

**CITY OF ROCK ISLAND**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

2/14/2022 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. This meeting will also be conducted by audio and video conference without the requirement of a physically present quorum of the Rock Island City Council due to the disaster declaration issued by Governor Pritzker.

3. Roll Call

Mayor Thoms asked City Clerk Samantha Gange to call the roll.

Present: Mayor Mike Thoms, Alderpersons Moses Robinson, Randy Hurt, Judith Gilbert, Jenni Swanson, Dylan Parker, Mark Poulos, and Bill Healy.

Absent: None

Staff: Interim City Manager John Gripp, Attorney Dave Morrison (via remote connection), City Clerk Samantha Gange, and other City Staff.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Thoms led in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Moment of Silence

Mayor Thoms requested a moment of silence. A moment of silence was observed.

6. Public Comment

Mayor Thoms asked if anyone in the public wished to speak.

Ms. Gaye Burnett, Rock Island citizen and member of the Rock Island Coalition of African

American Stakeholders, came to the podium to address Council. Ms. Burnett read a statement: The Coalition is insisting that the City return the African American Civil Rights grant to the federal government for several reasons. First, this is more than a marker on a tourism trail; it is the story of our lives, the stories of our ancestors' past, and the stories of our children's futures.

We feel that the City has acted with total disrespect for the Black community. The statement that no one knew who to contact in the Black community we consider disingenuous. The executive director of the MLK Center is an African American man, a City employee, and a long-term member of the Rock Island community. When politically expedient, these same politicians can identify the key members of the Black community. While the list is not infinite, it's substantial enough to determine who to talk to if the true intent is to engage the African American community in Rock Island, and due to the importance that our history has to our lives and the lives of our future generations, we know that it is not too much to demand that skillful historians, archivists, and ethnomusicologists document and preserve the memories and experiences. It is also important that they capture the wisdom of our personal and first-hand accounts of pivotal events of our family's rich history and contributions to the City of Rock Island. We see it as our right to have the Black history of Rock Island properly documented by trained and credentialed African Americans that can be found in Rock Island. However, what's equally important is we also have community members that have been and are currently documenting and curating the local Black history of Rock Island. Yes, the Butterworth Center and Deere-Wiman House, German American Heritage Center & Museum, The Moline Preservation Society, the Putnam Museum and Science Center, The Richardson-Sloane Special Collections Center at the Main Davenport Library, the Rock Island Arsenal Museum, Rock Island County Historical Society, Rock Island Preservation Society, Rock Island Public Library, and the Saint Ambrose University Library, might be on this tourism trail; however, they provided the already documented history that they wanted to be included. Therefore, we insist that our history be gathered and told in a way that builds each generation of African Americans with pride from the knowledge of knowing that the past is their strength, a strong foundation for our future generations to stand. As for the current companies contracted for this grant, meeting members of our community with arrogance, condescension, rudeness, and disrespect speaks to the reasons we will not work with Pearson LLC and Media Link to document our history. So who do we entrust with this important endeavor, and who do we choose to see as being qualified to help us persevere our history, seek out the stories that shed light on our lives and heritage? We trust qualified and credentialed African American professionals that can be found in Rock Island, the Quad Cities, and the University of Iowa, which is a rich resource of highly trained and skilled Black professionals that can help respectfully document the stories of the Rock Island African American Community. In the words of Marc Morial, "There is no more powerful force than a people steeped in their history." She remarked that the Coalition has a vote of no confidence in Pearson, LLC and Media Link and do not feel that either company is qualified and the grant should be returned and started over with professionals from the community.

Mr. S. Edward Yancey Jr., a resident of Rock Island came to the podium to address Council. He asked Council to vote to return the grant.

Ms. Shellie Moore Guy, Rock Island citizen and member of the Rock Island Coalition of African American Stakeholders, came to the podium to address Council. She remarked the Coalition met twice with City officials, Charles Pearson from Pearson Consulting, and Natalie Linville-Mass with Media Link and discussed how the Coalition felt about not being made aware of the grant project and not being included. From these meetings, the Coalition was told that speaking to them was not an obligation and they were not qualified and that if Pearson Consulting and Media Link did not do this project, nobody else would be able to. The Coalition also felt insulted that the City indicated they weren't sure who to contact. Ms. Moore Guy spoke about the historical marginalization of African Americans in the West End of Rock Island and noted the destruction of the 9th Avenue Business District, Franklin Junior High closing, and the red lining that occurred during the 1970's. The African American community feels they have been silenced and their voices not heard and they are a blighted community with vacant buildings and empty lots. She remarked that this grant is another example of the historical marginalization of African Americans in Rock Island. She asked

that the City Council vote to send the grant back to the National Park Service.

Ms. Carrie Jackson Baker, came to the podium to address Council about the African American grant. She remarked that when it comes to election time, it seems that City officials are able to find African Americans in the churches and other places, but when it comes to things like this grant, suddenly they are not able to reach African Americans in the community. She indicated she was concerned that the City went outside of Rock Island County to find someone to document their history. She indicated that the Black community will not be silenced and asked City Council to vote to send the grant back.

Mr. Thurgood Brooks, resident of Rock Island came to the podium to address Council. He remarked he has spoken to hundreds in the community and not one person of Color is an agreement with moving forward with the grant. Voting to send the grant back is a reasonable ask and the easiest vote Council members could make. He noted that it felt arrogant that nobody saw a need to discuss this grant with the Black community. He indicated that he will do everything possible to assure that anyone who votes yes for this grant will not be reelected.

7. Minutes from the January 24, 2022 Study Session and City Council Meeting.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to approve the minutes as printed; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

8. Minutes from the January 24, 2022 Closed Session.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the Closed Session minutes; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

9. Update Rock Island

**Holiday Garbage and Recycling Collection** – will be on the normal collection schedule during the week of the President's Day Holiday. City of Rock Island offices will be open on President's Day, Monday, February 21, 2022 with the exception of the Rock Island Public Library, which will be closed so that staff may attend annual training.

**Rock Island Public Library to host Dr. Jane Simonsen, Professor of History at Augustana College for a free lecture on Standing on (Her) Ground: Native American Women & Land Claims in Eastern Iowa** - on February 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. at the downtown Rock Island

Library. Dr. Simonsen will share the stories of Native American women who sought legal claim to their land.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center Events and Happenings**

1. **Free, drop-in PCR COVID testing** is available at the Martin Luther King Center on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am-3pm, and on Thursdays from 9am-5pm. All are welcome.
2. **The MLK Center is hosting United Way's VITA tax preparation assistance program through April 9th for qualifying individuals and families.** No appointments are needed, but lines form quickly so it's best to come early. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 5-8pm, and Saturdays from 9am-noon.
3. **The MLK Center is hosting the Putnam Museum's traveling exhibits on the history of civil rights in the Quad Cities.** This exhibit will be on display in the MLK Center's lobby during regular hours of operation through the end of February.

### **QCCA Expo Center Events**

1. **QCCA Outdoor show** – This four-day event starts Thursday, February 17, 2022 through Sunday, February 20, 2022 and features a variety of resources for anyone interested in the great outdoors. A large number of hunting, fishing, and boating vendors will be on hand as well as representatives from charters, resorts, government agencies and conservation clubs. Tommy Skarlis, known as one of the most inspiring and dynamic outdoor professionals on the planet, will be this year's featured presenter and will provide multiple seminars on fishing secrets and tactics. A kid's camp area will also be available with an archery range, trout fishing pond, minnow races and more.
  2. **RV & Camping Show** – will be held Friday February 25, 2022 – Sunday February 27, 2022 and will feature an enormous indoor showroom for the latest models of motorhomes, trailers, toy haulers, 5<sup>th</sup> wheels and other recreational vehicles. For ticket information for either of these events, visit [WWW.QCCAEXPOCENTER.COM](http://WWW.QCCAEXPOCENTER.COM).
10. Mayor Thoms will close the regular meeting and open a Public Hearing on a request from Khalid Grewal, Essentials Plus for a waiver of the signature requirement to secure a Liquor License at 3015 18th Avenue.

Mayor Thoms closed the regular meeting and opened the Public Hearing. He asked if anyone in the audience or virtually wished to speak for or against the request. No residents volunteered to speak.

Noah Burkhart with Essentials Plus addressed Council. Essentials Plus is asking City Council to waive the signature requirement for a liquor license. They attempted to reach all the businesses and houses required on the list provided by the City and were unable to reach several after three or four attempts. He noted the signatures they did obtain were favorable. The main focus of Essentials Plus is a high-end tobacco and smoke vaporizing shop, however, they will also carry a small section of specialty beverages that are unique to Illinois.

Aldersperson Swanson asked Mr. Burkhart to elaborate on the amount of liquor they will be carrying. Mr. Burkhart responded a few cooler doors of specialty liquor. He noted they will not carry hard liquor or cheap bottles as the focus will be on specialty mixed drinks as well as beverages from local breweries. The store will be primarily a high-end vape store. Aldersperson Swanson commented that there are several vape shops in a two-block radius. Mr. Burkhart noted they are trying to differentiate themselves from the other vape stores with high-end vape items that are safer and are FDA approved. It was noted that the legal age for purchasing vape

items is 21.

Alderson Parker asked if there will be on-site consumption of vape products. Mr. Burkhardt responded no.

Alderson Hurt asked if the liquor would be packaged in certain amounts or solo containers. Mr. Burkhardt responded they will have different varieties of four packs and six packs and the highest quantity would be a twelve pack. He noted single items would be very limited if sold at all.

Alderson Hurt remarked the list of properties they were required to obtain does not provide details as to whether it is a business or residential property. Mayor Thoms responded the Community & Economic Development department provides the liquor license applicant with a list of addresses that are required for signatures and the list does not detail whether it is a business or residence. The City Clerk mails out letters to all of the addresses provided notifying the property owners of the public hearing two weeks in advance.

Alderson Parker indicated the precedence is that City Council typically approves these waivers. He asked if Essentials Plus had other locations. Mr. Burkhardt responded they currently do not have other locations as this is a new concept, but the company does own cell phone stores.

Mayor Thoms closed the Public Hearing, reopened the regular meeting, and entertained a motion.

MOTION:

Alderson Poulos moved to not recommend to the Mayor/Liquor Commissioner to waive the signatures; Alderson Hurt seconded.

Alderson Poulos noted his concerns with the policy and that a public school is within three blocks of the proposed liquor and vape shop location.

Alderson Robinson remarked it isn't fair to the business owners that they are attempting to get the signatures and nobody is responding. He noted several of the owners on the list of required signatures are not even located in Rock Island.

Alderson Parker remarked that if this is a policy discussion about vape shops that should be the discussion not whether the business owner should be given the waiver as the Council has always granted this waiver to other businesses.

Alderson Swanson asked if the City has a limit on the number of vape shops. Mayor Thoms responded the City does not have a limit. He noted with regards to the liquor license, there isn't a specific license for high-end liquor and in theory they could sell any type of liquor.

City Attorney Dave Morrison remarked according to the ordinance, the waiver of signatures is a recommendation from City Council to the Mayor/Liquor Commissioner and that the Mayor/Liquor Commissioner will take the matter under advisement and make a decision whether or not to grant the liquor license within 30 days.

Alderson Healy asked if Essentials Plus would proceed with the vape shop without having the liquor license. Mr. Burkhardt indicated he wasn't sure and would need to consult with others in the company.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 5-2-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: Parker and Robinson. Absent: None.

11. Special Ordinance regarding installation of a 3-way stop sign at the intersection on 41st Streets at its intersection with 20th Avenue and 22nd Avenue. (Second Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Parker seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

12. Special Ordinance requesting removal of a handicapped parking space located at 2203 16th Street. (Second Reading)

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to pass the ordinance; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

13. Claims

- a. Report from the Human Resources Department regarding payment in the amount of \$16,295.74 to David G. Morrison, City Attorney, for services rendered during the month of January, 2022.
- b. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment #1, #2, and Final in the amount of \$119,320.74 to Precision Pavement Markings, Inc. of Pingree Grove, IL for the 2021 Pavement Marking Program, Project 2749.
- c. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment #3, #4, and #5 in the amount of \$161,337.05 to Greenspace Associates of Davenport, IA for the 2021/2022 Sod Replacement Program, Project 2141.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve claim items a through c; Aldersperson Parker seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

- d. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$66,252.33 to McClintock Trucking & Excavating, Inc., of Silvis, IL for the Water Service and Sanitary Lateral Repair Program, Project Numbers 2526 and 2564.
- e. Report from the Public Works Department regarding #4 and Final payment in the amount of \$230,733.60 to Langman Construction, Inc. of Rock Island, IL for the Blackhawk Hills Drive and River Heights Reconstruction Project 2815.
- f. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$17,738.42 to Valley Construction Co. of Rock Island, IL for an emergency water main repair on 3rd Avenue and 19th Street.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve claim items d through f; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

Aldersperson Parker recused himself from the vote due to the nature of his employment.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

- 14. Claims for the week of January 14, 2022 through January 20, 2022 in the amount of \$441,052.06; week of January 21, 2022 through January 27, 2022 in the amount of \$739,414.45; the week of January 28, 2022 through February 3, 2022 in the amount of \$1,161,049.33; and payroll for the weeks of January 10, 2022 through January 28, 2022 in the amount of \$1,548,716.63.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to allow the claims and payroll; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

- 15. Report from the Public Works Department regarding bids for the purchase of 160,000 paper yard waste bags for the 2022 Leaf Pickup Program, recommending that all bids be rejected and the order be placed through Grainger, Inc. of Lake Forest, IL in the amount of \$79,040.00.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the purchase as recommended; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

16. Report from the Public Works Department recommending a contract be awarded to CDM Smith, Inc. of Chicago, IL in the amount of \$175,985.00 for maintenance repairs on the storage domes at the Water Treatment Plant.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to approve the contract and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the documents; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

17. Report from the Human Resources Department regarding a one-year contract extension for labor counsel legal services with Pappas and O'Connor of Rock Island, IL.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the one-year contract extension and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the contract; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

18. Report from the Public Works Department regarding an amendment to the Motor Fuel Tax Resolution with the Illinois Department of Transportation appropriating \$794,127.30 of Motor Fuel Tax funds for street maintenance in 2021.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to adopt the resolution as recommended; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

19. Report from the Public Works Department regarding items be declared as surplus and that permission be given to dispose of the surplus item in a manner that will be advantageous to the City.



MOTION:

Aldersperson Poulos moved to approve the request as recommended; Aldersperson Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

20. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding a request to declare the Blackhawk Statue at Watchtower Plaza surplus property, and that it be donated to Blackhawk Bank & Trust.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Hurt moved to approve the request as recommended with the requirement that Blackhawk Bank & Trust install a plaque acknowledging the City of Rock Island's donation; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

Aldersperson Parker asked if this needed to be reviewed by the Preservation Commission. Mr. Miles Brainard, Community & Economic Development Director responded that it was not reviewed by the Commission as it is not a locally designated landmark.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

21. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Community and Economic Development Department to increase revenues and expenditures by \$127,878.03 in the Community/Economic Development Fund (207) for the Homestead Rehabilitation Program.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to approve the budget adjustment; Aldersperson Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

22. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Community and Economic Development Department in the amount of \$422,436.12 related to HUD CDBG Funds.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the request as recommended; Aldersperson Healy seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

23. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Parks Department increasing the Parks Department revenue by \$75,000.00 and expenses by \$1,328,249.78 (Parks Fund 555) for the Highland Springs Clubhouse.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to approve the request as recommended; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

24. Report from the Finance Department regarding a budget adjustment for the Library Fund (Fund 251) in the amount of \$44,705.38 for a comprehensive audio-video project at the new Watts-Midtown Library.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Swanson moved to approve the request as recommended; Aldersperson Parker seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

25. Report from the Community & Economic Development Department regarding the National Park Service African American Heritage Grant.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Gilbert moved to approve option 1 as indicated in the memo; seconded by Aldersperson Swanson.

Aldersperson Poulos remarked he came to the meeting prepared to vote for option 3 and return the grant, however he was disappointed to hear remarks made during public comment that anyone on Council who chose to vote to keep the grant would be subject to threats of not being reelected.

Aldersperson Robinson remarked the Black community was not made aware of the grant, which is another repeat of history and if the focus is on what was said during public comment versus the optics of what the grant is authorizing, then Council is not understanding the point of why the

Coalition is asking the City to return the grant.

Aldersperson Swanson asked Mr. Brainard to come to the podium to address Council. She asked if the grant was for the purpose of only identifying historical sites and putting them on the National Historic Registry. Mr. Brainard responded that all members of Council received a copy of what was submitted to the National Parks Service (NPS) and the \$33,500 that was awarded is for what is exactly described in the document. In response to Aldersperson Swanson on further clarification of the grant, Mr. Brainard remarked Pearson Consulting and Media Link asked the City to submit the grant application as it had to be submitted by the City to the NPS. The NPS reviewed the project as described in the application and awarded the grant to the City. If Council wants to move forward with the project as described in the approved grant application, they will also need to approve a subrecipient agreement to Pearson Consulting and Media Link to pass through the funds to them. The NPS has indicated that the City can either move forward with the subrecipient agreement, put it out to bid, or return the grant. It is the City's grant, but we cannot deviate from the specifics of what the application describes.

Mr. Brainard indicated Pearson Consulting and Media Link were included in the narrative of the application, but the NPS did clarify that as long as the scope of work is exactly the same then City Council had discretion to choose from the three options included in the memo.

Aldersperson Gilbert asked who wrote the grant. Mr. Brainard responded the content of the application was submitted to City staff by Pearson Consulting and Media Link. The requirement was only that the City had to submit the grant.

Aldersperson Parker remarked he came to the meeting prepared to go with option 2, however, learning that the scope of the project had to be exactly the same, he would like to go with option 3 and return the grant. He opined he didn't like the way option 3 was worded as it implies that the grant stops, which is not an appropriate way to summarize how everyone feels of wanting to tell the story of African Americans in Rock Island. Aldersperson Parker recommended keeping \$100,000 from the hotel/motel tax fund for tourism to develop a heritage resource tourism plan that includes a Steering Committee that would explore not only Rock Island's Black history, but also other people and histories that make up our City.

Aldersperson Gilbert remarked she felt there has been a lot of misinformation and confusion surrounding this grant. Last year, Randy Tweet, former City Manager met with Pearson Consulting and Media Link on other projects including one that relates to Black life on the Mississippi. During this time, Mr. Pearson and Ms. Linville-Mass met with Mr. Tweet and Community and Economic Development staff to discuss the NPS grant opportunity and everyone was in favor of moving it forward and the City agreed to submit the grant on their behalf. Aldersperson Gilbert opined that the former City Manager entered into a legal, verbal, and moral agreement at that time and Mr. Pearson and Ms. Linville-Mass had every expectation that if the NPS awarded the grant to the City, Pearson Consulting and Media Link would be the subrecipients of the grant. She noted that a member of the Coalition was aware of the grant but nobody else came to the City to apply for this grant but Mr. Pearson and Ms. Linville-Mass. Aldersperson Gilbert indicated that Ms. Linville-Mass has already created a wayfaring system for our heritage tourism as well as for other communities.

Aldersperson Poulos remarked there is a disconnect among Council surrounding this grant. He opined that Aldersperson Gilbert had a good point that the the City had an agreement. However, the Coalition has indicated they would not work with Pearson Consulting or Media Link.

Aldersperson Robinson indicated he was on the Zoom call to try and bridge the communication with City staff, the Coalition, and Mr. Pearson and Ms. Linville-Mass. He opined that the conversation was not inviting and he felt that Mr. Pearson and Ms. Linville-Mass were not receptive to the Coalition. A second meeting was established and more people were brought in

and he felt again that it was not inviting and that the Coalition was faced with resistance to their involvement. He indicated he felt that it was never the intention to include the Black community as part of the discussion and process. Alderperson Robinson said he was unaware of the grant until a member of the Coalition notified him that it was awarded to the City.

Alderperson Swanson opined that the City is being put in a no-win situation and it is vital that the African American history in Rock Island is told.

Alderperson Healy asked Alderperson Robinson if it is his understanding that the Coalition will reapply for this grant or a similar grant. Mr. Robinson responded no.

Alderperson Parker remarked the City has tourism money budgeted for this type of project.

Alderperson Robinson indicated that this is the perfect example of why the City needs to change its current course of action on making decisions without having open communication. He noted this is an opportunity for Council to learn and understand from this and in future decisions invite the key stakeholders to the table to discuss before taking action.

Alderperson Hurt remarked that this process has been flawed and that he would like to give the grant back.

Alderperson Gilbert asked if Council could approve the pass-through and in conjunction with that make a motion to take the \$100,000 from the heritage tourism fund and identify people to be on a committee to develop an African American Heritage Tourism museum, trail, district, etc.

Alderperson Parker said that the City should return the grant and pursue a holistic plan for how to address history in Rock Island.

Mr. Brainard remarked at this time the City does not have a process for evaluating requests like this one. If an organization asks the City to submit a grant on their behalf there is no set of steps or review. He recommended a process be put in place so when staff receive a request like this one, they are able to take steps to ensure it not only serves the community, but includes those that will be impacted. He indicated that if City Council votes to return the grant, then it can be returned to the NPS with a robust narrative and explanation as to why the community decided not to proceed with the grant.

Alderperson Gilbert asked what the deadline was for the grant to be expended. Alderperson Robinson responded September 2023.

Alderperson Gilbert asked if there was an option for Council to not to take action on the grant tonight and bring all parties together again to try and work something out that is agreeable to all. Mr. Brainard responded he recommends Council make a decision now as these conversations have been going on without resolution for several months.

Alderperson Parker called the question. Mayor Thoms indicated he would allow Ms. Linville-Mass and Ms. Burnett to both speak briefly.

Ms. Burnett addressed Council and remarked that this process has not been done correctly. It is not a matter of working together, but a matter of planning and including the right people. She has been working with the Putnam Museum in Davenport and has also talked with Dr. Smith at Augustana College regarding documenting the history of African Americans in Rock Island. She noted that there are people with PhD's in history in Rock Island that are qualified to do the work. She indicated the Coalition would not be willing to have further conversations about the grant.

Ms. Linville-Mass with Media Link and QC PastPort addressed Council. She remarked QC PastPort was founded on making sure they can tell everyone's story from every background and every culture. Mr. Pearson has a long history of work with tourism and trails of Black lives throughout the Midwest that make him qualified to do this work. She opined that she agreed that there needs to be a clear process with the City moving forward, but they shouldn't be penalized as there wasn't a process when they applied for the grant. She remarked she has been straightforward and open with everyone involved and this project would be inclusive of everyone in the community. She noted some of the partners they have been working with including Putnam Museum and the German American Heritage Center, among others. She noted she wanted to work together and thanked Council for their time.

VOTE:

Motion FAILED on a 1-6-0 roll call vote. Aye: Gilbert. Nay: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, and Swanson. Absent: None.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to approve option 3 as indicated on the memo; seconded by Aldersperson Hurt.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 6-1-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, and Swanson. Nay: Gilbert. Absent: None.

26. Report from the Mayor's Office regarding the appointment of Tammy Pauwels to the Rock Island Housing Authority.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Robinson moved to approve the appointment as recommended; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

27. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

28. Closed Session.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Parker moved to enter into Closed Session for the exceptions cited; Aldersperson Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

29. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION:

Aldersperson Healy moved to adjourn; Aldersperson Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion PASSED on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Aye: Parker, Poulos, Healy, Robinson, Hurt, Gilbert, and Swanson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

The meeting concluded at 10:55 p.m.

Samantha Gange

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Samantha Gange, City Clerk