

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

CITY OF ANN ARBOR
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 1, 2021
6:30 P.M.

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>> Mayor Taylor: Good evening, everyone.
And welcome to the November 1, meeting of the Ann Arbor city council.
If you are able, please rise and join us for a moment of silence, followed by the
Pledge of Allegiance.
>> I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the
republic for Which it stands: One nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
>> Mayor Taylor: Would our clerk please call the roll of council?
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Hayner.
>> Councilmember Hayner: Here.
In Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Disch.
>> Councilmember Disch: Here.
In Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Griswold.
>> Councilmember Griswold: Here.
Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Song.
>> Councilmember Song: Here.
Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Grand.
>> Councilmember Grand: Here.
In Ann Arbor.

>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Radina.
>> Councilmember Radina: Here.
In Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Mayor Taylor.
>> Mayor Taylor: Here.
In Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Eyer.
>> Councilmember Eyer: Here.
Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Nelson.
>> Councilmember Nelson: Here.
In Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Briggs.
>> Councilmember Briggs: Here.
In Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: Councilmember Ramlawi.
>> Councilmember Ramlawi: Present.
Ann Arbor.
>> Clerk Beaudry: We have a quorum.
>> Mayor Taylor: Excellent.
May I have a motion to approve the agenda.
Moved by Ramlawi and seconded by Disch.
Discussion of the agenda?
All in favor --
>> I'm sorry, Councilmember Hayner?
>> Councilmember Hayner: Yes, thank you, Mr. Mayor.
You know, many of us received emails from folks asking that, you know, even
some pleading that someone who is in the affirmative of concord pains would like
to reconsider that.
I would ask if anyone who did vote in the affirmative reconsider that.
It would be a great service to the public.
I'm not able to.
>> Mayor Taylor: Further discussion of the agenda?
All in favor?
Opposed?
The agenda is approved.
Do we have communications today from our city administrator?
>> Int. City Admin. Dohoney: Good evening, mayor, members of the council.
Just wanted to say hi, glad to be with you all.
Nothing further.
Thank you, sir.
>> Mayor Taylor: With the brevity of your comments is inverse to the proportion
of the delight in us having you here.
So welcome from one and all.
We now have an introduction from the chair of our independent community police

oversight commission, Dr. Jackson.

Dr. Jackson, you have the com.

>> Good evening.

Thank you.

For who don't know me, I'm Lisa Jackson, I'm the president of the independent community police oversight commission.

Welcome, Administrator Dohoney.

We conducted interviews with four candidates, and we will soon recommend three of them to the council liaisons for their review and subsequent presentation to the entirety of council for your consideration.

We were blown away by the individuals with whom we spoke, and we hope that council will possess a similar level of confidence in their aptitude for and potential contributions to our commission.

Moving on, I would like to also announce that the independent community police oversight commission in partnership with the southeast Michigan criminal justice policy research group at eastern Michigan university was awarded a grant in the community foundation for southeast Michigan and the grant is going to facilitate technical assistance for analyzing the police traffic stop data we have been working on, such that we will be able to share the analysis with the community and do some thorough analysis and pay for some national experts as well.

And we're intending to do outreach bidirectionally.

We would like to share information, and get community feedback based on the information that we share.

And -- and with all of the communities who are affected by policing.

The main topic I would like to discuss with you today, is radical imagination of for those of us tasked with advocating for policy, which includes you.

The notion of utilize our imaginations sounds at best silly.

Why?

Because knowing that we will ultimately be expected to justify our proposed solutions if feels safer to fall back on the moderated reasonable policies that offend no one and easily backed up with easily understandable solutions.

I'm not about to suggest that anyone completely cast aside data-backed analysis or the gradual implementation of new policies.

As a researcher and a scientist, I would never advocate for that, however, what I'm going to say is that while or solutions should be well reasoned and backed by data, we should also allow the thinking that ultimately creates those solutions to be radical and uninhibited by precedent.

For example, you city council acknowledged in your resolution that some public safety calls are better suited for nonpolice persons with extensive training and expertise and public health, mental health and human services, yet often when we talk about policing alternatives, we can feel constrained by existing institutions, like policing as we have already known it, as we always have known it.

And unfortunately, that leads to alternatives that are different flavors of the same thing.

And the case in point might be community policing.

Community policing can add more police interaction to communities by having more police patrolling and walking through communities and while some feel it makes there are communities feel safer, and others think that it means more surveillance.

To be clear, the idea of community policing always involves police who are always armed.

Chief Cox has been clear that police will always be armed.

However, when our thinking is constrained in this way, we end.

Up with variations of the same problems we always have.

Community policing doesn't address the long mistrust of the police, simply adding more police into the community, isn't going to make communities that have distrusted the police suddenly trust them more.

Therefore, we need to give ourselves the space to imagine something radically different.

For example, imagine if we had the resources to staff such a wide array of community services that we had the most qualified people showing up to every kind of call.

We wouldn't have to worry about negative externalities of having undertrained police dealing with situations that they shouldn't have to touch.

Let's contrast that with the current reality in which I have talked to so many who fear for their children, who are having a drug overdose, but then had the child -- the child had even greater anxiety when an armed police officer responded to a 911 call.

Certainly, that person would be better served by a community drug abuse expert who deals with overdoses often, and help the person and not arrest them.

Would Anthony Harrison, whose introduction in the criminal legal system started with kicking over trash cans have been better served by a person who responded to his teenager anger and frustration as opposed to a armed police officer who criminalized his behavior.

And while that vision of community safety does not exist in Ann Arbor, it could.

Especially when we think of unarmed, nonpolice, expert responses to public safety concerns such as overdoses, concerns about people who are unhoused and certainly in terms of responding to people in a mental health crisis.

Grounding our thinking in the potential of our ideals rather than the paralysis of our analysis.

It's our sincere hope, that the administrator is communicating with places that have implemented such policies with encouraging results.

Many improved outcomes range from the decreased stress of police officers who are no longer requires to calls for which they feel ill equipped.

The decreased stress of people who have bad results of policing and those who get expert mental health help, that is no longer compounded by incarceration.

Grounding our thinks in the potential of our ideals rather than the paralysis of our identities.

It's my sincere hope that we can take those steps forward together.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Thank you, Dr. Jackson.

We now have an introduction with respect to the sustainable energy utility report by the head of the office of O.S.I., Dr. Stults.

Dr. Stults, you have the com.

Once you are moved on over.

There you go.

>> Thank you, mayor and members of council for the opportunity to discuss a new report to you.

Ms. Beaudry, can I get sharing privileges if possible?

There we go.

All right.

Thank you, Dr. Jackson too, for the concept of radical imagination.

In our brief time together tonight, I want to share with you a little bit about an idea, its history and potential application for our community and that is the concept of a sustainable energy utility.

First, and this is more for the members of the public that might be joining our conversation tonight.

I wanted to ground the S.E.U. conversation and our existing goals and as you all know, in November of 2019, council unanimously adopted the goal achieving a just transition to carbon neutrality by 2030.

Due to grounding in that network, our greenhouse gas emissions profile.

Most of our emissions come from buildings.

We know that solutions to reducing local climate position necessity finding pathway to address in, usage in our built environment.

O.S.I. staff along with members the energy commission have systemically been evaluating various pathways to reduce energy-related emissions.

These pathways have included things such as on-site renewable energy, community choice, and a litany of other options.

Underlying all of these concepts has been the commission's growing understanding as well as staffs of energy-related law here in Michigan.

Now, the purpose of today's presentation is not to discuss the pros and the cons of each of these various concepts and/or why we'll likely need to do many of them to hit our clean energy goals.

Instead, I wanted to share another idea that emerged during our energy exploration together.

Now, to ground that, let me just start by saying the Michigan constitution very clearly protects the rights of cities and villages to create their own municipal utility, as a direct buyout of the existing utility and direct competition.

Every community that has started their own municipal electric in Michigan with the last being Zealand which originally formed in 1902, sold in 1915 and reestablished in 1935.

Was done through condemnation.

With significant declines in solar and energy storage, competition is a viable pathway and competition is at the heart of S.E.U. concept.

So what is the sustainable energy utility?

Simply put a sustainable energy utility is a public utility that's 100% renewably powered, local, shared and publicly owned.

As envisioned in our report, the S.E.U. would focus on local clean energy.

It would feed directly in our homes, businesses, places the worships and community centers.

This would be paired with storage to help improve energy reliability and offered in conjunction with deep energy waste reduction programs and lower the energy cost and usage while improving.

The S.E.U. could use more program with our A2Zero goals, support with electrification, geothermal and help with transitioning to our transportation to electric.

The concept of S.E.U. is grounded in choice, providing Ann Arborites another way to harness their energy source, one that is coming from clean reliable sources.

Strategy one in a A2Zero this includes shifting our energy system from carbon intensive to carbon-free sources.

Finding solutions commensurate with the time frame and the ambition established in A2Zero and centering residents, customers, and giving people choice, in how they procure their energy.

Centering the needs of low-income and historically underrepresented groups in the energy system with the focus of affordability and improved comfort.

Viewing energy as a service, not just a commodity and improving the reliability of our energy system and thereby, the resilience of our community.

With those objectives we put together a group of technical and legal and policy experts to look sustainability.

It became clear that the concept was feasible.

So we transitions to what services a sustainable energy utility could offer.

On the next two slides, I will show one potential approach to how we can phase in an S.E.U. locally based on the goals.

First, the S.E.U. could enable a lot more people to get benefits of solar by paying directly for systems.

Residents wouldn't be the owner of that solar system, the public or the S. E.U., the residents would subscribe to purchase their energy at a rate that's based on the costs and the S.E.U. operations.

From the system that they have on their roof or on their neighbor's roof.

In the resident's energy needs are met, any excess power flows into a battery.

The resident could still have power if the big traditional grid goes down.

It would not be limited by current utility systems, for example the limit of the size of solar on one roof.

We could focus on maximizing local solar production.

Over time, individual solar systems could be connected to micro and nanogrids.

I will talk about that in a second.

And the S.E.U. could offer a series of robust energy waste reduction services.

This would help us lower energy demand and improve comfort.

Some of those services h available to anyone who sub scribes just like we currently have energy waste production services for incumbent utilities. Others would be opt in energy waste and they could potentially finance on build finance which is the third offering we propose in the first phase should council decide this is something they are interested in pursuing. The on-bill finance, the S.E.U. can pay the upfront costs such as efficiency or electrification and the residents pay back the cost through the utility bills. This allows the cost of the improvements to stay with the home as opposed to the resident and helps to reduce initial upfront costs. And phase two of the S.E.U., we could focus on micro and nanogrids. If a resident needs more power than the system is able to produce, they can pull from the neighbor, if there's excess available. If a resident is generating more energy than they need, they send it to the micro grid or the perhaps the batteries connected within the system and if the neighbor doesn't have good solar viability. They pull power from the shared battery system. The whole neighborhood can share locally and clean powered energy. We would have to stand up limited poles and wires to connect houses and businesses. That's new equipment we own therefore ensure the quality and viability for us. During the second phase, we can look to create district level geothermal systems and helping to transition the heating and cooling loads and reducing our reliance on natural gas and we can support beneficial electrification programs, helping them to transition to electrical appliances where that makes sense for them. S.E.U. can use packaging improvements together that are customized for that home, that business or that community center. These phases are likely going to include things like community solar offerings. Those kinds of offerings need a little bit of wires to distribute the energy across the community but in is essential to helping us ensure that anyone who wants to participate in our community can participate in the S.E.U. I know that's a lot to digest. We had a little bit of time together, but I want to bring this back to the core. S.E.U. is a municipal utility that creates electricity, and reduces emissions and improving reliability. Ann Arborites will be able to reap the benefits of clean energy economy. The S.E.U. is about generated locally owned renewable power. And the good news is the S.E.U. actually aligns really closely with council-adopted energy criteria and principles. S.E.U. is a novel endeavor but the city has the building blocks to consider administer it, as we do the water recovery and stormwater. We can leverage that infrastructure to help with billing and customer service. We can work with peers around. State who already have existing utilities and do many of the services that the S.E. U. envisions. We can work through contracts and implement energy reduction programs.

These minimal maintenance once they are implemented.
We can choose to run our own team.
We have opportunities to leverage experiences around our own great state.
In closing our technical, legal, and policy analysis regarding the S.E.U. found just a few steps to move the concept forward to a bevy of interest.
I want to close with this.
First the advisory committee suggested starting a wait list.
This will help to with be the rate phase.
Simultaneous with these two actions the proposal is to identify potential governance structures and the staffing needs.
Fourth the required step 19 passing of ordinance.
So the ordinance is the only required step.
Last, we need to determine how to get the seed capital to start the S.E.U.
Once operational, the S.E.U. will be self-sustaining but we need to determine where the seed capital would come from.
Depending on that path, we may need to do a vote of the people.
We may need to do a vote of the people or choose to do it regardless but really it's only for taking out debt financing.
And lastly not on the screen, should we move forward, staff would also propose that we immediately conduct a technical assessment for the micro grids and the nanogrids to understand the power technologies needed to establish the important features and analysis of the S.E.U.
So I know that was fast and furious a lot to digest.
We wanted to make sure you had a little bit of details about that concept.
Anyone that is interested in listening, please check out our website you can see that at the bottom of the screen here, once a2gov.org/seu.
And feel free to send us an email at sustainability@a2gov.org.
Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Dr. Stults, thank you very much.

We now come to public comment reserve time.

It is my understanding from the clerk that no members the public have called in to speak at public comment reserve time.

Is that confirmed?

>> Clerk Beaudry: That is correct.

>> Mayor Taylor: Thank you.

There are communications from council?

Councilmember Griswold?

>> Councilmember Griswold: Yes, the theme of my remarks is safety.

Someone reminded me of that today.

That's that the theme that has motivated me for the last couple of decades, and the last meeting I mentioned bringing forward a resolution, I'm still working on that, a resolution that would focus on operations and evaluation some of our pedestrian infrastructure.

But before with talk about operations and evaluation, I think it's good to look at the data and to acknowledge what has been done and I sent an email to our city

administrator today asking staff to prepare a summary report of the infrastructure improvements in the school walk zones from 2017 through the current period.

And this was the result of work done by a2 safe transport.

They did an analysis and turned it over to staff.

And staff turned it into the tier one, two and three projects.

Given that we are closing that effort that staff deserves credit for the significant, yet noncontroversial improvements in the school walk zones for the last five years.

I think that will also put into perspective the report from the lower town mobility community regarding a loading zone at Epstein school.

I was in Berkeley, California, last week.

It's very clear, just looking around the tremendous pressure that the university has put on housing in that area.

In addition, Yale was in the news today, because of the burden that is put on New Haven, Connecticut.

So I think that this is a movement afoot.

I would like to continue to work with some stakeholders, develop a policy so that I can bring something forward as a resolution.

Thanks.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember.

Councilmember Radina.

>> Councilmember Radina: I wanted to remind everyone that tomorrow is election here in Ann Arbor.

And polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

And if you are a resident who is holding on to your absentee ballot, please remember to return that in person.

You can drop it off at one of our city's secure drop box locations or the city clerk's office, and all of information on tomorrow's election and drop box locations can be found at a2gov.org/elections.

Thanks.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Disch?

>> Councilmember Disch: Thank you.

I just wanted to respond to the point that Councilmember Hayner raised, about the concord pines.

Being on planning commission, I feel like I can share some information.

Concord pines doesn't need a zoning variance to go forward because it proposed to build what the site was zoned for.

Council doesn't really have discretion in such situations.

It's administrative and not policy.

So they strongly suggest that these projects not come to the council table at all, because it creates a false impression of the leeway that council has and I understand that this was a daunting number of trees being removed.

The city forester and the planning commission reviewed this just half the trees through the middle of the sight were ranked a low quality woodland.

It contains many invasive.

And there were some older valuable trees, but they are mixed in with invasives and less desirable type this was not the kind of project that council should be going out on a limit for.

I'm sorry.

I didn't real -- limb for and I'm sorry, I really didn't mean that pun.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Grand.

>> Councilmember Grand: Thank you to my colleague, my word colleagues about election day tomorrow, in our ward, those who vote in the 36 or the 39, which both vote at garnet middle school, they will be voting right down the street at Mitchell elementary.

So for that one time.

-- so it shouldn't be too big.

A burden and knowing our clerk, I'm sure there will be a lot of signage.

I wanted to congratulate the entire community for getting back to Halloween.

I think that was a real positive.

Last night, I know many of us had record number of trick-or-treaters and were maybe scrambling.

We had about 200 at my house.

It was just great to see so many families and community members out enjoying one another and having somewhat of a normal situation.

And I will look to many of our 5 to 11-year-olds being vaccinations this week.

So happy vaccinations.

>> Mayor Taylor: Ms. Beaudry, I believe Councilmember Ramlawi is in the waiting room if you would be so kind.

Councilmember Nelson.

>> Councilmember Nelson: Thank you.

There is a meeting on proposed rezoning -- proposed transit corridor district, in the whole of ward 4.

That will be on November 9th at 7 p.m.

It's a Zoom meeting.

To learn about the zoning and offer your feedback on it.

Thanks.

>> Councilmember Hayner: It was a great pleasure to attend the opening of the African American and historical museum last week.

They struggled over the last couple of years where they weren't able to have their normal fund-raising.

And through the generosity of other artists and other folks in our community to open up that building.

So I'm looking forward to that being a longstanding part of our neighborhood, the history and the story of the underground railroad and so on that it happens in that handful of blocks.

It was just great to meet folks out there.

Second, just to let folks know, you know, Councilmember Ramlawi and I have talked about this several times both being interested in the downtown areas, and I will be bringing a -- we're talking about doing a consideration of looking and

finding out what our public bathroom situation is in the community and the conversation last week about providing period products.

I want to do a survey of what we have available and if there's a need for more and kind of move that project forward because I think -- I think there is a need for a better understanding of what we provide as a public service.

I think that's part of the parks.

Speaking of parks, I spoke with a police officer down by wheeler park where folks are camping out in the bathrooms down there.

It was disappointing getting to the ICPOC comments.

You call the 911 or regular 911 nonemergency number and the choices are we will send an officer down there to run them off or we can give you the phone number for the shelter situation and possibly port.

And so that's just -- that's not a great -- neither one of those is a great choice and it speaks broader to our need to completely address what kinds of services we are allowed to provide as a community and what types of services we will provide as a community.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember.

Councilmember Ramlawi.

Ram thank you.

And thank you for have --

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: Thank you.

And thank you for having me readmitted as quickly as possible.

My Internet connection is a little unstable.

I want to let my residents in the 5th ward who have been experiencing lengthy construction process on west liberty, that was supposed to go on for a month, and it's gone over two months.

I have been talking to some folks over there who expressed what they have been going through.

There was some G.S.I. information that was inaccurate.

And they are hoping to have west liberty, west of 7th opened up by the middle of November.

So hang in there.

We are almost there.

I know they are trying to get the connection to the main matter on 7th it's been quite a difficult task.

Following up on Councilmember Hayner's comments, yes, I welcome and I appreciate the comments.

Hopefully we can get movement again on policies that have been kind of delays for that reason.

It does fall on the heels where spark has major concerns of safety for their employees and others at liberty plaza.

So much so that they are thinking of hiring private utility to protect their employees.

>> Recording in progress.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember?

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: I will follow up my comments at the end of the song.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Song.

>> Recording stops.

>> Councilmember Song: On our all care.

We had a number of elected folks, parents and child caregivers who gathers and had a conversation about the challenges facing our community and securing child care, pay equity, affordable housing, and just kind of figure out if we can navigate a way to fund this need adequately.

, quickly, and see if we can find collaborations between the city, the council, private providers and employers.

So thanks to Cat Hadley, Jessica Pelton and Liz Lynn.

So three women who pulled this together in pretty quick succession.

I also wanted to share -- I don't know if folks had heard this really great piece on N.P.R. on urban planners Halloween and reidentifying density walkability, pedestrian safety and our neighborhoods and how that is an attraction for a lot of young families including our city.

I encourage you to take a listen.

Thanks.

>> Mayor Taylor: My apologies to Councilmember Ramlawi.

Councilmember Song, I was in the process of trying to remute myself and accidentally turned on the record button and then turned off the record button.

That was a little bit of the electronic interruptions that you may have perceived or may have heard.

That is what was going on, and my apologies.

Further communication from council.

I have one built of delightful communication that is a resolution to appoint Milting Dohoney to the building author, the downtown development authority, and the economic development corporation board.

Moved by Griswold and Disch.

Discussion, please of MC-1?

Fall in favor?

All opposed?

It's approved unanimously.

This is a one-step appointment.

Mr. Dohoney, again a triple welcome and we look forward to your office on these various boards.

We now have the consent agenda.

Moved by Disch and seconded by Radina.

Discussion of the consent agenda?

All in favor?

All opposed.

It's approved, with all 11 voting in the affirmative.

CA-1, CA-3, CA-4, CA-5, CA-6 and that is.

We now come to the public hearings that's for a specific subject matter of the

public hearing that is to say the specific couple on the agenda.

To speak at a public hearing, one need not have signed up in advance but your speech must relate to the specific subject matter of the public hearing, that is to say the subject matter on the agenda.

So speak at this public hearing, please enter the number on your screen, 877-853-5247.

877-853-5247.

Once you are connected, please enter meeting I.D. 94212732148.
94212732148.

Once you are connected, please enter star 9 to indicate that you wish to speak. Our clerk will identify you by the last three digits of your telephone number.

When it's your turn to speak, you will have three minutes in which to speak.

Please pay close attention to the time.

Your clerk will notify you when 30 seconds is remaining and when your time is expired.

Whether your time is expired please conclude your remarks and cede the floor.

Public hearing number one, an ordinance to amend sections 1:451 to 1:455 of Chapter 17, the reapportionment of wards of Title I of the code of the city of Ann Arbor.

Is there anyone who would like to speak at this public hearing?

>> Clerk Beaudry: Do you have a comment?

>> Yes, hi.

>> I'm Adam Goodman.

I'm a resident of the 5th ward.

In the last several months, both state redistricting and the Washtenaw County reapportionment were holding hearings to I think it's an interesting contrast where we have a fully formed plan that landed on the agenda last meeting and as far as public input go, I guess this public hearing is basically.

I'm aware as you sure are, that the city has some very specific requirements dating back to, I guess, 1967.

>> We have pie-shaped wards.

Whatever the original intent, this tends to disenfranchise students by diluting their voice.

So the thing that I found interesting, though, is a while back I found a news article in the AILDS archives, from the '70s or '80s and it was a fight over the ward boundaries.

Even in the context of all of these maps complying with the pie shape ward requirement.

I think what we should take away from this precedent is the requirements in the city charter might not tie our hands as much as we seem to think.

In any case, I expect that this ordinance will pass tonight and so be it, but whatever the mechanism, I think it's long past time that Ann Arbor had a serious conversation about whether our ward boundaries are serving the needs of our community and ensuring equitable representation on council.

And tonight it seems like we missed out on an opportunity to do that, and instead

we are spreading as we often do from the assumption that we should maintain the status quo to the extent possible and I kind of think that's a shame.

That's all.

Thanks for listening.

>> Mayor Taylor: Thank you.

Is there nip else who would like to speak at this public hearing?

>> Clerk Beaudry: Mayor, I don't see any other hands raised.

>> Mayor Taylor: Seeing no one this public hearing is closed.

We now have before us the minutes, special session of October 6th, work session of October 12, and regular session meeting minutes of October 18, 2021.

Moved by Ramlawi and seconded by Disch.

Discussion, please of a-1.

All in favor?

Opposed?

It's approved.

B-1, an ordinance to amendment sections 1:451 to 1:455 of Chapter 17, reapportionment of wards, of Title I of the code of the city of Ann Arbor.

Moved by Nelson and seconded by Disch.

Discussion of b-1.

Councilmember Griswold.

>> Councilmember Griswold: I want to thank Adam Goodman for speaking tonight.

I have heard similar comments from community members.

Some have referred to the pie-shaped wedges as republican gerrymandering, that may be a bit strong but there are students and others who are interested in changing the charter to take out the requirement to have the pie-shaped wedges in the future we can talk about that and having some action to look at the charter.

So, again, I don't think there was a lot that we could change or a lot that we could do given what's specified in our charter, but I hope that there's ongoing effort to make some changes in the future.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Nelson.

>> Councilmember Nelson: Thank you.

I just want to acknowledge the work of our city clerk, Jackie Beaudry.

I know that in the conversations that I had or the communications I had with her this was really an effort to keep neighborhoods kind of cohesive and the tweaks to rebalance this was not an easy task.

I want to thank her for her work.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Hayner.

>> Councilmember Hayner: Thanks.

Yeah.

I heard the complaint -- the complaints that I heard mostly seem to be centered about the pie-shaped notion is that somehow it's been designed to exclude or break up the university's, you know, presence or authority or maybe the students' potential to have a student representative on city council and I'm not sure if

that's so although I know that ward 1 has a good amount of student population, possibly the largest, although this redistricting, the shifting the boundaries gives away several thousand away to ward 4.

You know, I'm not sure that it does that.

I think there were concerns about the downtown isn't fairly represented but I think we know that the downtown has its even representation by are the D.D.A., the business association and so on.

I'm not super critical.

I know it will be rapidly out of date as construction continued unabated here in ward one.

And so ten years from now, it will change again, and there is nothing stopping us from having a conversation prior to that, and reapportion the wards.

The clerk would have to speak to that.

Is there any kind of state -- this is a question.

Is there any state prohibition at addressing this in the future prior to the mandated reappraisal based on the federal census?

It could be brought back, I guess is my -- to sum up?

>> Clerk Beaudry: You are asking about the charter amendment.

That would require an amendment to the city charter that the voters would approve if the pie-shaped formation would be tape out.

So that would require a public vote I would have to check with the city attorney.

My thought is that the change would take place with the next census.

I don't think there's a plan to change the districts mid-ten-year cycle.

>> Councilmember Hayner: I didn't think so myself.

>> City Atty. Postema: I will follow one that, Councilmember Hayner.

I will double check.

For my own knowledge, I don't know offhand.

I think the clerk is correct.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further discussion?

I would like to echo my true and earnest thanks to staff, Ms. Beaudry and all who worked with her on this.

It was a seamless process, removed from electoral intentionality.

I'm grateful for the rest of the work that you have done.

I will observe that the -- oh, forget it.

I was going to talk to my law revote, that relates to vote dilution and under count.

If anyone is interested, I would be delighted to talk with you.

It's been moved and seconded.

Is there further discussion?

All in favor?

Opposed?

It's approved.

DC-1, resolution opposing the secure Michigan vote petition and any other efforts aimed at restricting, voter access and voter rights.

Moved by Radina and seconded by eyer.

Discussion?

Councilmember Radina.

>> Councilmember Radina: I wanted to thank our clerk for bringing this to last policy agenda committee meeting that we had for discussion.

This is what prompted this resolution to come forward.

For those not familiar, this is an effort by largely republican political activists here in the state to exploit a constitutional loophole in our ballot proposal process that would essentially allow this proposal to be enacted without a majority vote and without oversight from the governor.

So many of these pieces that are in this secure M.I. vote petition have been passed by the republican-controlled legislature.

Governor Whitmer has the ability to veto those currently what would happen in this case if republicans secure 10% of the previous gubernatorial election signatures to put this on the ballot is the language.

It would allow the republican legislature to pass this by a simple majority vote without any oversight from the governor and without requiring it to go to a vote of the people.

And so this resolution registers our city's opposition to this effort to undermine voter results and urges citizens here and elsewhere throughout the state to -- to sign this petition.

Thanks.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Disch.

>> Councilmember Disch: I would like to be added as a cosponsor and express my gratitude for the colleagues and the city clerk for putting this on the agenda.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Song?

Song myself as well if I could be added as a cosponsor.

I was on the executive committee for prop 3 back in 2018, which helped to secure the no reason absentee ballot.

So this attempt by republicans really undermines that work that we did years ago and hoping to secure and making our voting process more accessible.

I would like to be added as a sponsor.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Briggs?

>> Councilmember Briggs: I was hoping Ms. Beaudry, if she might be able to speak for a second around why the municipal association of clerks has shown this so important and the impact of clerk's offices in terms of ban on in-kind support on volunteers.

>> Clerk Beaudry: Yes, sure.

Over 80% of members responded are opposed to this initiative.

Our concern especially with the in-kind donations.

That may be any polling place used that's not city owned.

I believe it says would -- the city would have to pay market rate.

So a lot communities are concerned about churches and other community centers.

We are looking into whether that would also mean the university builds that we utilize or even public schools.

And then many clerks have volunteer support, whether that's people working their lines and helping with voter registration drives and so the prohibition potentially on any granting of help, which that's through volunteerism and the long time absentee voters having to more information on their concern and our concern is the number of provisional ballots and rejected applications due to misunderstanding of the voters that these previously were not required of long-timed registered and absent voters.

Those were the two primary concerns from the clerk perspective for election administration.

>> Councilmember Briggs: Thank you for that sharing that and thank you for bringing this to the community.

I urge everyone in the community to sign this petition.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Eyer.

>> Councilmember Eyer: Thank you.

And thank you clerk Beaudry for bring forward to the policy committee.

As the chair of the policy committee, I will keep my comments brief because I don't want to rehash what everyone else has said.

Councilmember Radina really explained it all really, really well.

What we are saying is decline to sign.

So many people sign petitions just because they think I may not agree with it.

I will not read it closely because we will find out about it later and let the voters decide.

That is not the face with this petition.

By signing it, you are supporting putting it into -- into our laws.

And this is very dangerous legislation to our democracy.

So please decline to sign and that's all I have to say.

Thank you.

>> Councilmember Hayner: Well, thanks.

I think it's nice that we recognize that the potential that low turnout has for sort of having a nonrepresentative or corrupting effect on the democracy, the strength of democracy and, you know, we have supported -- my last three years or so on council, we had various ways to support the clerk's office to try to expand access to the ballot locally and that's been important.

I think some of that has paid off.

We have a pretty decent turnout in Ann Arbor which is a good thing.

You know, kind of parallel to this matter, you know, we have -- I mean we have a special election tomorrow that I -- you know, that's a situation where we have set ourselves up to have low voter turnout.

While we are saying we have low voter turnout, we don't necessarily have the same qualms which it has an effect on something we do like, school millage election in May, special election for four charter things tomorrow and so on.

I would like us to, you know, take genuine consideration of what we are doing as a body to build the efforts of democracy locally and here at the state level.

I want to support this.

I just want to point out that a lot of times we do things that create situations for

low voter turnout.

I would love to see a minimum amount of turnout for a millage.

You know, 10%, 12%, 14% of the people show up and the other 87% are the people with the bill.

And so things need to be done to increase voter turnout, not decrease it.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further discussion?

I would like to be added as a cosponsor.

This vote petition effort is another in a long line of voter suppression efforts and in an effort to restrict people's access to the vote and ensure and support minority rule.

It's as simple as that and we, I hope are shedding some additional light on this and are encouraging people to decline to sign.

This is not merely signing the petition is -- it's part of the plan to restrict people's access to the ballot and that's contrary to everything that we as a state and country should stand for.

Councilmember Ramlawi?

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: Thank you.

Thank you to the clerk for the work and others who have brought this to the table.

I won't extend our short meeting any longer.

I would like to be added as a cosponsor, please.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further discussion?

All in favor?

Opposed?

It is approved.

DC-2, resolution to approve the hiring of Atleen Kaur as city attorney.

Moved by Councilmember Grand, and seconded by Griswold.

Discussion of DC-2.

I would like to say that this, of course comes through the administration committee after the -- after Ms. Kaur interviewed here with staff members and city attorney's office on multiple occasions.

I feel able to say on the part of the community that we are very excited about the prospect of moving forward with Ms. Kaur and are delighted that she continuing to explore interests in serving as our new city attorney.

There's a couple ever aspects of the process.

In the event that she were to join us, it wouldn't come for some time.

That is to say that she an additional commitment which, you know, run through perhaps April.

And so if we are moving forward, that's the time frame that will likely be hit.

As we are expressing our enthusiasm for Ms. Kaur and bringing forward this resolution to approve her hiring, it's not a done deal.

Ms. Kaur has -- she continues to -- she has a distinguished career in the private sector and is in the process herself of exploring and considering whether municipal service is what she wants to take on.

I'm hoping that the answer is yes.

I have discussed this aspect of my communications with her and she heartily approves of them for she is true.

And it's my -- well, I just want folks on council not in the administration committee to understand that and certainly too members of the public that she is continuing to think through what her next best steps are and it's my firm and fond hope is those steps to join the team on the their floor.

Further comments?

Councilmember Grand?

>> Councilmember Grand: Thank you.

As a member of the council administration committee, I want to thank Amy sell, all the staff at the attorney's office who gave us valuable feedback.

I know I personally went in this process with a lot of apprehension, given that, you know, the person we were looking to replace and just the level of responsibility of this position.

And I was pleasantly surprised at how smoothly the process has gone so far.

So I'm constantly optimistic that we will -- so I'm cautiously optimistic that we will ride that wave of pleasant surprises, I guess and that, you know -- I know that the feedback we received from Ms. Kaur was incredibly positive.

Hopefully we will be looking at a smooth transition where we have time to pass along some valuable institutional knowledge.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Griswold.

>> Councilmember Griswold: Yes, I also wanted to acknowledge the contribution of Amy sells and also to point utility the commitment to team building that we heard about during her interview was reflected in the way she interviewed and was willing to meet with small groups of attorneys.

So I am very optimistic and enthusiastic that what we heard in the interview is exactly how she will perform if she's hired as our city attorney.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Hayner.

>> Councilmember Hayner: This won't do anything for my reputation of being somewhat contrary.

I enjoyed the interview with the candidate.

I wasn't completely thrilled with the lack of municipal experience.

I appreciated her direct, forth right on municipal law and environmental law, the things I'm concerned and looking for in a candidate.

And I just I think I will cast the lone no vote, but I think it's odd that we essentially interviewed one person and now we are offering up the job.

I just don't feel that I have embraced a wide range of enough candidates.

It doesn't seem like enough to offer this position up after such a short search.

If she accepts the position, I look forward to bringing all the quality that she mentioned in her interview.

I won't support it.

It's too little, too soon.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Briggs.

>> Councilmember Briggs: Well, I feel the complete opposite.

I'm very excited after this long national search to find we have such incredible talent in our own community and within the 5th ward I might say.

And I hope that Ms. Kaur will join us and I think it's quite impressive that considering what big shoes she has to fill.

There's integrity and strength in our city attorney's office right now.

And after the interviews with our administrators and with council and senior leadership and city attorney's office, what we saw was a strong endorsement of her coming to the city and I understand that there may need to be a longer transition time and I hope we can welcome her in the spring.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Griswold.

>> Councilmember Griswold: As a member of the committee, I would like to mention that this was a robust interview process and I would recommend to council maybe Hayner that he reach out to Amy Sell, and talk to her about the process, because while there was just one finalist, there were many candidates considered in the process.

So thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: It Councilmember Ramlawi.

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: I do share the view of my colleague in the 5th ward for many reasons and Atleen being a resident of the 5th ward is just one of them. Her resume is outstanding.

He had interviewed extremely well and has the buy-in of the staff in the legal department, which I think is important.

I would just like to put on record here that we did try to interview two people, and one person backed out before the final process that we undertook.

So, yes, it was unfortunate that we didn't have more people to interview in that final stage.

It was my belief that Atleen was head and shoulders above eight out of the other ten.

And the other person that came close just decided to withdraw their nomination to the job.

So these are tough times to be a public servant and I hope Atleen finds it within her to give a big part of herself to the community and serve in city government.

Money is great and all, but it's not everything.

There's other things that motivate us and is the reason that we do what we do.

And that doesn't come in the form of a paycheck.

Hopefully that resonates with her and we do have someone who can fill the big shoes that will be left vacant, someone who comes with a lot of credentials and the ability to learn very quickly.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further discussion?

Councilmember Radina.

>> Councilmember Radina: Thank you, mayor.

I want to also briefly add my excitement for this opportunity to vote this way tonight.

I too, I think my biggest concern throughout this process was Attorney Kaur's

apparent lack of coming into the role.

One the benefits that we have from Attorney Postema giving us such a long period of time to conclude the search to find the right candidate and hopefully onboard that person while he's still employed with the city allows for that kind of transition, that onboarding and really that time for Attorney Kaur to get up to speed on all the things that might be impacting the city right now and what's on the horizon.

And I think with Mr. Postema helping that transition, that alleviated any of the concerns I had.

It became very clear that attorney Kaur was not only incredibly capable and I think she will be a quick study and I look forward to working with her and welcoming her on board.

So thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further discussion?

Roll call vote, starting with Councilmember Ramlawi.

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: Yes.

>> Councilmember Hayner: No.

>> Councilmember Disch: Yes.

>> Councilmember Griswold: Yes.

>> Councilmember Song: Yes.

>> Councilmember Grand: Yes.

>> Councilmember Radina: Yes.

>> Mayor Taylor: Yes.

>> Councilmember Eyer: Gentlemen.

>> Councilmember Nelson: Yes.

>> Councilmember Briggs: Yes.

>> Clerk Beaudry: Motion carries.

>> Mayor Taylor: Mr. Postema, do we have the pleasure of a closed session today?

>> City Atty. Postema: Mayor, we do not.

>> Mayor Taylor: We have before us the clerk's report of communications, petitions and referrals.

May I have a motion to approve the clerk's report.

Moved by Ramlawi, seconded by Disch.

Discussion, please?

All in favor.

It is approved.

Mr. Postema, do we have a pleasure of communications from our city attorney?

>> City Atty. Postema: The only thing I would add, it is -- it is interesting to watch the council vote on my successor and I believe that the candidate is a strong candidate, and I had the pleasure -- she's called me several times to get proper due diligence on the job, background information that I would give to any candidate, interest in the budget, interested in the people that are here, interested in -- interest in all sorts of things.

I will tell that you she's a person with the talents to do deep due diligence which

is a talent that I admire, as you all know.

And so in watching that, I would be remiss in not pointing out two things, one is Kevin McDonald and Margaret Radabaugh, they did a very good job internally. I was not part of the process internally to the city attorney's office and that was proper, I didn't want a role in that and they did a very good job of coordinating that with attorney sell and with the candidate, the people would spoke about those interviews, it was a multi-tiered process and I appreciate the leadership of attorney McDonald and Radabaugh.

And the admin committee on this, I spoke about this before.

This was a very diligent search and a process that the admin committee worked very, very tirelessly on and very effectively and came to a unanimous conclusion to bring this forward.

This resolution coming from the admin committee, following on the heels of Milton Dohoney's offer and for the city administrator position and he's now here.

Also unanimous, I believe bodes well for the city at the leadership levels.

So with that, having watched the admin committee very fairly with this and having provided them advice, I believe they executed their task very wisely and appropriately.

>> Mayor Taylor: Thank you.

We now come to public comment general time.

It's an opportunity for members the community to speak about matters of public interest.

To speak call 877-853-5247, once you are connected, please enter meeting I.D., 94212732148.

Once you are connected further, please enter star nine.

Star nine to indicate that you wish to speak.

You will have three minutes in which to speak.

Please pay close attention to your time.

Our clerk will notify you when your time is expired.

When your time has expired please conclude your remarks and cede the floor.

Is there anybody who would like to speak at public comment?

>> Clerk Beaudry: Mayor, I don't see any callers on the line with their hands up.

>> Mayor Taylor: Seeing no one, public comment is closed.

Are there communications today from council?

Councilmember Griswold.

>> Councilmember Griswold: This is something that I talked to our city attorney Postema about.

For greater transparency.

I asked him to phase out the new council orientation for legal issues, and it's something that I don't want to put words in his mouth, but he was already thinking about, we are coming up to the one-year anniversary of new councilmembers being elected.

And I think it greater transparency, we need to vote the reason we are there and the councilmembers can learn from each other by discussing new issues.

I want to acknowledge that and thank Mr. Postema for making that change.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Ramlawi.

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: If I could allow Mr. Postema to talk first.

>> City Atty. Postema: Thank you.

I wanted to say, I have talked with the council, it has been my practice after one year to open up and have two time periods for open office hours.

As you know, councilmembers can contact me any time outside of those hours. The only condition is that there's not a quorum in either of those and that those issues -- there may be somebody's topics that we bring forward but just as a policy matter we don't have a quorum, but two separate times for office hours, first come, first serve.

That will start in December.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember Ramlawi.

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: Thank you.

I hope this is audible.

Our Internet is up stable.

I just wanted to follow up with comments I made at the beginning of our meeting, with the situation over there at liberty plaza.

The board again, the LDFA board was addressed and asked about help in the issues facing the employees and others at liberty plaza -- and I think I might have gone -- can people hear me?

Everything is frozen.

>> Mayor Taylor: You are audible councilmember.

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: Unfortunately, I'm not sure what's being transmitted here.

>> Mayor Taylor: Councilmember, you are audible.

>> Councilmember Ramlawi: If you can hear me, I will work with others on this matter, including our city administrator and public safety officials in addressing this public safety concern that's gotten much, much worse over the last two years because what's going on there should concern everybody, and, again, I just want to bring light to it and draw the whole body's attention to the matter that safety issues at liberty plaza have reached an all-time critical level.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further communication from council.

Councilmember Song.

>> Councilmember Song: I wanted to thank our communications office.

I wanted to take a look at the A.T.C. newsletter.

It's a newsletter that you can subscribe to and it's an introduction to our interim administrator and some guidance on election data and our quality water matters report, the parks have park gear and wear, and fall leaf disposal.

A lot of these issues that we ourselves are approached with constituent requests are covered in this newsletter and also a link to Missy Stults' sustainable energy utility.

So quickly assess.

It's nice.

It's on Twitter too and also on our website.

And it's great.

Good work.

Thanks for doing that.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further communication?

Councilmember Hayner.

>> Councilmember Hayner: Real briefly to follow up on councilwoman song's comments.

You know, I was speaking to some police officers out in the field this weekend, and they said they received feedback that their website is -- has had challenges of customers trying to use it and A.A.P.D. website.

If anybody out this has ever had an experience of -- a boar experience with the website or have suggestions or comments on how to approve it, this sergeant that I spoke with, said feel free to collect them on our behalf and forward them to the police.

They are trying to make improvements to the website, in the way you spoke of our other website, Councilwoman Song.

If anybody has had any experience either retrieving data or looking up something and has comments or suggestions to improve that, send them to myself, and I will pass them on to the police, and there's also an administrator of police website that can be found on the website.

You can take a look at it there.

You know, the more community feedback we get on these things hopefully the we are -- they will change for the better, rather, and it's one way we face the community -- I saw some other things done on polling on sidewalks and other issues.

It was specific to say, grab your favorite device that can support this application and, you know, unfortunately not everybody has a device that can support the applications.

So in all cases I want to make sure that we are creating ways to interact with the city that don't exclude those that are less proficient with technology.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Taylor: Further communication from council?

May I have a motion to adjourn, please?

Moved by: Councilmember Disch and seconded by song.

Discussion?

All in favor?

Opposed?

We are adjourned.