



**BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2021  
5:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

Members Present: Jonathan Elmore, Mayor  
Brian Fisher, Mayor Pro Tem  
Lisa Shortell, Commissioner  
Lionel Laratte, Commissioner  
Dee Merriam, Commissioner

Staff Present: Patrick Bryant, City Manager  
Paul Hanebuth, Asst. City Manager  
Shannon Powell, Asst. City Manager  
Gina Hill, City Clerk  
Stephen Quinn, City Attorney

Item #1 Meeting Called to Order

Item #2 Adoption of Agenda

- Mayor Pro Tem Fisher moved to amend the agenda to include an item on Covid-19. Commissioner Merriam seconded. All ayes.
- Commissioner Laratte moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Shortell seconded. All ayes.

Item #3 **Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Laratte asked everyone to be safe during the Covid pandemic. Commissioner Merriam praised volunteers for keeping Willis Park clean and attractive. Commissioner Shortell added a couple of names to Ms. Merriam's list. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher commented on school being back in session.

Item #4 **Approval of Minutes:**  
June 9<sup>th</sup> work session  
June 9<sup>th</sup> regular meeting  
June 16<sup>th</sup> public hearing  
June 21<sup>st</sup> special called meeting  
June 23<sup>rd</sup> work session  
June 23<sup>rd</sup> public hearings  
June 23<sup>rd</sup> regular meeting  
June 30<sup>th</sup> public hearing  
June 30<sup>th</sup> special called meeting  
July 28<sup>th</sup> work session

July 28<sup>th</sup> regular meeting

- Commissioner Shortell moved to remove the June 23<sup>rd</sup> regular meeting minutes from the list. Commissioner Merriam seconded. All ayes.
- Mayor Pro Tem Fisher motioned to engross. Commissioner Laratte seconded. All ayes.

Item #5

**Welcoming Committee Requests Financial Support for Placita Latina**

The Committee requests \$5,000 to partner with organizers of Placita Latina, a celebration of Latin heritage. The festival will include four events -- held in collaboration with Decatur -- over a month-long period starting the middle of September.

Commissioner Shortell motioned to approve up to \$5,000 for this event. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher seconded. All ayes.

Placita Latina organizer Adela Yelton addressed the BOMC and audience about the festival. Mayor Elmore expressed support for the event as did Commissioner Laratte. They each listed reasons why. Commissioner Merriam asked where funding would come from and City Manager Bryant said it would come out of the general fund. She asked about the impact to the budget and he said it would be minimal. Ms. Merriam listed her concerns mostly regarding process although she supported the concept of the event. Commissioner Shortell supported the event but requested that organizers try to reduce costs. She also clarified the roles of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA, of which she is a member) and the city in funding such requests. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher supported funding the event through the Welcoming Committee. Mayor Elmore agreed. He acknowledged this was not being discussed at a work session first and asked for public comment. John Mizell asked how much Decatur was donating towards the festival and was told \$10,000. Members of the Welcoming Committee, Chris Hess and Sharon Saliba, spoke in support of the event and creating a better process. Kathy Kingsbury was not in favor of supporting the festival. She added a better process should be adhered to. Mr. Mizell asked if other boards would come forward to ask for funding of events. Mr. Elmore responded that most other boards don't host events so this is a somewhat unique situation. Ms. Shortell noted that she differentiates between the event organizers asking for money and the Welcoming Committee making a budget request. Ms. Merriam suggested a process for hearing the budget requests of the various boards and committees. Welcoming Committee member Shelly Groves pointed out that the funding was for four events, not two. Two other event organizer highlighted the potential benefits to the city. Ms. Merriam requested a report after the event measuring its impact.

Mayor Elmore discussed current numbers of Covid cases. He reiterated that the BOMC wants the city manager to keep an eye on the situation and advise them on measures he deems appropriate where city operations are concerned. Commissioner Merriam would like those watching the meetings virtually be allowed to comment and ask questions. City Manager Bryant said that the BOMC can control what happens on city property (such as mask mandates) and they could mandate masks in businesses as well. He added that going back to completely virtual meetings would require declaring a state of emergency.

Mayor Pro Tem Fisher did not wish to issue any mandates outside of city hall. Mr. Bryant explained the current vaccination policy for city employees. Board members made a couple of other comments before wrapping up the topic.

Item #6 Public Comment: None

Item #7 Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Fisher moved to adjourn. Commissioner Shortell seconded. All ayes.

APPROVED AUGUST 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2021



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Gina Hill, City Clerk