

Minutes of the Regular City Council Proceedings of the City of Chicago Heights, Cook County, IL.
held Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at 1601 Chicago Road, Chicago Heights, IL.

***By Zoom conference call with public participation at Chicago Heights Municipal Building, 1601
Chicago Road, Chicago Heights, IL***

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gonzalez called the regular meeting of the Chicago Heights City Council to order at 6:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL BY DEPUTY CLERK RACHEL VEGA

Mayor:	David Gonzalez	Present
Council:	1 st Ward Renee Smith	Present
	2 nd Ward Sonia Perez	Present
	3 rd Ward Wanda Rodgers	Present
	4 th Ward Christopher Baikauskas	Present
	5 th Ward George Brassea	Present
	6 th Ward Vincent Zaranti	Absent
	7 th Ward Kelli Merrick	Present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMUNICATIONS

Alderman Smith announced that she would hold her next ward meeting on Saturday, March 12th at 3:00 p.m. at Barack Obama School.

Alderman Perez announced that the tentative date for her next ward meeting was Monday, February 28th, but that she would confirm that with the Mayor's Office by Friday.

Alderman Rodgers announced that she would hold her next quarterly ward meeting in March, the date to be announced.

Alderman Baikauskas announced that he would hold a joint ward meeting with Park Commissioner Michele Baikauskas on Monday, February 28th at 6:00 p.m. at Roosevelt School.

Alderman Brassea - no ward meeting announcement.

Alderman Zaranti - absent

Alderman Merrick - no ward meeting announcement.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Corporation Counsel Somer was in the council chambers and reported there were no guests present for public participation.

REPORT OF CHIEF OF STAFF – KAREN ZERANTE

COS Zerante reported that the City’s second vaccination clinic held in partnership with the IDPH had gone well. The City acquired 1200 KN95 masks through an IDPH giveaway. The City distributed masks at the clinic and would continue to do so until the supply was depleted.

REPORT OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL—T.J. SOMER

None

1. MINUTES: MEETING OF FEBRUARY 2, 2022.

Alderman Perez moved, and Alderman Rodgers seconded, a motion to approve the minutes.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

2. BILLS: APPROVAL OF FIRST RUN OF FEBRUARY 2022.

Alderman Merrick moved, and Alderman Brassea seconded, a motion to approve the bills in the amount of \$ 1,814,030.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

3. ORDINANCE #2022 - 2: AMENDING CHAPTER 41 OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO HEIGHTS CODE OF ORDINANCES REGULATING THE SALE OF TOBACCO.

Alderman Rodgers moved, and Alderman Smith seconded, a motion to approve the ordinance.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Corporation Counsel Somer reported that the amendment capped the number of tobacco licenses permitted to be issued at the current existing number of 28. The amendment further provided that if a business closed or lost its tobacco license, the number of licenses authorized would be automatically reduced by the one that went out of business.

4. ORDINANCE #2022 - 3 : AMENDING CHAPTER 26 OF THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES REGULATING THE ISSUANCE OF BUSINESS LICENSES.

Alderman Merrick moved, and Alderman Perez seconded, a motion to approve the ordinance.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Corporation Counsel explained that the amendment would eliminate subparagraph (b) related to property tax hardship, in response to a recent court rendering that this provision was not permitted to be imposed in an ordinance. The City would continue to figure a way to provide a mechanism to help licensees with property tax hardship.

5. ORDINANCE #2022 - 4 : AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES REGULATING PURCHASING PROCEDURES.

Alderman Perez moved, and Alderman Merrick seconded, a motion to approve the ordinance.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Corporation Counsel explained that amendment incorporated the exceptions provisions of the Illinois School Code into the section of the City's ordinance regulating the exceptions to bidding. In addition, it increased the minimum bidding threshold from twenty thousand dollars to fifty thousand dollars. The new provisions would affect more efficiency in operation. There was a question on the amendment before the vote.

6. ORDINANCE #2022 - 5 : AMENDING CHAPTER 2-212 OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO HEIGHTS CODE OF ORDINANCES GOVERNING THE CITY'S BOARD OF FIRE & POLICE COMMISSIONERS.

Alderman Baikauskas moved, and Alderman Merrick seconded, a motion to approve the ordinance.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Mayor Gonzalez stated that he requested the increase in commissioners' annual compensation from \$1000 to \$5000 based on the size of the City and the amount of work involved. Brief commentary in agreement.

- 7. RESOLUTION #2022 - 14 : APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR A COOK COUNTY CLASS 8 PROPERTY TAX CLASSIFICATION FOR THE COMMERCIAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 844 HALSTED STREET.**

Alderman Brassea moved, and Alderman Perez seconded, a motion to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Jack Hynes, Economic Development Director, informed the council that the applicant group paid over \$ 300,000 in back taxes for the property, and that it planned to improve the property as well as open a grocery store at the location. The group owned three other gas stations in the City, and the tax incentive would assist in its business efforts here. Brief discussion.

- 8. RESOLUTION #2022 - 15 : APPROVING AGREEMENTS WITH ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT FOR CITY VEHICLE LEASING, SALE AND MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT.**

Alderman Smith moved, and Alderman Baikauskas seconded, a motion to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Mayor Gonzalez recalled Enterprise's presentation at a previous council meeting, and went over the costs on the analysis provided to the council. The City would see a savings in maintenance and fuel costs, and see average age of vehicle reduced from eleven to four years. Enterprise would manage the fleet, advising when to retire a vehicle and resell it, with funds deposited in escrow for future leases. Projected costs were \$ 328,207 for the first five-year term, and then \$ 8,892 for the next five-year term. There were questions to which Jamie Warczyski of Enterprise responded.

9. RESOLUTION #2022 - 16 : AUTHORIZING A DEED IN LIEU OF FORECLOSURE AGREEMENT FOR ACQUISITION OF THE COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 1107 HALSTED STREET (former El Tunel), 1010 WEST END AVENUE (former Wells Mechanical) AND 525 DIXIE HIGHWAY.

Alderman Rodgers moved, and Alderman Baikauskas seconded, a motion to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Corporation Counsel Somer stated that the owners agreed to deed the properties to the City, who would manage, improve or eliminate depending on the case. Brief discussion.

10. RESOLUTION #2022 - 17 : APPROVING A MAYORAL APPOINTMENT TO FILL A VACANCY ON THE CITY'S BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSIONERS.

Alderman Perez moved, and Alderman Baikauskas seconded, a motion to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Mayor Gonzalez said he wanted to fill one of two vacancies on the board by appointing Thomas Kennedy, who served as the City's interim Fire Chief in 2015/2016. Mayor Gonzalez welcomed Mr. Kennedy, who was on the phone line.

MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION, PERSONNEL ISSUES AND/OR THE USE OR DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY. **(IF NECESSARY).**

11. RESOLUTION #2022 - 18 : APPROVING THE SETTLEMENT OF CERTAIN CIVIL LITIGATION (CASE # 19L008770) AS PRESENTED FOR EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION OF THIS DATE AND/OR BY MEMORANDUM.

Alderman Smith moved, and Alderman Perez seconded, a motion to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Corporation Counsel Somer stated that he communicated with the city council and did not receive any request to move to executive session on the matter.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:49 p.m. Alderman Baikauskas moved, and Alderman Perez seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Smith, Perez, Rodgers, Baikauskas, Brassea, Merrick

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Zaranti

Motion to approve carried.

Lori Wilcox, City Clerk