

**MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 26, 2020**

The City Council of DeKalb, Illinois held a Regular City Council meeting on October 26, 2020, in the Yusunas Meeting Room of the DeKalb Public Library, 309 Oak Street, DeKalb, Illinois.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

City Clerk Lynn Fazekas (participating remotely) called the roll, and the following members of City Council were present: Alderman Carolyn Morris, Alderman Bill Finucane, Alderman Tracy Smith, Alderman Greg Perkins, Alderman Scott McAdams, Alderman Mike Verbic, Alderman Tony Faivre, and Mayor Jerry Smith.

Staff present included: City Manager Bill Nicklas.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Assistant City Manager Josh Holdt led the Pledge.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Smith asked for any additions and deletions to the agenda. None were requested.

MOTION

Alderman Morris moved to approve the agenda. Alderman Verbic seconded.

Resident Mark Charvat said there was a scrivener's error in the agenda narrative, a reference to Finance Advisory Committee's having held a regular meeting, but he noted the committee does not hold regular meetings.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the agenda approved.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Amy Levin spoke against the proposal to reduce compensation of elected officials. She said the message this would send is only people who don't need to be fairly compensated

are welcome to serve; and she pointed out that increasing diversity among elected officials should be a goal of the City, as stated repeatedly in meetings last summer.

Mark Charvat announced more than 20 participants joined the first virtual joint meeting of Fourth and Fifth Ward residents the preceding week and said the recording would soon be available on City Barbs Blog. He summarized the discussion, which included South Fourth Street development, the new laundromat liquor license, and south side crime and crime data. He said citizens want the map feature brought back to the police-to-citizen portal on the website and reminded Council it had promised to revisit the matter.

E. PRESENTATIONS

There were none.

F. APPOINTMENTS

There were none.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of October 12, 2020.
2. Accounts Payable and Payroll through October 26, 2020 in the Amount of \$2,633,694.43.
3. Investment and Bank Balance Summary through August 2020.
4. Year-to-Date Revenues and Expenditures through August 2020.
5. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report – September 2020.
6. Hospitality Recovery Program Update.
7. FY2020 Human Services Funding Third Quarter Report.

Mayor Smith read each item of the consent agenda. He asked if any Council member wanted to consider an item separately, but no one made a request.

MOTION

Alderman Perkins moved to approve the consent agenda. Alderman Finucane seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the consent agenda passed.

H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

I. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Consideration of the Annual Property Tax Levy in the City of DeKalb.

Resident Mark Charvat spoke against the property tax levy called "Option 4" that was being recommended by Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) and the city manager. He said it would be the largest increase he'd seen in 20 years, and he asked about a potential "Option 5" that senior FAC member Tom Teresinski had brought up during the previous FAC meeting. Mr. Charvat referenced Mr. Teresinski's preference for the method the City had been using, which was a flat number plus new construction EAV that would lower the rate and keep the levy the same. Mr. Charvat also called for going beyond salary freezes and to make cuts to the budget to overcome falling revenues caused by the pandemic.

City Manager Nicklas said the four property tax levy options presented to the FAC were merely illustrative of costs of covering fiduciary responsibilities of pensions and library bond, and that FAC was not seriously contemplating hikes of 30%, 20%, or even 10%. He gave background on the City's increasing inability to cover the obligations in full without help from other general funds, and used a slideshow to demonstrate the effects of rates, exemptions, and multipliers on his own property tax bill and the theoretical bill of an owner of a home worth DeKalb's median value of \$154,000. He said the FAC supports his recommendations based on preserving liquidity to maintain levels of services, and he said his latest proposal, using Mr. Teresinski's rate model, would use a decreased rate of 1.0662 and increased use of reserves to balance demands for maintaining services, balancing the budget, meeting fiduciary obligations, and lowering taxes. He did caution on this last point that factors related to the township multiplier of 4.09% were outside of the City's control.

Mayor Smith asked for consensus on what he labeled "the new Option 5." This was met with positive comments from Aldermen Perkins and Verbic, after which the mayor declared consensus to include "Option 5" as part of the proposed 2021 budget to be brought for consideration in mid-November.

J. RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution 2020-113 Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with DeKalb Township Road District Pertaining to Roadway Construction Responsibilities.

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Finucane moved to approve the resolution. Alderman Faivre seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Mayor Smith. Nay: none.

2. Resolution 2020-114 Authorizing a Real Estate Purchase Agreement with City Hall Suites, LLC for the Sale of Real Property Located at 200 S. Fourth Street, in the Amount of \$600,000 (Johann DeKalb Suites).

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman McAdams moved to approve the resolution. Alderman Faivre seconded.

Mark Charvat spoke on behalf of Bessie Chronopoulos, whose comment was that the proposal has been rushed and pushed through, along with the city hall move, and Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) should be examining it further. Ms. Chronopoulos said the City is not functioning as it should to protect the interests of residents.

Mr. Charvat then spoke for himself to the proposal. He said the math does not add up and noted the P&Z vote was tied and people at that meeting spoke against it also. He said he thought the matter should return to P&Z.

Rita McNett spoke for herself and John McNett. She said they will be looking at the development for the rest of their lives, and that they'd talked to P&Z about their issues with it. She said the developer has adjusted the plan; for example, by cutting back the development by about 20 units and keeping the open space now occupied by the community garden, and the family now supports the project.

Cat Prescott said she was pleased the developer and neighbors had come to a more agreeable arrangement, especially the conservation of green space and old-growth trees. However, she said she was concerned about the planned shared spaces in the middle of a long-term pandemic, such as gyms, and a potential safety concern involving one of the planned vehicle exits. She asked that Council consider more changes.

(Also see item L.1. for additional comments on the changes.)

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Smith, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

3. Resolution 2020-115 Authorizing a Redevelopment Agreement with City Hall Suites, LLC for the Redevelopment of Property Located at 200 S. Fourth Street (Johann DeKalb Suites).

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman McAdams moved to approve the resolution. Alderman Faivre seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

4. Resolution 2020-116 Authorizing a Purchase Agreement with Midwest Salt Company for the Purchase of Clear Southern Rock Salt for a Period of One Year from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 for the Purpose of Treating the City's Drinking Water.

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Smith moved to approve the resolution. Alderman Verbic seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

5. Resolution 2020-117 Authorizing a Purchase Agreement with Carus Corporation for the Purchase of Phosphate for a Period of Three Years from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2023 for the Purpose of Treating the City's Drinking Water.

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Faivre moved to approve the resolution. Alderman Perkins seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

6. Resolution 2020-118 Authorizing the Waiver of Competitive Bidding and the Execution of an Agreement with Layne Christensen Company for the Repair and Replacement of Well Parts and Equipment in an Amount Not to Exceed \$61,162.

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Perkins moved to approve the resolution. Alderman McAdams seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

7. Resolution 2020-119 Authorizing a Standard Agreement for with Crawford, Murphy and Tilly, Inc. for Construction Services at Illinois Airports for Design/Special Services and Construction Phase Engineering to Resurface Runway 2/20 at the DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport.

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Faivre moved to pass the resolution. Alderman McAdams seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

8. Resolution 2020-120 Approving a First Amendment to the Water Agreement Between the City of DeKalb and Goldframe LLC to Correct a Scrivener's Error (Project Ventus – Facebook Data Center).

Mayor Smith read the resolution by title only.

MOTION

Alderman McAdams moved to approve the resolution. Alderman Verbic seconded.

City Manager Nicklas called misstatements in a graph of the water capacity reservations a scrivener's error and said the corrections must be approved by both parties.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared the resolution passed.

K. ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

1. Ordinance 2020-064 Establishing Revised Compensation and Benefits for the Elected Officials of the City of DeKalb.

Mayor Smith read the ordinance by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Finucane moved to approve the ordinance. Alderman McAdams seconded.

Steve Kapitan commented the current Council compensation is \$100 per year more than was set in 1990. Mr. Kapitan said if Council is setting an example for staff, the savings would be a drop in the bucket. He said he is sure no one would expect staff salaries to be cut to levels under what they were paid 30 years ago, and he asked Council to reject what he termed an empty gesture. He added that Council has still not addressed the "unsustainable status" of the city clerk.

Mark Charvat asked about 10% reductions for administrative staff and the bargaining units if there are supposed to be across-the-board cuts for elected officers. Also, he said he supports a full-time, elected city clerk.

Alderman Verbic said he supports freezing the compensation for elected officials to reflect freezes for staff, though he is willing to consider increases as conditions improve.

Alderman McAdams said he would consider raising compensation in the future but believes in addressing the current situation as it is.

Alderman Faivre indicated he would probably vote "no" on the current version of the ordinance, against a cut, to keep things the same, though he said he does not agree it's pay that limits participation for the aldermen.

Alderman Perkins said he originally did not see cuts in pay as maintaining status quo but the people speaking up about them influenced his views.

Alderman Smith said some of the people he has talked to support raising compensation, which he did not expect. He said while cutting is a good gesture, following serious input he would probably vote no.

Alderman Finucane said he has been the most vocal proponent of the cut, and people agree with him. He said he will vote in favor.

VOTE

Motion was defeated 2-5 on roll call vote. Aye: McAdams, Finucane. Nay: Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Smith, Perkins. Mayor Smith declared the motion defeated.

L. ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

1. Ordinance 2020-066 Approving the Rezoning of 200 S. Fourth Street from the “CBD” Central Business District to the “PD-R” Planned Development – Residential District and the Planned Development Preliminary Plan (Johann DeKalb Suites).

Mayor Smith read the ordinance by title only.

MOTION

Alderman Verbic moved to pass first reading. Alderman Smith seconded.

Alderman Morris said she had spoken with each of the Planning & Zoning Commission members who had voted “no” on the development and found the developer had since addressed the issues related to the problem excessive density with the adjustments discussed earlier in the meeting (item J.2.). The alderman added the developer had answered the question about parking, saying safety requires two entry and exit points to ensure access by emergency vehicles.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Verbic, Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared passage of first reading.

MOTION

Alderman Finucane moved to waive second reading and approve the ordinance. Alderman Morris seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Faivre, Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declare the ordinance passed.

M. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Council Member Reports

Alderman Morris reported the demolition of Campus Cinema is nearly finished, and Opportunity DeKalb is continuing work on the Annie Glidden North revitalization plan.

Alderman Finucane announced where free COVID testing would be taking place, and he welcomed Alderman Morris out of quarantine.

Alderman Smith reported over 500 people participated in Dr. Powell's webinar "Belonging" and it is still available for viewing.

Alderman Verbic reported City staff are working with the owner of Travel Inn to facilitate demolition of the property, which should start soon, and that the City will be tidying up the islands in the Knolls subdivision.

Alderman Faivre announced the next Airport Advisory Board meeting.

Mayor Smith announced the first day of leaf collection and the hours for trick-or-treat.

2. City Clerk Report

City Clerk Fazekas gave no report.

3. City Manager Report

City Manager Nicklas said in addition to the Cinema and Travel Inn demolitions, Community Development Block Grant funding is now in place for the Edgebrook property. He also gave an update on Moody's, which recently removed the negative outlook from two years ago but lowered the City's bond rating from A1 to A2.

N. EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO 5 ILCS (120/2)

No executive session was authorized during this meeting.

O. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Following conclusion of business, Alderman Verbic moved to adjourn. Alderman McAdams seconded.

VOTE

Motion carried 8-0 on roll call vote. Aye: Morris, Finucane, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Faivre, Mayor Smith. Nay: none. Mayor Smith declared adjournment at 7:46 p.m.

LYNN A. FAZEKAS, City Clerk

Minutes approved by the City Council on November 9, 2020.