



## REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2020 6:00 PM

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Candace Hollingsworth, Mayor  
Kevin Ward, W1 (Council President)  
Carrianna Suiter, W3  
Bart Lawrence, W1  
Robert Croslin, W2  
Danny Schaible, W2  
Ben Simasek, W3  
Edouard Haba, W4 (*arrived at 6:24 p.m.*)  
Daniel Peabody, W4  
Joseph A. Solomon, W5  
Erica Spell Wolf, W5 (*arrived at 6:02 p.m.*)

Absent: None

Also present were the following City staff members:

Tracey E. Douglas, City Administrator  
Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator  
Ron Brooks, City Treasurer  
Chief Amal Awad, City of Hyattsville Police Department  
Lesley Riddle, Director of Public Works  
Laura Reams, City Clerk  
Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk  
Cheri Everhart, Recreation, Programs, and Events Manager  
Kate Powers, City Planner

### MEETING NOTICE:

As we continue to take precautions due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the Hyattsville City Council will hold its meeting on Monday, October 5, 2020 remotely via video conference. The Council meeting will be conducted entirely remotely, there will be no in person meeting attendance.

The meeting will be broadcast live on cable television channel 71 (Comcast), channel 12 (Verizon) and available via live stream at [hyattsville.org/meetings](http://hyattsville.org/meetings).

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Public Comment may be made using the e-comment feature at [hyattsville.org/meetings](http://hyattsville.org/meetings) or emailing [cityclerk@hyattsville.org](mailto:cityclerk@hyattsville.org). All electronic comments must be submitted by 4 PM on October 5, 2020. Comments received will be read by City staff during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Members of the public who wish to attend the virtual council meeting must register in advance using the link below.

Register in advance for this webinar:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_rK7w4JR2Q7OeB1UKOToUUw](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rK7w4JR2Q7OeB1UKOToUUw)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



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**1. Call to Order and Council Roll Call**

**Mayor Candace Hollingsworth** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

**3. Approval of Agenda**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ward
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Croslin
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Haba, Spell Wolf

**4. Approval of the Minutes**

**4.) Approval of the Minutes**

[HCC-89-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Minutes Sept 21, 2020 CM FINAL](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the minutes of the City Council meeting of September 21, 2020.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ward
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Croslin
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Haba, Spell Wolf

**5. Public Comment (6:10 p.m. – 6:20 p.m.) Complete Speaker Card, Limit 2 minutes per speaker**

There were no public comments.

**6. City Administrator Update (6:20 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.)**

City Administrator Tracey Douglas addressed the Mayor and Council with updates regarding news and events associated with the City referencing that the month of October in Hyattsville was proclaimed Hispanic Heritage Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and also featured Mental Illness Awareness Week, and Economic Development Week. She announced that City staff were in the planning stages for a “Halloween Treat O’Rama” event for the end of the month.



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Ms. Douglas reported on the 2020 Census relaying that the National, State, County, and City participation rates were 66.7%, 70.9%, 69.5%, and 62.7% respectively and that the deadline for submissions had been extended through October 31, 2020. She commended the Complete Count Committee for their ceaseless efforts and expressed her appreciations for the partnerships formed with local entities.

City Administrator Douglas provided information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic stating that the Hyattsville testing center had reopened, and staff were seeking funding to allow for a third weekly day of tests for area residents. She reported that the site was able to serve approximately 200 patients a day with results received in three (3) days on average. Ms. Douglas noted that food distributions would continue, and every effort was being made to ensure that food be made available for as long as possible.

Ms. Douglas communicated that partnerships with local entities had been successful and recalled that \$1M in City funds had been provided to CASA de Maryland, Employ Prince George's, local businesses, artists, and child care providers, and the Hyattsville Community Development Corporation (CDC). She stated that each partner that had not already exhausted all their funds was expected to in the coming weeks.

Ms. Douglas addressed the Magruder Park name change campaign in which she described how residents could participate and submit their ideas for a new name. She explained that the campaign began at the beginning of the month and suggestions would be collected online, could be submitted to a drop box at the park, and through other methods. She explained that submission would not be accepted beyond November 15<sup>th</sup> at which time the submissions would be reviewed by members of the Race and Equity Task Force (RETF) and the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Advisory Committee (HWRAC) with the intention of a final decision in the first half of 2021.

Administrator Douglas reported on youth virtual programming and teen mentoring noting that the Creative Minds program would hold sessions weekly through December 18<sup>th</sup>, the Virtual Teen Center would offer programming weekly on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Friday, online tutoring would be offered three (3) nights a week with 35 students enrolled and 70 volunteer tutors, and cited Voice DMV: "On the Table" Roundtable that would provide an intergenerational approach to promote group work and problem solving among participants of versatile backgrounds and experiences.

Ms. Douglas updated the Body with a review of the previous year's activity and accomplishments of Age-Friendly initiatives recalling that the Age-Friendly action plan was adopted by City Council on January 7, 2019 and had hired its lead, Marci LeFevre, on September 29, 2019. She recognized a grant of \$339,543 to expand transportation services for residents of advanced age and those with limited capabilities and noted progress from the Age-Friendly Workgroup including the Emergency Assistance Voluntary Registry Program, a mapping project that identified senior populations, surveys developed to establish the needs of older residents, and new programming to increase social inclusion and engagement of seniors.



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City Administrator Douglas provided Council with details regarding the 2020 General Election as well as the 2021 City elections noting the processes for mail-in ballots, locations of ballot boxes, the timeline for early voting, City voter registration drives, changes to the City election Code, and welcomed the newest member of the Hyattsville Board of Supervisors of Elections (BOSE), Zach Peters.

**7. Proclamations (6:30 p.m. - 6:35 p.m.)**

**7.a) Energy Efficiency Day Proclamation**

[HCC-91-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Energy Efficiency Day 2020](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation recognizing October 7, 2020 as Energy Efficiency Day in the City of Hyattsville.

**7.b) Proclamation recognizing Economic Development Week in the City of Hyattsville**

[HCC-92-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Economic Development Week 2020 Proclamation](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council recognize the week of October 19-23, 2020 as Economic Development Week in the City of Hyattsville.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ward
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Croslin
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None

**8. Appointments (6:35 p.m. - 6:40 p.m.)**

**8.a) Appointment to the Board of Supervisors of Elections**

[HCC-88-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** Hollingsworth

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Zachary Peter redac](#)

I move that the Mayor, with Council approval appoint Zachary Peters (Ward 2) to the Hyattsville Board of Supervisors of Elections for a term to expire on January 9, 2023.



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<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ward
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Solomon
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None

**9. Consent Items (6:40 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.)**

**9.a) Road Salt Contract Rider Extension**

[HCC-87-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Signed Amendment](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the City Administrator to accept the contract extension to Montgomery County Contract IFB#1088536, which has been extended until October 1, 2021 by Montgomery County Amendment #2 signed on July 27th, 2020. I further move the Council authorize an expenditure not to exceed \$35,000 for the purchase of rock salt for FY21.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ward
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Haba
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None

**10. Discussion Items (6:45 p.m. - 6:55 p.m.)**

**10.a) Removing Unjust Penalties in the Municipal Charter and Code – Imprisonment**

[HCC-94-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

I move that the Mayor and Council direct the City Attorney to remove all existing references to imprisonment or jail as a penalty for violations of the municipal charter and code.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** summarized the item and provided a brief background stating that imprisonment had not been pursued as a penalty for code violations and her request to remove it as a consequence was to remove the vulnerability to residents and ensure that the City’s response to infractions were consistent and reasonable with relation to the infraction.

She cited that imprisonment was a possible outcome for violations of absentee voting, altering or tampering with code, cable franchise operation without a franchise, election misconduct, tampering with metered parking equipment, non-compliance with stop orders, peddling with door-to-door soliciting, personnel manual and rental license manipulation, operating a business



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without a license, second-hand property dealings, and the unauthorized use of the City logo or seal.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** suggested that if Council had interest in moving forward with the item that they review the referenced code sections and identify any inconsistencies or imbalances regarding penalties for failure to comply with the code and charter. She stated that the item would return for action and, upon approval, be sent to the City attorney for legal review.

### 11. Council Dialogue (6:55 p.m. - 7:05 p.m.)

**Ward 5 Councilmember Joseph Solomon** thanked City staff for their hard work, specifically the continued responsiveness from the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Health, Wellness and Recreation Advisory Committee (HWRAC) for their offerings of mental health education.

**Ward 5 Councilmember Erica Spell Wolf** expressed her appreciation to be able to return to legislative business after the recent birth of her son citing the many initiatives of the City including significant interest in the renaming of Magruder Park. She noted the approaching national election and urged residents to vote.

**Ward 3 Councilmember Ben Simasek** congratulated the Wolf family on their newborn son, thanked City staff for the prompt response to the fire at the Friendship Arms apartments, and encouraged all to vote and participate in the Census.

**Ward 2 Councilmember Robert Croslin** expressed his appreciation for the encouragement of residents to vote stating that it was extremely important that everyone participate and cited the reported sterilization of women in the United States and shared that his grandmother had been a victim of unconsented sterilization. He reiterated the importance of voting.

**Council Vice President Carrianna Suiter** reiterated the sentiments of her colleagues and emphasized the importance of having a plan to vote and to make sure that your vote is recorded and secure.

**Council President Kevin Ward** encouraged voting and thanked City staff for their response to the fire at Friendship Arms asking that if residents knew anyone in need they should refer them to the City so that they can receive assistance and resources.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** shared the sentiments of her colleagues regarding voting and praising the relief efforts at Friendship Arms stating that it was done safely and extremely well managed. She referenced the removal of racist language in the deed for Magruder Park and stating that great work and action had to be taken for society to reach a point in history where divisive and biased regulations were viewed as unfair and in need of change. She compared it to many of the issues facing Americans and asked that everyone vote and, further, pay close attention to and put forth an effort to change current inequalities.



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**12. Community Notices and Meetings**

**12.a) Main City Calendar October 6 - October 19, 2020**

[HCC-95-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Main City Calendar Oct 6 - Oct 19 2020](#)

**13. Presentation and Discussion (7:15 p.m. - 9:15 p.m.)**

**13.a) Affordable Housing Council Workshop #1**

[HCC-93-FY21](#)

**Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

[Affordable Housing Workshop Agenda Materials Oct 5](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council participate in the first of a two-part remote workshop with Enterprise Community Partners to identify the goals and priorities of the City's Affordable Housing Strategy.

City Planner Kate Powers provided a summary and background of the Affordable Housing Strategy introducing Enterprise Community Partners representatives Laura Searfoss and David Huaman who would be presenting the first part of a two-part affordable housing workshop to determine the goals and approaches for the most efficient way to address challenges regarding affordable housing in Hyattsville. Ms. Powers explained that the second part of the workshop would focus on the tangible tools that would be established through discussion that evening.

Laura Searfoss addressed the Mayor and Council with an introduction that included the purpose of the workshop, identifying the most important issues facing residents, and developing an effective affordable housing strategy. Ms. Searfoss explained that Enterprise had been collecting quantitative and qualitative data and had received many comments from stakeholders that would be considered during phase one of the workshop.

David Huaman addressed the Mayor and Council reporting findings, City needs, and action areas of the strategy. Mr. Huaman stated that the initial findings of the analysis showed that there was a need for a broader range of house types in conjunction with the changing demographics and a need for improved housing quality. He relayed that the City had limited tools and resources, however financing mechanisms from the County and State were available and noted that many developers have had success in using the tools for affordable and market-rate development.

Mr. Huaman identified some of the immediate goals that could be influenced by leaders in Hyattsville including increasing and preserving affordable, accessible, housing options, preventing involuntary displacement and stabilizing neighborhoods, preserving and expanding existing affordable home ownership, and ensuring that internal policies and practices advance equity.



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He continued that the firm had reviewed several pertinent studies and reports produced by the City and the County in recent years and that led to identifying the priorities of making rental units affordable for those earning lower incomes, mitigating the tax burden, and closing the housing ownership gap between white households and households of color.

Mr. Huaman reported that the City could benefit from increasing units for seniors that were equipped with accessibility features, providing larger units of two (2) bedrooms or more, updating and rehabilitating current homes, and minimizing vacant homes and foreclosures. He highlighted the possibility of ineligibility for the use of the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and stressed the need for a regulatory environment for development and a better understanding of the resources available to assist in City developments.

**Councilmember Solomon** sought clarity regarding the definition of affordability to which Mr. Huaman responded that Enterprise defined affordability as spending 30% or less of one's income on the rent or mortgage of one's home and noted that many residents of the City were spending far greater than 30%.

**Councilmember Solomon** suggested providing an online resource to track what initiatives had been adopted and how they would be implemented as well as online listening sessions referencing the increased participation of City Council meetings since holding them virtually.

**Councilmember Simasek** cited data from Enterprise's presentation stating that the strategy included the development of 350 units at certain price points and referenced the intention of thousands of units that were already approved and sought clarity regarding the specific price points to which Mr. Huaman replied that the thousands of incoming developments were not taken into consideration when determining the price points of the 350 proposed units stating that many in the pipeline were at market rate or higher. City Planner Kate Powers confirmed the assessment of the price point for developments in the pipeline.

**Councilmember Simasek** asserted that the Transit District included areas outside of the incorporated limits of the City and other outside neighboring areas and inquired as to how the housing affordability plan integrated into the County and other farther-reaching plans. David Huaman responded that during the research and analysis costs of outlying areas were assessed but were not included in the scope for the purposes of the presentation. Mr. Huaman was amenable to reviewing such data should it be the request of the Body.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** requested further detail regarding the definition of stabilizing neighborhoods to which Laura Searfoss explained that it can be applied to people and property and provided examples such as stabilizing costs for residents, limiting foreclosures, providing tax relief, and similar arrangements.

Laura Searfoss stated that they would be identifying priorities by agreeing, as a Council, on the primary criterion for prioritizing housing needs or issues and generating a list of up to four (4) other priority areas.



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Mr. Huaman reiterated the process and noted that common priorities were gauging what efforts would have the highest impact, identifying pressing or urgent issues, the eagerness of the community to recognize and address the issue, a cohesive alignment with existing policies, and items that can be affected by direct influence of City officials.

**Councilmember Ward** requested a discernment regarding “pressing or urgent” and highest impact to which David Huaman responded that pressing or urgent had to do with a recurring, frequent, issue to be addressed as opposed to “highest impact” which could mean a single item that would result in the greatest progressive change.

**Councilmember Simasek** sought further clarity regarding the definition of “highest impact” to which Ms. Searfoss replied that “most pressing” could mean offering the greatest good to the most amount of people whereas “highest impact” could affect a smaller number of people more significantly.

**Councilmember Solomon** sought clarity regarding some of the terminology and strategy on prioritizing issues to which Ms. Searfoss explained that the selections would only serve as a base going forward and while some of the items were technically mutually exclusive, all items should be treated in a general sense without concentrating on variables or in-depth details.

**Ward 2 Councilmember Danny Schaible** requested further explanation of portions of the process and the weight of impact on the process, as a whole, to which Ms. Searfoss replied that the selection of a primary criterion was simply to gain a perspective in preparation for the next part of the discussion and that it would not eliminate any other priority from being addressed during the project.

**Council Vice President Suiter** requested more clarity regarding **Councilmember Simasek’s** question to which Ms. Searfoss described different scenarios that displayed a discernment between “biggest impact” and “pressing issues”.

**Councilmember Solomon** requested further discussion regarding the capabilities associated with direct influence on which Ms. Searfoss asked how the other members would choose to approach the issue. **Mayor Hollingsworth** commented that although the scope of items that can be directly addressed by Council would be relatively small, she would prefer that approach as opposed to an indirect approach.

**Ward 4 Councilmember Edouard Haba** summarized the method stating that the primary criterion would determine the other pertinent priorities and reiterated the understanding that this was a first step in a multi-faceted review and implementation process.

David Huaman reported the results of the live poll that showed the highest priority as “highest impact” followed by “direct City influence”. Mr. Huaman polled the Body regarding their choices for four (4) housing needs or issues that the City should address over the following 10 years which showed the most popular items: units for low-income households, decreasing the home ownership gap, units for seniors, and the property tax burden.



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**Council President Ward** commented that he selected rehabilitation and repair so that the focus could be on existing homes in the City as opposed to large development projects that would be far more costly.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** expressed her surprised that regulatory environment was not chosen by more members with its correlation to highest impact stating that there were many tools available to address the value of homes which were influenced by zoning regulations and location and sound regulations would allow a municipality to have greater control over affordable housing.

**Councilmember Croslin** shared that one of his selections was units for seniors and accessibility for “obvious reasons” to which **Council President Ward** added that he did not choose the same only because he felt it was redundant when compared to some of the other categories.

**Councilmember Haba** stated that he expected larger units to have been given more priority as Hyattsville is seeing more families living in the City to which **Mayor Hollingsworth** supplemented that her perspective viewed regulatory environment synonymous with larger housing as it could be controlled by those guidelines. **Councilmember Spell Wolf** concurred with larger housing being of high priority due to the increase in families and an overall need for more space per unit.

**Councilmember Schaible** noted that he had chosen the items that were the four (4) most popular and added that he would like to see a specific focus on reducing involuntary displacement of residents. Ms. Searfoss suggested a second vote to view potential changes after gaining insight from the results of the first for which **Councilmember Simasek** expressed support.

A second poll was administered that included two (2) new categories in which the Body was, again, asked to select the top four (4) issues that should be addressed by Council over the following 10 years and resulted in the top priorities being units for low-income households, property tax burden, home ownership gap, regulatory environment, and involuntary displacement.

**Councilmember Haba** stated that units for seniors and units with accessibility could be interchangeable and augment the priority results to which **Councilmember Simasek** retorted that he did agree that senior units should be equipped with accessibility features for those with limited mobility, however, it was not the same for the inverse and there would be a need for accessibility separate from senior units.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** questioned the definition of senior units asking whether the units would have an enhanced experience, amenities, or affordability to which **Councilmember Solomon** responded that he interpreted senior units as those made affordable to seniors while allowing them to remain in their residence amid market changes and taxing augmentations.

**Councilmember Croslin** commented that a retired person’s fixed income after retirement is not at the same rate as from direct employment and that, in association with the consideration of residents who need continual first-hand care for basic self-maintenance, should be considered when determining the category as a priority.



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Ms. Searfoss acknowledged that some overlap existed between some of the categories and challenged the participants to choose one of the competing issues; units for seniors, regulatory environment, and involuntary displacement, to omit and determine what the chosen priority would be given the new field of options to which **Councilmember Haba** replied that his most important of the three (3) would be regulatory environment because he stated that if that element was carried out well, it could have significant impacts on the other two issues.

**Councilmember Simasek** expressed his lack of clarity regarding “regulatory environment” stating that it was a very broad term and could include a number of specific potential and current guidelines that could have varying effects on the other categories depending on application to which Ms. Searfoss recalled that during stakeholder meetings there was mention of County assistance, but for the purposes of the discussion it would include all possibilities and approaches available to positively change the regulatory environment as a whole.

**Councilmember Simasek** reiterated his concern regarding the challenges made evident from the COVID-19 crisis and stated that regulatory environment was something that could be very important in the following years as seniors will sustain tax and rent changes and will be navigating how to afford to remain in their homes to which **Councilmember Solomon** expressed agreement.

Laura Searfoss explained that the next step would be moving forward the top five (5) priorities of units for low-income households, property tax burden, home ownership gap, regulatory environment, and involuntary displacement and, while being used as starting points, assess how they would affect the lower priority categories.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** cited the two (2) areas agreed upon of “highest impact” and “direct City influence” opining that should the focus involve a specific segment of the population it could hinder the City’s influence to make an impact on the general population thereby restricting the effectiveness.

**Councilmember Schaible** expressed the importance of addressing involuntary displacement and suggested another vote to determine the priority of choice among the three (3) contending categories to which **Councilmember Haba** expressed his support. The Body conducted a voice vote resulting in the common priority of regulatory environment.

Ms. Searfoss reported that the items that would be the base for the next discussion on the matter would be units for low-income households, property tax burden, the homeownership gap, and regulatory environment.

**14. Motion to Adjourn**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Croslin
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Solomon
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None



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**ATTEST:  
October 15, 2020**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Laura Reams", written in a cursive style.

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**Laura Reams, City Clerk**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Sean Corcoran", written in a cursive style.

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**Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk**