



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
City Hall, 215 SE 7th Street, Suite 255
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Date: October 27, 2023

Time: 1:00pm

Location: Classroom A; Law Enforcement Center 320 S. Kansas Ave Ste 100
(virtual option also available)

Committee members Present: Spencer Duncan (Chair), Christina Valdivia-Alcalá, Hannah Naeger

City Staff Present: City Attorney Amanda Stanley, Chief Financial Officer Freddy Mawyin, Fire Marshal Alan Stahl, Property Maintenance Division Director John Schardine, Development Services Division Director Richard Faulkner, Wendi Rieb, Councilwoman Michelle Hoferer

1) Call to Order

Chairman Duncan called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Committee members introduced themselves.

2) Approve June 1, 2023 Minutes

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá made a motion to approve the minutes. Chairman Duncan seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

3) 2024 Legislative Agenda

Whitney Damron, Contract Lobbyist for the City of Topeka, reviewed a memorandum of items that may potentially impact Topeka in 2024. These include:

- Last session, legislation was proposed to remove sales tax on food. The Senate's idea was to also remove it at the city and county level, which would have had a significant impact on local units of government. That legislation did not succeed, but it will come back.
- Another piece of tax legislation was put into a bill and sent to the Governor. It would exempt certain properties, namely health clubs, restaurants and child care facilities, from having to pay property taxes. The expectation is that that item will be brought back before legislation.
- The House and Senate leadership would like to see the state move to a flat tax income tax. It would potentially have long-term impact on state revenues and could see declining revenues. Because of that, the state is fortunate right now, that it has a pretty good balance of about \$3B in unencumbered finances. A lot of people want to spend down.

1 - Policy and Finance Committee

Minutes Taken: October 27, 2023

Minutes Approved: November 14, 2023

- One priority for next year is to get the legislature to fund the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction (LAVTR) fund. That has been cast aside for about the last 20 years. Their ask is potentially \$50M of the state fund to be put into LAVTR, to be distributed to cities and counties for reducing property tax. The House and Senate leadership have indicated that is not their priority.
- Mr. Damron thinks there will be efforts seen to reduce property taxes in the 2024 session, but the legislature, at least the Republican leadership, is more included to look at a reduction of the statewide Mill Levy, which is \$20M to fund schools k-12. There is also a \$1.5M statewide levy that is used to fund infrastructure for universities and the like, so buying that down a couple of Mills is probably more of an interest to leadership. They get credit for doing that, as opposed to passing money down to local units of government to try to cut property taxes.
- There may be efforts to reduce property taxes for seniors.
- Last year, there were 30-40 tax bills, and at least half of them made it to the Governor's desk, and all of them were vetoed. They were in two or three different packages, and the legislature failed to override any of the Governor's vetoes. She will likely continue to exercise her veto authority in 2024, so it remains to be seen if Republicans can override. With only so much money in the State's bank account, and with it being an election year for all House and Senate members, Mr. Damron felt it was unlikely that they would leave town again without some kind of a tax bill. There may need be a compromise with the House, Senate and Governor in 2024.
- The public/private competition issue will be back. Many of those issues actually passed the House and Senate and were sent to the Governor. They will not need to go back through the committee process, and can wait until whatever time during the session to put packages and pieces back together and send them back to the Governor.
- Another issue important to Topeka, as well as other cities, is homelessness. Within the past few days, Mr. Damron, City Attorney Amanda Stanley and Interim City Manager Richard Nienstedt met Representative Francis Averkamp from St. Mary's. Representative Averkamp chairs a committee on welfare reform. He has a one-day hearing scheduled in November on homelessness and we wanted to get some of his thoughts on his direction, and what he would like to see that committee do. Although they probably cannot come to any great conclusions, resolutions or recommendations with a one-day hearing, but it does start the discussion. Chairman Averkamp indicates his priorities are public safety followed by protection of business interest, and then third is dealing with the homelessness issue in a broader sense of itself. He understands it is extremely complicated, but his direction and priorities were on public safety and the protection of private property.
- Foster care is another issue that will likely be looked at and would impact the City. The child tragedy that occurred recently involved Topeka. The legislature

Republicans suggested the state needs an Office of Independent Child Advocacy.

- There are also going to be efforts again for Medicaid expansion. That is a tough sell with this legislature.
- Child Care Regulations
- Economic Development
- STAR Bonds
- Election laws
- Electric rates
- Imminent domain
- Another issue that probably will not move into the legislative process, but that has also been worked on is the challenges regarding financing for the Polk-Quincy Viaduct project, due to bid prices that have been coming in for the City. There has been constructive discussion with the administration about perhaps getting some assistance on that for the City as well. There is a target date to meet again in the coming weeks to look at what bids might look like and the shortfalls.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá had a number of questions and requests:

- Request to receive an update to the Policy & Finance Committee or Governing Body meeting as a whole, after the November 9th meeting with Representative Awerkamp, regarding homelessness. She noted that she was on his panel last year and spoke with him in depth about the challenges that Topeka is facing with the unsheltered crisis. She is hopeful that he is open to having another such panel and listening to all parties.

City Attorney Amanda Stanley responded that the goal of the meeting with Rep. Awerkamp was mainly to listen to him, to figure out what, as Chair, his plan was for that November 9th meeting. They also provided Rep. Awerkamp with information about what the City's Innovation team, and the issues being addressed are not just a City specific issue, and that it needs all parties to be at the table. Rep. Awerkamp explained that part of his goal is to get a good understanding of his Committee, of mainly education of the law. He allowed staff to suggest some names of individuals that might understand how the law works and impacts cities. Amanda Carnes, Executive Director for the International Municipal Lawyers Association, has been put on his agenda to explain the law and the impact to cities and to make sure that the legislature has a thorough understanding of how and what do, and how it can impact us on the local level.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá inquired if there were about the concerns about suing, and looking at that from an alternative lens? That there are folks out there who have been so fed up with this, and others outside of Kansas that have pushed for some type of legal recourse. The lack of public health and

safety that this crisis across our country is causing. It is not only the ACLU, but concerns from citizens in neighborhoods are pushing back with concerns about their health and safety and quality of life. All public health and safety is being compromised with the “do nothing” approach.

City Attorney Stanley stated she felt Rep. Averkamp’s, and his committee’s, focus will be on public safety and businesses. Protecting business rights.

- Is there any nuance being given in these conversations of how lot to moderate income (LMI) communities have had more of a challenge with this issue? In Topeka, we have LMI communities and upper-class communities, and the burdens and more intense impact is occurring in the LMI communities.

Mr. Damron stated he would be representing the position of the City of Topeka in the hearing process, and that those concerns could be brought forward.

- Is there is an anticipation, with regard to homelessness, for a game plan of how to use excess funds? For what the City is trying to do with increasing stock of affordable housing, trying to come up with a long-range plan for the homeless crisis? Is there specifically, a game plan to ask for additional funding, since we maybe one of the first cities in the state to go to the level where we currently are with trying to find a path forward.

Chairman Duncan stated he had planned to make a request for what that amount and request might look like, a little later in this meeting, to add homelessness to that list. He wanted to work as a Committee to create what they felt should be their “ask” to the legislative agenda.

- Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá inquired if the Policy & Finance Committee could make a recommendation, which will be sent forward to the Governing Body, to add poverty and a living wage? She felt that there was a need for further discussion, and taking actions when possible, to the systemic issues that are creating some of these problems. Continuing to put money toward the issues and hoping that something will stick, is not going to work.

Chairman Duncan stated he would be willing to take time to have the Committee review this and create a request. Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá would like to request that the Policy & Finance Committee work together to formulate a paragraph or two for this.

- There are two things that Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá felt were important for the Governing Body to consider with regard to the upcoming legislative session. One is, what is the consideration for, when needed, to get Council members that are specifically involved with particular aspects of any

part of the legislative agenda, to go and speak? The second thing is, when we talk about property tax relief, what is the possibility of being creative in the upcoming year to consider taking average people before the House to speak on being taxed out of their home?

City Attorney Stanley stated she would be proactive with working with Mr. Damron and City Manager to invite Council members and others to speak, as having new voices is helpful.

Committee member Naeger voiced support in taking a deeper look, as a committee, and adding to the agenda, a look at living wages. She thanked Mr. Damron and staff for their work on these issues.

Mr. Damron stated that the Shawnee County Delegation will be meeting in the State House on Wednesday, November 29th, to hear from community stakeholders and to explain what their legislative agenda is. The meeting begins at 9:00am. The City of Topeka is scheduled at 9:30am in room 144 South.

Chairman Duncan stated that the Senate President last year, was not very kind to cities, publicly in things he said on the record. Chairman Duncan and the Senate President have spoken. He felt like the City does a good job of staying in touch with the local delegation, but he felt it could be a benefit for the City to meet with the Senate President, or with a group of the Senate leadership, when they get into position in January. It is a chance to hear from the capital city's folks and perhaps help smooth some of his rhetoric before he starts.

Chairman Duncan noted that the 2023 Legislative Agenda resolution was included in the packet. The Committee reviewed this list and noted items that had been resolved and which have still not been resolved at this time.

Items removed:

- Common Consumption
- Drivers License
- Docking Building and KDHE Lab
- Broadband
- ARPA funding. He would like to include additions of the LABTR, Medicaid expansion through a lens of the homelessness issue, something that relates to homelessness, something on living wage and poverty.

Items staying from 2023 to 2024:

- Tax & spending powers
- Home Rules
- Abandoned housing

- Mental health - to include discussion of a State Hospital
- Menninger property

Items being added to 2024 Legislative agenda:

- LAVTR
- Support for Medicaid expansion; to also include a piece about homelessness and Medicaid
- Homelessness/Poverty
- Living wage

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá noted that something she continues to hear about is the lack of a state hospital. She would like to know what the City's range would be with the Legislative agenda to talk about pushing for the creating of a state hospital. The Shawnee County jail is spending around \$18M, with \$2M going toward an expansion to create 100 beds specifically for mental health patients. It has been noted by many in the city that once the former state hospital closed, and once Menninger's left, that that is when many of the problems related to increased homelessness and crimes from individuals with mental health issues began.

Chairman Duncan stated would support adding this item to the mental health section, whether it is to support the redevelopment of a state hospital system, or whatever it may look like. He is aware that the Kansas Mental Health Coalition and the State Hospital Association support has started, and he felt this would be timely, as other cities are also voicing similar concerns. Committee member Naeger also felt this would be appropriate to add.

4) Vacant Property Registration

Chairman Duncan noted the changes related to this program are not substantial, but are related to bankers and the process they will be required to do with registering vacant properties that they have acquired. In simplistic terms, there is always a period of time where a bank acquire a property, but cannot actually do anything with the said property. The banks did not like that they had to register the property and possibly pay fees during that time, and went to the State Legislature, along with the Realtor's and Renter's Association, requesting to ban registries across the entire state. When the City met with the bankers and assured there would be a way to fix the issue, locally, it seemed to interest them. The amended language in the Ordinance does not get them off the hook in the long-term, but it does solve their short-term problem of when they are not legally allowed to do certain things. The City should not be penalizing them during that period.

City Attorney stated the original registration was created during the COVID-19 pandemic, and some of the message was lost in the shuffle. Bankers did not realize what the City was working on, and since then there has been productive dialogue. Kansas is a lien state, so courts do not recognize the right of preservation like they do in other states. This legislation and these ordinances were initially introduced and pitched from basically lays out that, if a bank enters a property before that ownership has transferred, in Kansas, they are guilty of trespassing. They do not have the legal rights to do what the City is requiring them to do. The bankers felt stuck. They are wanting to be good community partners and follow the ordinance, but also knowing that it is illegal for them to follow the ordinance, Staff felt this was something that could be resolved.

Chairman Duncan noted that this does not impact or change the portion of the registry that the Public Health & Safety Committee has been working on as part of the *Changing Our Culture of Property Maintenance* initiative. City Attorney Stanley stated there was one change, in that there is no longer a fee to register a vacant property. This was a request by the Property Maintenance Division. It helps remove a barrier and reason for not registering a vacant property. As such, if a property owner continues to not register their vacant property, the City can assess it as a lien against the property, and put it on the back taxes and fine the owner a civil penalty. The idea behind this is that the City wants to take away every barrier that people complain about to register, so that it does not cost money to register the property. Having vacant properties on the registry ensures the City knows who the owner is, and can make sure it is adequately secured.

Chairman Duncan provided a brief overview of the original vacant property registry. The City had hired a third-party company, and they did not do the best job and are no longer managing it. From there, staff did their best to move the registration process forward, but now we are reaching a point where we need to take a deeper look at it. He feels that changing the fee will give the City a year to see how it is utilized, and to know if it is really working better. He is hopeful that these changes will get the registry on a better path and system.

Committee member Naeger inquired about the banking community. City Attorney Stanley stated that there was a legal limbo created. The original ordinance said that the bankers had to register the property when it was foreclosed on, but not when the deed was transferred, which is that legal limbo time because the property has been foreclosed on but the bank does not have the legal right to go onto the property. The ordinance said you have to register it and have it secured.

The bank cannot secure the property, because it is illegal for them to step foot on it. This kept them from being able to comply with both State law and the City's ordinance. With the amended language, it will mean that the clock will not start, for penalizing them, until they actually take official legal possession of the property.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá stated she understands that these changes will help the banking community. However, she would like to know where this registry will be designated through? Property Maintenance Division Director John Schardine stated the Property Maintenance Division will oversee this registry. He is hopeful that the property owner will be able to take care of this. His staff is also working with the County to join their group. The hope would be that, when someone registers their property and goes to pay taxes, that there could be a request to submit emergency contact information. So, when you proceed to pay taxes, you would be required to enter this information. This process requires the County to make happen.

Division Director Schardine noted that they are requesting the amendment because, with the original language, the City is not getting compliance. The compliance rate is 25%. The changes will now move toward a one-time registration, with no fee attached, unless they fail to register. At that time, there would be a \$250 fee. That amount was reduced from \$500 to \$250.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá inquired if there was a possibility that there will be an overtaxing on staff as this program moves forward. She wants to better understand how much staff time might be required. Division Director Schardine noted that the changes will actually reduce staff time from what is currently required. As it is currently written, Property Maintenance Inspectors are required to go and inspect the property at least twice a year. If the owner contests if, it then requires the Property Maintenance staff to make additional trips to inspect the property and make sure they are complying, and if they do not comply we hold them to the fine.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá felt that with the strengthening of the LLC Ordinance and Retaliatory Eviction Ordinance, the City is getting better at sending a strong message that enough is enough. Owners oftentimes do not seem to care about their properties, and sometimes they do care but may be so poor that they cannot afford to fix up a property. It is also known that some of the multi-family homes are in bad shape, so as the City comes into a more aggressive and

proactive approach, are the mechanisms in place for serious execution of the fines and moving through to clear up the issues that are in the city? City Attorney Stanley stated the process would go through the administrative side rather than the municipal court side. It is a civil penalty. City Attorney Stanley felt it would make it easier than going through as a criminal penalty, because the individual will go to a Hearing Officer to meet the standard. If the offender shows up, they show up. If they do not, the City can contest it and it will go straight to a lien on the taxes and can be collected as a civil debt. After one year of being a lien on taxes, the City can simultaneously send it to collections. This would make it easier to get enforcement on it.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá inquired if the Hearing Officer is employed by the City? City Attorney Stanley confirmed, and noted there is an administrative side to the process, and is a City employee. That person is the second Municipal Court Judge. Most of her time is spent as a Municipal Court Judge, but one day a week, she is a Civil Administrative Hearing Officer and comes to the Holliday Building and does the administrative civil adjudications.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá inquired about the amount of time the Judge spends as the Hearing Officer-side? And if there is an anticipation of that number increasing? Division Director Schardine responded that there are about 2% of the cases for folks who are cited for the vacant registry are contesting their cases.

MOTION: Chairman Duncan made a motion to accept the changes and move them forward to the Governing Body. Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá seconded. Approved 3-0-0.

5) Merchant or Private Security Guard Uniform

City Attorney Stanley stated this ordinance was introduced by Chairman Duncan. The current code allows, per Union contract as well as City code, police officers to work off-duty employment. If they are working at anywhere, other than a private security firm, they can wear their police uniform. This allows the officer to slip into their police powers if they need to arrest someone, and are functioning as a City of Topeka employee. If officers are working at a private security agency, they are not allowed to wear the police uniform. City Attorney Stanley felt there was a rational purpose for that, as no one would want private security guards being confused for police officers, and no one would want police officers working as security guards wearing uniforms that would make people think they are officers but in reality are not. The rules focus around what private security agency cars

can look like and what their uniforms can look like, however, the Department of Child and Family (DCF) commonly uses Topeka Police Officers as their security officers, as do other state agencies. The officers cannot wear their police uniforms currently. The amendment to the ordinance would allow Topeka Police Officers to wear their uniforms while working security at a state agency.

Chairman Duncan noted that this change has partially come about because, for some off-duty officers, it is an additional form of revenue income. DCF, and some other state agencies were using the Topeka Police Officers when this became an issue, and as such, contributed to losing part of that contract. There is an opportunity to get that contract back, however there needed to be a change to the ordinance. The Chief of Police as to approve any of these requests, and has that authority. Everything has to be approved by the Chief if it is considered “off-duty”.

Chairman Duncan noted that, in the future, he would like to look further at the next level of this ordinance, which is a slight expansion of what officers can do.

MOTION: Chairman Duncan made a motion to approve the ordinance, to move to the Governing Body. Committee member Naeger seconded. Approved 3-0-0.

6) Common Consumption

Chairman Duncan noted it was the City of Topeka that went to the State Legislature last year and requested the Common Consumption idea. Many other cities across Kansas also liked the suggestion and stood with Topeka in support. It was not a unanimous vote by the legislature, however the alcohol bill did pass. This gives cities the authority to create these common consumption areas. The proposed ordinance before the Committee today is the first draft of what such an ordinance might look like for Topeka. Chairman Duncan stated that he would like for the Committee to hold a listening session to allow community members to speak toward any concerns or suggestions that they have on the issue. He is not asking for action on this item at this time.

City Attorney Stanley stated that Staff had spent a lot of time listening to both the NOTO and Downtown businesses of what their vision of a common consumption would look like. She encouraged the Committee members to provide an opportunity to the business owners in both districts to meet and list their concerns, fears, or visions for the ordinance.

City Attorney Stanley reviewed page 1 of the definitions of common consumption. She noted that some of those definitions come from the State law. They are pretty

clear that the “director” means the Department of Revenue. The City-specific things begin on page 2. One of the things staff heard pretty resoundingly from both the businesses in NOTO and Downtown, was that a common consumption zone is really only going to work if the City of Topeka is the permit holder. City Attorney Stanley noted that the original version of the ordinance required that a non-profit would have to be the sponsor of the permit. But if you look at somewhere like NOTO or Downtown, it becomes very cost prohibitive because there are considerations such as insurance and liability and identifying who would be willing to take it on for the other businesses. This current version makes more sense as the City already has additional liability protections, because the City has some legislative immunity. That is a legislative policy choice that the Governing Body made. The City also has the Tort Claims Act and other things, so it makes it much easier for the City of Topeka to be the permit holder.

The Downtown area would be the area encompassing SW 4th between SW Jackson and SW Quincy on the north; SW 10th between SW Jackson and SE Quincy on the south; SE Quincy between SE 4th and SW 10th on the east; and SW Jackson between SW 4th and SW 10th on the west.

The NOTO area would be the area encompassing Fairchild Street on the north, Norris Street on the south, Quincy Street on the east and Jackson Street on the west.

The descriptions of these areas would also be available online.

These areas were picked directly because that is what the businesses in both communities thought would be the right district for a common consumption area.

The next subsection says that public streets or roadways may be blocked. Although they do not have to be. This is the biggest piece that the City of Topeka asked to be changed, so that the City can have some discretion for the requirement. If it makes sense during a particular event to have the streets blocked, we can block them. But it does not need blockades most of the time, the streets would not be required to be blocked.

Looking to page 3, the hours for the common consumption law states that it shall only be allowed between the hours of 11:00am and 10:00pm, Sunday through Thursday. And 11:00am through 12:00am (midnight) Friday and Saturday. City Attorney Stanley stated she thought the idea with this was to give consistency of hours across the board, so that everyone knows when liquor can be consumed under common consumption, and when it cannot.

It then goes on to say that the City has to apply for the state permit. This is only in effect if the City is granted a state permit, so the City would do that. From

there, the specific requirements under state law that have to be included in the ordinance are listed. One such requirement states that in order to participate in the common consumption zone, the premise must be a licensed alcohol and beverage business licensed by the Department of Revenue. Alcohol has to be served in a container that displays the licensee's name, logo or other identifying mark that is unique to the business. As these are all requirements from state law, the City's ordinance has to include them. Additionally, alcohol cannot be removed in a glass container.

The other requirements such as purchasing, when you can buy it and when you cannot, follow.

Inappropriate Conduct is another section. The City wanted to make it very clear that if someone is acting inappropriately in a common consumption area, that the Topeka Police Officers can remove said person from the event, or from the area, for inappropriate conduct or violations of state law. It is also important for the City to make it clear to Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) that the City understands we need to enforce laws and that we will do that, and that the City will comply with all rules and regulations from the Department of Revenue.

Page 5 gives the City Manager the authority to talk all necessary acts to allow the City to be the permit holder, execute any documents that the City may require and the section (a) shall not apply if there is a specific special event in that area at that time, then the special event rules would control for that.

Chairman Duncan reviewed a couple of pieces from the ordinance. He noted that, from a practical standpoint, as this ordinance establishes only these areas in Downtown and NOTO and said that, to staff or his knowledge, there are no other areas that have requested or expressed a desire to be included at this time. He noted that if it is private property, there would not be a need to go through the City's common consumption process for this. They would be able to get their own license and do whatever they wanted. He used a shopping center as an example, and if the consumption area was on their private property, they would not need the City to enact these.

Chairman Duncan also noted that if another area comes forward at any time, they would apply with the City, and the request would come before the Governing Body for approval.

Chairman Duncan also supports the hours being more wide open, rather than limited. There have been many conversations about different arrangements, and he felt it creates confusion for everyone, including the place that sells alcohol, if there are too many specific restrictions. So having a set standard of hours will provide consistency which will also make it easier for everyone to enforce (the

consumer, the seller, and the police). He noted that signs would need to be posted once the zone has been created, to establish the end of those zones.

Chairman Duncan discussed the cups, and stated that the cups are to help vendors and consumers identify they have purchased the beverage from a business within the common consumption area. In other communities that have common consumption areas, there have not been any issues with the identifier for where it was sold. Outside of that, every other liquor law, street law, traffic law, etc. still apply. The common consumption zone only means people can walk from one establishment on one end of the zone to the other end, or back and forth between places.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá stated she would be supportive of this ordinance and also felt having some community input would be important. Chairman Duncan agreed, and stated that there had been some initial conversation and input with the businesses in the districts prior to the creation of this draft ordinance.

Chairman Duncan would like to schedule the listening sessions within the next six weeks, so that final action could be taken by the Committee and Governing Body in January. This would allow businesses to know what they are allowed to do by the new year.

7) 2021 International Residential Code

Development Services Division Director Richard Faulkner presented the proposed changes for the International Residential Code (IRC). The City is currently working on the 2009 IRC. If approved, Topeka will be the first of peer cities in Kansas to be utilizing the newest version of the IRC.

Presentation Highlights:

- These codes are published by the International Code Council. The City has several codes that are used to facilitate construction in the community. A lot of the codes are used for residential and commercial code.
- The review for today will be of the 2009 IRC for Residential codes, chapters 1-10. There are other codes that are used for the plumbing, mechanical and electrical portions of the construction process.
- If adopted, Topeka will be the first of peer-cities in Kansas to be utilizing the 2021 IRC, which will put Topeka ahead of the curve.
- Review process: The Board of Building & Fire Appeals (BBFA) subcommittee lead the process. Members of City staff served as liaisons to the board, including the Building Official, and the Building Inspectors. It is the recommendation of the board to adopt the 2021 IRC with local amendments.
- Notable Amendments include:

- The door coming off of the garage going into the residence is required to be self-closing.
- There is now a code specifically for decks.
- Smoke detectors are allowed to be interconnected wirelessly.

Questions/Comments:

Chairman Duncan inquired about the response from stakeholders in the industry related to the other updates to codes that have occurred. Division Director Faulkner stated the feedback has been positive and business as usual. There had been a push by stakeholders to update the Electrical Code. Now that the Electrical Code has been updated, stakeholders are happy.

MOTION: Committee member Naeger made a motion to approve the 2021 International Residential Code and to move it to the Governing Body for action. Committee member Naeger seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

8) Other Items

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá would like to request an update with ARPA funds prior to the end of the year. She wanted to bring forward some of the success stories from agencies that had received some of the City's ARPA dollars, and the additional services they would be able to provide should there be any leftover funding. Chairman Duncan stated this was also one of his items. He stated a concern has been that the two main people who had participated in the process are no longer with the City. While he knows money has been given out, he wants to ensure the quarterly reports have been received. It was made clear to the recipients that the reports and funding were important to the process, and that the Committee would be checking in on the status of those at the beginning of 2024. Those dollars are "use it or lose it", and the Federal Government will take the excess money back. Chairman Duncan noted that we know there are other programs in the community that can use additional funds.

Chief Financial Officer Freddy Mawyin confirmed he would be able to share a more robust report to the Committee at the next meeting. CFO Mawyin shared that at least 61% of the funds have been distributed. Eleven agencies have received 100% of their funded awards. Out of the two tiers of awardees, the first tier has had 100% of the organizations provide their reports. From the second tier, most of the organizations have submitted their reports, with the exception of a few that have requested a bit more time. The City is required to provide a quarterly report to the Federal Government. That has been done and submitted, and those reports include all of the information from the agencies that had received awards. This also includes the purpose and any additional amendments or changes to their specific budgets.

Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá attended the Citizens Advisory Council's Poverty Simulation event. The table that Committee member Valdivia-Alcalá sat at discussed predatory lending. She also feels it would be important and beneficial for more of the City's directors and Governing Body members to become more familiar with the realm of poverty and homelessness.

9) Adjourn

Chairman Duncan adjourned the meeting at 2:15pm.

The video of this meeting can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/U17nrGpxBkw?si=INQv58cLnoF9K2x>