

**CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
January 25, 2022**

Mayor Gallo called the Council meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Physically Present: McHale, O'Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez

Remotely Present: Budmats, Sanoica

Absent: 0

Deputy City Clerk Judy Brose announced that Alderman Sanoica and Alderman Budmats are unable to physically attend tonight's meeting and proceeded to take roll call for the Aldermen that were physically present.

Physically Present: McHale, O'Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez

Mayor Gallo declared that a quorum was physically present.

Mayor Gallo stated that Alderman Sanoica has notified the City Manager that she is unable to physically attend tonight's meeting due to her own illness and has requested to attend the meeting remotely. It has been determined that Alderman Sanoica meets the qualifications for remote attendance under Section 2-114 of the City Code. Mayor Gallo asked for a motion to permit Alderman Sanoica to attend the meeting remotely. Alderman McHale made the motion and was seconded by Alderman O'Brien.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: O'Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez, McHale

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

With 5 in favor and 0 opposed. Alderman Sanoica is remotely present for this meeting.

Mayor Gallo stated that Alderman Budmats has also notified the City Manager that he is unable to physically attend tonight's meeting due to his exposure to COVID-19 and has requested to attend the meeting remotely. It has been determined that Alderman Budmats meets the qualifications for remote attendance under Section 2-114 of the City Code. Mayor Gallo asked for a motion to permit Alderman Budmats to attend the meeting remotely. Alderman Vinezeano made the motion and was seconded by Alderman Bisesi.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez, McHale, O'Brien

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

With 5 in favor and 0 opposed. Alderman Budmats is remotely present for this meeting.

Mayor Gallo stated that Alderman Sanoica and Alderman Budmats will be able to participate in the meeting in the same capacity as those members physically present and will be called and counted for any vote taken during the meeting.

Members of the audience were reminded that the proceedings were being recorded for current and future broadcast.

Staff Members Present: City Manager Rob Sabo, Deputy City Clerk Judy Brose, Police Chief John Nowacki, Fire Chief Jeff Moxley, Deputy Fire Chief Pete Sutter, Director Public Works Rob Horne, Assistant Director Public Works JoEllen Charlton, Business Advocate Martha Corner and City Attorney Melissa Wolf

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Gallo asked for motion to approve the Minutes of the January 11, 2022 City Council Meeting. Alderman McHale made the motion and was seconded by Alderman Vinezeano. A voice vote approved the Minutes as presented.

MOTION TO DEVIATE: **None**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Gallo addressed the subject of in-person meetings and stated the following: Throughout the course of this pandemic I've tried to keep the subject of COVID-19 non-controversial and mainly focus on policy that beneficially impacts the City. Specifically, trying not to politicize the situation and by politicizing it, I mean use this virus to create discord or divide our decisions and behaviors on the Council. As the Mayor, I've simply tried to take measures that I believed were responsible, practical and in the best interest of all.

I understand there's recently been a level of concern over holding in-person meetings by two members of City Council. This was initiated publicly on January 11th and has since carried on. As I address my position on the matter I believe it's important that everyone hear it simultaneously and one time only for this year.

Before proceeding I want to put it in perspective though. In March of 2020 I called a special meeting to declare a state of emergency for the City of Rolling Meadows. The subsequent meeting that was held on March 24th 2020 was arguably the first if not one of the first as a community to conduct the meetings in a virtual manner. We continued our virtual meetings until May 25 of 2021. That's because I have always been an advocate for technology and promoted the use of solutions available that allow us to maintain continuity of operations.

During those 15 months of virtual meetings I also said I would conduct those meetings based on the level of safety felt by the least secure member of the City Council. To that point I'd like to make clear that where we are today with this pandemic is not the same as the pandemic of that timeframe when I made that statement. Vaccine administration to US residents was in its infancy with the first Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA on December 11, 2020. It wasn't until March 18, 2021 when this country was promised 100 million vaccines in 100 days. The situation then that kept us in a virtual meeting environment is not the same as our situation today. For two members of the City Council who prefer that we go back to meeting virtually while the remaining members are comfortable and prefer continuing to

hold meetings in-person, I will not revert to virtual meetings by making the determination that in-person meetings are not practical or prudent just for peace of mind.

I don't agree in going that direction and I believe it sends the wrong message to the community. By me saying we need to meet virtually, also says we should not be anywhere else in public. But I understand we are volunteering our time and if the level of anxiety over these in-person meetings are disruptive to your personal or professional lives, I also understand you have to strike a balance.

In England they've decided to drop masks and COVID passports and treat COVID like any other illness. Stay home if you are sick.

In Australia, arguably the strictest continent and nation state government with the highest vaccination rate recently opened their borders to more than 23,000 backpackers encouraging them to travel and join their labor force while there.

More importantly, at home, we're telling our children to remain in person at school and they will not go back to virtual learning even though they endure the same statistics some may use to justify our virtual direction here. Our children are confined in small rooms with large class sizes. They all wear masks, they sit close together and have to unmask for lunch which many eat in their classrooms communally.

Additionally, our neighboring communities are continuing to hold in person meetings at this time. In some cases unmasked and nonetheless with the public in the same room. Now I'm not condoning, condemning or comparing ourselves to others and our neighbors.

Because I'm speaking entirely about in person meetings vs. virtual meetings for our City Council, I want to remind everyone what I said on January 11th about the safety of our environment. This room is cleaned prior to our arrival and also after we leave. We have ultraviolet filtration in our HVAC system, we're spaced far apart from one another, we don't allow members of the public to share this space with us at this time, we wear masks and don't touch one another's devices or documents to avoid cross contamination or possible infection. We also have plexiglass dividers available should the Council want to use them.

In reality, people are far more likely to contract COVID outside of this environment during their regular and ordinary activities than they are to catch COVID in here and leave with it. Though possible NOT probable and we cannot exist in hypotheticals thinking what if I catch it in here.

Under section 7(e) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act identifies the Mayor as sole decision maker who determines whether it's practical or prudent to conduct meetings in-person or virtually. Based on my position and the knowledge that the majority of the Council prefers to continue our meetings in-person, this is how it will remain. Now I empathize with those who disagree. But the [7 day positivity rate](#) has ultimately declined and we can presume or hope during the month of February the positivity rates will continue to portray the same downward trend. Thus allowing our peers a timeframe to get comfortable knowing we're continuing with in-person meetings.

Another thing to remember, which I've long since said, is when we assumed these roles as elected officials we had to forfeit our individual wants and needs because we now represent a broader set of needs. Those of our constituents.

As we move forward, if there's still individual reluctance by a member of this City Council to return, it's going to be up to the individual to figure out how they meet the demands of representing their Ward. If

they're ill or meet two other criteria, we have a mechanism that allows for their remote participation. We have an obligation to be available to our residents in this setting.

I understand we maintain communications with our residents while meeting virtually but we are unable to be available to them in that capacity.

This leads to two final points I want to address. Last week, I provided Manager Sabo advanced notice during his and my regular weekly meeting that the City Council will need to initiate a determination on when, in the near future, we will sunset our state of emergency for the City of Rolling Meadows due to the COVID-19 pandemic and simply exist under the State's state of emergency. Our local state of emergency no longer affords us anything more advantageous than what we can receive under the State of Illinois'.

The second item has to do with evolving based on the lessons we've learned and continuing to learn throughout the course of this pandemic. Item #2 is our local Ordinance 19-43 "Attendance at Meetings by Means Other Than Physical Presence (Remote Attendance), which was adopted in October of 2019 and can be found in the City's Code of Ordinances in sec. 2-114, enabling remote or telephonic attendance to City meetings by up to 2 members of the City Council.

This ordinance was originally conceived and adopted prior to the pandemic under the premise that an individual was prevented from physically attending under certain conditions even though they wanted to engage in the meeting.

The composition of that ordinance never had in mind the constraints we faced through the course of this pandemic. To that point, this City Council is going to have to revisit this ordinance and evaluate what we can do technologically within the boundaries we're allowed for holding City Council meetings that offers a flexible, hybrid approach and affords a certain number of members the ability to attend remotely if necessary but attend more than telephonically while providing a seamless, well conducted meeting for those participating and anyone watching.

As I conclude these remarks please know, I'm not trying to incite a debate that attempts to refute or rebut my decision on keeping meetings in-person. I'm well aware a debate on this topic can go in circles. I'm not attempting to convince or persuade anyone to change their mind nor am I looking to be convinced or persuaded either. I understand this topic is sensitive. What everyone needs to understand is the following 3 things: First -- it's my decision -- at this time-- to keep our meetings in-person, 2. We have to consider sunsetting our local state of emergency and the third, we have to re-evaluate our existing remote attendance ordinance so it meets the demands of whatever the future may hold in order to keep moving forward because that's the only direction we should all be interested in going.

WARD REPORTS:

Alderman Vinezeano stated that the congestion and traffic problems by Rolling Meadows High School have been brought up before and she is bringing it up again because she has received more complaints from residents. She wanted to let the residents know that the City is working on possible solutions to this problem.

Alderman McHale stated that on January 17, 2022 the weather siren in Ward 1 was activated due to a malfunction. City Manager Rob Sabo advised that there was a malfunction of the weather siren in the Green Meadow Court area. City Staff responded to that siren and discovered that the battery backup system shorted out the control panel which caused the siren to be activated. This has been repaired and is completely functional and will be on the regular testing cycle which is the first Tuesday of each month. Alderman McHale clarified that these sirens don't typically go off randomly so if you hear a siren please heed warning and make sure everything's okay.

Alderman Sanoica stated that on January 24, 2022 at 11:40 p.m. police officers responded to The Stadium Sports Club in the 4000 Block of Algonquin Road in reference to a report of shots fired in the bar area. Once on scene, officers were able to locate three males who had received apparent gunshot wounds. This shooting stemmed from a physical altercation between the patrons. The investigation into this incident is still ongoing. One individual, a 33 year old male from Forest Park, Illinois is currently in police custody, he had sustained an injury to his hand during the altercation. The individual currently in custody is allegedly the person who fired the gun that struck a 38 year old male from Des Plaines, Illinois in the abdomen and this victim is in critical condition and is being treated at Lutheran General Hospital. The second victim, a 26 year old male from Elgin, Illinois was struck in the leg by a bullet during the incident and this individual was treated and released from the hospital. A huge thank you to the officers and the bar management from deescalating the situation and keeping the injuries to what they were for this incident yesterday. Alderman Sanoica will continue to work with City Staff and Police Chief Nowacki as additional details unfold.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR 20 MINUTES:

Mayor Gallo stated that there was one person signed in that did not wish to speak but was available for any questions for item E on the agenda.

PENDING:

A) Ordinance No. 22-04 – Approve an Ordinance Confirming and Extending the State of Emergency within the City of Rolling Meadows Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (2nd Reading)

Mayor Gallo read the title into record and asked for a motion to adopt this Ordinance. Alderman Vinezeano made the motion and was seconded by Alderman Bisesi.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Budmats, O'Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez, Sanoica, McHale
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. This Ordinance was adopted.

B) Ordinance No. 22-05 – Amend Pay Ranges for Seasonal and Intern Positions for the City of Rolling Meadows (2nd Reading)

Mayor Gallo read the title into record and asked for a motion to adopt this Ordinance. Alderman O'Brien made the motion and was seconded by Alderman Vinezeano.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: O'Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez, Sanoica, McHale, Budmats
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. This Ordinance was adopted.

C) Ordinance No. 22-06 – Designate Representatives to the Northwest Suburban Municipal Joint Action Water Agency (NSMJAWA) for the City of Rolling Meadows (2nd Reading)

Mayor Gallo read the title into record and asked for a motion to adopt this Ordinance. Alderman O'Brien made the motion and was seconded by Alderman Reyez.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez, Sanoica, McHale, Budmats, O'Brien
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. This Ordinance was adopted.

➤ **CONSENT ORDINANCES (1st Reading):**

The Consent Ordinances in for first reading consists of three (3) items, items D thru F. Mayor Gallo asked if any Alderman wished to remove an item from the Consent Agenda for Ordinances. No items were removed.

Mayor Gallo declared it in order for one motion to consider the three (3) Ordinances in one motion without debate. Mayor Gallo asked for a motion to consider the Ordinances for 1st Reading. Alderman McHale made the motion and was seconded by Alderman O'Brien. Mayor Gallo read the titles into record.

D) Ordinance No. 22-00– Approve an Ordinance Confirming and Extending the State of Emergency within the City of Rolling Meadows Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (1st Reading)

- E) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Grant Approval of a Special Use Authorizing an Electronic Message Sign, and Other Relief Necessary to Accommodate the Electronic Sign for Community Church of Rolling Meadows at 2720 Kirchoff Road (1st Reading)**
- F) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Amend Chapter 6, “Alcoholic Beverages”, of the Code of Ordinances to Create a Class K Liquor License and to Correct References related to Video Gaming (1st Reading)**

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Bisesi, Reyez, Sanoica, McHale, Budmats, O’Brien, Vinezeano
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. The Ordinances were moved forward for 2nd reading.

➤ **NEW BUSINESS:**

G) MOTION TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS ON WARRANT 1/25/2022

Mayor Gallo asked for a motion to approve the Warrant. Alderman O’Brien made the motion and was seconded by Alderman Vinezeano.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Reyez, Sanoica, McHale, Budmats, O’Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. The Warrant was approved.

➤ **CONSENT RESOLUTIONS:**

The Consent Resolutions consisted of two (2) items, items H and I. Mayor Gallo asked if any Alderman wished to remove any item from the Consent Agenda for Resolutions. No items were removed.

Mayor Gallo declared it in order for one motion to consider the Resolutions in one motion without debate. Alderman McHale made the motion and was seconded by Alderman O’Brien. Mayor Gallo read the titles into the record.

H) Resolution No. 22-R-14 – Appoint City Representatives to the O’Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC)

I) Resolution No. 22-R-15 – Approve an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Arlington Heights for the Wilke Road Resurfacing & Multi-Use Path Project, Phase 1 Engineering Services

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Sanoica, McHale, Budmats, O’Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. The Resolutions were adopted.

OTHER BUSINESS & REPORTS:

Mayor's Appointments: None

Mayor's Proclamations: Alice Fitzgerald Turns 100 Years Old

City Clerk's Report: None

City Staff Reports:

Rob Sabo, City Manager reviewed the following:

1) Community Items of Interest

- 1) Only a few weeks remain to recycle your holiday lights, extension cords and power strips. Items can be dropped into the collection boxes outside of City Hall until February 4th. For details about this program, visit www.elginrecycling.com.
- 2) The City will be canceling two upcoming indoor events in February and March. Taste the Town, scheduled for February 26th, and the St. Pat's Day Dinner, scheduled for March 12th, due to the economic and staffing challenges the restaurant industry is currently facing and also uncertainties related to attendance in light of various COVID related mandates which currently exist. We hope to bring these two events back in 2023. While we aren't holding our Taste the Town event this year, we encourage everyone to dine at or carry out from our Rolling Meadows restaurants. Let's fill our restaurants and show them some Rolling Meadows love!
- 3) The Rolling Meadows Police Department continues to accept donations for the new HOPE FUND to assist victims of disasters, domestic violence, child abuse and other hardships. Donations to the HOPE FUND can be made by visiting the Go Fund Me page located at www.gofundme.com/f/rmpd-hope-fund.

Rob Sabo, City Manager reviewed the following:

2) February 8, 2022 City Council Draft Agenda

MOTION TO APPROVE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2022 COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE MEETING AND JANUARY 25, 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MOTION TO DEVIATE:

MAYOR'S REPORT:

WARD REPORTS:

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR 20 MINUTES:

PENDING:

- A) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Approve an Ordinance Confirming and Extending the State of Emergency within the City of Rolling Meadows Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (2nd Reading)*
- B) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Grant Approval of a Special Use Authorizing an Electronic Message Sign, and Other Relief Necessary to Accommodate the Electronic Sign for Community Church of Rolling Meadows at 2720 Kirchoff Road (2nd Reading)*
- C) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Amend Chapter 6, “Alcoholic Beverages”, of the Code of Ordinances to Create a Class K Liquor License and to Correct References related to Video Gaming (2nd Reading)*

CONSENT ORDINANCES:

- D) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Approve an Ordinance Confirming and Extending the State of Emergency within the City of Rolling Meadows Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (1st Reading)*
- E) Ordinance No. 22-00 – Amend the Alcohol Liquor Code to Increase the Number of Licenses Permitted Under the Class K Liquor License – Aloft Hotel located at 3405 W. Algonquin Road (1st Reading)*

NEW BUSINESS:

F) MOTION TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS ON WARRANT FEBRUARY 8, 2022

CONSENT RESOLUTIONS:

- G) Resolution No. 22-R-00 – Approve Local Public Agency Agreement for Federal Participation with Illinois Department of Transportation for Proposed Hicks Road Bike Path – Phase II Engineering*
- H) Resolution No. 22-R-00 – Award a Contract for Phase II Engineering Services for Hicks Road Bike Path*
- I) Resolution No. 22-R-00 – Approve Rebuild Illinois (RBI) Appropriations for Road Reconstruction Program*

J) Resolution No. 22-R-00 – Award Contract for Engineering Services for Kennedy Pond Survey

K) Resolution No. 22-R-00 – Approve Easement at 2200 Algonquin to Accommodate Bike Path Improvements

OTHER BUSINESS & REPORTS:

Mayor's Appointments:

Mayor's Proclamations:

City Clerk's Report:

City Staff Reports:

- 1) *Community Items of Interest*
- 2) *January 2022 New Businesses*
- 3) *Carnegie Drainage Improvement Status Report*
- 4) *February 15, 2022 Committee of the Whole Draft Agenda*
- 5) *February 22, 2022 City Council Draft Agenda*

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

CLOSED SESSION:

- 1) *Pending or Imminent Litigation – 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act – To consider litigation, when an action against the public body has been filed or is probable or imminent based upon the finding of the City Council.*
- 2) *Personnel - 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act – To consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee of the public body.*

ADJOURNMENT:

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Alderman Vinezeano stated that in light of the situation of that happened in Ward 4 this week near the high school, she just wanted to remind residents that City Staff and the Rolling Meadows Police Department do not monitor Community Chatter on Facebook so if you see something that is concerning you need to call 911. Luckily, there were a few citizens that witnessed a potentially very dangerous situation and called the police and if those individuals had just relied on Community Chatter something terrible could have happened. Police Chief Nowacki advised that if someone witnesses any type of crime or dangerous situation or if you need to speak with a police officer to call 911. The incident that happened last week was a traffic related matter and it could have been a very dangerous situation and we are investigating that matter.

CLOSED SESSION:

- 1) **Pending or Imminent Litigation – 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act –**
To consider litigation, when an action against the public body has been filed or is probable or imminent based upon the finding of the City Council.

- 2) **Personnel - 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act –** To consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee of the public body.

Mayor Gallo stated the he would like to entertain a motion to go into closed session under section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act based upon the finding that Litigation against the City on a certain matter is probable or imminent and under section 2(c)(1) of the Open Meetings Act regarding Personnel. Alderman Vinezeano made the motion and was seconded by Alderman O’Brien. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McHale, Budmats, O’Brien, Vinezeano, Bisesi, Reyez, Sanoica
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0

With 7 in favor and 0 opposed. City Council entered into Closed Session.

The audience and press were advised that they do not anticipate taking any action upon returning to open session.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, by unanimous consent the City Council meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Judy Brose, Deputy City Clerk

January 25, 2022 City Council Minutes Approved by Council on February 8, 2022.

Judy Brose

Judy Brose, Deputy City Clerk