

**CITY OF ROCK ISLAND  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

City Hall

1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island IL

City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

5/10/2021 - Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 6:45 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 Interim City Clerk Josh Adams to call the roll.

Present: Alderman Randy Hurt, Alderwoman Jenni Swanson, Alderman Mark Poulos, Alderman Dave Geenen, and Mayor Mike Thoms.

Alderman James Spurgetis was present via remote connection in accordance with Governor Pritzker's Executive Order.

Absent: Alderman Ivory D. Clark and Alderman Dylan Parker.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Thoms led in the saying 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 any residents in the crowd or via remote connection wished to speak.

Rock Island resident Andrew DeFrees came to the front and spoke in support of Alderman Parker with regards to recent comments on Police pursuit reform. He said Alderman Parker made a mild statement regarding reform and challenging the status quo, and was criticized by the Mayor and Police Union. He added the City has not addressed the recent death of DeShawn Tatum with anything but a performative statement. He noted the increase of Police Department

budget in contrast to other City departments, and criticized the City's lack of attention to marginalized groups.

Rock Island resident Don Mewes came to the front and spoke in support of the Rock Island Police Department. He repeated verbatim the full statement on the Tatum incident from Alderman Parker. He said it was unfortunate for Alderman Parker to have doubled down in response to his statement.

Rock Island resident Ray Lind came to the front and spoke in support of the Rock Island Police Department, and asked for the resignation of Alderman Parker. He said Alderman Parker has put the public in danger by putting the Police Department in danger with his statement regarding the Tatum incident. He noted he had also been on ridealongs as well as Alderman Parker, and he did not doubt any of the actions of officers in any situation. He said the description of officers as 'agents of state violence' in Alderman Parker's statement was indicative of his attitude towards law enforcement. He said Alderman Parker did not call for accountability from criminals, but instead called for a study on policing. He offered possible solutions to combat criminal activities.

Geneseo, Illinois resident Shawn Roselieb introduced himself as a member of the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police in support of the Rock Island Police Department. He noted that it was currently National Peace Officers Memorial Week. He said the City should be proud that the Rock Island Police Department was the most diverse, best trained, and best equipped group the City has seen. He challenged Council to continue on the current path and provide the Department with what they need to succeed, to stay away from the keyboard and social media, and to ask difficult questions surrounding incidents.

7. Minutes of the April 26th, 2021 City Council meeting.

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to approve the minutes as printed; Alderman Poulos seconded.

Alderman Spurgetis requested confirmation that the changes he suggested were made. Interim City Clerk Adams confirmed they were minor clerical errors that did not change the context of the minutes, and said the minutes were corrected as suggested prior to the meeting.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

8. Minutes from the April 12th and May 10th, 2021 Executive Sessions.

Interim Clerk Adams noted the item should have read April 12th and April 26, 2021.

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to approve the minutes as printed; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

9. Update Rock Island by Mayor Thoms

Tonight marks the beginning of another chapter for the City of Rock Island.

Tonight we will be swearing in two new Aldermen. Additionally myself and 2 incumbent Aldermen will also be sworn in again as we begin our second terms in office. I would like to first acknowledge those who will be leaving us tonight: Alderman Ivory Clark and Alderman James Spurgetis. Their time serving the City has been very much appreciated and they will both be greatly missed. I would like to personally thank them for their time and commitment to the City of Rock Island and wish them well as they go on to their next chapter.

The faces of municipal government change, just like the residents of our City and the dynamics of our neighborhoods change. In a few moments, two new people will be sworn in and will sit up here with us as we go on to the new business portion of tonight's agenda. While some things may change around us, the basics of our local government remain the same. As our history states on our website, the City of Rock Island adopted a council-manager form of local government in 1952 to bring a professional, less political approach to local government. We are a non-partisan City. We do not run on a party platform. Our citizens elect seven aldermen and the mayor to be their voice, not only of their ward, but of the City as a whole. We are elected to work together to serve our City.

Sadly, in the last several weeks, I have felt a divide occurring within our ranks. It seems as if personal politics and individual agendas have, at times, taken precedence over what is good for the City as a whole. We were each elected to these positions to work together for the betterment of the City and to set the policies and procedures needed to make Rock Island a great City to live, work and play. We are the voices of those who live in our City, those that work in our City, and those that visit our City. We need to come together and work with the various leaders in our neighborhoods. We sit up here as the play makers. It is our duty to listen to all of our constituents, and determine their needs and wants and if possible, to set the policies in place to make that happen. We do that as a collective group and then we trust in and provide support to our staff to ensure those plans happen. Our City Manager, our directors and our employees all work diligently to see that these policies are carried out. The City Council sets the strategic goals, the City Manager implements those goals with the planning and work of the Division Directors and employees.

Our City successfully came through this recent pandemic with the dedication and assistance of all employees and Aldermen. We worked together to ensure our City emerged in a position to grow and thrive.

The foundation upon which the City of Rock Island is built is strong. Together we will make it stronger, robust and able to withstand future challenges. United together in a common goal-to improve our City- we will continue to be the place people come to work, live and play.

10. Proclamation declaring May 16th through May 22nd, 2021 as National Public Works Week.

Interim City Clerk Josh Adams read the proclamation. Mayor Thoms read his declaration.

11. Proclamation declaring the month of May, 2021 as Historic Preservation Month.

Interim City Clerk Josh Adams read the proclamation. Mayor Thoms read his declaration.

12. A Special Ordinance establishing a handicapped parking space at 2022 43rd Street - Second Reading.

MOTION:

Alderman Spurgetis moved to approve the ordinance as recommended; Alderman Geenen seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

13. A Resolution approving an amended employment agreement with the City Manager and authorizing the Mayor to execute the contract documents.

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to adopt the resolution and authorize the Mayor to execute the contract documents; Alderman Hurt seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

14. Claims

- a. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$415,503.90 to Walter D. Laud, Inc., East Moline, IL, for 2020 and 2021 Sidewalk and Pavement Patching Program, project numbers 2140, 2142, 2377, 2411 2434, and Parks Path for services provided February 21st through March 19th, 2021.
- b. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$13,335.23 to Langman Construction, Inc., for an emergency water main repair at 3901 6th Street.
- c. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$16,980.21 to Langman Construction, Inc., Rock Island, IL, for an emergency water main repair at 26th Avenue and 40th Street.
- d. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$21,095.22 to Langman Construction, Inc., Rock Island, IL, for an emergency water main repair on 20th Street and 16th Avenue.
- e. Report from the Public Works Department regarding payment in the amount of \$33,788.00 to Greenspace Associates, Davenport, IA, for payment #12 of the Sod Replacement Program, Project 2141 and 2740 for services provided from December 30, 2020 through April 7th, 2021.
- f. Report from the Human Resources Department regarding payment in the amount of \$18,059.32 to David G. Morrison, City Attorney, for services rendered in April, 2021.
- g. Report from the Human Resources Department regarding payment in the amount of \$9,544.10 to Marjory Tallman for payment of a General Liability Claim.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to approve Claims Items A through G as recommended; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

15. Claims for the week of April 16th through April 22nd, 2021 in the amount of \$512,523.17; April 23rd through April 29th, 2021 in the amount of \$417,735.95; April 30th through May 6th, 2021 in the amount of \$726,275.01; and payroll for the weeks of April 4th through April 18th, 2021 in the amount of \$1,539,159.03 and for the weeks of April 19th through May 2nd, 2021 in the amount of \$1,547,375.44.

MOTION:

Alderman Geenen moved to allow the claims and payroll; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

16. Other Business

Alderman Spurgetis said it was an honor to have served his community, and thanked everyone for their support past and present. He said he felt privileged to have Alderwoman-Elect Judith Gilbert succeed him. He thanked Mayor Thoms, Mr. Tweet, City Staff, and fellow Council members.

Mayor Thoms thanked Aldermen Spurgetis and Clark for their service, and noted they would be presented with a commemorative plaque at a later date. He read the statements on the plaques.

17. Motion to Adjourn Sine Die

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to adjourn Sine Die; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

Motion passed on a 5-0-2 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Spurgetis, Swanson, Poulos, and Geenen. Nay: None. Absent: Clark and Parker.

OATH OF OFFICE - Interim City Clerk Josh Adams administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Mike Thoms, 1st Ward Alderman Moses Robinson Jr, 3rd Ward Alderwoman Judith Higgins Gilbert, and 7th Ward Alderman Dave Geenen.

18. Call to Order

Mayor Thoms called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

19. Roll Call

Mayor Thoms asked Interim City Clerk Josh Adams to call the roll.

Present: Alderman Moses Robinson, Alderman Randy Hurt, Alderwoman Judith Gilbert, Alderwoman Jenni Swanson, Alderman Mark Poulos, Alderman Dave Geenen, and Mayor Mike Thoms.

Absent: Alderman Dylan Parker.

20. Public Comment

Mayor Thoms said he was happy to have his family in the crowd, and thanked them for their support and encouragement.

Alderman Robinson said his family was also in attendance, and thanked them for their support, inspiration, and encouragement. He thanked those that voted for him, and said he prayed to be there for them and be their voice.

Alderwoman Swanson welcomed Alderman Robinson and Alderwoman Gilbert to Council.

Alderwoman Gilbert said her siblings and daughter were in attendance, and thanked them for their support. She took note of family members that were unable to be present.

Alderman Geenen said it was good to have his family in attendance and thanked them.

21. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding the construction contract with Pillar Construction, Bettendorf, IA, for work on the City's rehab house located at 1435 15th Avenue.

MOTION:

Alderwoman Swanson moved to approve the contract with Pillar Construction, subject to minor City Attorney modifications, for an amount not to exceed \$230,015.00 and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract documents; Alderman Poulos seconded.

Alderman Robinson said he was not well-versed enough with the measure to make a sound decision. Alderwoman Gilbert gave a summary of the funding sources, and said she would hope Staff could find a way to invest the money with a housing partner, and leverage the money for further impact. She added Staff needed to make a better case for spending the money, or check on other public-private partnerships that could be forged.

VOTE:

Motion failed on a 3-3-1 roll call vote. Aye: Hurt, Swanson, and Poulos. Nay: Robinson, Gilbert, and Geenen. Absent: Parker.

Mayor Thoms provided a tiebreaking vote in favor of the measure, which then passed 4-3-1.

22. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding a request to vacate a section of the street right-of-way (sidewalk portion only) between 5th Avenue and the alleyway bisecting the 500 block of 18th Street north of 6th Avenue and convey said property to

the YWCA of the Quad Cities - First Reading.

MOTION:

Alderman Geenen moved to approve the vacation and conveyance as recommended, that a utilities easement be put in place for same; and suspend the rules and pass the ordinance; Alderman Poulos seconded.

VOTE:

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

23. Report from the Community and Economic Development Department regarding the rezoning from R-4 (multi-unit residential) to PUD (Planned Unit Development) located approximately at 2001 7th Avenue (Parcel 095289).

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to approve the requested rezoning and accompanying PUD site plan with all requested variances; Alderman Robinson seconded.

Dr. Reginald Lawrence, Superintendent of the Rock Island-Milan School District, joined via remote connection. He said he supported this initiative to continue having the District establish a footprint in this area of the City. He added the new proposed facility will help the District become a more efficient and effective organization.

VOTE:

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

24. Report from the City Attorney's Office regarding changes to the Liquor Ordinance, specifically as it relates to issuing licenses to applicants who have previously been convicted of a felony.

MOTION:

Alderman Robinson moved to consider the ordinance; Alderwoman Swanson seconded.

VOTE:

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

25. Report from the Public Works Department regarding a request from Denise Browning, General Manager of Sunset Marina to host Fun Food Friday's at the Marina during the 2021 boating season.

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to approve the request as recommended, subject to complying with all licensing regulations and subject to being shut down early if complaints are received; Alderman Geenen seconded.

Alderman Hurt thanked both Ms. Browning and Tim Kavanaugh for bringing these events to the Marina and Park. Ms. Browning joined via remote connection and thanked Council for their support of the Marina.

VOTE:

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

26. Report from the Mayor's office regarding the appointment of Dr. Pandora Lawrence and the reappointments of Kevin Day, Nicole Parker and Bill Sowards to the Board of Zoning Appeals and the appointment of Dr. Yolanda Grandberry Pugh and the reappointments of Patrick Mahar and Karen Phillips to the Library Board of Directors.

MOTION:

Alderman Swanson moved to approve the appointments and reappointments as recommended; Alderman Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

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

27. Report from the City Clerk's Office regarding a request and a resolution from the Quad Cities Marathon Committee for the temporary closure of the easternmost northbound lane of US 67 (Master Stanley Talbot Memorial Bridge) and the temporary closure of the eastbound and westbound lanes of IL 92 and 17th Street to the intersection of 24th Street and 4th Avenue

MOTION:

Alderman Hurt moved to approve the event as recommended and adopt the Resolution; Alderman Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

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

28. Report from the City Clerk's Office regarding a request from Augustana College to use sound amplification on Friday, May 21st, 2021 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at Lindberg Stadium, 520 38th Street.

MOTION:

Alderman Poulos moved to approve the sound amplification permit as recommended; Alderman Gilbert seconded.

VOTE:

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



29. Other Business

Mayor Thoms noted it was a good feeling to have Council together in person. He commented on the developments regarding current and State mandates with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mayor Thoms said Executive Assistant and Deputy City Clerk Linda Mohr's upcoming retirement warranted discussion on the clarity of what was needed from a replacement in the position. Alderwoman Gilbert opined that a full-time Clerk should be a priority, and provided additional requirements with regards to the position and State statutes. She noted the City Clerk is appointed by the Mayor and City Council, and the position should revert back to reporting to them. Alderman Geenen said the Ordinance was changed, but the City is unique in comparison to municipalities across Illinois with the current status. He added he hoped the City would be in compliance.

City Attorney Dave Morrison discussed his research on the State statutes. He noted the City Manager does have authority to act on the Clerk positions if granted by Council. Alderman Poulos said the decision would clearly be made by Council, but it made sense for the Clerk to report to someone on site. Mayor Thoms noted other cities in Illinois, including Moline, have the same format as is currently with Rock Island. Alderwoman Swanson said it would be difficult to have seven different supervisors, which could create conflict and division. She added the best chance for success is to have one line of communication due to the unique current situation.

Alderman Robinson said there is a record of successful supervision under the current Council-City Manager relationship. Mayor Thoms said either format could work, and having a former Clerk on Council may help or add conflict. He added before a knee-jerk reaction is made, he would opt to allow the situation to continue. Alderman Robinson asked why the format was changed. Alderman Geenen opined it felt like a knee-jerk reaction at the time when the change was made. Alderwoman Swanson disagreed and noted there was a definite reason for the change. She added the format has worked well since the change in January, and the format keeps the City Clerk out of conflict with Council. Alderman Robinson said any new applicant would understand the traditional format from their background. Mayor Thoms said the City has had others in the position with no municipal background who learned on the job.

Alderwoman Gilbert noted the primary job of the City Clerk is to do the bidding of City Council. She requested that one or two members of City Council be on the search committee for a full-time City Clerk. Mayor Thoms added it is easier to give a directive on Clerk performance issues with a supervisor that has regular communication. Alderman Hurt added he prefers to maintain the current format.

30. Motion to Adjourn

MOTION:

Alderman Geenen moved to adjourn; Alderman Robinson seconded.

VOTE:

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

The meeting concluded at 8:12 p.m.

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Josh Adams, Interim City Clerk