

: OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS :

: OF THE CITY OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS :

A Special Meeting of the City Council of Peoria, Illinois, was held April 21, 2020, at 6:00 P.M. by electronic means through Microsoft Teams with Mayor Ardis presiding, and with proper notice having been posted.

### ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE

In accordance with Governor JB Pritzker's Executive Orders 2020-10, issued on March 20, 2020, prohibiting all public and private gatherings of 10 people or more in a single room or single space at the same time, and 2020-18, issued on April 1, 2020, extending Executive Order 2020-10 through April 30, 2020, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendation of gatherings of no more than 10 people in a single room or space and social distancing of at least six feet between persons; I, Mayor Ardis, declared a local State of Emergency and closed City Hall to the public to contain the spread of COVID-19.

To fulfill the requirements and recommendations and to comply with the spirit of the Open Meetings Act by conducting the April 21, 2020 Special City Council Meeting virtually through Microsoft Teams. Those City Council Members attending the meeting virtually shall be declared present. Citizens and media are invited to watch through the online live stream, local TV Channel 22, or WCBU radio. Submissions for Public Comment were received through the City Clerk's Office.

### ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed the following Council Members were electronically present: Ali, Cyr, Grayeb, Jensen, Kelly, Moore, Montelongo, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis – 11.  
Absent: None.

### INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Jim Ardis requested a moment of silent prayer or silent reflection and then he led the pledge of allegiance.

### PETITIONS, REMONSTRANCES & COMMUNICATIONS – CITY OF PEORIA

**(20-081) Communication from the City Manager With a Request to RECEIVE and FILE a PRESENTATION on the IMPACT OF COVID-19 RELATING TO THE CITY'S BUDGET.**

City Manager Urich provided a follow-up presentation regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the City of Peoria's budget. Three documents were distributed as follows:

- 2020 COVID-19 Budget Restructuring PowerPoint
- Council Report Backs Part 2
- 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Peoria and the Peoria Civic Center Authority

City Manager Urich reviewed what cities the size of Peoria were experiencing similar circumstances in light of COVID-19, noting revenue declines, public service cuts, effect on

Police, and the furlough and layoffs of employees. He reviewed what larger cities were doing identifying Los Angeles, Nashville, Hamilton County – Ohio, Cincinnati, Phoenix and Detroit. He reported, at the end of 2019, the City of Peoria had a balanced budget outlook on the future, noting that the pandemic had impacted that budget. He said the beginning of the curve of the deficit began at \$54 million. He reviewed different types of recoveries noting the V-shape as the fastest, the U-shape with a lower and longer dip that ended in a fast recovery, and the L-shape that had very little recovery. He said the City did not know the condition of its revenues, but the City did know that changes had to be made that would impact service deliveries. He reviewed the City's cash position for 2020 through October noting \$16 million could be drawn down through October 2020 and \$38 million in November and December. He reviewed four management levers that were available to the Council as follows: capital reduction, operations reduction, borrowing and savings. He reviewed borrowing options such as new forms of debt, line of credit, restructuring and pushing out debt. He recommended capital reductions in the amount of \$26.7 million, noting it would not help the General Fund but would address personnel costs. He remarked on the need for a "new norm" for the City that would continue over the next few years. He said the City could pursue external sources such as grants and could break down larger projects into smaller pieces over a few years. He reviewed possible operation changes including service reductions, furloughs and layoffs, pay cuts and restructuring/outsourcing.

At the conclusion of his presentation, City Manager Urich asked the City Council for guidance regarding the City's budget for 2020 and beyond.

Mayor Ardis summarized the budgetary issues that were before the City Council to address. He remarked on the proposed \$26.7 million in capital reductions, noting it provided the City Manager with a parameter. He said the projects identified for reduction were not final and could be changed. He said the Council needed to provide direction on revenues, borrowing and savings, operations and capital. He asked the Council to provide input on potential financial mechanisms such as lines of credit, refinancing, pushing out debt or obtaining new debt. He said the Council would receive information from Speer Financial regarding financial mechanisms at the next City Council meeting. He asked the Council to provide parameters for reductions or restructuring of operations.

Discussions were held regarding the City's current cash balance and what was considered a safe level. Finance Director/Comptroller Jim Scroggins said the Council's Policy was to have 25% of expenditures in the General Fund, which equaled approximately \$25 million. He reported that the City currently had \$48 million available across all funds.

Council Member Jensen said she supported the proposed capital reductions. She asked the City Manager to review restructuring debt, pursuing a line of credit or using the City's reserves. She said all scenarios should be reviewed first before looking at operating reductions. Regarding operating reductions, she asked for different types of furlough plans to be presented and the cost savings that would be associated. She asked for information on any savings there could be with closing City Hall one day per week.

At the conclusion of her comments, Council Member Jensen moved to defer the capital improvement projects, as outlined in the City Manager's recommendation, totaling \$26.7 million; seconded by Council Member Moore.

Council Member Riggerbach said he appreciated the efforts of the City Manager and Staff. He remarked on the importance of their constituents understanding that there had to be serious



adjustments made to the budget in light of the pandemic. He said the concept presented was solid and he said he would support the motion.

Council Member Kelly said he wanted to discuss options and he asked, in the operating budget, what 5%, 10% and 15% layoffs would look. He remarked on the need to provide the City Manager flexibility to give different scenarios on budget adjustments to the City Council. He expressed a concern that the motion had a dollar amount attached, stating he wanted to hear about potentials in other areas as well.

Council Member Moore said the projects identified in the capital budget for the \$26.7 million were not solid decisions. She said she seconded the motion to provide the direction to look at \$26.7 million as a start for discussion. She said every District within the City would have to take some cuts. She remarked the situation was temporary and once the pandemic was over and the City was operational again, the projects that were delayed would go to the top of the list. She asked the City Manager to look at the potential for borrowing in order to prevent essential City services from being reduced to a point where it would not be able to rebound, stating the City could not afford to lose any of its personnel.

Council Member Ali said she supported the motion at the last Council meeting based upon the clarifications made at that time; however, she expressed concern for the words "as outlined" used in the current motion and she requested clarification.

Council Member Jensen said she would not amend her motion stating it was the same motion from the last Council Meeting offering the same flexibility to the City Manager. She said it authorized the City Manager to make reductions to the Capital Improvement Budget for 2020 in a manner as outlined in the City Manager's communication to the City Council. She said the City Manager could come back with a final proposal, or more than one proposal, under those parameters.

Mayor Ardis said there was nothing final about the motion on the floor, stating it provided the City Manager with direction within a framework to develop recommendations.

Discussions were held regarding road projects and whether Federal funding would be lost if some of those projects were deferred. City Manager Urich said Staff reviewed the large capital projects that had funding along with their deadlines so funding for those projects would not be lost.

Council Member Oyler said there needed to be a level of borrowing in order to secure the budget. He said he would rather borrow for capital projects than for operations. He remarked on the long-term needs of the City and the need for road repair. He said he wanted to ensure that whatever recommendations came back to the City Council would include continuation of road repair work.

Council Member Montelongo expressed a concern in delaying the Glen Avenue Reconstruction project. He remarked on the condition of the road and he commented the land acquisition that was needed was the longest part of the project. He said Glen Avenue had been in disrepair for quite some time and he commented that it was a major thoroughfare in the City. He asked for the land acquisition to be done first since it would take the longest and he commented, if construction was pushed out to 2021, this project be at the top of the list.



Motion to defer the capital improvement projects, as outlined in the City Manager's recommendation, totaling \$26.7 million was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Cyr, Grayeb, Jensen, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis - 10;

Nays: Kelly - 1.

Council Member Ruckriegel expressed his appreciation to the Mayor for encouraging assistance from the Federal Government. He said there were capital projects that tied back into operations that were needed to complete capital projects. He recommended providing the City Manager with a range in capital reductions between \$23 million and \$28 million and potential reductions in operations of \$5 million, \$10 million and \$15 million, inclusive of external contracts. He asked the City Manager to look at the balance in terms of bonding and refinancing with a parameter of \$50 million. He asked for two or three scenarios with those parameters outlined for the City Manager to bring back to the City Council.

At the conclusion of his comments, Council Member Ruckriegel moved to ask the City Manager to provide the City Council with a range of scenarios that offered capital reductions between \$23 million and \$28 million, operation reductions between \$5 million and \$15 million, inclusive of bonding options that would total all in the amount of \$50 million; and a fourth option only comprised of borrowing and financing; seconded by Council Member Grayeb.

At the request of Council Member Grayeb, City Manager Ulrich outlined the City's efforts to provide several different scenarios to the City Council for review. He said the City would be meeting with Speer Financial to develop options and provide feedback consistent with what was requested. He said the City was looking into a line of credit with local and Midwest banks as well as considering a working capital bond and reviewing the lost revenue and for how long.

Discussions were held regarding a potential fourth stimulus package and whether it would be allotted to states and municipalities. It was noted that many municipalities the size of Peoria fell below the threshold of 500,000 of the previous stimulus package.

Council Member Jensen said she would not support the motion as presented. She said capital improvement projects needed to be cut first and then the City needed to review borrowing and restructuring debt with a reduction in operations being a last resort. She said she would not support directing the City Manager to cut jobs until all other options were considered first.

Council Member Ali said the motion made by Council Member Ruckriegel was a comprehensive approach and she remarked on the need for the City Council to review all options and scenarios. She said she was optimistic about a stimulus package that would address the issues of cities under 500,000.

Council Member Montelongo said he would support the motion made by Council Member Ruckriegel and he said he agreed with Council Member Jensen that cutting operations should be a last resort. He said the City needed to develop a plan for public advertisement when the Stay-at-Home Order was lifted to help get businesses running to ensure the City was following State and Federal guidelines. He said there needed to be a line item in the budget for this type of advertisement.

Council Member Moore recommended reviewing the City's borrowing options with no operating reductions.



Council Member Kelly said he would support the current motion that included various parameters for the City Manager.

Council Member Riggerbach said he would support the motion, stating it was exactly the direction that was needed.

Council Member Jensen expressed a concern that the motion included a reduction in operations and was not clear or specific on borrowing options. At the conclusion of her comments, Council Member Jensen moved for a substitute motion for the City Manager to come back with three to four different scenarios and proposals to keep the City afloat through 2020 and 2021.

Motion died for lack of a second.

Mayor Ardis said he would support the motion and would not require the City Council to readdress the first motion.

City Manager Urich said there was a fourth scenario that included no operating cuts, same range of capital reductions, and included all borrowing options.

In response to Council Member Grayeb, City Manager Urich said layoff notices were sent to the bargaining units last week and the City was currently in the process of scheduling a time with those units to meet. He said the notice indicated the City may implement layoffs within 30 days. He said it put the Unions on notice that layoffs may occur.

Discussions were held on how the City would recognize its borrowing or restructuring in its debt accounting and Finance Director/Comptroller Scroggins provided a brief overview of the same.

Council Member Montelongo said there was a major revenue shortage in the City's budget that would change the budget overall.

Discussions were held regarding the settlement with the U.S. EPA for the combined sewer overflow. City Manager Urich said the negotiations were put on hold until the economy improved and people went back to work in order to determine the fiscal impact it would have on the community. At the recommendation of Council Member Grayeb, he said he would research the costs and fees of the CSO and any offsets and provide an update.

Mayor Ardis said he asked the City's Washington DC legal counsel to request the U.S. EPA to dismiss this action against the City in a form of a Federal stimulus to the City of Peoria.

Motion to have the City Manager provide the City Council with scenarios that offered capital reductions between \$23 million and \$28 million, operation reductions between \$5 million and \$15 million, inclusive of bonding options that would total the amount of \$50 million; and a fourth option comprised solely of borrowing and financing was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Cyr, Grayeb, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis - 10;

Nays: Jensen - 1.

Discussions were held regarding the Hotel, Restaurant and Amusement Tax revenues and how the City currently suspended funding to the Peoria Civic Center, the Peoria Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and ArtsPartners, and others. City Manager Urich remarked on the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the Civic Center, stating there were no



agreements with the other organizations. He said these organizations were advised that their funding was subject to HRA revenues. He said the PACVB was aware that there would not be funds available through the rest of the year. Council Member Jensen asked the City Manager to keep Council informed once the City started to receive its revenues, noting that allotments for each organization would differ and would be gradual.

Discussions were held regarding relief to cities under 500,000. Mayor Ardis commented that many cities were overlooked due to their population. City Manager Urich said if there was Federal funding available, there would be better options in budget scenarios for the Council to review. He said he had not received guidance on the Coronavirus Relief Fund, noting the 500,000 population threshold.

Discussions were held regarding whether the emergent expenses qualified for FEMA reimbursement, and City Manager Urich said the City would need to seek other funding first and then FEMA would reimburse the City at 75%.

In response to Council Member Jensen, City Manager Urich said he would review reducing monetary contributions to other organizations and provide a Report Back regarding the same.

**(20-092) Communication from the Mayor and Corporation Counsel with a Request to APPROVE the DECLARATION OF LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY.**

Council Member Riggerbach moved to approve the Declaration of Local State of Emergency; seconded by Council Member Oyler.

Discussions were held regarding whether the Mayor was allowed to do anything contrary to the Governor's Executive Orders, and Interim Corporation Counsel Peterson said guidance regarding the definition of "essential business" and what businesses qualified under that definition has changed frequently; however, she stated that the Mayor did not have the authority to issue an opinion contrary to any Executive Orders issued by the Governor.

Motion to approve the Declaration of Local State of Emergency was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Cyr, Grayeb, Jensen, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis - 11;

Nays: None.

Council Member Grayeb commented that the Governor issued the Executive Order and the only ability the City had was to enforce that Order. He said the City was being more restrictive than necessary.

**FIRST READINGS**

**(20-093) Communication from the City Manager and Director of Community Development with a Request to RECEIVE and FILE a FIRST READING Review of an ORDINANCE Amending CHAPTER 13 of the CODE of the City of Peoria Relating to the DEFINITION of WEEDS.**

Community Development Director Ross Black provided an overview of the proposed Ordinance Amendment, which would increase the violation height of grass and weeds from 10" to 15". He explained the proposed amendment was due to the City's current economic situation and the budget shortfall created by COVID-19. He explained how the Department's budget would be



affected going into spring and summer and how staffing levels would be impacted. He explained how the Department would be proactive by reaching out to past violators and reminding them of the City's Code, implement an early warning system, and continue to monitor the situation. He said this was an attempt to smooth out the environmental workload through the rest of the 2020.

Council Member Moore asked that a sunset provision be included within the Ordinance, stating that there could be an economic upturn in 2021.

In response to Council Member Moore regarding the delay in cost recovery, Director Black said he would provide a Report Back at the next Council Meeting.

Discussions were held regarding Staff availability through the end of the year and the ability to address environmental concerns appropriately. Council Member Moore recommended that should there be layoffs and furloughs of Staff, those individuals should be hired to help address the situation in Community Development. She remarked on the importance of the services the Community Development Department provided.

Council Member Grayeb said he would not support this item stating that the height of grass and weeds should be no more than 10" within the City.

Council Member Cyr inquired as to the City Manager's emergency powers during a State of Emergency, and City Manager Urich said he could suspend certain practices until the State of Emergency ended. Council Member Cyr said he would not support the Ordinance amendment stating he would prefer the City Manager to exercise his emergency power and use his discretion.

Interim Corporation Counsel Chrissie Peterson said Section 7-35.2 of the Code of the City of Peoria stated the City Manager could suspend or alter an Ordinance during the duration of an emergency.

City Manager Urich said if he were to suspend the Ordinance during the duration of the emergency, and the State of Emergency was lifted in June, then the mowing requirement would go back to 10". He said the City currently did not have the funding to mow at that level. He recommended proceeding with the Ordinance amendment through the remainder of 2020.

Council Member Moore moved to receive and file a first reading review of an Ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Code of the City of Peoria relating to the definition of weeds; seconded by Council Member Kelly.

Council Member Riggerbach requested a sunset provision running through the end of 2020 be included in the Ordinance.

Motion to receive and file a first reading review of an Ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Code of the City of Peoria relating to the definition of weeds was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Cyr, Jensen, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis - 10;

Nays: Grayeb - 1.



**UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Including but not limited to motions to reconsider items, if any, from the previous Regular Meeting)**

- (20-086) Communication from the City Manager and Director of Public Works with a Request to APPROVE CONTRACTS for the 2020 CITY OF PEORIA AND PEORIA COUNTY TRUSTEE AND VACANT LOT MOWING PROGRAM (Bid #10-20) (All Council Districts) and Award the Contracts, in the Total Amount not to Exceed \$257,492.25, as Follows:**
- A. D&D Homecare Solutions, in the Amount not to Exceed \$19,112.25;**
  - B. JIMAX, in the Amount not to Exceed \$20,671.50;**
  - C. P-Town Car Club, in the Amount not to Exceed \$36,976.50;**
  - D. Walton Service, Inc., in the Amount not to Exceed \$31,363.50;**
  - E. Carmody Lawn Services, in the Amount not to Exceed \$49,614.00;**
  - F. Hulse Lawn Care, in the Amount not to Exceed \$18,183.75;**
  - G. Law'n Order, in the Amount not to Exceed \$67,939.75; and**
  - H. Hearn's Landscaping, in the Amount not to Exceed \$13,632.00.**

Council Member Moore provided an overview of her initial concerns with this item, noting the increased height to mow as well as not mowing Peoria County Trustee lots. She said there were approximately 700-800 Trustee lots within the City of Peoria with the majority of those located on the South Side, but there were some also located within the Second and Third Council Districts. She said she spoke with Public Works Director Rick Powers about including mowing Trustee Lots in the contracts, which added approximately \$85,000.00 to the total. She said she would agree to the increased length of grass as long as the Trustee Lots were being addressed. She asked the community to be vigilant that the Trustee Lots did not exceed the 15", and she complimented Community Development Director Ross Black, Assistant Community Development Director Joe Dulin and the Code Enforcement Department for their efforts on addressing the environmental issues within the City.

Council Member Moore moved to approve contracts for the 2020 City of Peoria and Peoria County Trustee and Vacant Lot Mowing Program (Bid #10-20) (All Council Districts) and award the Contracts, in the total amount not to exceed \$257,492.25 as follows: D&D Homecare Solutions, in an amount not to exceed \$19,112.25; JIMAX, in an amount not to exceed \$20,671.50; P-Town Car Club, in an amount not to exceed \$36,976.50; Walton Service, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$31,363.50; Carmody Lawn Services, in an amount not to exceed \$49,614.00; Hulse Lawn Care, in an amount not to exceed \$18,183.75; Law'n Order, in an amount not to exceed \$67,939.75; and Hearn's Landscaping, in an amount not to exceed \$13,632.00; seconded by Council Member Ali.

Discussions were held regarding whether the City would be able to recuperate the cost of maintaining the Trustee Lots. City Manager Urich said he had tried to have this issue addressed at the Legislative Program. He said the City would continue to discuss the matter



with Peoria County to have them address these lots. He explained when taxes were not paid on a property, it eventually was given to the County Trustee which would then go to auction in order to try to recuperate the taxes and the cost of maintaining the property. He said he would continue to have those conversations with Peoria County.

Council Member Grayeb expressed his concern for increasing the height to 15", and he said he would not vote in favor of this item.

Motion to approve contracts for the 2020 City of Peoria and Peoria County Trustee and Vacant Lot Mowing Program (Bid #10-20) (All Council Districts) and award the Contracts, in the total amount not to exceed \$257,492.25 as follows: D&D Homecare Solutions, in an amount not to exceed \$19,112.25; JIMAX, in an amount not to exceed \$20,671.50; P-Town Car Club, in an amount not to exceed \$36,976.50; Walton Service, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$31,363.50; Carmody Lawn Services, in an amount not to exceed \$49,614.00; Hulse Lawn Care, in an amount not to exceed \$18,183.75; Law'n Order, in an amount not to exceed \$67,939.75; and Hearn's Landscaping, in an amount not to exceed \$13,632.00, was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Jensen, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggerbach, Mayor Ardis - 8;

Nays: Cyr, Grayeb, Ruckriegel - 3.

**(20-091) Communication from the City Manager and the Corporation Counsel with a Request to APPROVE a LAND PURCHASE AGREEMENT between EXPOSITION GARDENS and the City of Peoria.**

Council Member Montelongo said he was waiting for an official response from Exposition Gardens, and he moved to defer this matter until April 28, 2020, Regular City Council Meeting; seconded by Council Member Ruckriegel.

Motion to defer this item to the April 28, 2020, Regular City Council Meeting was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Cyr, Jensen, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis - 10;

Nays: Grayeb -1.

**Restroom Facilities for the Homeless Population of Peoria**

Mayor Ardis said there had been discussions regarding the need for restroom facilities for the homeless in the downtown area. City Manager Urich said the City was working with the Heart of Illinois Continuum of Care to address the situation. He said the downtown shelters allowed access to their restrooms and the Dream Center offered showers and meals on a drop-in basis. He said CityLink was willing to host temporary restroom facilities as well. He said there would be handwashing stations offered in the parking lot of the Public Library. He said the City's Public Works Department was coordinating with CityLink to identify facilities and was working on the rental of Porta Potties.

**CITIZENS' OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL/TOWN BOARD**

Hearing no objection, Mayor Ardis asked City Clerk Beth Ball to read the citizen comments into the record as follows:

Barb Geyer, a citizen of Peoria, expressed a concern for a lack of bathroom facilities for the homeless population during the pandemic. She provided recommendations of possible facilities that could be opened, portable bathrooms, and handwashing stations.



EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was determined that an Executive Session was not needed at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

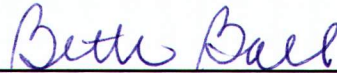
Council Member Grayeb moved to adjourn the Special City Council Meeting; seconded by Council Member Oyler.

Approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ali, Cyr, Grayeb, Jensen, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Oyler, Riggenbach,  
Ruckriegel, Mayor Ardis - 11;

Nays: None.

The Special City Council Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 P.M.



Beth Ball  
Beth Ball, MMC, City Clerk  
City of Peoria, Illinois

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