



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Amended PUBLIC SAFETY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 11, 2015

5:00 PM

Madison Police Department
Central Community Room
211 South Carroll Street, Room Gr-22

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Paul E. Skidmore; Maurice S. Cheeks; Merrilee Pickett; Bruce P. Frey;
Dena M. Carreyn; Debra F. Julian and Barbara Harrington-McKinney

Absent: 1 - Ernest E. Horinek

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Alder Skidmore made a motion to approve the July 2015 PSRC minutes.
Merrilee Pickett seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

All public comment was regarding item number 39502.

Karen Andro

First United Methodist Church

She doesn't enable homelessness and serves food to help people survive and assists with shelter needs at First United Methodist Church. She said there are rules and that they are needed however she felt the time limit for sitting on the bench is an absurd way of dealing with homelessness. She read a letter of a woman who came to Madison in January 2010 to escape domestic abuse and crime. She shared it will be more difficult to find help and safety.

Al Muhaymin

2322 Allied Drive, Apt. #1

Madison, WI

Used to sleep at the City-County Building. He has stayed at the Salvation Army and there was a mix-up on the number of days of staying there and ended up staying outside in the Winter. He has a health condition and has to sit down. He has social security although paying for shelter rates are too high. He once had a great paying job and was married but life situations occurred causing him to become homeless. He now has an attitude with the police after receiving 2 - \$400 tickets.

Wendy Schneider

P.O. Box 3253

Madison, WI

Local resident from Madison. Struggles with how the proposal got this far that individual's can't rest in our city stating it is inhumane and punitive. Upset

about proposal for those people who struggle the most in this city and that most can't imagine what their needs are. She said the ordinance is terrified fear based rhetoric that benches are the problem. Mayor should have a plan of action that we are capable of. There is a need for benches.

Ronald Barbett
427 W. Mifflin St.
Madison, WI

Insulted by the Mayor. Madison used to be "all that". Moved from Madison to Washington, D.C. back to Madison. Recalls all the partying that occurred on State Street and city personnel just did their jobs back then by cleaning up the mess. He shared it was a different era back then. Since 2012 there has been attacking of homeless to live and breathe. There are very strong people involved naming several city departments and the Mayor is paying us to leave town to go back home. There is Freedom of Speech and a bunch of committees don't have the right to limit where we sleep and sit. Shelters only allow 60 days.

Tanya Cohen
P.O. Box 1459
Madison, WI

There was not a logical level of thought put into the ordinance. Shared information about her daughter's study regarding benches on State Street and urges to not do this as it is not right.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

REPORTS

1. [39608](#) Report from the Madison Police Department (Captain Wheeler)

Captain Wheeler from the Madison Police Department Investigative Services shared an update on the multiple shootings that occurred from March-June when there were 37 shots fired throughout the city at random locations ranging from the mall to neighborhoods. He shared a "round-up" took place where several individuals from the department worked together; Analysts, the Violent Crime Unit, Gang Unit, Detectives, and Police Officers. Individuals who were involved were sought out and arrests were made with others contacted for involvement.

The committee requested Madison Police to provide monthly reports on how the Armored Rescue Vehicle (ARV) is used.
2. [39612](#) Report from the Madison Fire Department (Assistant Chief Langer)

Assistant Chief Langer distributed a handout on the number of times rigs were used January – July in the City. Alder Cheeks requested another report at the September PSRC meeting with detailed information broken down by incidents.

There was a joint functional tornado drill exercise with many city departments involved. Fire and Police worked together on joint decisions during this drill.

It was very successful and the departments are looking at doing another one next year.

A 16 week Fire academy is taking place with a November 6th graduation. There is an accelerated academy as well with 4 in that class. A promotion/recognition will take place on September 23rd. PSRC members will receive invites for these events.

Since taking over the annexation of Blooming Grove there have been 16 calls for service.

3. [39611](#)

Report from Alders (Alder Cheeks, McKinney, Skidmore)

Alder Cheeks: the Madison Fire and Police Charity Ball tickets are on sale. The City reached a 2.3 million dollar settlement on the Paul Heenan case.

Alder McKinney shared that Assistant City Attorney Zilavy will present the ordinance with regard to the entering of a vehicle without permission at the September PSRC meeting.

Alder Skidmore from District 9 reported a variety of offenses have been occurring within his district.

NEW BUSINESS

4. [39183](#)

Establishing a Glass-Free Zone for the State Street area from 9:00 pm on October 30, 2015 to 5:00 am on October 31, 2015 and from 9:00 pm on October 31, 2015 to 5:00 am on November 1, 2015.

Attachments: [2015 Glass-Free Zone Map-Freakfest \(Oct.30-Nov.1, 2015\).pdf](#)

Alder Skidmore made a recommendation for approval. Alder Cheeks seconded the motion. Establishing a glass free zone on State Street for the annual Freakfest was unanimously approved. Deb Julian inquired if there could be a standard approval of the same type of events that are presented annually for approval that are presented before committees. It was shared that each event needs to be approved specific to the date of the event in which dates fluctuate annually.

5. [39502](#)

Creating Section 23.60, renumbering current Section 23.60 to Section 23.70, and amending Section 1.08(3)(a) of the Madison General Ordinances to impose a time limit on use of public benches, to prohibit sitting or lying or lodging in the public sidewalks and rights of way and specified other public places, during specified hours in the Central Business District, and establish a bail deposit schedule for violations thereof, to be known as the Downtown Pedestrian Protection Ordinance.

Attachments: [Body](#)
[Central Business District Map](#)

Mayor Soglin indicated there are three elements to the proposed ordinance; the bench, sleeping on the sidewalk, and attempting to live where city offices are located. The Mayor noted this ordinance is a short-term strategy and believes this will not take away homelessness. He shared there has been a

shift in culture and behavior in the downtown area over the last couple of years that is dangerous and unsafe with newly arrived homeless coming to downtown Madison every week. These individuals he said are creating a variety of calls for service from police and fire sharing recent incidents that have occurred with fighting, drugs, and physical threats. There was an inquiry on the storage facility downtown to store belongings. He responded the storage facility was removed due to defecation, intravenous drugs, sexual activity, and sleeping in the facility. He said the City-County Building sets the tone of downtown and there is a need to get control for those who are visiting the downtown area and for those who work in the building and there needs to be rules and there are none. There are needs for mental health and substance abuse. Madison he said is way under our financial capacity but is looking at funding from the budget in housing first commitments sharing it is very difficult with all the million dollars in cuts to the budget with safety, community, resources, and dealing with the everyday challenges.

Alder McKinney said she has witnessed behaviors around the City-County Building and considered them to be appalling. She has seen the homeless population conduct themselves in an orderly fashion at First United Methodist Church(FUMC). She inquired with Ms. Andro on how FUMC enlist the many volunteers that assist in supporting the positive behaviors. She also inquired on what rules are in place. Ms. Andro responded that she believes in compassion and rules as that is a very specific part in care giving mentioning there is zero tolerance for alcohol and if someone has alcohol they go to the wet shelter. Ms. Andro indicates that she builds on trust to specific individuals and considers the ordinance another attack on individuals. She mentions it is not productive to the efforts of ending homelessness in 2015, chronic homelessness in 2016, and child homelessness in 2017. She further shared that moving and limiting individuals on a bench is not a solution to homelessness and a violation of freedom of speech. Homeless individuals she shared can become "fear stricken" with sitting on a bench and being a target.

Deb Julian, PSRC member inquired with Ms. Andro if she would support the ordinance if the bench component is removed? Ms. Andros indicated that the parts of the ordinance are all connected and that she doesn't care for the ordinance as it is punitive way of dealing with homelessness.

Alder McKinney inquired with Chief Koval what happens when a ticket is issued and it is not paid. Chief Koval responded that it would be a site and release. The City Attorney's office indicated that it could go through the warrant process although the thresholds are very high up to thousands of dollars accrued. There are other options such as community service, tax intercept, suspending a driver license. It is all on a case-by-case basis.

Alder Cheeks inquired how the doorway ordinance is enforced. Chief Koval referred to Assistant Chief Langer in which they both shared there would be a safety fire code violation. Chief Koval shared that the police attempt to take the path of least resistance with checking welfare and assisting with other needs of service options before issuing citations.

Alder McKinney inquired with Gloria Reyes, the Mayor's Assistant on what this ordinance will accomplish. Ms. Reyes indicated that it is a way to connect the individual who is on the bench with resources and the other is the citation part

of it. Chief Koval chimed in sharing the ordinance is an intervention in a formalized way.

Alder Cheeks shared his thoughts on the ordinance indicating that with all of the other options available he doesn't feel this particular ordinance would change the ability to do something. He shared the ordinance would not be something new or unique.

Gloria Reyes shared there needs to be a balanced approach, but there needs to be rules. The ordinance she mentions is essentially a tool to be able to make contacts to assist individuals with identifying needs.

Alder Skidmore made a motion for approval. Merrilee Pickett seconded the motion.

Alder Skidmore indicated that he supports a number of items on the ordinance and he understands the Mayor and that it is based on the behavior and not homelessness. He shared the ordinance is not crafted on services but on certain individuals that cause behavior problems. He mentioned he doesn't have a problem with people sitting on a bench; but laying, passed out and living on the bench he has a problem with. He further mentioned there is defecation and urination in doorways of the downtown area and that behavior he shared should not be accepted or tolerated anywhere in the city. He sees people who sleep on sidewalks that take up the walk area causing other people to walk around, jump, or cross the street. Late at night he shared there is violence with assaults.

Merrilee Pickett shared the ordinance is not a solution to end homelessness but a small step. She shared that there are many individuals who want to be compassionate and do the right thing however it is attracting more and more homeless to Madison which is causing a financial drain to police, fire, and businesses. Every place she mentioned has rules and the city should have rules too for public spaces. The ordinance she felt was not crafted on cruelty or being inhumane but to be used as a tool.

Alder McKinney said she struggles with this ordinance mentioning she cares passionately and has seen individuals dress and get ready for bed on the street corner, however she says there needs to be rules. She mentions there are no day shelters in which she feels the city needs as there is no place for the population to move. If individuals are moved from the bench she mentioned they will just move to another area. She said the ordinance does not get to what it needs to resolve the issues. At this time she indicated that she can't support the ordinance the way it's written.

Deb Julian shared she used to work in the City-County Building and this should have been addressed a while ago. She shared there is a fear for those who work and visit and that items should not be placed in front of public buildings.

Dena Carreyn indicated that she is conflicted on the ordinance. She shared that something is necessary for the anarchy in the City-County Building. She said rules are essential.

It was shared by Assistant City Attorney Paulsen that there are four sections to

the ordinance. There was discussion on the ordinance and the committee was finding it difficult to vote on the ordinance as it stands.

Alder McKinney made a motion to individually go over sections of the ordinance at the September PSRC meeting. Alder Cheeks seconded the motion. Bruce Frey, Alder Skidmore, Dena Carreyn, and Deb Julian were in favor of going over sections of the ordinance. Merrilee Pickett was opposed. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Alder Cheeks made a motion to adjourn, Bruce Frey seconded the motion. The meeting as adjourned at 7:30pm.