
DATE: Monday, May 12, 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, May 12, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: DeShawn Williams, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey, CM Jaya Kolisetty, CM Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: CM Maryalice Wu

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Dave Smysor, Thomas Webb, Kevin Garcia, Marcus Ricci, Matt Roeschley, Larry Boone, Tal Prendergast, Steven Doggett, Will Kolschowsky

OTHERS PRESENT: None

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- a. 04-21-2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
- b. 05-05-2025 Special City Council Meeting Minutes
- c. 05-05-2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

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

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Written Public Input regarding concerns on the release of memos for Ordinance No. 2025-05-015 / Plan Case No. 2501-SU-25 was received from the following individual and read by CM Kolisetty: Tom Schroeder.

b. National Police Week Proclamation

Mayor Williams proclaimed the week of May 11, 2025, through May 17, 2025, National Police Week in honor of the contributions and sacrifices made by law enforcement officers serving across the nation. Presented the proclamation to Police Chief Boone.

5. Council Input and Communications

None.

6. Reports of Standing Committees

None.

7. Committee of the Whole (*Council Member Chaundra Bishop, Ward 5*)

1. Consent Agenda

- a. **Ordinance No. 2025-05-014:** An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Amend Section VI-5.B for Clarity and to Update Regulations Allowing Stairs to Encroach into Required Yards / Plan Case No. 2500-T-25) – CD

The Ordinance approves an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow stairs that are used to access buildings and outdoor living areas to encroach into required yards up to six inches from property lines. The amendment would also clarify some language in the Zoning Ordinance without changing its intent.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

2. Regular Agenda

- a. **Ordinance No. 2025-05-015:** An Ordinance Approving a Special Use Permit (102 East Michigan Avenue / Plan Case No. 2501-SU-25 – DRA Properties, LLC) – CD

Presented by Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner with Marcus Ricci, Planner II available for questions. The Ordinance approves a special use permit for a wireless cellular tower with antennas on the Urbana School District #116 (USD116) campus in the Conservation-Recreation-Education (CRE) Zoning District. Kevin Garcia clarified the Plan Commission provided supplemental memos to the public attending the Public Hearing on April 17, 2025, with the intent to clarify the staff presentation and elaborate on specific items in the Zoning

Ordinance. Stated the memo was not sent out in advance, was not sent to a select group of individuals, and the memo was made available to the public at the same time it was made available at the Plan Commission meeting. Questions and discussions followed.

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

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

PRESENT: Wilken

8. Reports of Special Committees

None.

9. Reports of Officers

None.

10. Mayoral Appointments

a. *Mayoral Staff Reappointments*

Presented by Mayor Williams. Stated background information regarding the appointees were sent out two weeks ago to Council for review. Expressed a desire to work with the appointees and foster their success under his leadership. Stated continued service with the City will be determined by performance and shared hope to provide the greatest level of service possible to the City. Discussion followed.

Mayor Williams requested the appointments be considered individually.

Human Rights and Equity Officer

– Carla Boyd (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

PRESENT: Wilken

Information Technology Manager

– Thomas Webb (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

City Attorney

– Matthew (Matt) Roeschley (term ending June 30, 2027)

Motion to approve by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Quisenberry. Discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Human Resources and Finance Director/CFO

– Elizabeth Hannan (term ending June 30, 2027)

Motion to approve by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Kolisetty. Discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

PRESENT: Wilken

Fire Chief

– Kent (Demond) Dade (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Deputy Fire Chief

– Tal Prendergast (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

– Steven (Steve) Doggett (term ending June 30, 2027)

Motion to approve by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Wilken

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Chief of Police

– Larry D. Boone (term ending June 30, 2027)

Motion to approve by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Hursey. Discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: Evans, Wilken

Deputy Chief of Police

– David (Dave) Smysor (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

PRESENT: Wilken

Public Works Director

– Timothy (Tim) Cowan (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Deputy Public Works Director

– Vincent (Vince) Gustafson (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

City Engineer

– John Zeman (term ending June 30, 2027)

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

NAY: None.

b. *Mayoral Staff Appointment*

Interim City Administrator

– Elizabeth Hannan (term ending June 30, 2026 or until position filled, whichever is sooner)

Motion to approve, with a beginning date of May 12, 2025, by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Kolisetty. Questions and discussion followed.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

PRESENT: Wilken

11. Adjournment

With no further business before the Urbana City Council, Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:39p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 5/27/25



PUBLIC INPUT - May 12, 2025, City Council meeting - Regarding Ordinance No. 2025-05-015

From Tom Schroeder <[REDACTED]>
Date Mon 5/12/2025 3:35 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Council Members and Mayor Williams,

I am writing to provide public comments on the special use permit application for the proposed cellular tower on the City Council agenda for May 12, 2025. If possible, I would like these comments to be read aloud into the record.

After nearly 30 years in Urbana, I've finally felt compelled to speak out on a City Council issue. Until now, I've either trusted the City's processes or assumed my input wouldn't matter.

In my comments on May 5, I expressed concern that City staff hadn't fully reviewed zoning regulations related to the proposed tower, particularly those involving lighting. I believed the review had wrongly treated a light pole as an existing tower, which allowed lighting to carry over from the old light pole to the new tower. I later discovered my concern about a lacking review was mistaken. Despite that, the reason for this misunderstanding has revealed a more serious concern.

The core issue is how City staff handled the release of two memos regarding zoning compliance for the project. The first memo, dated March 20, provided only a brief analysis and was included in the April 17 meeting packet, which was made available to both the Plan Commission and the public. A second, more comprehensive memo was released on April 17. It included a full zoning review, containing a lighting analysis, but was not shared with the public before the meeting. Instead, it was sent to a select group, including Commission members, the tower applicant, and a school district representative. The public didn't see this second memo until it was silently added to the packet for the May 5 Committee of the Whole meeting, nearly two weeks after the Plan Commission had already approved the project.

The first memo, which was the only information available to the public before the vote, led to my initial misunderstanding. It described the new tower as one that would "replace an existing light tower on an athletic field." This language made it particularly frustrating when, at the May 5 meeting, Mr. Ricci remarked that "*nobody ever said the light pole was a tower,*" even though his first memo clearly described it that way.

City staff completed their zoning review on April 17 and shared their final analysis with a limited group that same day. That evening, the Plan Commission introduced the item, reviewed it, invited public comment, and approved the tower, all in a single meeting. The public, with access only to the initial memo, was left with incomplete and potentially misleading information. As a result, anyone else

following the issue had no meaningful opportunity to understand or respond to the zoning of the project before the vote took place.

The bigger concern here is two-tiered access to information. City staff provided a limited version of the review to the public, while offering the more complete version only to decision-makers and the interested stakeholders in the decision. This withholding of information fell short of the transparency and fairness that Urbana residents expect, undermining public trust.

The rapid pace of the approval process suggests it may have been driven by a deadline set by the applicant. Regardless of the reason, the outcome was the same: the timing prevented the public from being properly informed before the Commission voted. Since the zoning review wasn't completed until the day of the meeting, the appropriate course of action would have been to delay the vote and continue the hearing. This would have given the public a chance to receive the full information and provide input. Instead, the project was approved rapidly, without an opportunity for meaningful community participation.

I also remain concerned about the proposed lighting on the tower and continue to believe a waiver is necessary. In my view, staff focused too much on the intended purpose of the ordinance and not enough on its actual language, creating unnecessary legal ambiguity. However, I also believe that a Plan Commission meeting is the proper venue for a full discussion of this concern.

Given how this process was handled, I respectfully ask the City Council to require the Plan Commission to hold a proper public hearing. The public was given only partial and potentially misleading information, while a more complete analysis was shared privately with select and financially interested parties. This created an uneven process that lacked transparency and fairness.

The process did not reflect the values of open and inclusive government that Urbana residents expect and deserve. Approving the project before the full information was made public denied the community a real opportunity to understand the issue and provide input.

Holding a new hearing, with all relevant documents shared in advance, would give the public a fair chance to participate. It would also help maintain trust in the city's zoning process. This issue deserves a full and open review before moving forward.

Sincerely,

Tom Schroeder
Resident (Ward 4)