

**MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 27, 2023**

The City Council of DeKalb, Illinois, held a Regular meeting on February 27, 2023, in the Yusunas Meeting room of the DeKalb Public Library, 309 Oak Street, DeKalb, Illinois.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Barnes called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Recording Secretary Ruth Scott called the roll, and the following members of City Council were present: Alderman Carolyn Morris, Alderman Barb Larson, Alderman Tracy Smith, Alderman Greg Perkins, Alderman Scott McAdams, Alderman Mike Verbic, and Mayor Cohen Barnes. Alderman Tony Faivre was absent.

Others in attendance included City Manager Bill Nicklas and City Attorney Matt Rose.

Sasha Cohen was present but not in the capacity of Clerk; he left the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Shadow Gentry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Alderman Larson moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Alderman Perkins.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

D. PRESENTATIONS

1. DeKalb Public Library Annual Report.

DeKalb Public Library Executive Director Emily Faulkner provided a recap of the Library's services, events, and programs during 2022.

Mayor Barnes thanked Ms. Faulkner for use of the Library's space for mural planning and creation.

Mayor Barnes asked Ms. Faulkner for the number of people who used the Library in 2022. Ms. Faulkner stated she believes it was approximately 90,000, but she would check and advise.

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Sasha Cohen spoke regarding what he alleges as misconduct by Alderman McAdams.

F. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Barnes read the following by title only:

1. Appointment of Shaun Langley to the Citizens' Environmental Commission for the Completion of a Two-Year Term through December 31, 2024.

2. Appointment of James Carlin of the DeKalb County Health Department as an Ex-Officio Member of the Citizens' Environmental Commission.
3. Reappointment of Nick Newman to the Citizens' Environmental Commission for the Completion of a Two-Year Term through December 31, 2024.

MOTION: Alderman Smith moved to approve the appointments and reappointment; seconded by Alderman Verbic.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

G. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of February 23, 2023.

MOTION: Alderman Perkins moved to approve the minutes as submitted by the Recording Secretary; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

H. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Barnes read the following Consent Agenda items by title only:

1. Accounts Payable and Payroll through February 27, 2023, in the Amount of \$2,785,346.06.
2. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report for January 2023.
3. FY2022 Human Services Funding Fourth Quarter Report.

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Alderman Larson.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

J. CONSIDERATIONS

There were none.

K. RESOLUTIONS

1. **Resolution 2023-022 Amending Resolution 2022-023 to Extend the Deadline for the Issuance of a Package Liquor License with Supplemental Drive-Through Licensure for Blue Ridge LLC – 1221, Located at 1221 W. Lincoln Highway.**

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to approve the resolution; seconded by Alderman McAdams. (This motion was not voted on; see page 4 for final motion and vote.)

City Manager Nicklas provided an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet. The petitioners, Jeff Dobie and Jeff Richardson, are requesting another extension for the issuance of a bar liquor license with supplemental video gaming, a liquor license for a drive-through package liquor store, and a license for a video gaming establishment. This grouping of licenses and allowances was first authorized by the Council on a conditional basis on September 10, 2018. Since then, the petitioners have received Council extension on October 12, 2020, August 23, 2021, and February 28, 2022. They also received a six-month extension from the City Manager in 2021.

Following his overview, City Manager Nicklas recommended that Council allow a final 90-day extension on the condition that the petitioners get a permit for construction of the proposed building during that time.

Alderman Verbic noted he was generally supportive of business investment in DeKalb unless it's to detriment to the city, and asked if there was a downside to allowing the extension.

Brief discussion ensued.

City Manager Nicklas stated if the petitioners had not provided the plans (as shown in the backup of this agenda item) he would not have recommended the extension.

Alderman Verbic stated he sees a sizable investment in this project by the business owners and offered his support of granting the extension.

Alderman Verbic then asked what the ramifications are if the petitioners fail to follow through. City Manager Nicklas replied there needs to be accountability and a commitment to complete what's promised.

Discussion ensued.

Alderman Larson stated the City has been holding a video gaming license for this project for years, and by doing so, may have lost revenue for the City. She further stated she would like to see a lot of progress on this project if a 90-day extension is granted.

Mr. Richardson thanked Council for being patient with him and Mr. Dobie during this process and noted it was his recommendation that held the project back in the past because he felt the timing wasn't right and it was too risky to build, especially since the cost of building materials was very high. However, prices are coming down now.

Discussion ensued regarding the timeline of the project and the possibility they may need another extension.

Mr. Richardson disagreed, stating he doesn't think another extension will be needed. He also added that video gaming is a huge component of the plan; without that, the project will not be able to move forward.

There was brief discussion between Alderman Perkins and Mr. Richardson regarding the timeline of the project and what comes next if the extension is granted.

Alderman Perkins stated the City is doing everything it can to be business friendly, but this has been going on for five years and he'd like to see a good faith effort that the project will proceed.

He also agreed with Alderman Larson's statement regarding the held video gaming license and potential lost revenue.

Brief discussion ensued between Alderman Smith and Mr. Richardson regarding the previous business at the subject location (a pancake house) and how long it's been a vacant lot (approximately 20 years).

Alderman Smith stated his support for granting one more extension, but Council will need to see movement on the project.

Mr. Richardson assured Council the project will move forward expeditiously.

Brief discussion ensued regarding building material availability.

City Attorney Rose recommended amending the resolution in order to add the conditions of an extension if granted, i.e., applying for a building permit, submitting the final plan and plat, etc.

Discussion ensued.

City Manager Nicklas noted the final plan and plat would have to be vetted by the Planning and Zoning Commission. He recommended having the final plan and plat done within 60 days and a building permit issued within 90 days, which would be June 1, 2023.

Discussion ensued regarding the timeline.

Alderman Larson commented she'd like one of the conditions in the resolution to be that the video gaming establishment must be operational and open for business within a certain timeframe.

Alderman Smith asked Mr. Richardson if they had a contractor lined up for the project. Mr. Richardson replied they don't, adding they've been having issues just getting quotes.

Mayor Barnes informed Mr. Richardson that, if approved, this would be the last extension and recommended an abundance of communication with the City.

Brief discussion ensued.

City Manager Nicklas reiterated Council's conditions of the extension.

Alderman Morris offered an alternative perspective to this issue, stating Council may be adding unneeded pressure to the project, especially since the lot has been vacant for so long. She added she's in support of allowing an extension for as long as it takes to finish the project.

Mayor Barnes commented the extensions have gone on long enough and he just wants to see the project done.

Alderman McAdams noted his agreement with Alderman Morris' statement and asked Mr. Richardson to please cooperate with City staff so this project can be seen through to a positive conclusion.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to table/postpone this item; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

2. Resolution 2023-023 Amending Resolution 2022-023 to Extend the Deadline for the Issuance of a Bar Liquor License with Supplemental Licensure for Video Gaming for Blue Ridge LLC – 1221, Located at 1221 W. Lincoln Highway.

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Morris moved to approve the resolution; seconded by Alderman Verbic. (This motion was not voted on; see below for final motion and vote.)

City Manager Nicklas recommended tabling this item, noting it and the item before it will be brought back for Council vetting at their next meeting.

MOTION: Alderman Perkins moved to table the resolution; seconded by Alderman Larson.

There were no questions or comments from Council.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

3. Resolution 2023-024 Authorizing the Purchase of a Phoenix G2 Station Alert System from US Digital Designs for the DeKalb Fire Department in an Amount Not to Exceed \$124,557.80 Using Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) Funding (Fund 130).

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Perkins moved to approve the resolution; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

City Manager Nicklas provided an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet. A station alert system is the software and hardware responsible for Police dispatches to the Fire Department's internal communication system once a 9-1-1 call is received. The current station alert system is over 30 years old, and the Department has wrestled with a number of expensive maintenance issues in the past several years. Four vendors were solicited for quotes – US Digital Designs, Purvis Systems, Motorola, and Z-Tron – with US Digital Designs meeting the Department's specifications. The upgrade will improve system reliability including dispatch information, response times, station security, and notification. The FY2023 GEMT budget includes funding for a new alerting system involving the installation of components at all three City fire stations.

There were no questions or comments from Council.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

4. Resolution 2023-025 Authorizing the Purchase of a Station Alert System with Component Installation for the DeKalb Fire Department in an Amount Not to Exceed \$20,180 Using Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) Funding (Fund 130).

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Larson moved to approve the resolution; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

City Manager Nicklas provided an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet. The installation of a new station alert system requires certified installers for warranty purposes. The Fire Department solicited bids from the following certified installers: Electrical Solutions Services, DigiCom Installations, and Advancing Wiring Solutions. Electrical Solutions Services was chosen to install the components using FY2023 GEMT funding.

There were no questions or comments from Council.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

5. Resolution 2023-026 Authorizing the Purchase of Two Ford F-150 Pickup Trucks for the Public Works Department through Morrow Brothers Ford in an Amount Not to Exceed \$80,468.

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Smith moved to approve the resolution; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

City Manager Nicklas provided an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet. The Public Works Department is requesting authorization to purchase two Ford F-150 pickup trucks through Morrow Brothers Ford in an amount not to exceed \$80,468. The vehicles will replace a 2003 Dodge Ram pickup truck and a 1997 GMC Sierra pickup truck, which will likely be sold at auction.

Alderman Larson commented on the age of the vehicles being replaced and offered her thanks to the Public Works Department for taking such good care of them over the years.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

L. ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

There were none.

M. ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

1. Ordinance 2023-012 Approving a Special Use Permit to Allow the Resubdivision of an “RC-1” Residential Conservation District Zoned Lot into Two Single-Family Attached Lots in Accordance with Chapter 23, “Unified Development Ordinance,” Article 5.03.06, and Approval of the Final Plat of the Burnoski Subdivision Located at 1104-1106 Lewis Street.

Mayor Barnes read the ordinance by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Smith moved to approve first reading of the ordinance; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

City Manager Nicklas provided an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet. The applicant, Samuel Burnoski, is requesting approval of a special use permit, variance, and an accompanying final plat to re-subdivide a two-family (duplex) lot at 1104-1106 Lewis Street into two single-family-attached (zero-lot-line) lots. The property would be re-subdivided along the common wall of the existing two-family (duplex) residential structure, which was built in the mid 1970’s. The re-subdivision would create two lots, with one residential unit on

each of the new lots. Lot 1 would be 3,397 square feet and Lot 2 would be 5,096 square feet. The resulting re-subdivision would allow each of the units and the lots on which they are located to be owned or sold in fee simple.

Alderman Smith offered his support of this item.

Alderman Larson asked about the water and sewer lines. Mr. Burnoski replied there are plans in place to add another sanitary line and water service.

Brief discussion ensued.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to waive second reading of the ordinance and approve; seconded by Alderman Morris.

Alderman Morris asked about previous discussions for streamlining any future requests of this nature. City Manager Nicklas replied that the process has been simplified in that the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed the project before being brought before Council. He further noted this is a very common process.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

2. Ordinance 2023-013 Authorizing the Northern Illinois University Annual Contribution for Integrated Transit Services.

Mayor Barnes read the ordinance by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Larson moved to approve first reading of the ordinance; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

City Manager Nicklas provided an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet. According to the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City of DeKalb and Northern Illinois University (NIU) for integrated transit services, NIU agreed to contribute a minimum of 40% of the total costs associated with fixed route transit expenses on an annual basis. For FY2023, January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, the anticipated NIU contribution amount is \$2,066,768.

There were no questions or comments from Council.

MOTION: Alderman Perkins moved to waive second reading of the ordinance and approve; seconded by Alderman Morris.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

N. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Council Member Reports.

Alderman Verbic thanked Public Works for the great job done on posting signs for the bridge closures on N. First Street and Lucinda Avenue.

Alderman Larson also thanked Public Works for keeping the roads clear during the recent ice storm. She also commented on a recent event she attended and noted how busy the downtown area was.

Mayor Barnes reported on recent meetings and events he's attended, which included being a guest speaker on the WLBK radio program, a meeting with Alderman Morris and a potential developer, and a mural workshop meeting. He also reported on meetings he's attended with City Manager Nicklas, which included meeting with Metra, meeting with Samantha White of the governor's office to discuss what's happening in DeKalb, the monthly meeting with Northern Illinois University leadership, a meeting with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and a meeting with Alderman Perkins to discuss the video gaming establishment/video gaming terminal topic.

2. City Manager Report.

City Manager Nicklas had no report.

O. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was none.

P. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Alderman Larson.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 voice vote. Aye: Morris, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Barnes. Nay: None. Absent: Faivre. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed and adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Scott, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved by the City Council on March 13, 2023.

Click [here](#) to view the agenda packet for the February 27, 2023, Regular City Council meeting.

Click [here](#) to view the video recording of the February 27, 2023, Regular City Council meeting.