Present:

**Evanston High School District 202**
Mary Rodino, Chief Financial Officer
Pete Bavis, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Mark Metz, School Board
Gretchen Livingston, School Board
Pat Savage-Williams, School Board
Rebecca Mendoza, School Board

**Evanston/Skokie CC School District 65**
Paul Goren, Superintendent
Andalib Khelghati, Assistant Superintendent
Raphael Obafemi, Chief Financial Officer
Sergio Hernandez, Board Member
Candace Chow, Board Member

**City of Evanston**
Stephen H. Hagerty, Mayor
Cicely Fleming, Alderman
Erika Storlie, Deputy City Manager and Director of Administrative Services
Kevin Brown, Youth and Young Adult Program Manager
Karen Danczak Lyons, Library Director
Ray Doerner, Recreation Program Manager
Patricia Efiom, Equity & Empowerment Coordinator
James Pickett, Deputy Police Chief
Luke Stowe, Chief Information Officer

**Other**
Nikki Baim, Daily Northwestern

Call to Order and Introductions:
The September 28, 2017 City-School Liaison Committee meeting is called to order at 5:35 pm by City of Evanston Mayor Stephen H. Hagerty. Introductions were made and Mayor Hagerty welcomed everyone. A quorum was present.

Legislative Update/Budget Updates
Paul Goren, Superintendent of District 65 (“D65”), says that now that the State has a budget, money is now flowing to the schools. D65 is at a solid point today, but can’t be sure what is ahead. Money coming in from the referendum and the state will be put into a fund balance and will be budgeted for use over the coming years. They need
between 25-45% of operating budget in reserve. They have been under that in previous years. With money coming in they will still be around 20%. The State has given less in property tax funds normally given to City.

Mary Rodino, Chief Financial Officer at District 202 ("D202"), says that a referendum is not an issue for the high school, but they are concerned with the reserve level. Money from taxes came late to D202, and they were close to lapsing. Reserves need to be kept for worst case scenarios. Their finances are AAA rated. D202 is dealing with a high increase in enrollment, which required them to add 10 new teachers. They had to budget special classes at 75% of what they did last year. The state has vouchered payments but they have not all come in at this time.

Gretchen Livingston, School Board member at D202, informs the committee of the regional advocacy group that represents local areas. They work together on joint interests in Springfield. Communities need to be aware that there could be a referendum by voters to decrease property tax. Voters were happy with the D65 referendum, but D202 has made sure discussions about possible referendums took place at budget meetings.

The City’s budget will be presented to Council Friday, October 6th. There is a $6 million deficit. There will not be an increase in property taxes. The City will have to make tough cuts to departments and programs. The deficit is due to a reduction in sales tax money from the State, a bigger hit in local government distribution tax, and a decrease in building permit fees from Northwestern.

Equity Update
Patricia Efiom, Equity and Empowerment Coordinator with the City of Evanston, says she started with the City in February of this year. She said prior to her arrival the “bus was already running” at the City with equity programs, but she is able to make it start moving. She has put forth a proposal, and the City Council will adopt an Ordinance establishing an Equity & Empowerment Commission on October 9. She will then work with the Committee to start a Strategic Plan. City Council will go through equity training on Wednesday, October 4th, and staff will continue with training. Budget cuts that the City is proposing will be looked at through an equity lens, and the library is going through an assessment process. All staff will be trained by the end of 2018. Northwestern University and the City will be working on a partnership to further these goals.

Sergio Hernandez, D65 Board Member, asks if the City is sending anyone to the Courageous Conversations National Summit in Detroit for the national equity training. Ms. Efiom says that the City hopes to send someone, but is not sure with City budget concerns.

Pete Bavis, D202 Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, says that the High School has all of its new hires participate in Beyond Diversity training. They are also continuing the SEED and Equity Development programs. Twenty of their 3rd year
teachers participated in Collaborative Action for Equity. This involved the teachers shadowing students silently for the entire day. Those teachers will debrief next week. D202 will send several staff to the National Summit in Detroit.

Paul Goren, says that D65 has a lot of parallel work. Teachers are part of the Beyond Diversity training, and 220 teachers, parents, and staff signed up for SEED training. D65 has staff going to the Courageous Conversations. Interviews have been revamped to include an equity lens, and they continue to look for teachers of color.

Karen Danczak Lyons, Library Director at the City of Evanston, informs the Committee that they are working to build on what is already in place at the library. DeEtta Jones presented to them via Skype recently, and they hope to incorporate the suggestions.

Candace Chow, D65 Board Member, says that the work is the beginning foundation. The works needs to keep going beyond and see where it can take everyone. The high school needs to look at the data for black males being at the bottom, and how can they be supported emotionally and physically. She is glad to know both districts will have board members present in Detroit, and hopes the City will get someone there.

Safety Update
City of Evanston Deputy Chief James Pickett says that Evanston is off to a good start to the school year. The school safety officers are out at the schools (two at D202 and two at D65). They are in the selection process to fill in the rest. There are no other major issues.

Mr. Goren says that the schools appreciate the use of the officers. He asks what can be done on ½ days for students at D65 and D202. Alderman Cicely Fleming asks what the safety officers provide. DC Pickett says the officers are there to provide outreach and act as a liaison between the police and students. The officers participate in the DARE class, and help teach other classes. Mr. Goren says it is a great way to have police presence, but if there is an emergency they will call 911.

Kevin Brown, Youth and Young Adult Program Manager with the City, says there are programs at most elementary schools for the half days, and at community centers for kids in middle school. It is asked if there is a place for kids go for help with homework. Alderman Fleming says that the YMCA has problems with reaching capacity and turning kids away. Kids can go to Chandler but how do they get there? She asks if it is possible to use the James Park fieldhouse for after school programs. It is a safety concern with kids traveling from south Evanston to find a location. Ms. Danczak Lyons says that the library can try to provide some help/programs.

Welcoming City
Mr. Goren issued a statement to students proclaiming that D65 is a safe haven school district. If an immigration officer comes to D65, they will first have to go through his office. He will cooperate, but will ensure steps are followed.
Ms. Efiom says that the City is updating the Welcoming City Ordinance which is up for Council approval. In addition, the City has designed a sign that says “All People are Welcome”; the sign will be in 5 different languages (including Braille, Spanish, Chinese). She asks D202 if they would be able to translate into additional languages. Alderman Fleming adds that the Ordinance is being updated to match the recent Governor’s TRUST Act. The Mayor said that he, along with the Police Chief and many others, sent letters in support of the Act to the Governor.

Update on Refugee Task Force
An attendee notes that D202 has had an increase of 35 to 135 students with refugee, which brings a host of challenges. They mention Skokie does a good job with refugees and Evanston should see if we can work with them. They are glad the Refugee Task Force was created and asks for the status. They are aware of a family who had problems with Chicago schools so they moved to Evanston. The family is having a great experience with D65 but hard time finding affordable housing that isn’t run by “slumlords”. Candace Chow says that the committee spoke about the Task Force in more detail at their last meeting. Sergio Hernandez, D65 Board Member says that refugees can get a home but may not have furniture. The Mayor made a note to request a summary of the Task Force from Savannah Clement, Housing Policy and Planning Analyst at the City, and will provide that to the Council. It is noted Ms. Clement gave a good presentation on this topic at the last committee meeting. Mr. Hernandez said he would like to get information from D202 on what they are doing in special service areas. The Mayor says that the City will continue its work with the schools. It is asked that the schools/City should get a joint agreement with Skokie and Niles. Ms. Efiom notes that the Task Force already works with other cities. Mr. Bavis mentions that D202 started a new program; each family is enrolled in this program which provides check-ins, assists with signing up for bus transportation, and allows attendance at a separate night for enrollment, etc.

Early Dismissal/After School Activities
Mayor Hagerty mentions that there was an incident with a twelve year old boy being put in a police vehicle after school hours. He said that after this incident, he worked for immediate change on the community outreach. Mr. Brown mentions that he coordinated with the City Manager and Chief of Police for additional safety officers and youth outreach staff in hot spots on early dismissal days. DC Pickett confirms that there have been no incidents in the downtown area. Mr. Brown says there is a need for more, free programming. His division is looking into programs at the library and at the school districts.

Alderman Fleming mentions that she had an open gym when she was young, and asks D65 if they have looked into a similar program. Programs cannot be offered at Robert Crown as there is a preschool that uses the gym space. Mr. Goren comments that it is a great idea and he will look into gym use, but is concerned about staffing. He thanks the YMCA for opening up on those days. Ms. Fleming adds that her big concern is for the ½ days for middle/elementary school age children. Ridgeville is working on opening up a camp, but the City needs activities for the winter when it is dark after hours. D202 has a
hard time providing space as teachers are using the rooms for conferences. Mayor Hagerty suggests forming a subcommittee to continue these discussions. Ms. Livingston brings up Family Focus and that they may have available space and only need help with staffing. Alderman Fleming says that she will take the lead on this issue/subcommittee.

City-School Spending at Local Businesses
Mayor Hagerty says the City’s Minority/Women/Evanston Business (MWEBE) program has done an analysis on City spending and if that spending is done locally. The City spends $13 million and $2 million is done locally. About $5 million is in IL and the remaining $6 million is out of state. Further analysis was done by the Chamber of Commerce this summer. Mayor Hagerty asks if the schools can spend more in Evanston. Alderman Braithwaite suggested this topic for this agenda, but was not able to make tonight’s meeting. Ms. Rodino says that D202 has a list of vendors which notes if they are MWEBE. It is difficult for the schools as they are required to go with the lowest bidder. The Mayor asks the schools to look into making some changes; if the City/D65/D202 all made some changes it could make a big difference.

Data Sharing
Ms. Danczak Lyons says the City’s Library and Parks, Recreation and Community Services departments are trying to dig deeper on who the City is not serving. The City would like data to help create maps of areas with needs. The City does not need personal identifier information. The library was going to start a door to door pilot program where they would let residents know about free programs that are being offered.

Mr. Goren says that once the City has a specific vision and goal, the district will check its rules and see if it can provide any general data. Mr. Brown says another way data sharing could be helpful that if the district knows about a child on a reduced/free lunch, then the City could also get the enrolled in benefit cards, etc.

Other
Ms. Danczak Lyons invites everyone to attend the Library’s Storytelling Festival this weekend. Many students are part of the event, and performing in a poetry slam.

Adjournment
Meeting is adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Submitted by Susie Hall
Executive Assistant, City Manager’s Office