

**CITY OF ROCK ISLAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

2/25/2021 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. This meeting will be conducted by audio and video conference without 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 Deputy Clerk Josh Adams to call the roll.

Present: Mayor Mike Thoms

Alderman Ivory D. Clark, Alderman Randy Hurt, Alderman James Spurgetis, Alderwoman Jenni Swanson, Alderman Dylan Parker, and Alderman Dave Geenen were present via remote connection in accordance with Governor Pritzker's Executive Order.

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Randy Tweet, Deputy City Clerk Josh Adams

4. Public Comment

Mayor Thoms asked if any residents wished to speak via remote connection. No one asked to speak.

5. A Special Ordinance amending the Alcoholic Liquor License Ordinance by eliminating Section 3-9, paragraph 1b titled Extended Hours, three o'clock a.m. option and amending two related paragraphs, specifically section 3-5, paragraph 10 regarding Annual Training Sessions and Section 305, paragraph 11 regarding recording systems. (Second Reading)

MOTION: Alderman Poulos moved to pass the ordinance; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

Alderman Hurt started the discussion with a statement that read:

"While realizing that closing at 3 a.m. is not ideal for the bar owners, closing at 2 a.m. is a first

step in developing a new and vibrant District. This time can be revisited once security issues are addressed. The council has requested the following measures to improve safety without delay:

1. Schematics for a possible new street to replace the existing plaza.
2. Sample lighting has been ordered with anticipated installation by late March/early April.
3. Security cameras to be installed by March/early April.

The Council and City understand the importance of a thriving downtown and pledges to work with bar owners to promote District events and find ways to bring in patrons earlier in the evening, hopefully making the District a first stop rather than the last stop. This decision was not an easy one, but the vision is not only about bars, but also attracting new businesses. We hope our existing bar owners continue to do a great job, including putting on signature festivals in the summer and creating new events. We also look forward to working with the newly established downtown Task Force to revitalize the District."

Alderman Spurgetis thanked Alderman Hurt for putting that statement together. He said it puts us on the right track moving forward and that he was looking forward to making this change.

Alderman Parker added that he wanted to recognize his colleagues on the City Council. He stated that he understood that there is not going to be a unanimous decision as there are clear disagreements on this particular vote. However, the past 72 hours there have been non-stop phone calls, texts and emails going on, discussing amongst the council and that he really appreciates everyone's dialogue. He went on to say that he goes back to one of the Task Force meetings where this issue was discussed and that it became apparent at that time that everyone's concern is that the City of Rock Island be able to provide the investment and the resources that the downtown needs such as security, infrastructure, lighting - all of the things that Alderman Hurt had just listed. Alderman Parker continued that he feels, after speaking with all of his colleagues over the past few days, that there is consensus in that direction and regardless of the vote, he said he is very optimistic regarding the future of downtown Rock Island. He went on to say that he thinks that through this was a bit of a contentious policy decision, the Council has forged an agreement amongst the council that they need to plan and actually act on that plan with respect to what needs to be done in downtown Rock Island. He added it needs to be safe, appealing and someplace that people want to visit. Alderman Parker closed by acknowledging the differences and the disagreements amongst the council, but at the same time appreciating the dialogue and the mutual and shared ultimate goal of improving downtown Rock Island.

Mayor Thoms thanked Alderman Parker and added that he learned in the last couple of days that several alleys in the downtown area that were talked about already have lighting. Behind Daiquiri Factory and over by Theo's for a couple, so there is already a start on the lighting project.

With no one else wishing to comment, Mayor called for the vote.

VOTE: Motion passed on a 4-3-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson. Nay: Parker, Geenen, Clark. Absent: None.

6. A Special Ordinance regarding the amendments to Chapter 8, Division 4, Section 8-232 Vendor Permits and Division 6, Section 8-234, Prohibited Activities, as they pertain to the 3 a.m. alcoholic liquor license extended option. (Second Reading)

MOTION: Alderman Poulos made a motion to pass the Ordinance; Alderman Hurt seconded.

VOTE: Motion passed on a 4-3-0 roll call vote. Aye: Poulos, Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson. Nay: Parker, Geenen, Clark. Absent: None

7. Motion to Adjourn

MOTION: Alderman Hurt made a motion to adjourn; Alderman Parker seconded.

VOTE: Motion passed on a 7-0-0 roll call vote. Ayes: Parker, Poulos, Geenen, Clark, Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson. Absent: None

The meeting was adjourned at 1:09 p.m.

Linda K. Mohr, Interim City Clerk