

**MINUTES  
CITY OF DEKALB  
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 13, 2023**

The City Council of DeKalb, Illinois, held a Regular meeting on November 13, 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 the City Council were present: Alderman Carolyn Zasada, Alderman Barb Larson, Alderman Tracy Smith, Alderman Greg Perkins, Alderman Scott McAdams, Alderman Mike Verbic, Alderman John Walker, and Mayor Cohen Barnes.

Others in attendance included City Manager Bill Nicklas, City Attorney Matt Rose, Director of Utilities, Transportation and Engineering Bryan Faivre, and Police Chief David Byrd.

Sasha Cohen was absent.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Shadow Gentry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Barnes recognized Mr. Gentry's 30 years of service at Opportunity House.

**C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Alderman Walker.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

**D. PRESENTATIONS**

There were none.

**E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**F. APPOINTMENTS**

Mayor Barnes read the following for the record:

1. Appointing DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC) Executive Director Mark Williams to the Airport Advisory Board as per Chapter 45, "Airport Advisory Board," of the City of DeKalb Municipal Code.

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

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

Mayor recognized Mark Williams, who then provided a brief review of his work history prior to accepting the Executive Director role at DCEDC.

### **G. CONSENT AGENDA**

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

1. Minutes of the Joint Review Board Meeting of October 27, 2023.
2. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of October 23, 2023.
3. Accounts Payable and Payroll through November 13, 2023, in the Amount of \$3,086,155.63.
4. Investment and Bank Balance Summary through September 2023.
5. Year-to-Date Revenues and Expenditures through September 2023.
6. Crime Free Housing Bureau Report – October 2023.

MOTION: Alderman Perkins moved to approve the items listed on the Consent Agenda; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

### **H. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Mayor Barnes opened the Public Hearing at 6:03 p.m. and read the following by title only:

1. Truth in Taxation Hearing: FY2023 Annual Property Tax Levy.

No one from the public spoke to this item.

Mayor Barnes closed the Public Hearing at 6:04 p.m.

### **I. CONSIDERATIONS**

There were none.

### **J. RESOLUTIONS**

1. Resolution 2023-104 Approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement with the DeKalb Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #115, Illinois Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council for the Period from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2026.

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

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

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

Alderman Walker asked where the City of DeKalb ranks in Illinois as it pertains to the rate of pay its Police Officers receive. City Manager Nicklas replied that DeKalb ranks second among comparable cities, which includes Geneva, St. Charles, and Batavia.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

2. Resolution 2023-105 Authorizing the Waiver of Competitive Bidding and the Approval of an Agreement with Layne Christensen Company for Maintenance Inspection and Repair to Well No. 7 in an Amount Not to Exceed \$78,380.

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

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

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

There was brief discussion between Alderman Perkins and City Manager Nicklas about when the proposed inspection and repair would begin. It was determined that both would begin within the next week or so. It was also determined that the work was originally scheduled for 2024, however, due to current issues with the well, the work is being requested now.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

3. Resolution 2023-106 Approving a Bar Liquor License with Supplemental Licensure for Video Gaming for Spahiu Gaming, LLC, d/b/a Chips, 122 E. Hillcrest Drive.

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

MOTION:

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

Alderman Walker expressed his concern regarding ongoing police presence in the parking lot of the shopping center where Chips is located and asked the potential new owner, Peter Flevaris, what he will do to ensure that will cease.

Mr. Flevaris stated he owns two other gaming establishments and he doesn't tolerate loitering, bad behavior or drunks. He also noted that upon taking over operations of Chips, he will ensure he has the proper employees and security in place to avoid further issues.

Mayor Barnes stated the City of DeKalb will not tolerate bad behavior. He encouraged Mr. Flevaris to reach out to the Council or the Police Department if assistance is needed.

Alderman Zasada stated she is in the location of Chips often and has never seen any issues. She then asked Police Chief Byrd if he felt it's a problem area. Police Chief Byrd replied he would have to look at statistical data to confirm any issues.

Alderman Zasada reiterated that she drives through the area multiple times throughout the day and added that perhaps daytime activity versus nighttime activity is different.

Alderman Walker stated he's worried about the kids in the area and asked Mr. Flevaris to reach out to him if he'd like to discuss some of the disconcerting issues he's witnessed.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

4. Resolution 2023-107 Amending Resolution 2021-083 to Increase the Combined Project Total for the Illinois Route 23 and Gurler Road Improvements to an Amount Not to Exceed \$1,995,000 (Curran Contracting Company).

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

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

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

Mayor Barnes commented that issues with the Illinois Department of Transportation delayed the project and he's happy it's finally getting finished.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

5. Resolution 2023-108 Amending Resolution 2022-091 to Increase the Combined Project Total for the Construction of Traffic Calming Measures on Fairview Drive and a Bike Path Extension Near Grove Street to an Amount Not to Exceed \$257,000 (Elliot & Wood, Inc.).

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

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

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

There were no questions or comments from the Council.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

6. Resolution 2023-109 Authorizing a Fund 400 Architectural Improvement Program (AIP) Grant for 830 E. Lincoln Highway in the Amount of \$25,000 (Miguel Zepeda).

Mayor Barnes read the resolution by title only.

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

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

There were no questions or comments from the Council.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

7. Resolution 2023-110 Authorizing an Architectural Improvement Program (AIP) Economic Incentive at 216 N. Sixth Street, in the Amount of \$2,750 (Byers Brewing Production Facility).

Mayor Barnes recused himself from this item.

Alderman Verbic read the resolution by title only.

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

Alderman Zasada stated she believes the entire Council values and appreciates those who invest in the community and run businesses in DeKalb, adding she's glad the City is in a position to help.

VOTE: Motion carried by a 7-0-1 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker. Nay: None. Recused: Barnes. Alderman Verbic declared the motion passed.

#### **K. ORDINANCES – SECOND READING**

There were none.

#### **L. ORDINANCES – FIRST READING**

1. Ordinance 2023-052 Authorizing the 2023 Levy and 2024 Collection of Taxes in and for the Corporate and Municipal Purposes and Special Service Areas of the City of DeKalb for Fiscal Year 2024.

Mayor Barnes read the ordinance by title only.

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to approve First Reading of the ordinance; seconded by Alderman Walker.

City Manager Nicklas gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

Alderman Zasada asked how long the Hunter Ridgebrook SSA (Special Service Area) is supposed to last. City Manager Nicklas replied that the SSA was created to help mitigate issues with the exterior of the building, such as the replacement of cameras, paving, trash enclosures, or the hiring of a police officer to monitor the area if needed.

Continuing, City Manager Nicklas stated it's up to the Council to decide whether or not they want to continue levying for the SSA. He added he doesn't feel all the improvements that could be made to the property have been, which is why he recommends keeping this SSA.

Alderman Zasada stated this SSA is for a very specific small space within her ward and she wasn't aware of all the uses the funding could be used for. She added that the uses are critical as long as the City is satisfying its responsible landlords and ensuring we are supporting those who have invested in the community.

City Manager Nicklas commented that there's a new local management team representing the ownership of Hunter Ridgebrook who has developed a positive relationship with the City's Building Department, which we haven't always had.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the City's tax rate. Mayor Barnes stated he's looking forward to seeing what the final aggregate tax rate is going to be once all taxing bodies have reported their tax rates.

Mayor Barnes also commended DeKalb Public Library Executive Director Emily Faulkner and the DeKalb Public Library Board for showing leadership and lowering their tax rate.

Alderman Larson asked for clarification regarding unused funds in the SSAs. City Manager Nicklas responded that unused funding stays within the SSA and isn't used for other projects.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

2. Ordinance 2023-053 Abating Taxes Levied for Corporate Purposes of the City of DeKalb, Illinois for the Tax Year 2024.

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 gave an overview of this item based on the information provided in the agenda packet.

There were no questions or comments from the Council.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed.

## **M. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Council Member Reports.

Alderman McAdams welcomed Excelleaf Dispensary to the Fifth Ward. He also reported that this week is officially Transgender Observance Week.

Alderman Verbic noted his appreciation to the Public Works Department for their rapid response regarding recent water main issues.

Alderman Perkins reported that he recently volunteered with the DeKalb Elks Lodge serving meals to veterans at the Lincoln Inn.

Alderman Larson reported that she recently toured the Excelleaf Dispensary location, noting they'll have a soft opening soon. She also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Alderman Zasada reported that she attended a recent Illinois Military Economic Development Committee meeting, of which she's a member, where they focused on childcare, the needs of veterans, and veterans' suicide. She also reported on her attendance at the Amvets Veteran's Day ceremony.

Mayor Barnes reported on recent events and meetings he's attended, which included being a guest speaker on the WLBK radio show, participating in a Phi Sigs Parents Day fundraising event where they awarded \$500 to the DeKalb Police Department, attending the Opportunity House Gala, attending a DSATS (DeKalb Sycamore Area Transportation Study) meeting, attending the

Kishwaukee College Gala, speaking at a Veteran's Day event at Kishwaukee College, and a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Agora Tower, Brian Scholle's State Farm Office, and The Grove.

2. City Manager Report.

City Manager Nicklas had no report.

**N. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Barnes read the following Executive Session exception for the record:

1. Approval to Hold an Executive Session in Order to Discuss Collective Bargaining as Provided for in 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).

MOTION: Alderman Verbic moved to recess for Executive Session; seconded by Alderman Perkins.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 roll call vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed and recessed the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Following adjournment of the Executive Session, Mayor Barnes opened the meeting to the public at 7:57 p.m.

**O. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Alderman Smith moved to adjourn the Regular meeting; seconded by Alderman McAdams.

VOTE: Motion carried by an 8-0 voice vote. Aye: Zasada, Larson, Smith, Perkins, McAdams, Verbic, Walker, Barnes. Nay: None. Mayor Barnes declared the motion passed and adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ruth A. Scott, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved by the City Council on November 27, 2023.

Click [here](#) to view the agenda packet for the November 13, 2023, Regular City Council Meeting.

Click [here](#) to view the video recording of the November 13, 2023, Regular City Council Meeting.