

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 6:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Councilmember Kelly, Councilmember Braithwaite, Councilmember Wynne (Chair), Councilmember Burns, Councilmember Reid, Lisa Dziekan, Jeanne Lindwall, Scott Ogawa, Kelly Gallagher, Councilmember Nieuwsma

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Paul Zalmezak

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Quorum was declared at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. Minutes from August 31, 2021

Councilmember Reid moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Councilmember Kelly. Motion carried unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Tina Paden commented on Agenda item 5A and expressed concern over who was receiving funding assistance from the City. Additionally, she commented on the lack of parking available, particularly handicapped parking. Ms. Paden requested more community input on ARPA funding.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. Ward Manufacturing Cook County Special Assessment Class 6b Incentive Renewal Request

Councilmember Wynne read the item into the record and made a motion to introduce the item for discussion. Councilmember Braithwaite seconded.

Mr. Paul Zalmezak briefly introduced the request and mentioned it has the support of Cook County Commissioner Suffredin. Mr. Zalmezak summarized the estimated tax benefit of the 6b incentive.

Mr. Tom Ward introduced his business, Ward Manufacturing, and its history in supporting the Evanston community, including a partnership with ETHS.

Councilmember Reid expressed support and inquired whether a local hiring agreement would be appropriate. Mr. Ward responded they are very committed to hiring locally and supporting the community.

Councilmember Braithwaite expressed his support and gratitude for the work Ward Manufacturing has done with Evanston youth and their commitment to hiring locally

Councilmember Kelly commented that she appreciates the work done with students but would also like to see an agreement in place.

Mr. Ward mentioned that there was additional potential for supporting the high school and programs for students interested in manufacturing.

Councilmember Burns expressed support for formalizing an agreement that establishes local hiring standards.

Councilmember Wynne mentioned the need for a workforce development coordinator.

Member Dziekan asked whether a formalized agreement became a legal document and is there precedent for this type of agreement.

Mr. Zalmezak explained that the City could create a legal agreement, but not something that has happened in the past. Could work with the law department on agreement if directed.

Councilmember Kelly and Councilmember Burns agreed there could be an agreement in place that would not be punitive, rather formalize a continued commitment.

Member Lindwall expressed her support for the 6b request and summarized how properties, particularly industrial, are assessed in Cook County, the reasoning behind the incentive, and the importance of maintaining the manufacturing industry in Evanston.

Councilmember Braithwaite directed staff to draft an agreement.

Councilmember Reid moved to make a positive recommendation to the City Council based on the condition that staff draft an agreement between Ward Manufacturing and the City. Councilmember Burns seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Parking Presentation by Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

Mr. Zalmezak introduced the item and explained how this presentation can help inform parking and placemaking strategies.

Lindsay Bayley from CMAP presented their parking presentation, "Parking management for livable communities."

Councilmember Wynne inquired about pricing strategies to create turnover. Ms. Bayley responded that analyzing occupancy data at different price points can be helpful.

Member Ogawa mentioned that a dynamic pricing model exists that can adjust prices in real time.

Councilmember Wynne asked, in the absence of that technology, what are the best strategies. Ms. Bayley mentioned it takes an investment of resources- staff time to check and analyze data- and informing customers.

Councilmember Kelly said we need to think about our current situation and the challenges of getting Evanston back on its feet. Maybe not the best time to implement higher parking prices.

Mr. Zalmezak asked for more information regarding similar parking programs, where some time is free and then there are charges/fines. Ms. Bayley expanded on examples in other areas that have worked.

Councilmember Nieuwsma commented that we should consider equitable strategies. Ms. Bayley said there were options to keep certain areas free if needed.

Member Lindwall mentioned exploring various alternatives would help create the right mix for Evanston.

Councilmember Reid talked about using the equity lens by decoupling parking from housing, and asked if there were other economic development options that would be more beneficial than offering free parking. There is a significant cost to maintaining parking garages and lots.

Ms. Bayley reminded everyone of the available resources through CMAP.

B. American Rescue Plan Act Economic Development Updates

Mr. Zalmezak gave a brief update and explained there will be additional conversations regarding parking and community-based placemaking ideas. These initiatives through ARPA can be tied in to leverage additional funding. He talked about upcoming recommendations, including a retail strategy RFP.

Member Lindwall suggested the City come up with some overarching objectives of what they would like to achieve to help guide future ARPA planning projects and initiatives.

Member Ogawa suggested spending funds on business district infrastructure and placemaking, rather than to individual businesses. Councilmember Reid agreed with focusing on business districts/placemaking rather than financial assistance directly to businesses.

7. COMMUNICATION

A. Announcements / Updates from EDC Members

8. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.