

**Evanston City Council
Closed Session Minutes
Aldermanic Library
Monday, August 11, 2008**

PRESENT: Aldermen Wollin, Wynne, Bernstein, Holmes, Moran, Tisdahl,
Rainey,

ABSENT: Alderman Jean-Baptiste, Hansen

STAFF: Elke Tober-Purze, Jolleen Daley, Doug Gaynor, Robert Dorneker,
Dennis Marino and Rolanda Russell,

PRESIDING: Mayor Lorraine Morton

START: 11:15 p.m.

Personnel

Interim City Manager Russell reported on the overall vacancies in the City of Evanston as well as the report from the Police Department, and Joellen Daley is here to answer any questions you may have concerning the report.

Alderman Tisdahl asked if there were any unfilled positions that we could leave unfilled.

Ms. Russell commented that if there was a position that a department needed to fill they would send some information to us. We would then perform an analysis to see if it has to be filled or we could leave it vacant. Some of the positions we will just put on hold, some of them will appear when we make our budget presentation to you and they will be eliminated. So its position by position what we will fill or have a person take on some of the tasks, and again some will be eliminated in our upcoming budget.

Alderman Rainey – one of the bills questioned tonight was about the advertisement for the vacancies. There is one here where we created a new position because of the Mental Health Director’s departure.

Ms. Russell – Yes, during the budget discussion when we decided not to fill Evonda’s old job, she came back with a reorganization plan and deleted that position. One additional thing Joellen wants to talk about.

Joellen Daley - We are now accepting applications on line, and we are instructing our employees to go to the website, click on employment and you can then view all of the open positions. We are not accepting paper applications any more however we have made provisions for anyone coming in who would like to apply for a position. We have set up a terminal adjacent to the Human Resources Office, where we will go in and help someone

who needs assistance and allow them to apply on line there or we will direct them to the Public Libraries to apply on line there. It was up and running August 4th and so far no problems.

Mayor Morton – She wanted to know what the asterisk on the Police report beside the name of Daniel Capesius meant. There is no reference to the asterisk anywhere. No big deal I just wanted to know, okay let's go on with the meeting.

Ms. Russell – If there are no other questions on the Personal report, we will move on to the next item. Real Estates, Doug.

Real Estate

Doug Gaynor – We were approached a few weeks ago by the Gale Sayers' Foundation desiring to build a center here in Evanston. Mr. Sayers who lives in Chicago does go to church here in Evanston on the corner of Noyes and Ridge and has been attending for about seven (7) years. They were very specific of where they wanted to build, and they wanted something near the "L". The places he had for consideration was the Noyes Center maybe that would be a good location, and we also showed him Chandler. We talked about Fleetwood and that area and was absolutely apposed to that because of the lack of transportation component there. So those were the two areas. The Noyes Cultural Arts Center their idea were to refurbish it , buy it, keep some of the tenants there and that would be determined as a concept, and I told him I wanted to bring it before the Council first. Most everything they are going to do with architectural and construction is all lined up, and they are ready to bring the architects in now to get started actually this week. The Chandler Center was another location using some of that space to the south and west of the building they were possibly interested in joining a new facility to that, and if the revenue board would put together a after school program during the week and Saturday's with a rotating museum with Gale Sayers artifacts. He will have an office there being there and primarily working with 8 to 12 year old youth, who will be making a commitment to staying off the streets and being proactive. Meeting with parents to explain the rules and if they don't follow the rules they are out of the program. The kids will be coming from Chicago and the suburbs and west, he is talking about local kids.

Alderman Rainey – She stated when she read it, it broke her heart. Someone had approached her wanting to build a tennis court with one room school house type in Elks' Park, which is only one block from the South Blvd. "L" station. Did you discuss using Elk Park with him?

Doug Gaynor- Answered no, none whatsoever. They came to us and asked what potential we had here in Evanston, and they had already done some investigation and those were the two sites, well Noyes Cultural Arts Center was really the only site they were interested in, Chandler was the second alternate site and he never considered Elk Park.

Alderman Rainey – stated that there is absolutely nothing there at Elk Park and felt it would be an excellent place for something like Mr. Sayers proposed center. She

understands it is his decision, but feels the area at the South Blvd. “L” station still would be a good location.

Alderman Tisdahl – she asked the question, “do they have any other center like this one?”

Mr. Gaynor – responded by saying no they do not, although they do have a number of camps that he runs and he has been very successful since his football days. We googled and spent some time running a background to see if there was anything like this and it wasn’t.

Alderman Tisdahl – how much of the estimating CFO’s will he be spending on this? No numbers appeared, so not sure what the amount would be.

Mr. Gaynor – you would have to look at two sets of numbers, one is construction, and the other would be renovations because they hadn’t really sent their experts in to settle on the numbers.

Alderman Tisdahl – so he would be purchasing Noyes from us or another purchasing another plot of land from us.

Mr. Gaynor – the thought was to purchase the Noyes Cultural Arts Center, and or build a building over near Chandler.

Alderman Tisdahl – would like to accompany the ones who will be going to measure the land area so she could pace of and see how much land we are really talking about.

Mayor Morton – did not feel comfortable with the proposal at all, until he sends out a proper proposal spelling everything out like it is supposed to be. He should have a letter with his signature on it, and let him present a formal proposal.

Ms. Russell – What we were seeking was direction, we’ll have all the details and written. We wanted to have you say yes and go forward, and with your approval we could get an appraisal for a building, so once we are ready to discuss we would have the numbers.

After all Aldermen and the Mayor had a chance to discuss the proposal it was agreed to have Mr. Sayers to come in and talk to the Council, because it is too good a deal to pass up. We are interested just have him come in.

Dennis Marino – speaking on Bravo and code issues, the required codes compliance were completed. It is now a proper working restaurant. Century Theater received their final certificate of occupancy and they were excited. City electrical inspector stated all electrical were sealed sufficiently and that Century is now compliant. This was from the same inspector who raised the issue concerning WolfGang-Puk’s location. Documentation of inspections concerning Century theater that were generated, and there were many. Constructural and fire safety systems were strongest, weakest was electrical inspections, able to work with fire department to get complete set of inspection files because they were not complete.

Alderman Holmes asked, how frequently does the fire department do inspections? Dennis’ response was, “I don’t know the answer to that, but they do it periodically I don’t know exactly when that occurs”.

Alderman Bernstein – What about the underlining concern we had as to how this electrical system was allowed to go down, what investigation have we done?

Ms. Russell – Legal staff contacted or tried to contact the individual that was on the letter and they never returned the phone calls. Alderman Moran asked who was on the letter that Ms. Russell referred to. She replied, an architectural firm Design firm stating it was agreed that they would not bring it up to code.

After extensive discussion about the electrical issues with Century Theater, all agreed that we should follow-up with the investigation with help from the State Attorneys office. Alderman Bernstein recommended that Elke talk to the State's Attorney.

Litigation

Interim First Corporation Council Elke-Tober Purze reported on the case of Elizabeth Gutstein v. The City of Evanston. The case is set for August 22nd. She is a 44 year old woman who resides at 2615 Eastwood in Evanston with her companion Patricia Butkus since March 2000. The alley way adjoining her property has always been made of gravel and unimproved. She and her roommate would leave their home the same way each time to take out the garbage or yard waste.



Mayor Morton asked Attorney Purze if she was asking the Council for anything, and she responded no not at this time. Mayor Morton then asked if there were any other questions on this matter, and since there were none she declared that the Council had concluded the agenda and so she declared the meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

Rodney Greene,
City Clerk