

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

October 19, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis, and Councilmembers Barksdale, Lee, Robertson, Stokes, and Zahn

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call, Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll. All Councilmembers were present and participating remotely. Councilmember Zahn led the flag salute.

(a) Domestic Violence Action Month Proclamation

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis read the proclamation recognizing October 2020 as Domestic Violence Action Month in Bellevue. He said we must continue to stand alongside LifeWire, advocates, service providers, law enforcement and our criminal justice system as they hold offenders accountable and provide care and support to survivors. He encouraged survivors, their loved ones, and concerned citizens to learn more by calling the LifeWire Helpline at 425-746-1940 or by visiting www.lifewire.org.

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

4. Oral Communications

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to open the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

No one came forward to comment.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to close the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Mr. McDaniel confirmed that removing the restrictive covenant will enable the sale of the property.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve Resolution No. 9828, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

10. Study Session

(a) Micromobility: Regulation of Motorized Foot Scooters

City Manager Miyake introduced discussion regarding the regulation of motorized foot scooters. He said electric scooters have become popular since 2018 and the business community has expressed an interest in considering a shared electric scooter pilot program. Mr. Miyake said that local code currently prevents the use of scooters as a personal transportation mode in Bellevue.

Mr. Miyake said staff is seeking Council direction to forward the topic to the Transportation Commission for study and review.

Andrew Singelakis, Transportation Department Director, said staff recommends forwarding the topic of micromobility and motorized foot scooters to the Transportation Commission to research and study issues in a public setting. Mr. Singelakis said staff received helpful feedback from Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis. He encouraged Councilmembers to raise issues tonight that they would like the Transportation Commission to address.

Andreas Piller, Associate Planner, said state law defines a motorized foot scooter as a device with two or three wheels that has handlebars and a floorboard that can be stood on while riding, and is powered by an internal combustion engine or electric motor that has a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour on level ground. He said state regulations applicable to foot scooters were updated in 2019, and Bellevue's regulations are no longer consistent with state law.

Mr. Piller highlighted the differences in state and local regulations regarding: 1) the use of scooters on roadways, bike lanes, sidewalks, shared use paths, unpaved nonmotorized trails, and in city parks, 2) when they may be operated, 3) how they may be operated, and 4) who may operate them. A foot scooter is functionally an illegal transportation mode under the current code, which therefore precludes the shared mobility option available in neighboring and peer cities. Mr. Piller noted the interest in providing consistent regulations across the region.

Mr. Piller provided background information regarding the regulation of foot scooters. After the State authorized the local regulation of scooters in 2004, the cities of Issaquah, Kirkland, and Seattle adopted ordinances. The Bellevue City Council adopted a scooter ordinance in 2007. Washington cities began launching e-scooter pilot programs in 2018 as the global popularity of the scooters began to grow. Policy priorities for the study and review of motorized foot scooters include safety, sustainability, equity, accessibility, innovation, consistency, engagement, education, and parking. Mr. Piller highlighted the different types of powered micromobility vehicles including bicycles, standing scooter, seated scooter, self-balancing board, non-self-balancing board, and skates.

Mr. Piller said staff is seeking Council direction to work with the Transportation Commission to review and to recommend updates to the Bellevue City Code regulating the use of motorized foot scooters.

Councilmember Robertson, liaison to the Transportation Commission, thanked Mr. Singelakis and Mr. Piller for their work. Ms. Robertson expressed support for sending the topic to the Transportation Commission for study and discussion. She said safety must be a top priority. She said there have been serious injuries to individuals using scooters. If there is an on-demand use, generally the company would be required to indemnify the City from liability. Ms. Robertson said the companies typically require the users to waive any damages against them in the case of accidents.

Ms. Robertson said she wants to ensure that scooters are safe for riders as well as for pedestrians and bikes using the same paths and roadways. She expressed an interest in helmet usage and in looking at the different types of motorized scooters. She said it is important to ensure that scooter parking does not block or impede walkways or access to buildings. She suggested the City might want to set a maximum speed for the shared scooters. Ms. Robertson said she would like the Transportation Commission to consider lessons learned in other jurisdictions that have shared scooter programs and from Bellevue's e-bike pilot program.

Councilmember Zahn agreed that this is a good time to review and update the regulations. She said she has seen adults using the scooters as transportation in a number of cities, including Washington, D.C., Dallas, Texas, and Santa Monica, California. She said the regulations should be centered around Vision Zero principles and objectives. She encouraged staff to study neighboring jurisdictions (e.g., Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, and Renton) to consider creating codes that are consistent with their laws. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Mr. Piller said state law allows some latitude in setting the minimum age for operating a motorized scooter.

Councilmember Lee expressed support for forwarding the topic to the Transportation Commission for study and review. He thanked staff for the update.

Councilmember Barksdale concurred with sending the matter to the Transportation Commission. He said he would appreciate input from riders about how they expect to use the e-scooters. He said he recently bought an e-scooter.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for the presentation and expressed support for sending the issue to the Transportation Commission. He commented that the City's experience with its shared e-bike program will help inform this review as well. He noted the importance of following Vision Zero guidelines to ensure safety. He expressed an interest in programs in neighboring cities and in Dallas, San Diego, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. He said he would be interested in hearing whether large employers have encouraged the use of scooters.

Councilmember Stokes said it is exciting to see this initiative moved forward. He recalled seeing the use of e-scooters in Santa Monica a couple of years ago. Mr. Stokes said he wants to ensure that the City explores the legal issues applicable to shared e-scooters as well. He is glad to hear that businesses support the use of scooters.

Mayor Robinson expressed support for forwarding the item to the Transportation Commission. She encouraged the Commission to take a field trip to experience the e-scooters in the region. She would like the Commission to consider how to limit where shared scooters may be used. She said technology can restrict their usage to specific areas of a city. She would like the Commission to address whether the usage of scooters should be limited to bicycle infrastructure and paths. She asked staff and the Commission to consider whether users should be required to register with or obtain a permit from the City. She concurred with Councilmember Barksdale's interest in input from scooter users.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to direct the Transportation Commission to work with staff to review and, as deemed appropriate, recommend revisions to City Code regulating the use of motorized foot scooters in Bellevue. Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

(b) Introduction of the Preliminary 2021-2022 Operating Budget and 2020-2027 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan

City Manager Miyake introduced the presentation of the Preliminary 2021-2022 Operating Budget and the 2020-2027 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan. He commented on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting budget constraints. The budget totals \$1.7 billion and balances Bellevue's history of fiscal responsibility with the needs of businesses and residents during this difficult time. The budget has been adjusted based on revenue projections reflecting the impacts of the pandemic. While core services are preserved, the budget includes certain necessary service level reductions.