

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

JUNE 20, 2023

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Betcher at 6:00 p.m. on the 20th day of June, 2023, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue, pursuant to law. Present were Council Members Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Rachel Junck, and Anita Rollins. Mayor John Haila and *ex officio* Tabitha Etten were absent.

WORKSHOP ON MINIMUM PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE: Fire Chief Rich Higgins and Building Official Sara Van Meeteren presented the Staff Report and answered questions from the City Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher opened the Public Input.

Erin Gibson, Ames resident, thanked staff for the changes made in response to community feedback. She suggested changing the wording for vegetation over 12” in the right-of-way (ROW) from “visibility” to “safety;” inquired whether the prohibition on chicken wire in the ROW would impact City efforts to protect ROW trees; and expressed concern that the proposed exterior structural requirements focused too much on the aesthetics of uniformity rather than decay.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher closed the Public Input when no one came forward to speak.

Moved by Gartin to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits plantings in the ROW from exceeding 12” within 1’ of the street and sidewalk and allows staff to require any vegetation creating a visibility issue to be removed. Seconded by Beatty-Hansen after Gartin accepted a friendly amendment to replace the word “visibility” with “safety.”

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Rollins, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the initial proposed language that requires a 16’ clearance over public streets and an 8’ clearance over sidewalks and bike paths.

Vote on Motion: 4-2. Voting Aye: Corrieri, Gartin, Junck, and Rollins. Voting Nay: Beatty-Hansen and Betcher. Motion declared carried.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Gartin, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits dangerous trees that pose a threat to the ROW.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits snow and ice from being pushed onto the public street once the street has been cleared.

Vote on Motion: 4-2. Voting Aye: Betcher, Corrieri, Gartin, and Junck. Voting Nay: Beatty-Hansen and Rollins. Motion declared carried.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Gartin, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits accumulations of snow ice, mud, gravel, grass clippings, leaves, etc. from remaining on a sidewalk for more than 10 hours after the cause of the accumulation.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Rollins, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits holes from existing and clarifying exceptions.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Betcher, seconded by Gartin, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits garbage containers from being left at the curb for more than 48 hours and requires them to be stored at least 10 feet back from the right-of-way.

Vote on Motion: 2-4. Voting Aye: Betcher and Gartin. Voting Nay: Beatty-Hansen, Corrieri, Junck, and Rollins. Motion declared failed.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Beatty-Hansen, to direct staff not to pursue adding an item about leaving garbage receptacles at the curb to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023.

Vote on Motion: 5-1. Voting Aye: Beatty-Hansen, Corrieri, Gartin, Junck, and Rollins. Voting Nay: Betcher. Motion declared carried.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Rollins, to leave provisions in the Rental Code regarding garbage receptacles unchanged.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits refuse, garbage, junk from being stored for more than 72 hours.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Junck, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits stagnant water from remaining on a property for more than 48 hours, with the exception of approved stormwater management areas.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Junck, to direct staff to not include the section on conditions that harbor vermin in the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Rollins, seconded by Junck, to direct staff to remove the 15 day prohibition on storage

of operable vehicles from the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Corrieri, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits vegetation that impedes ingress or egress.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Rollins, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the initial proposed language on exterior structural requirements.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Beatty-Hansen, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits unoccupied buildings from being unsecured and allows accessory structures to remain unsecured if the primary structure is occupied.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Betcher, seconded by Junck, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that prohibits graffiti from remaining for longer than 7 days after notification.

Vote on Motion: 5-1. Voting Aye: Betcher, Corrieri, Gartin, Junck, and Rollins. Voting Nay: Beatty-Hansen. Motion declared carried.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the alternative language that allows Recreational Vehicles (RVs) and trailers to be parked behind the front yard as long as they are on an approved surface and not used for habitation.

Vote on Motion: 5-1. Voting Aye: Betcher, Beatty-Hansen, Corrieri, Gartin, and Junck. Voting Nay: Rollins. Motion declared carried.

Moved by Gartin to ask staff to return with options for RV length restrictions and information on similar restrictions in peer cities.

Motion failed due to lack of second.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Rollins, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, the initial proposed language that prohibits turf grasses from exceeding 12" in height.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Rollins, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, a process establishing an appeal board and procedures.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Beatty-Hansen, to direct staff to add to the ordinance being presented on June 27, 2023, an abatement tool that would authorize staff the choice to abate

nuisances when not resolved through education and established enforcement procedures.
Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher asked whether action was needed at this time to continue exploring options for incentives and assistance programs. City Manager Schainker noted that decisions about appropriating funds should be made during the budget process, but staff could gather information on programs in peer cities before then.

Moved by Rollins to direct staff to examine homeowner assistance programs providing resources for property maintenance in peer communities and return with information on how they are funded. Seconded by Gartin after Rollins accepted a friendly amendment to add “and administered” to the end of the motion.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher recessed the meeting at 8:14 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:21 p.m.

WORKSHOP ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY: Planning and Housing Director Kelly Diekmann and Housing Coordinator Vanessa Baker-Latimer presented the Staff Report and answered questions from the City Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher opened the Public Input.

Loris Olson, President of Home Allies, encouraged the City Council to focus on zoning impediments to affordable housing, sharing a recent project that stalled due to zoning challenges.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher closed the Public Input when no one came forward to speak.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Corrieri, to direct staff to pursue a text amendment to allow for the reduction of parking requirements in zoning districts outside of Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning for low- to moderate-income housing projects.

Vote on Motion: 5-1. Voting Aye: Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Corrieri, Junck, and Rollins. Voting Nay: Gartin. Motion declared carried.

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL: City Manager Schainker noted two dispositions to the City Council, both for information only. The first item was a memo from Public Works Operations Manager Justin Clausen on the Sidewalk Safety Program. A memo from City Manager Schainker about the request from the Ames Economic Development Commission for a housing taskforce was the second item.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: Council Member Junck stated that she had just returned from visiting Kosu City, Japan, Ames’ sister city. She looked forward to sharing what she learned from the people there and welcoming a delegation from Kosu City to Ames in October 2023.

Council Member Rollins shared that the events of the Juneteenth weekend were successful, thanking the City Council and the community for their support.

Mayor Pro Tem Betcher echoed the celebration of the Juneteenth events, observing that several individuals expressed thanks for the City Council's vote to rename the James Herman Banning Ames Municipal Airport.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Corrieri, to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.