dave Wesner, City Attorney for his service. Spoke on the history and reasoning for appointing a City Attorney. Elizabeth Hannan elaborated on the expected difficulties for a search for a City Attorney as the needs were specific to municipal governments and governments within Illinois. Stated no other candidate has matched the qualifications of Matt Roeschley. Matt Roeschley expressed gratitude and eagerness to begin working with the City of Urbana. Shared desire to serve the public and continue his service to people of the area.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the Urbana City Council Mayor Marlin adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 7/8/24