

**Minutes of the Special City Council Proceedings of the City of Chicago Heights, Cook County, Illinois  
held Wednesday, October 6, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.  
Meeting to be held "IN PERSON" at The Bloom Township Center,  
425 Halsted Street, Chicago Heights, IL**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Gonzalez called the special meeting of the Chicago Heights City Council to order at 6:04 p.m.

**ROLL CALL BY DEPUTY CITY CLERK RACHEL VEGA**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Alderman Smith announced that she would hold her next ward meeting on Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at Barack Obama School.

Alderman Perez announced that she would hold her next ward meeting on Monday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at Garfield School.

Alderman Rodgers announced that she would host a vaccine event in partnership with Alderman Zaranti on October 29<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Chicago Heights Park District.

Alderman Baikauskas announced that he would hold his next ward meeting in coordination with Park District Commissioner Michele Baikauskas on October 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Roosevelt School.

Alderman Brassea – no announcements

Alderman Zaranti – absent

Alderman Merrick reported on the student art project entitled "Pieces of Us Mural" that was painted on the underpass along the Old Plank Trail in McEldowney Park, saying that the outcome of the event was incredible.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Tom Chelius, a resident of the City, addressed the council about a four-way stop sign, no parking signs, and bright security lighting near his residence.

## **REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF**

COS Zerante reported that Alderman Merrick's youth art project was a great day of community spirit, and said that other amenities would be looked at as focal points for that area of McEldowney Park. COS Zerante reported on the progress of the sidewalk and street projects, and said that the annual leaf pick-up program would soon commence. She announced that the Mayor's Office was offering information and assistance with CEDA low-income energy assistance applications.

## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL**

None

### **1. MINUTES: MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2021.**

Alderman Brassea moved, and Alderman Merrick 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 SECOND RUN OF SEPTEMBER 2021.**

Alderman Perez moved, and Alderman Baikauskas seconded, a motion to approve the bills in the amount of \$ 1,896,620.51.

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

**Nays:** none

**Abstain:** none

**Absent:** Zaranti

**Motion to approve carried.**

### **3. OMNIBUS RESOLUTION #2021 -     104     : APPROVING THE SALE OF THE CITY OWNED SURPLUS RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES AT 174 EAST 23<sup>RD</sup> STREET, 1842 EUCLID AVENUE AND 382 WEST HICKORY STREET PURSUANT TO THE CITY'S ABANDONED PROPERTY ACQUISITION PROGRAM (APAP).**

Alderman Rodgers moved, and Alderman Merrick 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 reported that these structures were three more abandoned properties that would be sold and rehabbed for return to the tax rolls.

- 4. RESOLUTION #2021 - 105 : APPROVING AN OPTION AGREEMENT FOR THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO PURCHASE THE CITY OWNED SURPLUS COMMERCIAL BUILDING LOCATED AT 1617 LOWE AVENUE.**

**Alderman Rodgers moved, and Alderman Brassea 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 addressed the council on the matter. The owner of the New East Side Gym, a business within the City, was considering purchasing the property as a more suitable building for the gym.

- 5. RESOLUTION #2021 - 106 : APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION LABOR COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF THE POLICE SERGEANTS EXTENDING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ITS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.**

**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.**

COS Zerante reported that the MOU would extend the term of the collective bargaining agreement retroactively to May 1, 2020 through April 30, 2022. All provisions of the agreement remained status quo except for those stated in the memorandum.

- 6. RESOLUTION #2021 - 107 : APPROVING THE METROPOLITAN MAYORS 2021 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN FOR THE CHICAGO REGION.**

**Alderman Merrick 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.

COS Zerante addressed the council on the City's participation in the climate action plan. She stated that the comprehensive plan contained much information on environmental goals and objectives, providing a template for the City as it considered its plans for the City.

7. RESOLUTION #2021 - 108 : APPROVING AN ECONOMIC INCENTIVE AGREEMENT TO INDUCE THE IMPROVEMENT OF SKYLINE RESTAURANT FACILITY AT 1016 DIXIE HIGHWAY (Bloom Plaza TIF Agreement).

Alderman Baikauskas moved, and Alderman Brassea 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, said that the restaurant was seeking assistance with the cost of improvements to the exterior of the restaurant area. Those improvements included landscaping to enhance the area and repaving of a 50,000 square foot parking lot.

MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION TO DISUCUSS PERSONNEL ISSUES, USE OR DISPOSITION OF CITY LAND AND/ OR PENDING LITIGATION. *(If Necessary)*.

8. RESOLUTION # 2021 - 109 : APPROVING THE SETTLEMENT OF CERTAIN CIVIL LITIGATION (21 WC 06673) AS PRESENTED FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION (AND BY MEMORANDUM) OF THIS DATE.

Alderman Baikauskas moved, and Alderman Merrick 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 all of the aldermen and there was no indication that there was a need to enter into executive session in order to take action on the matter.

9. RESOLUTION #2021 - 110 : APPROVING A PROPOSAL FOR THE CULVERT AND STREAMBED MAINTENANCE PROJECT.

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

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

**Nays: none**

**Abstain: none**

**Absent: Zaranti**

**Motion to approve carried.**

**COS Zerante explained that the City's system of tracking and recording of flooding events evidenced flooding occurring in the area of Franklin, Irving, and Hawthorne west of 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Burke Engineering, City consultant, acquired proposals for the project to alleviate the problem, and recommended the acceptance of the low proposal from Earthwerks, Inc. for \$ 349,000.**

**10. ORDINANCE #2021 - 12 : AMENDING CHAPTER 39 AND ADOPTING A MUNICIPAL CANNABIS RETAILERS OCCUPATION TAX (NON-MOTOR FUEL RELATED).**

**Alderman Merrick moved, and Alderman Brassea 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 explained that the State previously did not allow municipalities to impose a tax on retail sales of cannabis. However, the State amended its cannabis ordinance to permit the tax, and now the City was amending its City Code accordingly.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**At 6:57 pm. Alderman Baikauskas moved, and Alderman Merrick seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

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

**Nays: none**

**Abstain: none**

**Absent: Zaranti**

**Motion to approve carried.**

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**Lori Wilcox, City Clerk**