



## REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

4200 W 183rd St. Country Club Hills, IL 60478

Monday, September 13, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Pursuant to Governor Pritzker's ongoing Executive Orders Covid-19 Masks and Social Distancing are required for this in-person meeting. Also, be advised seating is limited and building capacity orders will be followed and enforced.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER – JAMES W. FORD, MAYOR

A Regular Meeting of the City Council, City of Country Club Hills, Cook County, State of Illinois, was held in the City Hall, 4200 W. 183rd Street at 7:05p.m. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable James W. Ford, Mayor.

### 1a. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of allegiance was presented by all in attendance.

### 2. ROLL CALL – PATRICIA D. HUTSON, CITY CLERK

Those on Roll Call answering present were:

Alderman Lockett, Alderman Davis, Alderman Edwards, Mayor Ford. Also present was City Administrator Carl Estelle and the Administrative Team.

Excused as absent – Alderman Spivey and Alderwoman Evans

### 3. INVOCATION – CLERGY OR DESIGNEE

Invocation was presented by Rev. Anthony Tiller Pastor of Jeremiah Ministries International of Country Club Hills. Mayor Ford asked all in attendance who are able to please stand in respect to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 as Pastor Tiller offers a special prayer.

### 4. JOURNAL PROCEEDINGS

#### Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- A. Approval - 08.23.2021 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Alderman Lockett moved for City Council approval of Regular Meeting Minutes 08.23.2021.  
Second, Alderman Davis. Discussion – None.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3 Ayes: Alderman Lockett, Davis and Edwards

0 Nays:

0 Abstain:

2 Absent: Alderman Spivey and Alderwoman Evans

Motion Declared Carried and Hereby Made a Part of the Original Journal of Proceedings this date.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS BY MAYOR FORD:**

Mayor Ford reiterated that in regards to 9/11 the dedicated services that we thank first our responders for the dedication and service.

**A. Bremen High School District #228 Presentation**

Debbie Stearns, School District #228 Board member, shared her appreciation for the Mayor and Pastor Tiller for recognizing the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 as she comes from a Firefighter family and acknowledged the importance of educating children about that day.

Mayor Ford then asked an audience member who was unmasked to please put a mask on and social distance himself from the person he was sitting close to and thanked the gentleman for his cooperation.

Member Stearns shared the board has encouraged the district composed of staff and students to have a positive impact on the community during COVID. When COVID occurred there was a need of PPE, masks, gloves etc. Teachers, staff, administrators and students gathered supplies and began delivering them to multiple organizations in the community to ensure the first responders had what was needed. The donations included Country Club Hills Fire and Police. The district knew that masks were a special priority during the shortage and the district used their 3D printer to make masks and provide them to the first responders. She shared the district even had a student to who used his own 3D printer to make ear extenders for those who wore masks all the time would experience less irritation. Member Stearns then shared unfortunately, children was not able to attend school in-person and recognizing students for their achievements was important. The district purchased yard signs for each student who graduated, held socially distanced ceremonies inclusive of walk through, drive through and virtual ceremonies. The district held virtual spirit week and competitions where students were able to win gift cards. The district also via the new superintendent held two vaccination events at the schools for students and

the community. These event vaccinated over 4,000 and the district is looking into booster vaccinations as well. Member Stearns shared everyone is invited to attend their meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month and if there are any questions please feel free to contact the district.

Mayor Ford thanked board member Stearns for her report, dedication and years of service to SD#228.

**B. Special Commemorative Presentation from the Democratic Women of the Southland Region**

Patricia D. Hutson and Alesia Allen, members of the Democratic Woman of the Southland Region presented 20<sup>th</sup> year 9/11 Commemorative Certificates to CCH Fire Chief Michelle Hullinger and CCH Police Chief John Galvin in recognition of the brave and selfless first responders of the Fire and Police Departments in Country Club Hills. These certificates were presented on behalf of the members and President Vivian E. Covington and Vice-President Tiffany Taylor of the Democratic Women of the Southland Region.

**C. Special Commemorative 20th Annual September 11th Proclamation**

This presentation was postponed and will be presented at the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**6. CITY CLERK'S REPORT – PATRICIA D. HUTSON, CITY CLERK**

City Clerk Patricia D. Hutson shared recently Governor Pritzker released information regarding the Back to Business Grant program for \$250 million dollars to assist small businesses. Clerk Hutson then shared the City of Country Club Hills will hold two workshops on Tuesday September 14<sup>th</sup> at 12noon and 6pm for small businesses. Mayor Ford hand delivered these invitations to local businesses for their attendance. Clerk Hutson shared it has been difficult for small business owners to attend a set meeting with no optional times was not well attended and business owners found it difficult to complete the grant and loan application forms. Clerk Hutson shared information on an upcoming event the Youth Future Fest hosted in collaboration with Cook County Commissioner Donna Miller, Saturday September 25<sup>th</sup> between 12noon and 5:00pm at the theater complex. Clerk Hutson then shared her email [phutson@countryclubhills.org](mailto:phutson@countryclubhills.org) if anyone has questions regarding the event.

**7. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance, Insurance, & Risk Management** – Alderman Lockett, Chairman  
(Committee Meeting – TBA)

Alderman Lockett thanked Alderman Davis for attending asked for a moment of silence on the loss of his mother-in-law who recently passed away and was laid to rest today. Alderman Lockett shared as the services were completed today and family members are in town Alderman Davis come in

to conduct the business of the city. Alderman Lockett, then again asked for a moment of silence for Mrs. Waters and may she rest in peace.

Mayor Ford acknowledged that if Alderman Davis had not been able to attend the meeting would have been canceled due to lack of quorum and thanked Alderman Davis for attending. Mayor Ford then extended prayers to Alderman Davis and his family on the loss of his mother-in-law.

**A. Approval - 09.13.2021 AP Vouchers**

Alderman Lockett moved for City Council approval of Vouchers in the amount of \$676,188.74 09.13.2021. Vouchers to be issued when monies are available. Second, Alderman Davis. Discussion – None.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3 Ayes: Alderman Lockett, Davis and Edwards

0 Nays:

0 Abstain:

2 Absent: Alderman Spivey and Alderwoman Evans

Motion Declared Carried and Hereby Made a Part of the Original Journal of Proceedings this date.

**Law, Ordinance, Government Operations & Contract** – Alderwoman Evans, Chairman  
(Committee Meeting – TBA)

No Report

**Public Works and Utilities** – Alderman Davis, Chairman  
(Committee Meeting – TBA)

Alderman Davis thanked the Mayor and Alderman Lockett and Alderman Edwards for their support during this time. Alderman Davis shared to the public that although as elected official they may not always agree but through life's experiences and working together their support is appreciated. Alderman Davis then shared dedication to residents and serving is why we are here, regardless to who we experience personally we have to be here to conduct the business of the city. Alderman Davis then again thanked Mayor Ford, Alderman Lockett, Alderman Edwards and all of the Alderman for their prayers during this time.

**Economic Development & Planning, Zoning & Development** – Alderman Spivey, Chairman  
(Committee Meeting – TBA)

No Report

**Education, Parks & Recs – Alderman Edwards, Chairman**  
(Committee Meeting – TBA)

Alderman Edwards extended his condolences and peace and love to Alderman Davis and his family and extended family on their loss. Alderman Edwards encouraged Alderman Davis to take care of his family and all will be well. Alderman Edwards then shared he met today with SD#228 superintendent and discussed Career Day, PTO, PTA and introduced a policy share college professor's syllabuses with students to teach them how to be prepared for college. Alderman Edwards then asked the Chief and Deputy Chief of Police not to be mad but, suggested to send police at the beginning and end of school if possible and if any there are any events that CCHPD would have the first opportunity to work them. Alderman Edwards shared that the superintendent will allow him to work directly with the principal of Hillcrest regarding how to make the school better and develop programs. Alderman Edwards has scheduled a meeting with Hillcrest principal and has a meeting scheduled tomorrow with another superintendent as well. Alderman Edwards shared he is moving to try and get the schools in better shape. Alderman Edwards shared he just obtained a phone number for a board member from SD#228. Alderman Edwards shared he has communicated with SD#144, SD#22, SD#227 and SD#160 that he has communicated within the last month. Alderman Edwards shared he will work to bring in judges, lawyers and other professionals for the youth to see to give them an outlook on life.

**8. MOTION TO OPEN THE FLOOR TO THE PUBLIC**

Mayor Ford shared in respect of Alderman Davis sharing his bereavement time by attending the meeting we ask to minimize the meeting and ask that we limit the number to 2-3 keeping in mind the time limit of three minutes or less please. Mayor Ford shared this would allow Alderman Davis to bereave with his family.

Alderman Lockett moved for City Council approval to open the floor to the public. Second by Alderman Davis. Discussion – none.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3 Ayes: Alderman Lockett, Davis and Edwards

0 Nays:

0 Abstain:

2 Absent: Alderman Spivey and Alderwoman Evans

Motion Declared Carried and Hereby Made a Part of the Original Journal of Proceedings this date.

**9. PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING**

1. Lamarr Miller, Community Engagement Liason for Prairie Hills SD#144, shared he attended to say hello and introduce himself as this is a new position and he been in communication with Alderman Edwards and his goal is to let everyone know that his district exists and the district realizes there was a gap in the past and they look forward to partnering with all four towns. Mr. Miller then shared he looks forward to the partnership.
2. Joann Cade, resident of 43 years of Devon Dr., shared she and her husband are long time residents who raised their children in Country Club Hills and is very concerned about the recent activities. Mrs. Cade then shared there have been 3 shootings and she knows for a fact that there was one murder. She shared the young man was dragged down Devon and shot and killed in front of his house on Devon and a young lady in the audience tried to administer CPR. Mrs. Cade was quite concerned because she never hears any news coverage or anything that goes on in Country Club Hills. She shared it is hushed up, there's nothing on Facebook or the news and residents have a right to know what is going on on Devon and Highland. Mrs. Cade shared we don't feel safe anymore. She shared we are scared for our lives. Mrs. Cade shared she and Mr. Cade are moving but it's a shame he is a Vietnam War veteran and paying for his home he can't sit on his front porch without fear of being shot. Mrs. Cade shared something needs to be done about this and it need to be done now. Mrs. Cade shared there are three homes where are the activity is coming from she had a meeting the Alderman and to her understanding the city is aware of the activity on Highland but nothing is being done. Mrs. Cade feels everything is being swept under the rug and it's not fair to the residents. Lastly, Mrs. Cade shared we live here and something needs to be done.
3. Elise Stuckey, resident for 34 years, spoke o behalf of her parents who live across the street from Mrs. Cade on Highland. Ms. Stuckey shared she tried to save the young man's life when he was shot and her parents cannot live in their house in fear of their lives. She shared they moved in June from a house that has been paid for. Ms. Stuckey shared the house next door to them is abandoned and guns are kept there and she has spoke with Alderman Edwards and CCHills police as well. Ms. Stuckey was told that Mayor Ford said he was not going to give any more help and if the police do not have faith how can we. Ms. Stuckey then apologized for her language and said she will be damned if her parents will be a statistic and get shot at. Ms. Stuckey shared her children are preteens and are threatened they had to move. Ms. Stuckey shared her father is 80 years old, on oxygen and they are staying at a hotel because of Country Club Hills violence. She shared they are sick and tired of it and nobody will help them. She has called and nothing has happened. Ms. Stuckey shared they have asked to have the trees behind them cut down because they are hiding guns back there, breaking into houses, storing stolen televisions and it's just ridiculous. She shared they are personally scared and aren't coming back until something is done.
4. Sephonia Barber, resident for 43 years and has raised her children here, participated in politics with Mayor Welch, been on the Youth Commission and was a member of ESDA. Ms. Barber shared she is concerned about the neighborhoods. She shared we have paid our taxes and paid our dues and crimes is concerning. She shared she doesn't think it's unreasonable to ask for more police support or for more information. Ms. Barber shared there was a recent incident where there the streets were blocked, helicopter was flying overhead and when everything was over everyone packed up and left. Ms. Barber shared when she watches the news if this happens in a white neighborhood the residents are told everything is ok and there is no danger. She shared she called her Mayor and was not given the satisfaction that she thought she deserved. She feels we should have a means of support and know what is going on in our neighborhoods. She feels that helicopter event

should have been on tv. Ms. Barber shared we are here planting flowers, painting houses, fixing up and the gangs are taking over our streets. Ms. Barber shared that is not fair to us. Ms. Barber shared we are homeowners and have one of the best blocks in Country Club Hills per Mayor Welch's repeated distinction and we see our block going to hell.

Ms. Barber also shared that the Devon block club sign that had been there for more than 30 years has been removed and Ms. Barber wanted to know why it was removed. The sign read Devon Block Club-Drive Slow-We Care. Ms. Barber shared the sign was on the public area because she asked Mayor Welch and he said it was not in private property but in the public area. Ms. Barber asked Mayor Ford why the sign had been removed and Mayor Ford shared he didn't know anything about the sign, he is not familiar with the sign and no one has seen the sign. There were multiple comments from the audience. Mayor Ford then shared he does not have people move signs and that is not his job to have people move signs. Mayor Ford shared he had spoken with Mrs. Barber respectfully and told Ms. Barber if Mayor Welch put up a sign he doesn't know anything about it, he's never seen it and never ordered anyone to remove the sign. Ms. Barber then shared ok with the sign and what about the things we are talking about. Mayor Ford shared she only had three minutes and her time was up. Ms. Barber shared she did not like his answer on the phone and you are our Mayor the Mayor for the people. Mayor Ford shared he is the Mayor but he doesn't know everything that goes on in the City of Country Club Hills, he has staff and Mayor Welch didn't know everything that happens and if that's the case then maybe we need to bring him back. Mayor Ford shared the Chief of Police is in the back and Ms. Barber can speak with him as well as Public Works. Mayor Ford then asked the audience to please let's be respectful to one another. There was ongoing conversation between Ms. Barber and Mayor Ford about the sign. Ms. Barber then repeated her concern about residents being notified. Mayor Ford then shared that Mr. Barber expected immediate notification at the same time as the event and Ms. Barber said no not notification at the same time but the next day. Ms. Barber then shared there were two people they were looking for and Mayor Ford again asked Ms. Barber to see the Chief of Police to answer her questions and his staff would assist her.

5. Kenneth Ross, resident of Deon Drive shared he has spoken to Alderman Edwards about a massive oil spill in the street in front of his home. Mr. Ross shared he believes the stain is because his neighbor's son drives a tow truck and that may have been where the stain came from. Mr. Ross shared he has been calling for six months and has received no assistance in having the stain cleaned. Mr. Ross would like someone to help him get the spill removed. Mr. Ross shared he works hard to maintain his home and won a 10 year beautification award. Mr. Ross shared he and his wife have lived here for 33 years. Mr. Ross shared between 12am and 1am there is a vehicle, in need of a muffler, constantly driving around. He asked if the city has any CSO's or have they been cut? Mayor Ford shared we do have Community Service Officers. Mr. Ross asked do they ride through various neighborhoods other than Marycrest? There were comments from the audience. Alderman Lockett shared if you constantly hear a vehicle and it's disturbing you do you the police? Mr. Ross responded yes he has. Alderman Lockett asked if they responded and Mr. Ross responded no they did not. Alderman Lockett shared he found that hard to believe and our police department responds to every call. Mr. Ross shared this happens every night and Alderman Lockett shared then you should call. There was ongoing discussion between Mr. Ross and Alderman Lockett regarding this matter and Mayor Ford asked Mr. Ross to speak with the police. Mayor Ford we are limited with officers and Mayor Ford shared he never said he would not provide additional officers and he doesn't know where that came from. Mayor Ford shared that is far from the truth. Mayor Ford shared when there are concerns to call the police, if the police don't respond, call your alderman, if your alderman

doesn't get a response the alderman will work with the Mayor for a resolution.

6. Lee Cole, resident, 36 year resident, shared he has more questions than anything. Mr. Coles shared in his area the Charger vehicles, Mustangs and vehicles with no mufflers are drag racing up and down 175<sup>th</sup> St. all day and all night. Mr. Coles shared the vehicles race from the light at 175<sup>th</sup> and Pulaski up 175<sup>th</sup> St. Mr. Coles shared Country Club Hills is only 5miles and he is not here to bash the police he actually feels for them and they have his sympathy because they have a difficult job. Mr. Coles shared that someone should be able to see them racing because it happens all day and all night long. Mr. Coles is concerned because he is a football coach and they practice at the football stadium and there are children and parents crossing 175<sup>th</sup> St. and he is concerned that someone is going to get hurt. Mr. Coles attended a previous meeting and heard a resident with the same concerns. Mr. Coles shared implementing speed bumps is costly, residents taxes are high and people continue to break the rules.

Mr. Coles then shared there is an intergovernmental agreement with the city (Park District) for youth football and the football stadium is not being utilized. There are four games a year and the teams have to find alternative sites to play football. The stadium could be used for more games and open to the public(seniors) for walking purposes. He shared the stadium should never be locked up and unavailable. Mr. Coles shared if there is an agreement why can't they use it more than 4 times. There are a lot of things going on in the area and we have the ability to keep the kids off the street by utilizing the stadium. Mr. Coles shared the tax rate is 22% in a city with 15,000 people and we need to address some of these concerns because, if we don't we're going to have a vacant city.

Mayor Ford responded there are other taxing bodies other than the city and if there wasn't a game this past weekend it was not his fault because he spoke with the coach and he said there wasn't a scheduled game there. Mayor Ford said he met with the coach and gave him approval to use the stadium. Alderman Lockett shared that coach Weaver was who the Mayor spoke with. Mayor Ford shared he met with coach Weaver and offered the stadium and coach Weaver said someone else had already signed up to host the game this past weekend. Mayor Ford advised Mr. Coles to speak with coach Weaver.

Alderman Edwards asked to be recognized and shared the ordinance was supposed to be put in... Mayor Ford shared the floor is open for the public. Alderman Edward shared he(Alderman Lockett) is speaking and he thought the one person was should be speaking is the Mayor when addressing issues but Alderman Lockett is speaking. Alderman Lockett asked who is he? Because he said coach Weaver. Alderman Edwards shared no, you were speaking to other residents prior to that. Alderman Lockett shared to Alderman Edwards what you are talking about is nothing because you're nothing. Alderman Lockett and Alderman Edwards had ongoing exchanges of conversation regarding the opportunity to speak as the floor is open to the public. There were various comments from the audience and Mayor Ford announced he will have to clear the room to finish the meeting because we are all being disrespectful to each other. There was ongoing and various comments from the audience, Mayor Ford responded we are trying to be professional but ma'am you are out of order. Mayor Ford then asked the police to clear the room. There were outbursts for several members of the audience as the police were escorting members of the audience out of the meeting. Mayor Ford then asked the young lady with the camera to leave as well. Mayor Ford shared to the young lady you don't have the right to do this you asked



permission from the council. After the room was cleared Mayor extended Mr. Burris, who had been waiting to speak as a member of the public body, the opportunity to speak.

7. Steven Burris, Rich Township Trustee and resident, shared he came to talk about some good stuff. He shared his appreciation to the City Clerk Patricia D. Hutson and the City Administrator Carl Estelle and Public Works for assisting his neighbor in the 4<sup>th</sup> ward with an extremely bad sidewalk that was resolved in two days.

## 10. MOTION TO CLOSE FLOOR TO THE PUBLIC

Alderman Lockett moved for City Council approval to close the floor to the public. Second by Alderman Davis. Discussion – none.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3 Ayes: Alderman Lockett, Davis and Edwards

0 Nays:

0 Abstain:

2 Absent: Alderman Spivey and Alderwoman Evans

Motion Declared Carried and Hereby Made a Part of the Original Journal of Proceedings this date.

## 11. ALDERMANIC REPORTS

Alderman Davis thanked Clerk Hutson for being in assisting him with a matter regarding the passing of his mother-in-law Mrs. Waters.

Alderman Edwards stated on 06.12.2021 he requested information regarding the liquor license, bond and insurance for the theater shows and on 07.12.2021 he again asked for the information and Mayor Ford told him these are not contracts but rental leases. Alderman Edwards then shared Mayor Ford previously shared the basketball rims would be up by July.

Mayor Ford then shared the Delta Variant has impacted more than 200 people per day and Alderman Edwards has every opportunity to contact him and schedule an appointment to discuss these matters in his office.

Mayor Ford then shared he will not respond to any questions during this setting and Alderman Edwards can call him to schedule a meeting.

Alderman Edwards then shared he will not schedule a meeting with Mayor Ford and noted per Mayor Ford, the Mayor will not answer his questions in this setting.

Alderman Edwards shared he did not care to meet with the Mayor in his office and what makes Mayor Ford do what he wants with no accountability. Alderman Edwards said he will FOIA the information and take it to the newspaper.

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Lockett moved for adjournment. Second, Alderman Spivey. Discussion – none.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2 Ayes: Alderman Lockett and Davis

1 Nays: Alderman Edwards

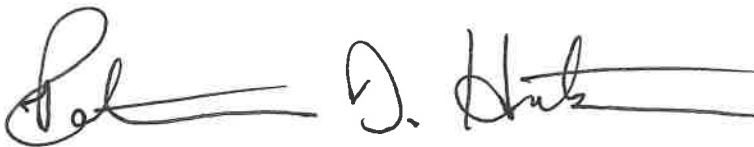
0 Abstain:

2 Absent: Alderman Spivey and Alderwoman Evans

Motion Declared Carried and Hereby Made a Part of the Original Journal of Proceedings this date.

The Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia D. Hutson', written over a horizontal line.

Patricia D. Hutson, City Clerk