

1 **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**
 2 **CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**
 3 **1776 E. Washington Street**
 4 **Urbana, IL 61801**

7 **DATE:** July 29, 2021 **PLACE:** Shields-Carter Meeting Room
 8 **TIME:** 6:30 p.m. **1776 East Washington Street**
 10 **Urbana, IL 61802**

11 **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ryan Elwell, Jim Randol, Tom Anderson, Marilyn Lee, Lee Roberts, Larry
 12 Wood

14 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

16 **STAFF PRESENT:** Susan Burgstrom, John Hall, Stephanie Berry

18 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Sue Stimson, Barney Bryson, Bryan Miller, Maggie Wachter, Steve Halfar,
 19 Annette Donnelly, Patrick Donnelly, Sara Brown, Rena Wilson-Jones,
 20 Drew Jones, Joan Mathis, Bob Mathis, Diane Koch, Ryan Shosted, Lesley
 21 Deem, Chris Graham, Ben Clegg, Lisa Romero, Andrew Troutt, Jan Troutt,
 22 Robert Meyer, Patsy Seeds, Derald Seeds, Jay Salmon, Quentin Olmstead,
 23 Polly Olmstead, Amanda Morgan, Charles Ledford, Angela Urban, Daniel
 24 Urban, Rachel Coventry, Jessica Shissle, Devin Neunsinger

27 **1. Call to Order**

28
 29 The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

31 **2. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum**

32
 33 The roll was called, and a quorum declared present.

35 Mr. Elwell informed the audience that anyone wishing to testify for any public hearing tonight must sign
 36 the witness register for that public hearing. He reminded the audience that when they sign the witness
 37 register, they are signing an oath.

39 **3. Correspondence - None**

41 **4. Approval of Minutes – None**

43 **5. Continued Public Hearings – None**

45 **6. New Public Hearings**

47 **Case 014-AT-21**

48 Petitioner: **Zoning Administrator**

49 Request: **Amend the Champaign County Zoning Ordinance to establish beekeeping requirements**
 50 **as summarized in the full legal advertisement and summarized as follows:**

- 51 1. **Amend Section 3.0 Definitions by adding a definition for “apiary”, “beekeeping”,**
 52 **“honeybee”, “nucleus colony” and other related terms.**

- 1 **2. Add footnotes 29 to Section 5.2 Table of Authorized Principal Uses.**
- 2
- 3 **3. Add footnote 30 to Section 5.2 Table of Authorized Principal Uses.**
- 4
- 5 **4. Add new Section 7.8 Beekeeping in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts, with new**
- 6 **requirements for beekeeping.**
- 7
- 8 **5. Amend Section 9.3.1 G.6. by adding a \$33 Change of Use Permit Application Fee to**
- 9 **establish beekeeping in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts.**

10

11 Mr. Elwell informed the audience that anyone wishing to testify for any public hearing tonight must sign
12 the witness register for that public hearing. He reminded the audience that when they sign the witness
13 register, they are signing an oath.

14

15 Mr. Hall, Zoning Administrator, stated that they are here tonight because the Environment and Land Use
16 Committee authorized this case to come to a public hearing. He said this proposal establishes minimum
17 requirements for beekeeping in Residential Zoning Districts in unincorporated Champaign County. He
18 said there is a map showing the very limited extent of those areas. He said it does not affect beekeeping
19 in Agriculture, Conservation Recreation, Business, or Industrial Zoning Districts. He said once the
20 Amendment is adopted, there will be enforcement on a complaint basis and the regulations will apply to
21 everyone. He said they are not going to go do a dragnet to find all the beehives in the Residential Zoning
22 Districts; they don't have staffing to do that, so they plan to enforce it on a complaint basis. He said that
23 it is regulated in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Zoning Districts, and those districts are for single family and two-
24 family dwellings. He referred to Attachment D, page two of six in Supplemental Memo #1, and said this
25 map shows the proposed regulated areas for beekeeping in Champaign County. He said that the green
26 areas are R-1, R-2, and R-3, and there is a little of the green around every municipality, but most of it is
27 in the Champaign-Urbana area. He said the red color is where the R-4 and R-5 Districts are. He said the
28 green areas total about three quarters of one percent of unincorporated Champaign County. He said that it
29 is a very small amount, but that is where they have been having problems. He referred to page three, and
30 said this shows an up-close map of the proposed regulated beekeeping areas within the one and one-half
31 mile extraterritorial jurisdiction of Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy. He said up along Brownfield Road is
32 where the Prairieview Subdivision is and that is where they first had problems; in fact, that is the only
33 place where they've had complaints about beekeeping. He said that you can see that there is R-1, R-2, and
34 R-3 spread all around the perimeter of the Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy area. He said that they got these
35 complaints about bees that were causing problems, so they checked the Illinois Bees and Apiaries Act,
36 which the Department of Agriculture implements. He said it largely requires that every beehive in the
37 State of Illinois is supposed to be registered with the Department of Agriculture, and beekeeping is
38 agriculture. He said that the Department of Agriculture makes sure that everyone is registered, and they
39 are primarily there to monitor, this is the term they use, exotic strains of bees, for example, Africanized
40 Bees. He said that there are rules on moving beehives; you can't move them from county to county or
41 state to state without checking with the Department of Agriculture. He said the complaints that the
42 Environment and Land Use Committee received were about bees in the Prairieview Subdivision. He said
43 the bees were stinging neighbors and causing quality of life issues, meaning the bees were interfering with
44 enjoyment of their lot. He said that might include swimming in a pool or watching birds at a bird feeder
45 or birdbath. He said that these complaints first came up early and late summer of 2018, then it all quieted
46 down. He said they went through all of 2019 with no problems, then P & Z Staff started getting complaints
47 again in 2020. He referred to Attachments B and C in the Preliminary Memorandum, and said they show
48 the Environment and Land Use Committee considered this at two meetings. He said at the second meeting
49 he had a proposed Amendment, which is almost exactly the Amendment that is in front of the Board

1 tonight. He said at that ELUC meeting, there were 19 individuals speaking against the adoption of the
2 Ordinance; none of the proponents for the Ordinance made it to that meeting, and ELUC decided to drop
3 the issue and not pursue it. He said he was contacted shortly after that meeting by the proponents and they
4 were very disappointed, as the Board could imagine. He said that the issue came back before ELUC in
5 January and February 2021, and at that point ELUC decided to go ahead with the amendment. He said
6 continuing onto page four, this ordinance is based on a review of two state beekeeping model ordinances
7 promulgated by beekeeper associations. He said they have a state beekeeping association in Illinois, but
8 they have not promulgated any model ordinance. He said they did find ones from Minnesota and Ohio,
9 but he can't take credit for finding the ones from Minnesota, Village of St. Charles, Illinois, and Lake
10 County, Illinois that Mr. Bryson provided to him and the Board. He said that Mr. Bryson lives in the
11 Prairieview Subdivision and he was trying to convince ELUC that ordinances like those can be adopted
12 and have some effect. He said when he got involved, he found the Village of Whitewater, Wisconsin
13 ordinance, which seemed to be an even better ordinance. He said that these are just a few of the ordinances
14 that are out there; it's not meant to be a selection of the best or the worst, it's just the ones that they had
15 that were convenient to use. He said that the proposed amendment adds lots of definitions, so they know
16 what they are talking about definitionally. He said it establishes where beekeeping is regulated and where
17 it is prohibited, and it adds a new Section 7.8 to their Home Occupation requirements. He said it authorizes
18 beekeeping as a Home Occupation right now in their Zoning Ordinance, because beekeeping is considered
19 agriculture. He said he spent several months working with the State's Attorney's Office and they
20 eventually were able to tell him that the County can regulate beekeeping in Residential Districts on lots
21 where agriculture is not the primary use. He said that it is part of their most restrictive Neighborhood
22 Home Occupation, which is the Home Occupation that they allow in the Residential Districts. He said that
23 there can be one non-resident employee as part of that Home Occupation. He said it's his understanding
24 that beekeepers have so many hives that they farm them out on other peoples' lots, so this could be done
25 as a Home Occupation. He said moving onto page five, they have to comply with the State of Illinois Bees
26 and Apiaries Act, because that's an important safeguard and they want to make sure that is done. He said
27 that there is a sister ordinance to the Zoning Ordinance, the Nuisance Ordinance, and the Nuisance
28 Ordinance amendments do not have to go through a public hearing process. He said that they have
29 provided that to the Board so they know what the Nuisance Ordinance proposed amendment looks like.
30 He said when the County Board votes on the Zoning Ordinance amendment, they'll also have the Nuisance
31 Ordinance amendment to vote on. He said the Amendment establishes the maximum number of beehives
32 as a function of the lot area; they start out at a 10,000 square foot or less lot. He said it establishes
33 separations to neighbors' dwellings, neighbors' accessory structures like pools; it requires fencing on
34 small lots, and the fence is not to fence in the bees. He said that the fencing is to protect the hives, but
35 more importantly to protect the neighborhood children from inadvertently wandering into a hive. He said
36 that it is the same thing they require for a pool, and they reviewed both for a possible attractive nuisance
37 and they are concerned about young children, but they are not concerned about teenagers or adults. He
38 said that it establishes flyway barriers, which is something they got from the model ordinances from the
39 Beekeepers Associations. He said it requires two sources of water on the lot. He said like all Home
40 Occupations, if a homeowner needs to have something a little different than what the ordinance requires
41 as a minimum, there is a way to get Special Use Permit approval. He said that the R-1 District has the
42 largest minimum lot area, at 9,000 square feet; R-2 and R-3 have a 6,500 square feet minimum lot area.
43 He referred to page 6, which shows an example of a residential lot in R-1 with an 80-foot minimum lot
44 width, and with 9,000 square feet, you get a 112.5-foot lot depth. He said that the example dwelling is
45 1,500 square feet and the yellow area behind the dwelling is a typical area where you could put hives. He
46 said that a hive could be located no closer than ten feet to a lot line, and where there is an adjacent home
47 or accessory structure closer to the lot line, you are required to have a 30-foot separation. He referred to
48 the hives in the yellow area, and said in any Text Amendment there are complications, and one
49 complication here is that you can have three hives, you can have three nucleus colonies, and you can have

1 another hive for a total of seven. He said the seventh hive is for managing swarms, and if you are one of
2 those good beekeepers that will go out and take a swarm from somewhere where they are not wanted, you
3 can bring them to your lot and you can have them in that hive for up to three months. He said that the
4 nucleus colonies are intended to only be used for 30 days at a time, but testimony at this public hearing
5 might convince the Board that nucleus colonies should be able to be used for 90 days at a time. He said
6 just like the hives, these changes can be modified once the Zoning Board has a chance to review them.

7
8 Someone from the audience asked what the blue circle was on the diagram of Attachment D.

9
10 Mr. Hall said that it was a swimming pool; it is an accessory structure that has that 30-foot separation. He
11 said that two water sources are required, and these water sources can be a chicken waterer, birdbath, and
12 even a bucket with floating boards provides a good platform for bees to get down and get the water. He
13 said the water source has to be kept full; that doesn't mean it has to be hooked up to water, it just means
14 that you have to make every effort to keep it full or at least not dry. He said the water source for example,
15 a pool, is a great water source for bees; so there has to be a water source not more than halfway to that
16 adjacent water source. He said another kind of water source on an adjacent property could be a goldfish
17 pond or could even be a bird bath if they know about it, but they might not know about bird baths. He said
18 to the extent that a beekeeper knows about them, you always want a bee waterer on the subject property
19 that is not more than halfway to the adjacent water source. He said as the lot area increases, you get an
20 additional hive and nucleus colony for every 10,000 square feet. He said he has had some inquiries from
21 folks that have bees, and one lot was 40,000 square feet in area and when it is 40,000 square feet in area,
22 you don't have to have the four-foot fence surrounding the hives. He said if your hive is more than 16 feet
23 from the property line, you don't have the flyway barrier; these are complications, but complications are
24 generally to provide options to the beekeeper. He asked if Ms. Burgstrom had anything she would like to
25 add at this point.

26
27 Ms. Burgstrom said no.

28
29 Mr. Hall said that is a quick overview of the Text Amendment.

30
31 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Hall and asked if there were any questions from the Board.

32
33 Ms. Lee stated that she had fun exploring things on the internet today. She said she should have been
34 doing some other work, but this was more fun. She said that her first question she researched online was,
35 how far do bees fly, and the answer that the internet gave her was that the longest distance was 20
36 kilometers, which equals 12.42 miles; bees travel a long way. She said that she doesn't expect an answer
37 to this question tonight, but the reason she looked at that was because if you get a complaint, how do you
38 know it is the beehives near you, and not one 12.42 miles away. She said the other thing that she looked
39 at was, and Mr. Hall did cover this, where beekeeping is agriculture. She said that beekeeping is
40 recognized in various government institutions, like the United States Department of Agriculture, which
41 encourages the CRP ground for promoting pollinators. She said that the Farm Service Agency of the
42 United States Department of Agriculture encourages pollinators, and the Natural Resources Conservation
43 Service shows how to help pollinators. She said that the question becomes with it being agriculture, is it
44 farming, and the Illinois Department of Agriculture considers it to be agriculture as well. She said there
45 was one thing in one of the charts that she noticed was the Illinois Act requires the name where it cannot
46 be washed out on the actual hives, so there is a requirement, and the Champaign County amendment
47 doesn't say anything about having the name; it has no requirement. She said the United States Department
48 of Agriculture website posted this document on their website on June 28, 2019, saying that more than one-
49 third of all crop production in the United States requires insect pollination. She said that the website talked

1 about saving the bees, because they have had some disease issues. She said the Illinois Department of
2 Agriculture helps with the diseases and will inspect things at no charge, and their fee for registering with
3 them is no charge. She said the question is if beekeeping is agriculture and beekeeping is farming, how
4 does this interact with the Right to Farm requirement in our Ordinance. She said that she forgot to add that
5 the Internal Revenue Service says that beekeeping is farming. She said that the third issue was that the
6 State's Attorney said that the primary source of use is the residence, but somebody could argue that their
7 beekeeping is a primary source of income on that lot.

8
9 Mr. Elwell thanked Ms. Lee and asked Mr. Hall if he would like to add onto this.

10
11 Mr. Hall said that regarding how far bees fly, that is what he found also. He said if they get a complaint,
12 they are going to go out and do a reasonable inspection of the neighborhood, probably around a 500-foot
13 radius from the property that they are getting the complaint from. He said if Staff sees a beehive, they are
14 going to see if it is registered with Champaign County as a Home Occupation and if it is, their work is
15 done. He said if they don't find a beehive within that radius, their work is done. He said they are not going
16 to scour within a mile radius of a property where they are getting a complaint to try to find a hive. He said
17 that they will never be able to know where the bees causing a complaint are coming from. He said they
18 are only going to be able to know, yes there are two or three hives within a 500-foot radius, and either
19 they are not registered with them and now they will be, or they are already registered. He said in any case,
20 you can have up to three beehives on your property; you're not going to have to get rid of them if there is
21 a complaint, you just have to register with the Department. He said that if someone is going to make a
22 claim that their means of support is from however many beehives they're raising on their property, then
23 they're going to have to provide some good data.

24
25 Ms. Lee said that the argument though is that is the primary source of income on that property, it's not an
26 issue of where their primary income is overall. She said technically, if they raise the bees on their lot and
27 the Internal Revenue Service considers it to be farming, that is the issue. She said it is not dealing with
28 outside income.

29
30 Mr. Hall said that their implementation of the Zoning Ordinance requirements is not incumbent upon
31 Illinois Revenue Service, Illinois Department of Tax Revenue, Natural Resources Conservation Service,
32 or United States Department of Agriculture standards. He said they are based on what their Ordinance
33 says, and their Ordinance says that beekeeping is agriculture. He said now it's proposed to be amended to
34 specify that in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts, it can be no more than a Home Occupation.

35
36 Ms. Burgstrom said that earlier today, Mr. Wood sent her an email asking if they know how many hives
37 in unincorporated Champaign County are in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts. She said that the USDA state
38 registration shows that there are 107 active beekeepers in Champaign County as a whole. She said they
39 don't provide addresses or any map of those, but there is a website that is called BeeCheck. She said that
40 she looked up and mapped the 35 available hives listed in BeeCheck that are in unincorporated Champaign
41 County. She said three of the 35 were in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Zoning Districts; the vast majority of the
42 hives were in the AG Districts or CR, and there was one in an Industrial District. She said it was a very
43 small amount from that sampling that were in these affected Residential Districts, and she also noted that
44 the BeeCheck map did not include any hives in the Prairieview Subdivision area. She said they don't have
45 an ability to say anything about hives in that particular subdivision.

46
47 Mr. Wood asked if they know whether the hives in the Prairieview Subdivision are licensed.

48
49 Mr. Hall said that it is his understanding that there are no more hives in the Prairieview Subdivision; that

1 is what he has been told, and that is what he believes, but he has not inspected the subdivision. He said
2 that subdivision has some wooded hedgerows, and he knows those are popular spots for people to farm
3 out beehives onto farmland, and those are all in the AG District. He said as far as he knows, there are no
4 bees being kept right now in the Prairieview Subdivision and it has been that way for about the past two
5 years.
6

7 Ms. Lee said another issue is that residential areas are expanding in Champaign County; they get to do
8 the Subdivisions without this Board's approval at any point. She said you could be having new
9 subdivisions start and it's going to be closer to existing beehives. She asked if Mr. Hall is going to make
10 any kind of language protecting that, where the beehives have been in existence for years.
11

12 Mr. Hall said that there have been no new county subdivisions in the Champaign-Urbana area for more
13 than 20 years, because they all have to be on sewer, and Champaign County doesn't control connection to
14 sewer. He said that any new subdivision in the Champaign-Urbana area will be a municipal subdivision,
15 and these rules don't apply to municipal areas.
16

17 Ms. Lee said that there is a lot of expansion and this Board has talked about it in some other cases lately,
18 where a lot of houses are being built in the rural areas of Mahomet.
19

20 Mr. Hall said that those houses are not being built in Residential Zoning Districts, they're generally being
21 built in the AG-2 Districts, where they do small rural subdivisions under the cities' rules; again, these
22 rules would not apply to that. He said he doesn't know if he is answering Ms. Lee's question or not.
23

24 Ms. Lee said yes, in a roundabout way.
25

26 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.
27

28 Mr. Wood said that if there are no licensed hives in Prairieview, are they creating a solution here that's
29 looking for a problem.
30

31 Mr. Hall said that they could be creating a solution for the next problem. He said that is a good question
32 for the County Board and they could take that into account in their recommendation.
33

34 Mr. Wood said that they create the situation and then it adds an additional cost, and he realizes there are
35 only a couple of hives that they know of that are in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 districts. He said it is going to
36 make it that much more expensive for them to have their beehives, and he doesn't know why they would
37 go through with that.
38

39 Mr. Hall asked Mr. Wood what kind of expense he is concerned about.
40

41 Mr. Wood said he is concerned about the expenses of putting up the fence and other things that are required
42 by the Zoning Ordinance, assuming that it is implemented. He said he believes that there was some
43 information in their packets regarding those kinds of expenses.
44

45 Ms. Lee said, sort of in tune with that, the other interesting thing that she found out was that bees are
46 classified as livestock when it comes to the United States Department of Agriculture. She said that bees
47 are not like cows, you can fence cows in, but you can't fence bees in. She said bees are going to fly
48 wherever they want and there isn't anything that they can control with a bee.
49

1 Mr. Hall said the only thing they can control is how many they allow in that Zoning District.

2
3 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Hall if he could describe to them how going from a smaller lot to a larger lot, what
4 was the thought process with having to fence the area verses no fence for the bees. He said when is the lot
5 big enough or not big enough to not require fencing.

6
7 Mr. Hall said that when it is a 40,000 square foot lot, the logic was that you have enough area to work
8 with that the proximity to the neighbors should not be a concern. He said the original concern was
9 presented when there was a discussion with the Department of Agriculture Apiary Inspector, who
10 recommended requiring a sign to be posted on every lot with a beehive. He said that from his view, posting
11 a sign that there is a beehive on a lot is more or less advertising for problems. He said the preferred Zoning
12 approach is to address the safety of the public by requiring a fence so that there won't be any accidents.
13 He said that is why the fence is included, and again, the fence is not for the entire lot; the fence is just for
14 the area of the hives. He said Mr. Ledford provided a cost of the fence in his letter that was a very sizable
15 cost, but he thinks it was for much more than just the area around where the hives could be. He said Mr.
16 Ledford is here tonight, and he can answer that question.

17
18 Mr. Randol referred to the diagram on Attachment D, page six in Supplemental Memo #1 with the
19 different size lot areas. He asked if the 16-foot setback is requiring the six-foot-tall flyway barrier in
20 addition to the four-foot fence around the hives, or does the fence around the hives not apply if you have
21 the six-foot-tall flyway barrier already.

22
23 Mr. Hall said that the interplay of those two requirements is an instance where they could come up with a
24 creative solution. He said they thought it was best to illustrate each one separately, but Mr. Randol is right,
25 if you put up a six-foot-tall fence as your flyway barrier, then you don't need to put up the four-foot fence.
26 He said that the two types of fences would have to be connected, and as long as the hives are surrounded
27 by fencing, then that is the important thing. He said in this illustration of the diagram in Attachment D,
28 the vegetation is being used as the flyway barrier and they used four-foot fencing. He said that Mr. Randol
29 is right, they are not going to require two types of fencing; one type of fencing would be sufficient if it is
30 done in the appropriate way.

31
32 Ms. Lee said that for reference purposes, when Mr. Hall is talking about the 40,000 square feet, that equals
33 in excess of 7.75 acres.

34
35 Mr. Hall said no, that is a little less than one acre.

36
37 Ms. Lee said pardon.

38
39 Mr. Hall said 40,000 square feet is less than one acre, one acre is 43,560 square feet.

40
41 Ms. Lee said okay.

42
43 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.

44
45 Ms. Lee said that she thinks the Illinois statute clearly says there has to be signage on the hive. She said
46 she doesn't think there had to be signage on the roadway. She said she thought it said that there had to be
47 signage on the hive itself.

48
49 Mr. Hall said it is not so much signage, but an identification so that the Department of Agriculture

1 Inspectors affirmatively know who is responsible for that hive.
2
3 Mr. Randol said that another thing that he was a little unclear on was the \$33 registration fee. He asked if
4 that was per hive or per beekeeper, and if they had three hives and three nucleus hives on their lot, and an
5 additional ten hives scattered around the county, how is that fee assessed.
6
7 Mr. Hall said that fee is assessed on a per Home Occupation basis. He said his recommendation would be
8 if you are going to establish beekeeping as a Home Occupation, that your initial application should
9 describe an area where you are going to have the maximum number of hives that you can have. He said
10 that way you just have the one application, and you get the one approval. He said that you might not have
11 all your hives being used at one time, but you have identified an area that meets all the requirements. He
12 said for bees that are kept somewhere else, if it's in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts, that would be another
13 application on that other property.
14
15 Mr. Randol asked if the property owner or if the beekeeper owner was responsible for the Home
16 Occupation on that secondary property for the beehives.
17
18 Mr. Hall said that in the Zoning Ordinance, the owner of the property is responsible, they are the only
19 ones that can apply for a permit on their lot.
20
21 Mr. Randol said for example, if he had 40 hives spread around Champaign County in ten different
22 locations, he would have to pay 30 dollars for each location.
23
24 Mr. Hall said only if the hives are in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts.
25
26 A person from the audience asked if they had to pay if the beehives were on agriculture land.
27
28 Mr. Hall said that if the hives are out in the agriculture area, then this Amendment is not relevant; you
29 don't need a permit out in the agriculture area.
30
31 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.
32
33 Mr. Hall said going back to the discussion of whether beekeeping is agriculture, many years ago, Staff
34 received their first complaints about keeping chickens in the Residential District. He said at that time, they
35 checked with the State's Attorney's Office and they recommended that yes, in fact, they could adopt
36 chicken keeping regulations in the Residential Zoning Districts on lots that are not primary agriculture.
37 He said they didn't have to do that as it turned out, but in fact the State's Attorney recommended
38 combining a chicken amendment with the beekeeping amendment. He said he preferred to focus on the
39 beekeeping amendment, because the bees are what they are having problems with. He said that they might
40 come back in the future with a chicken keeping amendment, but luckily, they haven't had a complaint
41 based on chickens for a long time.
42
43 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other question from the Board. Seeing none, he called the first name
44 on the Witness Register, Mr. Bryson.
45
46 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Bryson to please state his full name and address.
47
48 Mr. Barney Bryson stated that he lives at 2102 Barnes Street in Urbana. He said his request is essentially
49 for a proactive measure and not waiting for a very unfortunate reactive response, which may be too late

1 for some people. He said they have experienced bee stings, and from his research, there is no age limit,
2 you could be young or old. He said there is no timeframe or amount of bee stings that you can receive
3 before your body decides you are allergic to bees. He said that would require an EpiPen that was prescribed
4 to his girlfriend, because on her seventh sting she swelled up and was taken to the emergency room at the
5 hospital. He said she has a heart condition and a person with a heart condition is not to use an EpiPen,
6 because it can lock your heart up instantly. He said he appreciates the beekeepers, and they don't have a
7 problem with them. He said that they don't have a problem with the bees and as the Staff had pointed out
8 earlier, the only problem that there has been in this entire county is in the Prairieview Subdivision area
9 where they live. He said he is going to put the onus on that beekeeper and that is why he would support
10 this issue. He said he requested the State Apiarist to resolve an issue of 27 beehives on less than half an
11 acre. He said the Apiarist reported that the hives were double stacked and suggesting 45 hives; and four
12 houses down, they were double stacked on community property and it was right next to a sidewalk. He
13 said that the sidewalk does not get used much, and a lot of people take their children back there to look at
14 the chickens, but they can't when the beehives are extremely close to the sidewalk. He said the infestation
15 came back the next year and they had complained, because he had pulled 192 live bees out of his pool in
16 a 6-hour period. He said nobody can swim in a water source that has this many bees in it, and he has
17 monitored every day when he has been outside for a day or two working in his backyard; and pulled 48,
18 65, and 73 bees out of his pool. He said it costs him a lot of money to operate his pool; just like it costs a
19 lot to operate a beekeeping operation. He said he respects the beekeepers and understands their pain, but
20 he has a \$30,000 hole in his backyard that he cannot use, because of somebody else's inability to create a
21 sustainable environment for their bees. He said that they have overcrowded those bees to a point to where
22 they have to go elsewhere to find food and water. He said that when the infestation came back, they took
23 their issue back to the county and they thought it had been resolved, because it dwindled, as Mr. Hall had
24 stated. He said that the bees seemed to have gone away, but then they came back. He said he took their
25 issue back to the county, and once the beekeeper was aware that the county was getting involved, the bees
26 seemed to dwindle once again. He said when the pressure is on, the bees go away or somebody takes care
27 of their bees like they should. He said that several stings have happened throughout the neighborhood that
28 have caused trips to the hospital. He said that the bee feces is called frass; Rena didn't know that or she
29 pretended like she didn't. He said it sticks to everything including your cars, house, windows, or clothes
30 on a clothesline. He said it is a high protein substance that does not come off easily and it does not come
31 off easily at a carwash. He said when they try to do their laundry, they have been told how to dress; don't
32 where light-colored clothes, cologne, fragrant lotion, and use unscented deodorant. He said this is in their
33 homes and on their properties that they are being told by this beekeeper how to behave so that she can
34 maintain her home business or whatever it is she calls it. He said that he finds it insulting to those poor
35 bees that have to go through that kind of stuff. He said that this is a clear example of improper beekeeping
36 and one would hope that beekeepers would police themselves; unfortunately, this has not been the case.
37 He said that he has a few friends that are in the Beekeepers Association and they have spoken out against
38 this, but evidently their co-president doesn't feel like she needs to pay attention to it. He said that
39 overpopulating on half an acre is improper, and he would suggest that that person is the one that does not
40 care for bees. He said that you will not find one person in their neighborhood that tells you that they don't
41 like bees; they understand the situation with bees. He said that it is not the bees themselves when you look
42 at the real problem, it is the inappropriate keeping of those bees and to eliminate that it has been showed
43 when the heat is on, she acts properly; when the heat is off, she does as she pleases. He said to answer Ms.
44 Lee's question, most of them were there long before Rena Wilson-Jones even built her home in their
45 neighborhood. He said that she went around when she decided to start her adventure and she said if they
46 had any problems to let her know and she'd take care of it. He said that this is how she told him to take
47 care of it, how to dress and she told them this is what they should do. He said they never had the issues
48 until she started that experiment; they pay their taxes and have the right to enjoy their property without
49 the nuisance that Rena has caused. He said that the Board should have in their packet a legal brief from

1 the Municipal League that outlines and describes what a nuisance is. He said that they have a right for a
2 peaceful respite on their own properties without offending the bees with senses of sounds, feelings, and
3 smells in their community. He said what they have been experiencing would be the exact word of a
4 nuisance when they can't sit out on their porch because they're afraid they're going to get stung. He said
5 that they feel a bug on them and they jump, or company no longer visits them anymore, because of all
6 their bees. He said that there is a reason they are designated as agriculture and not as residential. He said
7 90 days for a nucleus hive in his opinion would be a complete summer gone and wasted and unfortunately,
8 we don't have them that long here. He said that if they allowed that for 90 days for another amount, the
9 summer would be over with. He asked why people want these swarms of bees taken away and where do
10 they take them; they take them away from some place where someone doesn't want them and bring them
11 to another place where someone doesn't want them. He said they never had issues with bees before and
12 he has lived in this neighborhood for 28 years; he would see a couple of bees here and there in the grass
13 and stuff and that is not a problem, that is nature. He said that the bumblebees come by and pollinate the
14 flowers, they don't infest a pool, birdbaths, and dog bowls; they do what they do and move on. He said
15 that they are talking about a residential area here, there have been at least two attempts to legislate by the
16 Illinois Beekeepers Association from one of the Representatives in western Illinois to make it illegal to
17 hold a beekeeper responsible for the damage the bees could do to their properties and any physical damage
18 that is done. He said that it has never made it out of the committee, and he had checked with a lobbyist on
19 that. He said that he had explained to him how it worked, and he said not to anticipate it will ever pass,
20 because there are people out there that are a little bit bigger than that association who do not want that to
21 go through. He said that they are a small community, and they have nothing against bees or the beekeepers,
22 but they do have an issue with inappropriate beekeeping. He said that he hopes the Board can pass this
23 Zoning Ordinance proposal with the consideration of, for example, 30 days on the nucleus hives as
24 opposed to 90 days. He thanked the Board and said he would answer any questions they might have.

25

26 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Burgstrom if they have a copy of what Mr. Bryson just read.

27

28 Ms. Burgstrom said that he did give her a copy and he did expand on that, but they do have the basic copy.
29 She said that when a witness comes up to speak, if they have a paper that they are reading from, they
30 would appreciate them just bringing it over to her when they are done to help staff with the minutes and
31 the record. She said that she also wanted to point out that they have a limited number of copies of the
32 Preliminary Memorandum that was posted online. She said that they have the Supplemental Memorandum
33 that was created today that includes the presentation and the diagram about the typical lot size; if they
34 want to grab those before they leave tonight, they are welcome to.

35

36 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any questions from the Board.

37

38 Mr. Wood asked if there are no licensed beehives in Prairieview Subdivision that they are aware of, yet
39 the testimony presently from Mr. Bryson is telling them that there are hives there.

40

41 Mr. Hall said that is a good question for Mr. Bryson; he is not aware that there any actual hives in the
42 Prairieview Subdivision currently.

43

44 Mr. Bryson said that his last FOIA request to the Department of Agriculture said there were two hives in
45 Prairieview Subdivision, but they were just registered there; it doesn't mean that they are there right now.
46 He said the registration tags were for that address, he asked for that address specifically, because by law
47 you cannot give an address like that unless your request pertains to a particular address.

48

49 Ms. Lee asked Mr. Bryson what date he received that answer from the Department of Agriculture.

1 Mr. Bryson said he believes it was back in February, because when he was out on his back deck killing
2 bees that were swarming around that day, he killed around 16 bees in February. He said that is when he
3 decided to file the FOIA request.

4
5 Ms. Lee asked if he filed the complaint in February, then when did the Department of Agriculture answer
6 his request.

7
8 Mr. Bryson said that they have five days to answer the FOIA request and they answered it within the time
9 period.

10
11 Mr. Elwell asked if the address was corresponding with the problematic bees.

12
13 Mr. Bryson said yes.

14
15 Mr. Elwell asked if that address had a license for keeping those beehives.

16
17 Mr. Bryson said when the beekeepers file with the State, they get a number for their beehive and that's
18 how the Department of Agriculture tracks these hives. He said that the FOIA request stated that at that
19 residence, they had two numbers that were attached to beehives. He said does that mean they are still there
20 today, he couldn't tell the Board, that would probably require another FOIA request. He said that there
21 were two at that address and there were a number in Piatt County, which he is not concerned with since
22 that is not his battle.

23
24 Mr. Elwell asked if the beekeeper has to do anything to maintain their licenses for the hive and if they are
25 held accountable for being a good steward of the hive.

26
27 Mr. Bryson said that as he understands it, that is a registration requirement, because the State Apiarist has
28 different sections throughout the state, and they come in and inspect these hives to protect the health of
29 the bees to make sure there aren't a lot of varroa mites, beetles, or anything else that would impact bees
30 negatively. He said that if they don't get that taken care of, then the hive unfortunately is destroyed, but it
31 doesn't spread elsewhere.

32
33 Ms. Lee said that the statutes require an annual registration, and she was thinking that it was November
34 of each year, but she is not sure about the month to register.

35
36 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Bryson if had called the Department of Agriculture and complained to them, and
37 what was the outcome.

38
39 Mr. Bryson said that he had called them and talked to the Head of the Department of Agriculture, their
40 Apiarist, and asked him if zoning could be enacted in a residential area within the county. He said that he
41 told him absolutely, if it is part of a municipality, because it is a residential area. He said that he told him
42 when someone tries to go in and zone agriculture, that is where he steps in and has a problem and then he
43 will get involved with it; he asked Mr. Bryson what his problem was. He replied that he had a neighbor in
44 his subdivision that has at least 27 beehives on their property. The State Apiarist told him that's when they
45 do an aerial view and count the tops of the beehives. He said that he would send a man out there to inspect
46 that right away. He said the guy went out and called him that day, and informed him that when a bee flies
47 in front of their faces or around their head, that is a sign of aggression. He said that he also told him that
48 when someone walks by a beehive, if a lot of bees come out, that is an indication of aggression. He said
49 that he told him when they do that in his town and his yard, he takes them to the country and those bees

1 will be gone within 30 to 40 days. He said that he did talk to him several times and he had told him that
2 he could make more things happen than the County and to drop what he is doing right now; don't deal
3 with it and he would handle it all and that was the year that the bees left. Mr. Bryson said the next year,
4 the bees all came back; it started all over again and he thought that the best action was at home and not
5 with someone who was 50 miles away. He said the State Apiarist probably did what he could for him, but
6 they have no legislation or no right to control any kind of bee husbandry. He said they can only legislate
7 the transportation of bees, sanitation of bees, and their health; that is what they are responsible for, not the
8 location, number of bees, or anything like that. He said that is when he started working with Mr. Hall
9 again.

10
11 Mr. Elwell said it seems to him that the health of a hive is dictated by the beekeeper. He said if the hive is
12 that much of a problem, they need to get rid of the hive. He said the Zoning Ordinance could say by putting
13 too many bees in a small 10,000 square foot lot that the bees' quality of life is going to be limited, because
14 the bees are causing all of these issues with their pools and things like that. He said he feels like this needs
15 to be pursued more through the State of Illinois for licensing of each individual hive, rather than by
16 approaching the Zoning Board. He said it seems like Mr. Bryson has attempted to go through the State of
17 Illinois and it wasn't to his satisfaction.

18
19 Mr. Bryson said that the first year it was wonderful, that was in 2018 and 2019, but then they found out
20 that the State had no legislation to tell the beekeepers they needed to move those bees if they were not
21 infected with any diseases; this was his assumption, but he could be way off base. He said local
22 governmental bodies can control the bees; there are several municipalities in this state that control bees
23 and there are few counties that have zoning for controlling bees. He said that they are much more
24 restrictive than what they have seen tonight, and Mr. Hall has been very generous in his proposed
25 amendment for the beekeepers in the Residential District. He said it is quite frankly unacceptable to them,
26 but he said it's more acceptable than 40 to 57 beehives on less than half an acre. He said he thinks Mr.
27 Hall was spot on, that when someone takes an animal, creature, or a human being and shoves them into a
28 small area, the bees don't have enough food and water; he would probably be aggressive too if he were a
29 bee.

30
31 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Bryson if he wouldn't agree that an apiarist would have a lot more knowledge and
32 background to address this than a Zoning Board.

33
34 Mr. Bryson said no, because the State Apiarist works with the health of the beehive. He said it's just like
35 raising horses; a landowner can only have so many horses on a certain number of acres, over that amount
36 it is considered overcrowded, and the horses cannot graze on that. He said that affects the health of those
37 animals and that's is what the State works on. He said that he would anticipate that the County or a
38 municipality could work with the State and see what they could glean from the State, but he doubts if they
39 would be willing to try to change an entire statute for one county.

40
41 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.

42
43 Ms. Lee said that she had a comment. She said that in Attachment B, page three of 18 in the Preliminary
44 Memorandum, Title 8 of the Illinois Administrative Code reads under part F of Section 60.20 -
45 Registration; Colony Identification that, "All apiaries shall be identified. This identification shall consist
46 of the State abbreviation "IL" followed by the beekeeper's Illinois registration number in weatherproof
47 lettering not less than one-half inch in height. The number shall be displayed prominently on the front of
48 a hive."
49

1 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Mr.
2 Bryson.
3
4 Mr. Bryson thanked the Board for their time.
5
6 Mr. Elwell asked the Board if this is the right jurisdiction to be deciding this. He said that is the question
7 he has in the back of his mind, is it up to the Board to legislate this or would it be up to the Department of
8 Agriculture to enforce the rules. He said he understands what Mr. Bryson said about having 35 horses on
9 two acres of land, but it's hard for him to believe that there wouldn't be some organization here in the
10 State of Illinois that the Board and Staff couldn't turn to and tell them that this landowner needs to have
11 the proper amount of space for this horse.
12
13 Ms. Lee said that in the Bees and Apiaries Act, of which Staff has only provided Title 8, Part 60 of the
14 Illinois Administrative Code in the Preliminary Memorandum, she thought it provided language for
15 nuisances. She said she could bring the Bees and Apiaries Act to the next meeting with the exact language,
16 but she thought there was some nuisance provisions in the Act itself.
17
18 Mr. Elwell asked who he would call to remove an unwanted beehive out of his backyard tulip tree.
19
20 Mr. Hall asked if he meant to remove the beehive.
21
22 Mr. Elwell said correct.
23
24 Mr. Hall said that Mr. Elwell would have to find a beekeeper that does that, unless he didn't care about
25 what happened to the bees, in which case he would hire an exterminator. He said he doesn't think it's
26 against the law; it's not what he would recommend, but it's not against the law.
27
28 Mr. Randol asked Mr. Elwell if he was talking about an abandoned beehive, wild beehive, or a beehive
29 that someone has in their backyard that is not being taken care of.
30
31 Mr. Elwell asked if he had problems with his neighbors' bees clogging up his pool and things like that,
32 there would have to be someone he could call that would come out and address the beehive.
33
34 Mr. Hall asked if Mr. Elwell meant to address his clogged pool or the bees coming from his neighbor's
35 property.
36
37 Mr. Elwell said going back to the horse issue, if a landowner had five horses on one acre of land and that
38 presumably wouldn't be enough land, there would have to be someone from the Department of Agriculture
39 that a person could complain to.
40
41 Mr. Hall said that the Department of Agriculture doesn't care how many horses, cows, chickens, pigs, or
42 bees that they put on any amount of land. He said that all they care about is the way the owner handles the
43 waste, manages the bees for diseases, and exotic strains.
44
45 Mr. Elwell called Mr. Miller to testify.
46
47 Mr. Elwell informed Mr. Miller that the microphone was on and asked him to state his full name, address,
48 and to proceed with his testimony.
49

1 Mr. Brian W. Miller stated that he lived at 911 West White Street in Champaign. He said wow, the Board
2 and Staff have some terrible information, and he doesn't know where to start. He said a bee will travel a
3 two miles radius easily, that is 8,000 acres around the hive. He said it doesn't matter if it's in a hive, house,
4 or a tree, that is the way they live. He said Mr. Hall mentioned earlier that if a neighbor complains about,
5 for example, someone getting stung by a bee or bees and staff goes to the neighbor's house and finds a
6 beehive; that's it, the problem is solved. He said that the person didn't know what it was, but that's the
7 problem, so is Mr. Hall saying bees in a tree or house never sting. He said what about hornets, wasps,
8 bumblebees, yellowjackets, or even ants, so that's ridiculous. He said this problem was fixed two years
9 ago and there has not been a single problem since, so why are they here tonight then. He said there are
10 over 300 colonies and 40 beekeepers in this county. He said he has 30 colonies himself, and if they go
11 about 400 feet north across Main Street in Urbana, he could show them seven of his colonies; his hives
12 are all in Champaign-Urbana and it's an amazing place to keep bees. Mr. Bryson said he had 16 bees in
13 his pool in February; he is pretty sure the pool would have been a solid chunk of ice. He said the bees died
14 somewhere in Mr. Bryson's backyard in February, but it is pretty darn cold in February, and he can't
15 imagine what a bee would be doing in his backyard. He said that he has heard 38, 45, or maybe even more
16 in Rena's backyard over two years ago. He said that two boxes doesn't mean two hives. He said the way
17 they run their bees in Illinois and most of the north, are two deeps, and that is what Rena runs as well. He
18 said sorry, he was wrong, she runs three mediums, so that is three boxes, but it's still one hive; it has fewer
19 bees than if it were two boxes. He said that the Board has some really bad information and if they would
20 have just asked some of the beekeepers questions, then some of these questions wouldn't be happening
21 now.

22
23 Someone from the audience asked a question.

24
25 Mr. Elwell reminded the public that the only time that they can speak is when they are speaking at the
26 testimony microphone and they will be given plenty of opportunity to speak.

27
28 Mr. Elwell asked the Board and Staff if they had any questions for Mr. Miller.

29
30 Mr. Hall asked Mr. Miller if he had beehives at the property where he lives.

31
32 Mr. Miller said yes, he does in his own backyard.

33
34 Mr. Hall asked him how many beehives.

35
36 Mr. Miller replied he had only one.

37
38 Mr. Hall asked only one beehive.

39
40 Mr. Miller said he has 30 beehives spread out all over town, and the one hive in his backyard right now
41 he is raising a queen in, so that would be considered a nucleus colony.

42
43 Mr. Hall asked if the other 30 hives were spread on lots where property owners have decided to let him
44 put the beehives.

45
46 Mr. Miller said yes, he has to have permission.

47
48 Mr. Hall asked how many hives he typically has on someone else's lot.

49

- 1 Mr. Miller said it depends; he has anywhere between four and seven hives on each lot.
2
- 3 Mr. Hall asked how many hives are on Champaign and Urbana lots.
4
- 5 Mr. Miller said in Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy, he has 26 of the 30 hives.
6
- 7 Mr. Hall asked they were all on one lot.
8
- 9 Mr. Miller said no, they are spread around.
10
- 11 Mr. Hall asked about how many hives he has on average on each lot.
12
- 13 Mr. Miller said there could be anywhere from three to seven on each lot. He said that four would be a
14 good average on each lot.
15
- 16 Ms. Lee asked Mr. Miller how many bees are normally in one hive, whether it's one or three boxes.
17
- 18 Mr. Miller asked if she meant a single hive. He said he would say 50,000 bees during the month of June
19 at the peak. He said that a queen can lay 2,000 eggs a day, and during the summer they live about six
20 weeks until they work themselves to death. He said if the queen is laying 2,000 eggs a day in May, six
21 weeks later, you have 2,000 bees dying; they don't live very long.
22
- 23 Mr. Hall said to Mr. Miller that if he has four hives per lot and this proposed ordinance has a limit of three,
24 he gets the impression that Mr. Miller thinks this ordinance is going to kill local beekeeping. He asked if
25 he agreed with that statement.
26
- 27 Mr. Miller said that it is not going to kill it, but it could severely hamper it.
28
- 29 Mr. Randol said that he has been under the impression that, he'll go back to January or February as an
30 example, the bees pretty much stay in their hive unless the temperature on a nice sunny day gets up
31 somewhere around 30 degrees.
32
- 33 Mr. Miller said it has to be warmer than 30 degrees, they would die instantly if it was 30 degrees.
34
- 35 Mr. Randol said so on a warm enough day they would come out of their hive, and asked Mr. Miller in that
36 time of year, how far are they likely to range, because there is no food. He said the bees are cleaning their
37 hive up during this time, so how far are they going to go.
38
- 39 Mr. Miller said that they don't go to the bathroom in the hive, so that is their first priority, and that time
40 of year there is nothing to forage; they are going to go a few feet, mingle around and fly back into the
41 hive. He said it is very important that the colony essentially stays intact in a ball; if they get split up, and
42 the weather changes, it could kill the whole hive.
43
- 44 Ms. Lee asked at what temperature do they move around more, if it isn't at 30 degrees.
45
- 46 Mr. Miller said mid to high 40's, but even then, the bees can't go very far. He said if it was 50 degrees,
47 they could go further.
48
- 49 Mr. Elwell said to Mr. Miller that with his experience, he has had an average of four hives on each lot

1 within Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy. He asked what type of feedback he has had from his neighbors;
2 presumably, maybe some of those neighbors have had a pool. He said he is trying to put this into context
3 of how many bees would be in his swimming pool every day; like how many bees would there have to be
4 in order to have a nuisance problem or for him to be upset enough to go through the lengths to complain,
5 like some of the neighbors have gone through already.
6

7 Mr. Miller said that he could not imagine having 300 bees in a pool. He asked Mr. Elwell if he was familiar
8 with Urban Gardens in Savoy.
9

10 Mr. Elwell said yes.
11

12 Mr. Miller said that it is a little place where they grow and sell flowers, and he has four colonies there. He
13 said that around 75 yards away, one of the neighbors installed a brand new pool last year and he hasn't
14 heard any complaints from them. He said that the pool is located close to Galen Drive and there have to
15 be a hundred pools in that subdivision, and no one has said a word.
16

17 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Miller how many bees someone would have to have to complain; in other words, if
18 someone had to pack in all these bees in order to cause this problem.
19

20 Mr. Miller said that he can't say.
21

22 Mr. Elwell asked if it would be 500,000 or a million bees.
23

24 Mr. Miller said that he can't say. He said that is kind of ridiculous thing to ask to be honest, like how
25 many prisoners does it take to kill one person.
26

27 Mr. Elwell said that unfortunately, he is not an apiarist. He said he is just trying to get an idea, would 46
28 hives on one lot be enough to cause a neighbor to complain, for example.
29

30 Mr. Miller said he can't answer that, he is going to have to give him a better question than that. He said
31 that it just doesn't make sense, he would never have 46 hives in one yard.
32

33 Mr. Elwell said that is what he is trying to get at.
34

35 Mr. Miller told Mr. Elwell that he isn't making any sense; he is sorry, he doesn't want to be rude.
36

37 Mr. Elwell said that in his mind, this is kind of like a puppy mill; for example, someone who is trying to
38 raise puppies to sell them and doesn't care about them.
39

40 Mr. Miller said that the beekeepers have way too much money invested in their bees and care too much
41 about their bees; they are not like cattle or hogs.
42

43 Mr. Elwell said that is kind of what he is getting at.
44

45 Mr. Miller said the beekeepers go to great lengths to make sure that they survive the winter; that is the
46 hardest thing, and the invasive pest that everyone knows about. He said they just don't stick them out there
47 and leave them alone; they are managed weekly all summer long, and by February or March, they are
48 chomping at the bit to get back into the hives to see what they next year is going to bring.
49

1 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.
2

3 Ms. Lee asked Mr. Miller what is the ideal square footage that a beekeeper would have available for the
4 bees for them to be sustained to one hive, for example.
5

6 Mr. Miller said he is not sure if he understands her correctly, but the whole 8,000 square feet. He thinks
7 that the Champaign, Urbana, Savoy, Tolono, and Philo area is incredible for beekeeping, because of towns
8 like Urbana where there is clover in the yards; at his own house he has a pollinator pocket. He said they
9 have all the prairie plants, and they are all over the whole city like that. He said Champaign is a monarch
10 city, and there was a big deal about that a few years ago. He said it is more than just the bees, it is about
11 all the pollinators; it's just an amazing place to have honeybees.
12

13 Ms. Lee asked what kind of area is necessary for the bees to continue living without having enough food
14 in the area. She said the beekeepers can't have the hives too close to each other, because they're going to
15 be going over the same area. She asked what the ideal conditions are for keeping bees in terms of quality
16 of life per square footage.
17

18 Mr. Miller said that there are more than enough sources of nectar and pollen, that it is not going to be an
19 issue now or in the future, it's never going to be an issue. He said that Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy
20 have thousands of linden trees and those are a huge nectar producer. He said there are tens of thousands
21 of maple trees, they are one of the earliest sources of nectar and pollen. He said the list goes on and on:
22 Tulip Poplar, Catalpa tree, and that is why it is so good here, because of all the big trees. He said the trees
23 are the major source of nectar and the clover after the trees. He said he doesn't know how many acres in
24 Champaign-Urbana, probably 15, 16 thousand, or more; there is plenty of forage for the 300 colonies that
25 are in Champaign County. He hopes that answered Ms. Lee's question.
26

27 Mr. Randol said maybe another way to describe what Ms. Lee is trying to ask is, for example, a 10,000
28 square foot lot with the number of hives that Mr. Miller has, what number of hives is he comfortable
29 putting within that lot area size without causing any type of complaints or problems.
30

31 Mr. Miller responded five hives. He said he has extra jackets if anyone wants to go see what it is about
32 and why they do it. He said that there are 12 people behind him in the audience that would be glad to take
33 anybody to see what they are dealing with.
34

35 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Mr.
36 Miller. He asked for Ms. Wachter to testify. He asked Ms. Wachter to please state her full name and
37 address before proceeding with her testimony.
38

39 Ms. Maggie Wachter stated that she lives at 1 Buena Vista Court in Urbana. She said that she is a master
40 beekeeper, she owns a company called Second Nature Honey, and she has been beekeeping in Champaign
41 County for about 15 years. She said she has currently has about 50 hives spread out in ten different
42 locations throughout Champaign County. She said in Urbana itself she has four hives at Sola Gratia Farm,
43 five hives at Curtis Orchard, 7 hives at Country Arbors Nursery, one hive on top of the Courier Café, and
44 the rest are distributed on farms throughout Champaign County. She said she teaches beekeeping classes
45 at Parkland College. She said that her hives are gentle and none of them are Africanized, the so-called
46 killer bees. She said that they have been registered with the State of Illinois and the United States
47 Department of Agriculture. She said that the State provides the beekeepers with a system of beekeeping
48 resources, including regional bee inspectors who provide them with valuable guidance, advice and
49 support. She said that the situation that sparked this meeting seems to her to demonstrate the need for

1 neighborly conflict resolution, not draconian regulations that will practically eradicate beekeeping for the
2 foreseeable future. She said since they are concerned about Champaign County residents' well-being, she
3 would like to know if they have considered the impact of such a proposed regulation on birds who depend
4 on bees for an important part of their diet; or one-third of their own diet, which is pollinated specifically
5 by honeybees; or the beauty of flowers and trees around them. She said that beekeeping legislation for the
6 state was crafted a few years ago with heavy input from beekeepers over many months; beekeeping is a
7 serious scientific endeavor that takes years of experience. She said that the discussion of nucleus hives is
8 an example of the Board's layman's knowledge. She said that some beekeepers keep only small hives
9 year-round; this is especially true for women or others who are physically challenged. She said that the
10 discussion of a fence requirement is another example of incomplete beekeeping knowledge because many
11 hives swarm and live in the wild often in trees; wild bees live around them everywhere. She said another
12 example of inadequate experience is the discussion of honeybee extermination; a few years ago, a tree
13 was cut down in Champaign, where a wild beehive was living. She said the city tried to kill it with poison
14 and after the bees were killed, many other bees arrived to take the poisoned honey back to their own hives
15 to feed to their babies; many hives were needlessly killed. She said that there are beehives in the White
16 House garden, there are others on Chicago City Hall, there are bees in the heart of New York City, and
17 here in Illinois, the beekeepers already register their hives with the State. She said that as they consider
18 the individual case that began this examination, let's remember that it is a single situation. She said that
19 the residents of Champaign County have a long legacy of agriculture and encouraging and promoting their
20 bees is part of their legacy as agriculture workers and human beings. She said that if there are regulations
21 that are going to affect the beekeepers, then beekeepers should have integrated input. She thanked the
22 Board.

23
24 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Wachter if she would be willing to email Staff what she read tonight.

25
26 Mr. Elwell asked the Board and Staff if there were any questions for Ms. Wachter.

27
28 Mr. Hall told Ms. Wachter that he just wants to make sure that they are in agreement; none of the places
29 where she described keeping bees would fall under this Amendment.

30
31 Ms. Wachter said yes, at this time.

32
33 Mr. Hall said right.

34
35 Ms. Wachter said she has kept bees at her own house on West Illinois Street. She said she kept eight hives,
36 two on one side of her property and six on the other side. She said that she kept them behind a fence right
37 next to Leal Elementary School and they never bothered anyone, and she taught beekeeping for an entire
38 summer in that area.

39
40 Mr. Hall said that area would not be covered under this Amendment.

41
42 Ms. Wachter said oh, sorry.

43
44 A person from the audience said it was part of the city.

45
46 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Watcher what her thoughts were on fencing off the beehives.

47
48 Ms. Wachter said under different circumstances she advises differently, but in town she advises
49 beekeepers to put up a six-foot privacy fence around the area where they keep their bees; so that they fly

1 up and over the trees and back down. She said that if there is no barrier for the bees, they fly in like an
2 airplane and if they bump into a person on their way down, they could possibly sting that person. She said
3 that there are many areas where she has bees where there is no fence, but there are no people around either,
4 because the bees aren't in a highly populated area.

5
6 Mr. Elwell asked if the problem is with someone approaching the hive or is the problem with the bees
7 approaching the hive.

8
9 Ms. Wachter said that if the bees bump into someone and that person gets scared then makes a gesture to
10 shoo them away, the bees can interpret that as a threatening gesture and they may rise to the defense and
11 sting.

12
13 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Ms.
14 Watcher. He asked for Ms. Donnelly to testify. He asked Ms. Donnelly to please state her full name and
15 address before proceeding with her testimony.

16
17 Ms. Annette Donnelly stated that she lives at 409 West Hill Street in Champaign. She said that she is here
18 tonight to ask the Board to consider a broader context and potentially to win their support for a denial vote
19 on restrictions to beekeeping and pollinators in Champaign County. She said because of a personal dispute
20 between two neighbors regarding bees in their pool, the County is considering legislation that will restrict
21 beekeeping. She said that this is concerning, because the legislation inhibits site selection and imposes
22 expensive fencing requirements on beekeepers that the bees are not likely to comply with as the fly. She
23 said in essence, the proposed rules hinder beekeepers who are unable to afford the mandates and the bees
24 will go where they like, as they already do. She said that she has learned a great deal as a Master Gardener
25 and Master Naturalist from University of Illinois Extension on the value of pollinators. She said she cannot
26 share how much she appreciates learning about prairie ecosystems and how amazing local park managers
27 are conserving and beautifying their sister cities. She said their parks and pollinator habitats are beautiful
28 and abundant; clearly Champaign strives to create a pollinator friendly environment that is pleasing and
29 educational for its citizens. She said that those of them interested in promoting a habitat and home for
30 pollinators need to share evidence-based knowledge with them as the Board considers these regulations.
31 She said that nationally, beekeeping is declining, and the United States has experienced a 40 percent drop
32 in managed beehives from 2018 to 2019 due to Colony Collapse Disorder. She said within that context,
33 consider that beekeeping in the United States has gone from 6 million hives in the 1940s to 2.8 million
34 hives today. She said that if that doesn't give them anxiety, consider that the insect population itself is
35 experiencing an alarming decline, which the BBC called an insect apocalypse in a recent report. She said
36 that it is up to beekeepers to help gather data and ensure the crops, flowers, and fields are pollinated. She
37 said that honeybees don't read maps, they forage in about a three-mile radius from their hive, as the Board
38 has already heard from other witnesses tonight. She said that it is difficult to imagine how far a distance
39 they travel and what backyard flower and crops they pollinate. She said that the honeybees' amazing
40 ability to travel a far distance for forage makes it a challenge if not impossible to legislate. She said that
41 if anything, the managed hives have less of an influence on offending neighbors than rogue hives would
42 in the wild. She said honeybees swarm when their colonies are at a peak and they feel crowded; the
43 beekeepers manage the colony to reduce this swarming instinct. She said that when swarms do happen,
44 the beekeepers try to catch the swarm and create a new home for them. She said the honeybees will still
45 produce in the wild, but the question is where they will live; it could be in a tree, attic, or the soffit of a
46 house. She said she is deeply saddened that a dispute between neighbors can turn into a zoning matter for
47 pollinators. She said this is politics at its worst and an embarrassment to the county that strives to promote
48 a healthy ecosystem. She said please consider a no way, not on their watch attitude about restricting
49 beekeepers; the proposed legislation is not about the effect of bees, it is about a personality. She said that

1 the bees will fly where they want, and personal disputes make bad law. She said please consider the impact
2 of their actions, thank you.

3
4 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Donnelly if she would be willing to email them a copy of her testimony.

5
6 Ms. Donnelly responded yes, they could have it.

7
8 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any question from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Ms.
9 Donnelly. He asked for Ms. Brown to testify. He asked Ms. Brown to please state her full name and
10 address before proceeding with her testimony.

11
12 Ms. Sara Brown stated that she lives at 2012 Rainbow View in Urbana. She said that she is the caregiver
13 for Rena Jones's father who lives in the home with Ms. Jones and her husband. She said she has been in
14 their family's home for the last eight years and spends more time with them then she does with her own
15 kids. She said she has grown to become very close with their family and she views them as a part of her
16 family. She said that when she started working for them, she had never been educated on the importance
17 of bees or how they affect their daily living. She said she has been stung only twice in the eight years she
18 has worked there, and her children have been on the property and never been stung. She said she knows
19 the intent of this meeting isn't to determine the character of Ms. Jones, but she just wants everyone to
20 understand the ways of this generous, kind-hearted, and hard-working woman. She said that yes, there
21 have been a few neighbors who have had issues with honeybees and any time a problem would arise, Ms.
22 Jones was quick to try to resolve the problem the best way she could. She said that included adding more
23 water stations in her yard, offering honey to neighbors, offering money for car washes, and educating
24 them on the overall purpose of honeybees. She said Ms. Jones and her husband work effortlessly every
25 year on a garden they maintain down the street from their residence and in that garden, there are beautiful
26 flowers as well as an array of vegetables that she offers to the neighbors, because she's that type of person.
27 She said that Ms. Jones has neighbors by the name of Ken and Nila Mills who she knew before she started
28 working for Ms. Jones. She said that after reading a typed letter that was signed by Mr. Mills, she has to
29 say that it is very contradictory to what she has witnessed with her own two eyes. She said that Mr. Mills
30 and his wife would both come over to see the bees and were very intrigued and loved being educated by
31 Ms. Jones. She said that she vividly remembers Ms. Jones having to instruct Mr. Mills on a couple of
32 occasions to back away from the hives, because he was so eager to have an up-close experience with the
33 bees. She said that she says all of this to convey if Mr. Mills was still living, she truly believes the words
34 out of his mouth would not match the words of his typed letter. She said that she understands the frustration
35 of the neighbors complaining that the bees are a nuisance, but she has to ask, how is it any different from
36 the nuisance of flies, wasps, ants, yellow jackets, raccoon, or squirrels. She said they run and complain
37 about them, because Ms. Jones is the beekeeper in the neighborhood doesn't mean it's fair to target her
38 and place the blame of all the honeybees on her. She said she has a pool in her backyard and has seen bees
39 around the water, but that doesn't mean they come from a hive right next door, because bees travel to find
40 a drinking source. She said that she has watched Ms. Jones come home from working for five clients,
41 change clothes, and voluntarily move hives just to please the complaints of her neighbors. She said that
42 she has always admired Ms. Jones as a woman that she looks up to for many reasons. She said that Ms.
43 Jones's bees are her peace, and she commends her for doing her part to keep them around. She said she is
44 against any restrictions for not just her, but all the beekeepers trying to do their part to help their
45 community.

46
47 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Ms. Brown.
48 He asked for Ms. Mathis to testify.

49

1 Mr. Randol asked Mr. Elwell if before they proceed with Ms. Mathis's testimony if they could take a brief
2 recess.

3

4 Mr. Elwell asked if he had a motion to take a brief recess.

5

6 **Mr. Randol said that he would make that motion.**

7

8 Mr. Elwell said for seven minutes.

9

10 Mr. Randol said that there is a lot to go still, how about a ten-minute recess.

11

12 Mr. Elwell asked him until what time then.

13

14 Mr. Randol said until 8:20 p.m.

15

16 Mr. Elwell said he has a motion for a brief recess until 8:20 p.m., does he have a second.

17

18 **Ms. Lee seconded the motion.**

19

20 **The motion carried.**

21

22 Mr. Elwell called the meeting back to order at 8:21 p.m.

23

24 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Mathis to please state her full name and address before proceeding with her
25 testimony.

26

27 Ms. Joan Mathis stated that her husband was with her tonight, Mr. Bob Mathis, and that they both live at
28 2004 Burwell Street in Urbana. She said that she doesn't have her testimony written down, but she heard
29 that there were only two people that had problems with the bees in their neighborhood, which is not true.
30 She asked the audience to raise their hand if they're in the neighborhood and they've had problems.

31

32 Mr. Elwell said that she will need to address the Board and not the public.

33

34 Ms. Mathis said she just wants the Board to know that it was more than two neighbors. She said that what
35 she and her husband are disappointed about is that they are a residential and not an agriculture
36 neighborhood. She said that they are zoned residential, and it bothers them that they have to have this
37 going on. She said that she is not against bees and she isn't against the good they do; and she isn't against
38 their beekeeper neighbors. She said that all she can tell them is that it was a problem, and it is a problem,
39 but it's not like it used to be. She said to please not judge them, and if they had an experience living by
40 beekeepers, they would know how they feel. She said that she and her husband have sat on their front
41 porch before with neighbors that are close to their age and the bees were so bad that they got up and left;
42 that's a nuisance. She said that she has had bees in the birdbaths, hummingbird feeders, and she hears
43 tonight that the bees don't like to go to the bathroom in their hives. She said that they go to the bathroom
44 on their cars, windows, siding on their house, and it dries like cement; it doesn't wash off nice, they have
45 to scrub every spot. She said that her husband is handicapped and she still washes their cars and house,
46 and she knows what she has to clean off. She said that they have lived at their home for 31 years, and they
47 didn't have those problems before the bees came there. She said that she believes the bees came from
48 those particular beehives, because they had an occasional bee, but they never had this. She said that in fact
49 she was so perplexed when she found these yellow streaks on her car and she would ask other people that

1 didn't live in their neighborhood if they had something different on their cars this year, they would say
2 no, but they do. She said that she feels like beekeeping is not agriculture in the residential area and there
3 should be more distance between lots. She said that they are almost a block from this and that is mostly
4 what she had to say. She said that she knows that they have had neighbors with other animals in the area
5 come in recently and she doesn't know when this is going to stop, or how far it is going to go if they don't
6 get something going. She said that she isn't against the beekeepers and she is not against the bees, but she
7 just feels like it needs to be in an area where there is more room to accommodate all these bees and things
8 they are dealing with.

9
10 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any questions from the Board or Staff.

11
12 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Hall if he could remind him what percentage of Champaign County this amendment
13 would overlay.

14
15 Mr. Hall said it would be three quarters of one percent for the total unincorporated area of Champaign
16 County.

17
18 Mr. Elwell asked for Ms. Koch to testify. He asked Ms. Koch to please state her full name and address
19 before proceeding with her testimony.

20
21 Ms. Diane Koch stated that she lived at 2006 Burwell Street in Urbana for the past 31 years. She said that
22 she is a neighbor to Bob and Joan Mathis. She said that she doesn't know how many of them get the
23 newspaper, but they made the front page today. She said that in the newspaper article there was a direct
24 quote from Ms. Jones stating that she had 40 beehives, and that she doesn't have them anymore; she has
25 farmed them out to different people. She said that as the Board has heard from beekeepers that have
26 testified tonight, in fact the one gentlemen, she can't recall his name, but he did say that his
27 recommendation was for no more than five hives on a lot that was one acre or less. She said that her
28 situation is that she loves flowers and birds, so she has birdbaths and birdfeeder areas throughout her yard.
29 She said that she is grateful that this year, for the first time in three years, the population of bees in her
30 yard has been normal. She said that she doesn't have a hundred or more dead bees floating on top of her
31 birdbaths and she is not exaggerating. She said that unfortunately the bees drown, because she doesn't put
32 in sticks, stones, and all the different things she is supposed to. She said that she just tries to keep the algae
33 out of the water, because it is for the birds. She said that she is hesitant to think that this is going to go on
34 forever, that she will not have the recurrence of all bees that she had previously. She said that even in the
35 birdseed, the bees are hungry and are trying to get food. She said that they are in the birdfeeders and
36 birdbaths, and that is a problem for her. She said that she likes to sit out on her deck in the morning and
37 have breakfast, but she can't do that; this season she can, but other seasons no. She said that she has been
38 stung multiple times, because she works in her yard a lot, and so far, she has no allergies, thank goodness.
39 She said that is basically all she has to say, but she does hope that there is a good resolution for the
40 neighborhood. She said she would like to say also in closing, that there are more than just two people in
41 this whole scenario that are in a disagreement with the way things have been in their neighborhood and
42 she is one of them.

43
44 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any question from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Ms. Koch.
45 He asked for Mr. Shosted to testify. He asked Mr. Shosted to please state his full name and address before
46 proceeding with his testimony.

47
48 Mr. Ryan Shosted stated that he lives at 402 West Michigan Avenue in Urbana. He said that he doesn't
49 envy the decision that is before the Board and clearly there are divergent views on this issue. He said that

1 he is a beekeeper himself and he has been asked to make a few remarks on behalf of the Central Eastern
2 Illinois Beekeeping Association tonight. He said that he is a small-time beekeeper and some of the people
3 the Board has already heard from tonight have a lot of hives; he just has had a few hives, but currently he
4 only has one. He said that when his ancestor, William Vernon, who was a wounded Civil War Veteran,
5 set a few beehives on a little farm near the banks of the Big Sandy River in Kentucky, he started a family
6 tradition that has continued in his family for five generations. He said he tells the Board this because
7 beekeeping is more than a hobby to some and a nuisance to others. He said that it is, in fact, a way of life
8 that passed down from parent to child, as it was in his family. He said that as Board members, they have
9 the power to ensure that beekeeping continues in Champaign County. He said that they have the ability to
10 regulate it out of existence, whether that is slowly or quickly, privately or publicly. He said that they have
11 the ability to retreat and let others make this decision for them as beekeeping in Champaign County
12 dwindles and dies. He said that his association represents at least 88 of their constituents, and hopes that
13 they will ensure the present and future vitality of beekeeping in this county by tabling the proposed
14 ordinance indefinitely as they did in November 2020 when he was last involved in this process. He said
15 that among its many benefits, beekeeping sustains the agriculture practices of the modern food web. He
16 said that limiting or discouraging beekeeping will by definition reduce the number of honeybees and in
17 return will affect the quality and abundance of their local food. He said that he knows what the reaction
18 of some of the Board members might be, they might say they aren't here to eliminate bees or beekeeping
19 from Champaign County. He said that his association categorically rejects that fallacy; they think that
20 decision before them is actually very weighty and it will serve as a deterrent to beekeeping; whether it
21 will affect current beekeepers or future beekeepers who move into the areas that will be zoned differently
22 and these all-present complications. He said that he knows when he purchased his property here in
23 Champaign County that he entered into it with the explicit understanding that he would be able to keep
24 bees on his property, because he did his research and found out. He said that he recognized that there are
25 a number of logistical hurdles to be able to set up an apiary. He said that he has been willing to pursue
26 those ends and to find out what the zoning ordinances are like, but he does think that the amendments that
27 are being contemplated here are unnecessarily complex and will serve as a deterrent to future beekeeping
28 in their county. He said that they already know there is environmental degradation that has been spoken
29 about eloquently here tonight. He said that there might be a misperception that the managed beehives in
30 Champaign County by folks like him don't really have that big of an impact and he thinks they do, and he
31 thinks the science shows that they have a big impact as well. He said that as he was driving here tonight,
32 he passed by a little community garden just to the southwest of the meeting, and if they think those fruits
33 and vegetables in that garden aren't pollinated by local beekeepers, they are probably wrong. He said that
34 they are almost certainly pollinated from the honeybees that are visiting there from local hives of the
35 residential beekeepers. He said that if the Board passes the proposed ordinance, there will be fewer fruits
36 and vegetables to harvest in that community garden and in gardens all over Champaign County. He said
37 that he thinks it is important to think about that and consider the effect that this ordinance could have. He
38 said that as an association of beekeepers, it is their duty to remind them that attempts to curtail beekeeping
39 in Champaign County are antithetical to the agriculturally and environmentally friendly views that prevail
40 among its citizens. He said that they have the ability and are empowered by the voters of this county that
41 have absolutely swollen their inboxes with expressions of appreciation for local beekeepers, with
42 expressions of anxiety and concern about the state of their environment and the situation that pollinators
43 are in. He said that has been expressed to them, and he doesn't know if it is on record or not, but the
44 petition that has gone around that has around 700 signatures on it and he thinks that is all very important.
45 He said that the benefits of maintaining beekeeping certainly outweigh any real or imagined risks, but
46 there are a couple of points he would like to go over with them. He said that he had much more prepared,
47 and he thinks a lot of it has been discussed already, but he did want to mention a couple of points. He said
48 the first one he wanted to discuss is that when Mr. Elwell brought up the issue of puppy mills, for example,
49 and he does think it is important to get it right out there. He said that having a relatively large number of

1 bees in one area where the hives are next to each other is not going to result in any hardship to those bees,
2 because those bees are going to travel out to a relatively large range to forage for pollen, nectar, and water.
3 He said that he did a little research on Google Maps before coming to the meeting tonight, and said if
4 there was a beehive located right here at Brookens Administrative Center where the meeting is being held
5 tonight, the bee would regularly travel all the way to Carle Foundation Hospital, all the way to the
6 University of Illinois Arboretum, and all the way to Meadowbrook Park, just to give them an idea of how
7 far one bee will go to look for pollen, nectar, and water. He said that is an important geographic example
8 to get in their minds about how far the bees really travel. He said that even if there are hives right next to
9 each other, if this was a situation with dogs, cats, weasels, or whatever it might be that someone would be
10 raising in cages, this would look terribly inhumane, but in fact the hives that are right next to each other,
11 the bees from those hives are not competing for resources that are within five or ten feet of the hive versus
12 if they lived like some other type of livestock, like 30 goats on someone's property or something like that.
13 He said that the bees are going to spread out and they are going to go very far to find their resources. He
14 said that this is just one of the many ways in which they find it deeply regrettable that local beekeepers
15 haven't been consulted on the drafting of this proposed ordinance and it's surprising to them, quite frankly,
16 that they haven't been brought in earlier. He said it would be nice to have this dialogue, that he recognizes
17 it is a very formal proceeding, but why haven't they had more informal proceedings where there are
18 dialogues with local beekeepers, since they are in fact the experts. He said that the Board has a lot of
19 technical questions, and he can't answer all of their technical questions, but asked if this was the sort of
20 proceeding where the Board could ask all of them. He said like Mr. Miller had said previously, he knows
21 about 12 people in the room who can share the right answer with them. He said that he thinks it's
22 unfortunate that this is the way they are having this discussion and he understands there must be a very
23 good reasons for it; he doesn't second guess them on that. He said that he fails to see why there haven't
24 been more informal meetings with beekeepers to discuss these very challenging and technical issues,
25 because they have a great deal of information. He said that the Board members seem very interested and
26 curious, and he commends that curiosity, and he appreciates the fact that they have been looking for
27 answers on the internet. He said that he just wonders why the beekeepers haven't been asked; this is a
28 rhetorical question, and he doesn't anticipate an answer. He said that bees are not horses, puppies, and
29 they are not talking about the same kind of situation because of the bees foraging nature and the fact that
30 they can go out into the wild. He said that he would just like to say in closing that should the Board move
31 forward with the beekeeping ordinance, they obviously encourage them not to do that. He said that they
32 ask them to at least meet with their officers, to talk to their members, and to discuss with them outside of
33 these formal hearings, the impacts that any proposed ordinance will have on beekeepers and on the
34 community overall. He said that this should be done before the Board presents to them again with an
35 ordinance that so blindly disregards the lives and livelihoods of law-abiding citizens of this county. He
36 said that the beekeepers do in fact perform a substantive public good and he thinks it is very important
37 that someone stresses this tonight, that they can say this is all kind of environmental nonsense, but it's not.
38 He said that if they like having lots of raspberries for themselves, their kids, and their grandkids, they want
39 that produce from their own yard. He said that it is not going to happen if there are not local beekeepers,
40 and they are not going to have that abundance of produce without them. He said that Mr. Miller said earlier
41 that they live in an amazing place for agriculture and the richness of their soil, it's just a wonderful place
42 to live. He said that to remove the bees, to restrict the bees, or to detour future beekeepers from keeping
43 bees, because he believes all aspects of this ordinance will do, that is something to be avoided. He said
44 that his final point that came up in the questioning earlier and he would have to look at the transcript to
45 know exactly, but when Mr. Wood asked a question and Mr. Hall answered that the only real thing that
46 they can control is how many bees there are, if that is the case, why on earth is this zoning ordinance so
47 complex and why does it contain all of these different features like the fencing, gate, and the water on the
48 property restrictions. He said that if really the only thing they are here to talk about is controlling the
49 number of bees on a particular acreage, then he thinks they can have that discussion. He said that he

1 doesn't want to speak for everyone, but that sounds like something they can talk about. He said this other
2 stuff is needlessly complex. He said that he doesn't know enough about the original complaint to say, but
3 from what he has gathered from this evening, it seems like a lot of the dispute could be handled by having
4 a conversation about how many bees should be kept on a particular property and understanding very
5 technically how many bees they are talking about. He said that Ms. Jones has mentioned to him before
6 that there are questions about hives that are inactive, for example, and he has left an inactive hive on his
7 property before; but from a Google view it would like it is an active hive, because it's just a hive that he
8 didn't put back in his garage in the winter. He said that he doesn't know if the number of hives that are
9 being mentioned in this particular case are even active, and some might appear active from a satellite view,
10 but they might not be an active hive. He said that he doesn't know how many hives that would have
11 affected in this particular case, but it is something they need to consider as they are thinking about the
12 number of hives on each property. He said that unlike other small-scale agriculturists who probably like
13 many of them raise food on their own property for their own families, the beekeepers make it possible for
14 food to grow in everyone's garden. He said please do not detour them from carrying out that vital function
15 they fulfil for them and the rest of their neighbors. He thanked the Board for its attention.
16

17 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Shosted that if they are talking about a small percentage of the area of Champaign
18 County, then how many beekeepers is this affecting. He said this is the question in the back of his mind,
19 he is almost picturing Africanized swarms attacking something.
20

21 Mr. Shosted said he's seen those movies too.
22

23 Mr. Elwell said right, and it was pointed out earlier that he is definitely a layman.
24

25 Mr. Shosted said let's say he's learning.
26

27 Mr. Elwell said thank you very much he appreciates that, but when he hears this, it's one way or the other.
28 He said that he happens to believe that the truth is somewhere in the middle, but when he hears from the
29 witnesses tonight that they can't have people come over to their house and things like that, that is
30 infringing on the enjoyment of that homeowner on their own property. He asked if he could paint the worst
31 picture of Africanized honeybees attacking a front porch, what would that look like.
32

33 Mr. Shosted said that he doesn't know and doesn't want to know.
34

35 Mr. Elwell asked if that is what is going on.
36

37 Mr. Shosted asked if that is likely to happen around here.
38

39 Mr. Elwell said yes.
40

41 Mr. Shosted said no its not, but there are experts that might be testifying later tonight and might be able
42 to speak to that better than he can. He said he is not a bee scientist, but the risks of Africanized bees are
43 one of these things that come up in the popular press frequently that need to be dealt with in a systematic
44 way so people do not get the impression that the source of a third of their food should be eliminated,
45 because there is kind of this sensational fear. He said that he is not talking about anything that anyone has
46 claimed tonight to have happened to them and he empathizes with them and feels bad about that. He said
47 that when he was talking about great swarms of bees causing irreputable damage, he doesn't think that is
48 what they are talking about at all here. He said that he thinks the Board has raised this question a couple
49 of times to others, and it seems to him that the Board is particularly interested in this idea of how little.

1 He said that Mr. Hall has expressed this several times, and is probably not making his point absolutely
2 clear. He said that he thinks the point he was trying to make is that this isn't going to affect that much of
3 the county at all, this is a tiny fraction of the county. He said that it sends a signal and a message that
4 beekeeping is a restricted activity, and he believes that for a person of his nature that he would look at
5 those ordinances, and he would say, "gosh I can't do this, this is too much for him to do, there are too
6 many restrictions, he's afraid of getting fined," and he wouldn't even want to start. He said he does believe
7 for that reason that he has tried to make the argument that the proposed ordinances could serve as a
8 deterrent to future citizens of Champaign County wanting to keep bees. He said if that is what they agree
9 on as a community, that they are scared of being swarmed by bees, and are frightened and terrified by it,
10 it just doesn't seem like that is consistent with the values of people who live in Champaign County. He
11 said that ordinances have been pulled from other places, and he is sure they work in those places, maybe
12 they do or maybe they don't, he doesn't know how well their ordinances work in these other places. He
13 said that this is their place and their opportunity to decide what is consistent with how they want to do
14 things in Champaign County, and he frankly doesn't think people are on point. He said that his experience
15 with his neighbors, public leaders, and researchers at the University that he interacts with is very positive
16 about bees. He said it seems like even some of the folks that have had this dispute about the bees have
17 said on record that they don't dislike bees and they don't dislike beekeepers. He said that they need to
18 come up with a solution that doesn't detour and doesn't put undue burdens on beekeepers. He said that he
19 gets they are not going to have that conversation tonight, because he knows it is very formal. He asked
20 why they can't have that conversation and talk to each other to come up with the right ordinance, if there
21 needs to be an ordinance. He said that because of the workings of the County government, instead of
22 having something that was brought to the beekeepers first, now they have to debate this; why not start
23 from the beginning. He said why not start with the question of how many bees should be on so many
24 acres in Champaign County.

25
26 Mr. Elwell said he would have to disagree, because this is the way that the County does that.

27
28 Mr. Shosted said this is how they do it, okay.

29
30 Mr. Elwell said correct, and he greatly appreciates all of the input tonight and he thinks with all of this
31 input, and over the next couple of meetings at least, he thinks they are going to be able to come to a Final
32 Determination.

33
34 Mr. Shosted asked if there will ever be a point where they get to ask questions and have those questions
35 answered.

36
37 Mr. Elwell said that is what this is.

38
39 Mr. Shosted said they should have told them that at the beginning of the testimonies. He said that he
40 doesn't think other people recognized that they got to ask the Board questions as well, because they
41 thought that they were the ones being questioned.

42
43 Ms. Lee said that there are some rules of the Board that prevent them from discussing things with the
44 public outside of the meeting. She said that she thinks the Staff can talk to the beekeepers, but they as
45 Board members cannot talk to the beekeepers outside of the meeting.

46
47 Mr. Shosted said that he understood. He said that his main disagreement with how this process has been
48 conducted is exactly that, that the Staff member didn't speak with local beekeepers before forming the
49 proposed ordinance. He said that he thinks this could have been less antagonistic and a more positive

1 process, but here they are now, and they will work their way forward. He said that his position that he has
2 tried to state to them tonight and he will clarify that he thinks the ordinance is too complex. He said that
3 it has too much going on in it and from what he understands about the original dispute, it seems to exceed
4 what the original dispute was about, and he doesn't know why. He asked Mr. Hall if he could ask him
5 why.
6

7 Mr. Randol said that he has mentioned more than once about getting together and talking to discuss the
8 proposed ordinance.
9

10 Mr. Shosted said yes.
11

12 Mr. Randol asked if in his association, do they ever have discussions among themselves at their meetings
13 as to how many hives various people have and the location of those hives. He said that if they do and
14 someone says, "well I've got 30 hives on my lot," do they not question that and say this isn't a good idea.
15

16 Mr. Shosted said that if they knew the size of the lot, then they could have that discussion. He said that he
17 doesn't necessarily know; he thinks Ms. Wachter pointed out that all these things are very circumstantial
18 and have to do with who their neighbors are.
19

20 Mr. Randol said that he thinks a lot of this could have been avoided two years ago if people knew that
21 there was a way that they could talk to somebody in his association and tell them that they're having a
22 problem at this location and what can they do as an individual.
23

24 Mr. Shosted said it was a missed opportunity, and it's water under the bridge at this point, but there are a
25 lot of bad feelings on the beekeepers' end if he can speak for them and that this has just been presented to
26 them. He said that they are the people who will be directly affected by the regulations of this proposed
27 ordinance immediately.
28

29 Mr. Randol said that he is talking about solving a problem among themselves within the association before
30 it ever gets to a governmental body to where they start forming an ordinance because of it. He said that he
31 must have some way to help alleviate a problem like that before it reaches this point.
32

33 Mr. Shosted said that the apiarists do visit occasionally , but certainly not with any kind of oversight in
34 mind. He said that is not the kind of body that they are, but if he is suggesting that somebody should be
35 able to put their arm around somebody else and say, "yeah I don't believe this is going very well." He said
36 that he thinks that that happens, and he has a mentor himself, Mr. Miller, who spoke earlier tonight. He
37 said Mr. Miller has been his mentor and has given him that kind of advice, but clearly, he has never been
38 in a situation where he has had a large number of hives on his property. He said that in all kinds of other
39 situations he has given him advice, so they do have kind of a mentor and student relationship, which is
40 very informal, and they do give advice to each other like that.
41

42 Mr. Randol said thank you.
43

44 Mr. Elwell asked if there was any other questions from the Board.
45

46 Mr. Shosted said wait, he thought he got to ask his question.
47

48 Mr. Elwell said sure.
49

1 Mr. Shosted asked Mr. Hall what the rationale behind all of the regulations is, like the water, fencing, and
2 some of the other issues that were mentioned earlier.
3
4 Mr. Hall asked him if he was asking why they have a requirement for two water sources for beekeepers
5 on small lots.
6
7 Mr. Shosted said yes.
8
9 Mr. Hall asked him if he had seen the article written by the young lady from the University of Illinois
10 Pollinarium in the News Gazette about a month ago that described that very thing as a good thing to do.
11
12 Mr. Shosted asked if it was a necessary thing to do and is it something that must be done, or they will be
13 fined, or they won't be able to have licenses.
14
15 Mr. Hall said that if this Amendment is adopted, they will have to have two sources of water on the lot
16 that has beehives.
17
18 Mr. Shosted asked how this proceeds from the original dispute. He said if the dispute was that someone
19 had too many bees on their property, how did they get to gate, fence, and two water sources.
20
21 Mr. Hall said that the gate and the fence are from a public safety perspective.
22
23 Mr. Shosted said he acknowledged that, but respectfully why is this the opportunity, if there was a very
24 narrowly defined infraction, of course there wasn't an infraction, because there wasn't an ordinance in
25 place. He said that he perceived that there is an issue here that has to be resolved; what did the issue have
26 to do with the water source or a gate.
27
28 Mr. Hall said the issues had to do with bees visiting in a neighbor's pool. He said he didn't know if they
29 had enough water sources on their lot or not; all he knows is they were also visiting birdbaths. He said
30 that they were going to develop standards to help the neighbors, and one of those standards is having two
31 sources of water on their lot if they have beehives. He said that from what he has read, that is just common
32 sense. He said he doesn't know if Ms. Jones had two sources of water; he doesn't really care, because he
33 is drafting an ordinance now for responsible beekeeping in a neighborly way.
34
35 Mr. Shosted asked what about the gates and the fences, what does that have to do with this.
36
37 Mr. Hall said public safety.
38
39 Mr. Shosted said that it doesn't have to do with the original dispute.
40
41 Mr. Hall said absolutely not; it had to do with developing an ordinance for beekeeping and they cannot
42 overlook public safety.
43
44 Mr. Shosted said that Mr. Hall is taking the opportunity and that he is just trying to ask.
45
46 Mr. Hall said no, this is good.
47
48 Mr. Shosted said that unfortunately, they never had this conversation before, and he is trying to understand
49 how they got to an ordinance that has all of these issues addressed but are not really an issue. He said that

1 it seems to have been the issue that has been talked about most of this evening, which is that somebody
2 has too many bees on their property. He said that Mr. Hall's point is that when he writes an ordinance, it
3 must be the most expansive ordinance possible to cover all aspects of public safety.
4

5 Mr. Hall said no, it was not that expansive, he looked at two State Model Ordinances, which Mr. Shosted
6 apparently doesn't agree with. He said he would love to have an Illinois State Model Ordinance, but
7 nobody has made one. He said that he looked at the two State Ordinances and at Lake County, Illinois,
8 which is not known to be a particularly aggressive regulatory county; they are generally considered a good
9 model for Illinois counties. He said that he looked at Saint Charles, Illinois, and he isn't sure how they fall
10 with most regulations. He said that he looked at Whitewater, Wisconsin and he actually went beyond all
11 of those; he proposed a limit of three hives, not just two, on a lot that is 10,000 square feet or less.
12

13 Mr. Shosted said thank you.
14

15 Mr. Hall said that Mr. Miller would probably like to see five hives, although he averages four right now.
16 He said that he doesn't really see that they are that far apart, and when he is a Zoning Administrator
17 developing an Ordinance, he wants to know, should they be able to put their hives right on the lot line by
18 their neighbor's yard, or should there be a minimum separation.
19

20 Mr. Shosted said if he asked a beekeeper that question, they would say as many of them have said tonight,
21 the bees are going to go where the bees are going to go.
22

23 Mr. Hall said he is not talking about where the bees are going to go. He said that he is talking about where
24 the hive goes.
25

26 Mr. Shosted said that the dispute has to do with the bees showing up in someone else's property, not
27 having someone inordinately cross a property line and get tangled up in the hive.
28

29 Mr. Hall asked Mr. Shosted if there is no public good served by making sure beehives are not kept on a
30 property line.
31

32 Mr. Shosted said to transgress the property line or to have a particular distance from the property line, he
33 doesn't know what the distance from the property line is going to do.
34

35 Mr. Hall asked Mr. Shosted if he is not opposed to being able to have a beehive right on the property line
36 with his neighbor.
37

38 Mr. Shosted said no, because if a beekeeper orients it the correct way, he doesn't see the problem with it
39 if they had fencing in place.
40

41 Mr. Hall said that now Mr. Shosted is starting to complicate it.
42

43 Mr. Shosted said that it could be either or, right, but he has presented the fencing, property line, water
44 source, etc. He said that in fact most of his beekeeping colleagues here would agree that some of these
45 pieces might be appropriate in certain situations. He said that the beekeepers tend to be very careful and
46 that is why Mr. Hall in his long and distinguished career with Champaign County has seen very few
47 situations with beekeepers, because they are in fact extremely prudent and they have excellent
48 relationships with their neighbors. He said that he doesn't mean to suggest that this is not a situation that
49 should have been taken seriously, they have clearly taken it seriously. He said that he doesn't believe Mr.

1 Hall has considered how well everything else has gone in the county for a very long time with beekeepers.
2 He said that this sends the message to beekeepers that essentially Champaign County is out to regulate
3 this behavior, which from time immemorial has not been regulated and does serve a public good. He said
4 that to beekeepers, that sends a message, and to future generations of beekeepers, that's kind of a weird
5 semi-criminal activity they shouldn't engage in, because they don't want the County to come down on
6 them for it, as if we're raising tigers in our back yard or something like that.

7
8 Mr. Hall told Mr. Shosted that he would greatly appreciate receiving a heavily red-lined version of the
9 amendment from him and his organization so that staff can get an idea of how far off we are in general
10 understandings and agreements.

11
12 Mr. Shosted said terrific, he thinks that they can do that and they would be very happy to do that, thank
13 you.

14
15 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.

16
17 Mr. Wood said that Prairieview Subdivision seems to be a fairly unique situation since it seems to be the
18 only place where we have a complaint about this. He asked Mr. Shosted if the person who has beehives
19 there is a member of their association.

20
21 Mr. Shosted said yes.

22
23 Mr. Wood asked if Mr. Shosted had had any conversations with that person.

24
25 Mr. Shosted said he was not aware of any of this until after it had boiled up.

26
27 Mr. Wood said he was just curious, since we have this one particular unique situation that has created this
28 whole issue and brought it to a head like it has.

29
30 Mr. Shosted said he did not want to gossip and really did not know a lot of the facts. He said frankly, that
31 is another question that he has about this whole process. He said that as far as he can tell, this is by no
32 means a judicial process; there's a lot of allegations and a lot of counter allegations. He said that he
33 imagines there have been a lot of things said by both sides that are disputed, and it is kind of unfortunate
34 for the Board and he feels bad for them because he doesn't know how they are supposed to make sense of
35 what has really happened in that situation.

36
37 Mr. Wood said he doesn't know how long this process has been in place in terms of the development
38 process by staff, but he can say that as far as the Board is concerned, they saw this about seven or eight
39 days ago. He said he doesn't know if there are any beekeepers here, so he would really like to see more
40 input coming in from the people who have the expertise in that area, including is there a resolution to this
41 problem so that we don't have to go down this road.

42
43 Mr. Shosted said that his organization would be happy to provide a red lined amendment, but up front he
44 would like to know if they really need to have an ordinance at all. He said he thinks they may be crossing
45 a bridge before they need to come to it if we're still at this stage of asking if they are going to be an
46 ordinance, because their position is that there shouldn't be an ordinance, to make it perfectly clear.

47
48 Mr. Wood said that the Board's job is basically to make a decision about either yes or no; in his opinion,
49 it is the beekeepers who need to work with staff to come up with a better solution.

1 Mr. Hall said he just wanted to remind the Board that the petition requesting adoption of a beekeeping
2 amendment also had a petition with three properties from Mary Lou Drive, which is across Brownfield
3 Road and is a different subdivision. He said that carried some weight with ELUC, because it proved to
4 them that it was not just a Prairieview Subdivision issue. He said again, that's three properties in a different
5 subdivision, but it's a little more than just Prairieview Subdivision.
6

7 Mr. Shosted asked what was taking place.
8

9 Mr. Hall said that they do not know what was taking place; we just know that they wanted to sign the
10 petition calling for a beekeeping amendment. He said he did not know why they decided that.
11

12 Mr. Shosted that is really important to recognize because there are not necessarily beehives or some sort
13 of violation in that other neighborhood.
14

15 Mr. Hall said he does not know why people sign petitions.
16

17 Mr. Shosted said okay, other people have signed petitions, but he would respectfully submit that they
18 could possibly be friends with the people in the other neighborhood.
19

20 Mr. Wood said yes, part of the problem is that we don't know whether this particular issue is caused by
21 the beekeeper there, or if it's caused by bees coming from some other location.
22

23 Mr. Shosted said that he would be very hesitant to suggest based on a couple of signatures that there is
24 actually another problem in another neighborhood without further investigation by the Planning & Zoning
25 Department.
26

27 Mr. Hall said it is staff's position right now that there are no bees in the Prairieview Subdivision. He said
28 that this ordinance is not likely going to change anything that is going on in the Prairieview Subdivision
29 unless it turns out that there are lots that have lots of bees that we don't know about. He said he thinks we
30 would know about it if that were the case. He said that is an historical thing that has happened, and as he
31 thinks Mr. Bryson said tonight, they're concerned that they don't want it to happen again.
32

33 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Shosted if this amendment doesn't pass, and there's nothing that says you can't have
34 like 100 hives on a very small postage stamp lot, where would one go to complain, or how would this be
35 policed going forward.
36

37 Mr. Shosted asked how it has been policed for many years; it hasn't been policed because it hasn't been
38 an issue, so Mr. Elwell is asking him a hypothetical, kind of crazy question if there's going to be 100 hives
39 on one property. He said that he is not trying to take the position that this is not something that Zoning
40 should have been involved in.
41

42 Mr. Elwell asked how it should have evolved. He said it probably should not have gotten this far;
43 something should have happened before then, but we can't go in the past. He said going forward, if this
44 doesn't pass or if there's no zoning ordinance, how should this be taken care of in the future.
45

46 Mr. Shosted said it seems to him that there are plenty of things that haven't happened yet in Champaign
47 County that you're not necessarily contemplating. He said given that this is one particular situation that
48 appears to be now resolved, he's not sure that it deserves any more particular attention, to be quite honest.
49

1 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or staff. Seeing none, he thanked Mr.
2 Shosted and called Ms. Deem to testify.

3
4 Ms. Leslie Deem, 1205 N Division Ave, Urbana, is the Director and teacher at the Pollinatarium on
5 campus. She said she does not have a prepared statement, but she has some questions about the
6 amendment. She said one of the things they do at the Pollinatarium is they field calls from neighbors who
7 are having difficulty with bees or yellow jackets or other stinging things, and she helps try to mitigate and
8 resolve some of the issues. She said for this story, she went looking and asking for questions to see what
9 was involved and what was happening. She said that part of what she was missing in some of the things
10 she read was timelines on things; what really happened, what's still happening, what was the situation,
11 what's the current situation. She said that part of what she has sussed out was when there was a problem,
12 the State Apiary Inspector did talk with the beekeeper in the subdivision, and the hives were removed in
13 spring 2019. She said with additional problems, she knows there are still bees in the area. She said going
14 across the street to Mary Lou Drive, she is not aware of any hives in that subdivision, but she is aware of
15 hives across Brownfield Road on one of the little farmettes, one of the properties that has horses and
16 things. She said that there are hives over on Perkins Road that are part of the University of Illinois research
17 beehives, so there are hives in the area that can still be the bees that are flying in the area. She said it is
18 her understanding that there are no current hives on the property in Prairieview Subdivision. She said all
19 the hives she is aware of have been moved to agricultural property and so they are no longer in the
20 residential property. She said when she saw the ordinance, she thought it was overkill, and yes, she would
21 like to work with staff on some of the things in the proposed ordinance. She said some of the things in the
22 proposed ordinance are very good, and some of the things are overkill and probably not totally necessary.
23 She said the most useful thing, and they were talking about hives right on the property line, with
24 beekeeping, one of the things they worry about the most as beekeepers is the entrance to the hive. She said
25 for her, if she wants to check on a set of hives, she leaves a gap behind them where she can just walk
26 behind them and she doesn't even have to wear gear, and she can peer over the front and see everybody
27 working. She said you can back a hive up close to the property line; she has done hives before where the
28 hive is near the fence, and she left an area between the fence and the hive so she could work it from behind,
29 and you leave enough space between the hives so you can work them from side to side and between them.
30 She said her property lot in Urbana is about 7,500 square feet, and she would be comfortable on that lot
31 doing four to six hives. She said she does not currently have any of her own, because she has plenty of
32 other things to deal with at the Pollinatarium; she does a beginning beekeeping class with 4-H kids, and
33 they try to teach and learn good neighbor behavior. She said it is not necessarily the closeness to the
34 property line, but where the flight path is for your set of bees. She said at the Pollinatarium, they normally
35 have an observation hive; they don't currently have one, they are going to set it up for fall when the school
36 kids start coming back. She said the hole goes through the north wall, and the hole is only a car width and
37 a half from the road, where they have dog walkers, bicycles, and vehicles. She said they put a six-foot
38 fence, only four-foot wide, and when the little bees come out of their pipe, that forces them up and over
39 the walking and driving path. She said having the fence directly in the flight path is the most important
40 thing in the rules here; having the extra ten feet really doesn't help things a lot. She said directing the
41 flight path high and over where people work and run and do their things is the most important. She said
42 the proposed amendment allows three hives per 10,000 square feet, but then when you have an additional
43 10,000 square feet, you are only allowing one additional hive. She asked why they couldn't have six hives
44 then; if they can have three on ten, why couldn't they have six on twenty. She said she would like to go
45 over some of the details and see if they can give staff informed information about how the bees behave,
46 and how what they're asking for will change their behavior and how they will end up interacting with
47 neighbors. She said she was asking about the pool for the accessory part on the map, because the pool in
48 question and the neighbors in question aren't next door to each other. She doesn't know, but she thinks
49 they are at least three houses away. She said that the 33-foot buffer is not necessarily what they think it

1 will give them, so she would like to talk details with staff on how the bees behave and how what some of
2 them are asking may or may not get them the result they want. She said she thinks the current situation is
3 resolved; the bees were removed in spring 2019, they are not on the property anymore, so yes, they need
4 to talk more about some of the other things. She said as far as she knows, there are no hives in the Mary
5 Lou Dr subdivision, but there are hives on Brownfield Road on the farmettes. She said she does not see
6 the need for the \$33 permit fee; she likes that the hives are already registered with the State, including a
7 GPS location number, and so she thought staff could access that information if they needed to know exact
8 locations for hives within residential areas. She said she didn't know what the permit fee was covering,
9 and what staff was trying to get to with that. She said she has questions on the fencing requirement and
10 that kind of thing; like she said, not a statement, but a lot of questions.

11
12 Mr. Hall said a lot of what he was thinking about when he was copying from other ordinances was how
13 close should someone be able to put their beehives to his house; he has never had that experience, but
14 others say that 30 feet is a good separation. He said they may have guessed at 30 feet, but when he sees it
15 happen more and more, that appears to be some kind of a standard. He said that is separation from not just
16 pools on neighboring properties, but even the neighbor's house; how close should we be to a neighbor's
17 house. He said the more he can ask questions like that of the beekeepers, that would be fantastic.

18
19 Ms. Deem said usually, when they are trying to place the bees in a beehive in a residential area, you don't
20 put the flight path right towards their back door or towards a specific area on their lot. She said they are
21 usually on the back corners, and you try to put the flight path up and over or away from where people are
22 going to be the most.

23
24 Mr. Hall said that staff did not even get into where the hive should be oriented.

25
26 Ms. Deem said that is sometimes more important than how close it is to the property line.

27
28 Mr. Hall said he agreed, from his reading that is probably the key thing, so that would imply some rules,
29 such as don't orient the beehive toward the neighbor's house, although that list of rules could be quite
30 long. He said he does not know the best way to get something like that on the books. He said again, this
31 may not pass, but he has to assume that it will pass, so he wants to make it as good as he can.

32
33 Ms. Deem said she wants him to make it as good as he can, but she doesn't want him to make it so
34 restrictive that it makes it really difficult for the beekeepers to keep their bees. She said she wants both
35 neighbors to be happy.

36
37 Mr. Hall said exactly.

38
39 Ms. Deem said she thinks they could come up with some pretty simple wording, and beekeepers try to do
40 this as a common sense thing anyways; they don't want to have their bees tangling with people and getting
41 into things. She said they will visit flowers, and one thing she runs into at the Pollinatarium is that the
42 stings come from other types of bees. She said they have 400 native bees in Illinois and a lot of times it is
43 yellow jackets and not honey bees, so you end up dealing with most stinging things. She said that she
44 would recommend not planting flowers around a pool, because then you won't direct them to a nectar
45 source in addition to a water source, so there's things homeowners can do to minimize where some of the
46 bees go too. She said they want both sides to be happy.

47
48 Mr. Elwell thanked Ms. Deem and asked if there were any other questions from the Board or staff. Seeing
49 none, he thanked Ms. Deem. He said there is a little bit of housework; he has six more people who have

1 signed the Witness Register, and we have another 15 minutes left in this meeting. He asked the Board if
2 they had any thoughts on how long they would like to extend the meeting.

3
4 Ms. Burgstrom asked the audience if there were others who did not sign the Witness Register who would
5 like to say something, even if it cannot be tonight. She asked people to raise their hands. When someone
6 said they might not be able to attend another meeting, Ms. Burgstrom said they know they are going to
7 have another meeting, but they can also accept emails, letters, phone calls too. Several others signed the
8 Witness Register.

9
10 **Mr. Randol moved to continue until 9:45 pm.** He said that somebody talking might be five minutes
11 while someone else might be 20 minutes, so he would be willing to go until 9:45 and anybody else left
12 would have to come back.

13
14 Mr. Elwell asked if there was a second to the motion.

15
16 Ms. Lee asked if there was anyone here tonight that cannot be here at their next meeting, because they
17 could be given preference to be able to speak tonight.

18
19 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Hall when the next meeting date was.

20
21 Mr. Hall said that the next meeting on August 12th already has three cases scheduled, so that's the Board's
22 call if they want to continue this meeting to the next meeting. He said the three variances that are on that
23 docket would take probably an hour and a half to two hours, so you would only have an hour at the next
24 meeting for this case. He said that August 26th is open, so that would be the full three hours for this case.

25
26 Mr. Elwell said he would like to extend the meeting until 9:45 and see if we can get as many people
27 through who would like to speak, and then have August 26th to finish up the Findings of Fact and stuff
28 like that. He asked if that made sense.

29
30 Mr. Randol said it suited him.

31
32 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Randol and asked if there was a second to the motion.

33
34 **Mr. Roberts seconded the motion.**

35
36 Mr. Elwell asked for a voice vote. **The motion carried.**

37
38 Mr. Randol stated that it is not often that he votes to go ahead with a meeting.

39
40 Mr. Elwell said that was noted. He asked Christine Graham to testify.

41
42 Ms. Christine Graham said she has lived at 2231 CR 675E, Champaign for 35 years, and has been a nurse
43 for almost 50 years. She is a novice beekeeper in her opinion, because she has kept bees for only six years.
44 She said as far as she knows, there are no Africanized bees in Illinois. She said since having beehives, the
45 pollination in her yard is phenomenal; fruit trees, asparagus, squash, peas, beans, cucumbers, raspberries,
46 trees and shrubs are all well-pollinated, and her produce is amazing. She said she weeds and picks her
47 produce next to the bees, almost touching them, and has never been stung. She said the vast number of
48 different wild bees has also increased in her yard; she now knows about yellow bees, green bees, medium,
49 small, big bees, and they're amazing. She said they all work together on the same flower and move

1 whenever needed; they don't fight. She said yes, she has been stung, and yes, it has always been her fault.
2 She said she thought the bees were still in the hive early one morning when she was weeding around the
3 hive. She said she threw a clump of dirt directly in the flight path of a bee; the bee swung around and
4 smacked her right in the forehead. She said the bee did not sting her, it smacked her as if to say she was
5 an idiot, and went on her way. She said bees often give warnings before they sting; en masse, they get
6 louder, alone they get up close and personal in your face. She said if they sting, they die; they don't want
7 to die, they simply want to get on with their business. She said in fall, she puts sugar water by her pond;
8 when working in a different part of her yard, she has had bees come and find her and buzz her in her face.
9 She said it took a while before she figured out they were asking for more sugar water. She said she has a
10 swimming pool, and she has a piece of Styrofoam floating in it for the bees to land, hopefully helping
11 them. She said that barn swallows also apparently prefer to get water from the swimming pool also. She
12 said, in the pool, they find Japanese beetles, crickets, flies, wasps, spiders, leaves, seeds, sticks, and the
13 occasional mouse. She said bees generally do not come out in the winter; if it is 50 degrees and sunny,
14 they come out to defecate, but they don't dawdle and they return to their 95 degree hive. She said if they
15 fly out to investigate intrusion in the cold, they get about three inches and drop to the snow; they can't fly
16 if muscles freeze up, so they don't go far. She said that beekeepers, as far as she is concerned, choose the
17 best location they can for their hives, usually in full sun. She said the number of hives should depend on
18 environment; if near a forest or prairie, more hives can be sustained. She said lots of all-season food can
19 support more colonies; if there are too many colonies, the bees have to fly farther in search of resources.
20 She said this is detrimental to the hive and their winter stores, but it is not detrimental to humans. She said
21 this amendment made her do some research, and she found that many cities and countries are making bee-
22 friendly parks, campuses, bee-friendly ordinances, reducing pesticide use, and pesticide-free towns. She
23 said two Detroit residents have begun transforming overgrown, weedy, abandoned lots into bee farms;
24 this started when one founder had a cold and local raw honey helped. She said the presence of thousands
25 of bees in the area has created joy, not fear, where Detroit currently has apiaries. She quoted, "locals have
26 expressed so much gratitude for their work in converting glorified dumping yards into thriving, useful
27 land. It removes the negative aura of poverty and gives the neighborhood a sense of purpose." She said
28 the Dutch city of Utrecht pays its residents to form their rooftops into bee sanctuaries, and has planted the
29 rooftops of bus stops with pollinator-friendly plants, creating bee stops. She said bee hives are being kept
30 on rooftops and balconies worldwide. She said since the University of Illinois is right down the block, and
31 is huge in progressive agriculture and farming practices, she believes Champaign County should be
32 proactive for bees and their beekeepers, not suppressive. She said it seems to her that this conflict between
33 individuals has been resolved, and perhaps we need to think about not how to write a restrictive
34 amendment, but how we can get together, sort this out, and have an ombudsman's group or something.

35
36 Mr. Elwell thanked Ms. Graham, and asked if there were questions from the Board or staff. Seeing none,
37 he asked Mr. Ben Clegg to testify.

38
39 Mr. Ben Clegg, 715 West Washington Street, Urbana, said he is a relatively novice beekeeper, so he is
40 not sitting on this extensive expertise that the speakers before him had, but he has three observations, some
41 from reading the ordinance and some in direct response to the testimony he heard first that he believes
42 was directly connected to the initial complaint that caused all of this. He said that one thing, before he
43 delves into all of that, is the repeated comments from some of those in attendance that this ordinance
44 would affect such a tiny percentage of this county, and it was implied how could this possibly make a
45 difference in beekeeping in this county. He said his response to that is probably the inverse of what you
46 would expect; if it's really just 0.75 percent that you're trying to have a rule for, what are we actually
47 trying to do. He asked if we are just using a scalpel around one property essentially, and then we have to
48 have some rules to make it general so it is just not one person. He asked if we are basically trying to fix
49 one issue that came up, as limited as possible in terms of area, with as broad a tool as possible, which is

1 an entire ordinance. He said the ordinance that has been pointed out by beekeeping groups in other counties
2 to the west of us as being threatening because it could set a precedent that could sort of snowball and start
3 local regulation there. He said he thinks one thing to consider here is a matter of scale, and that has been
4 brought up repeatedly; in fact, it was even brought up by that first testimony. He said to paraphrase, he
5 even said why would the State change a State law for one county. He said by extension, why should one
6 county enact an entire county ordinance for one issue that has arisen. He said he thinks that is worth
7 contemplating. In terms of his other two points, one of them is, especially as a novice, beekeeping is really
8 hard; it's not easy. He said it's not like you get a box and set up some bees; he doesn't have any experience
9 with what it was like prior to the 1980s, but since the arrival of various diseases, varroa mites spreading
10 viruses, etc. is really hard. He said he is not confident, for example, that he could get his hives through the
11 winter. He said that Illinois has one of the lower survival rates if you look at the statistics of hives going
12 through the winter. He said that one issue he had looking at the proposed ordinance was the restriction to
13 three hives. He said that three is better than two, but with a survival rate of 50%, and that's an average,
14 that means that if a person only has one property where they are keeping bees, which is him, he doesn't
15 have 40 hives on 20 properties, some will survive and they have more experience. He said in his case, or
16 cases similar to his where he has one property with a maximum of three hives, he is looking at a high
17 likelihood that he actually has a complete failure, a complete loss, basically, and he is trying his best to
18 get hives through the winter. He said the other issue he wanted to address was the concern about aggressive
19 bees, which also seems to go directly to the original complaint, because we heard in that testimony allusion
20 to aggressive bee behavior. He said of course bees can become aggressive if they feel threatened, but the
21 main thing in this is also with respect to your bringing visions of Africanized bees swarming us in great
22 numbers, which is what a Board member was sort of describing. He said that if you actually look, and
23 there are maps available so you can check yourself and do that research, as he is aware, there are no
24 Africanized bees in Illinois yet. He said they might be approaching southern Illinois at some point, but to
25 this day there are no Africanized bees. He said there are some strains that are more aggressive than others;
26 anyone who has multiple bee hives will tell you that they all have a different personality that includes
27 aggressive behavior, varying degrees, maybe from a sort of interbreeding depending on where the queen
28 came from, etc. He said in his experience, all the hives that he has dealt with are extremely tame; they are
29 literally like lambs, he can open them, close them, go in front, and he has not been stung in that activity.
30 He said the times he was stung was when he grabbed something while weeding and the bee was actually
31 on a flower. He said it was not from directly interacting with them or handling his hives. He said that they
32 are really, really tame and gentle, and he would argue that no beekeeper has any interest in keeping
33 aggressive hives. He said if he had a colony that was not behaving in the way that he described, where he
34 could just regularly interact with them, he would probably euthanize them or very quickly find a way to
35 do so or abate the issue. He said he has no interest in working with aggressive bees. He said not all bees
36 have to be aggressive; he knows that is sort of a stereotype, there's stingy and so they're scary, but in
37 general, bees from well-managed hives tend to be extraordinarily gentle. He said if there is something in
38 an ordinance, one thing to consider is perhaps something about Africanized bees, but he would actually
39 point out that this is already taken care of because it is in the Illinois Department of Agriculture statement.
40 He said it has been said that the only thing they have control over, or mandating is the health of the hives,
41 which is not entirely true, because the other thing they have is a statement about Africanized bees and the
42 control thereof. He said he would say that is probably a non-issue from his perspective.

43
44 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Clegg, and asked if there were questions from the Board or staff.

45
46 Mr. Hall asked Mr. Clegg if he had a recommendation for any limit on hives.

47
48 Mr. Clegg replied, no, he would prefer to defer. He said he is really new; he is literally trying to learn what
49 to do since this is his first year having hives. He has two hives; he started with one, made a split, and is

1 hoping to get both through. He said just knowing the rates of failure in the winter, at this he is really a
2 novice and he is not confident to get through with just two hives. He said he has no experience to tell the
3 Board what the number would be. He said that if the survival rate in the state is on average 50%, being
4 close to two or three is very low.
5

6 Mr. Elwell called Mr. Robert Meyer to testify. He said that there are seven more people listed on the
7 Witness Register.
8

9 Mr. Robert Meyer lives at 733 CR 600E, Tolono. He said he is a professor at Parkland College in the
10 Business and Agriculture Division. He said he had a PowerPoint that he was hoping to show, but since he
11 didn't have it on USB, he is just going to try to talk in general. He said that one thing he wanted to point
12 out is that there are about 500,000 acres of farmland in Champaign County, with about half of it being
13 beans and half of it corn. He said if there are bees around, they increase the yield by about two bushels
14 per acre, so if you think of beans being \$14 per bushel, you increase that by two bushels an acre, you've
15 made the farmer \$28 richer. He said he did some math, it is almost \$10 million more in revenue that comes
16 to the farmers that then gets spent on farm equipment and cars in town, and when someone buys a car,
17 that makes a job for a salesman who can then buy groceries, so it trickles down to more than \$10 million.
18 He said he tells them all of this because he is hoping that the rules they'll pass will encourage beekeeping
19 rather than discourage it. He said one of the things mentioned here is a fence, and he looked into the cost
20 of a fence they're talking about, and came up with \$2,600 for a 10 feet by 10 feet cyclone fence that would
21 cover three hives. He said he doesn't know how much they think beekeepers make, but he has been a
22 beekeeper for 45 years, and he has never sold a jar of honey; what little he gets each year he usually gives
23 to friends and family. He said that he knows there are some with a lot of hives, and they make some
24 money, but he is not making enough to put a \$2,600 fence around his bees; he's not even sure he wants to
25 pay the \$33 fee to register his hive. He said he had a slide talking about the benefits of pollination and he
26 told them about soybeans and such, but when you talk about squash or pumpkins, the yield becomes like
27 ten times greater. He said when you start passing these rules, you discourage beekeeping, and he doesn't
28 think that is what we want to do. He said has been a member of CEIBA, Central Eastern Illinois
29 Beekeeping Association, for 45 years. He said when he was a teenager, the CEIBA group came and talked
30 at his school; they set them up with hives, they could go out there and have mentors who would show
31 them how to work on the hives. He said the members of CEIBA have removed hundreds of swarms and
32 hives; someone asked what if there is a hive in his tree. He said they should call someone from CEIBA
33 and they will come there and take that hive or swarm away, and in almost all the cases, they will not
34 charge you anything, with the exception being if you have a hive that has built into your house where it's
35 up in the attic and they have to tear apart your house to get to it, then there's cost. He said that 99% of the
36 beehives or swarms or hives in trees they remove are services they do for free for the public. He said his
37 daughter is a teacher, and the beekeepers come to the schools and they talk about bees. He said he would
38 rather see his children having a beehive or studying bees than playing video games, and he kind of looks
39 toward the past when we had family farms with bee hives that were passed down from generation to
40 generation. He said he had some slides of bees, which he can turn in and the Board can look at them. He
41 said when his other daughter was at school, they had a hot dog and pop day, and they had bees all around
42 them and everyone was saying they're stinging them, not one of them was a honey bee. He said they were
43 all yellow jackets or sweat bees or hover flies. He said his grandmother always used to complain about all
44 the bees; well, they weren't honey bees, they were hover flies that would go around her. He said a lot of
45 this is about Rena Wilson, and he'll tell a story he heard from her, which he guesses is hearsay. He said
46 she said someone called and complained that there were honey bees on this person's property, and Rena
47 said she'd go out and remove the hive for free. He said she went out there, and it was not honey bees, it
48 was yellow jackets; they were wasps that had gone into wood. He said Rena told them to just leave the
49 wasps alone and they'll either die out this winter or when they burn the woodpile, they'll be gone. He said

1 the guy told her he wanted them gone right away, so Rena put on her gear, and took that wasp hive away.
2 He said she didn't get anything out of that; they didn't pay her and she didn't ask to be paid, that's just a
3 service that beekeepers do. He said he has heard some numbers about how many beehives or beekeepers
4 there are; he is going to guess that there are over 1,000 hives in Champaign County. He said around 500
5 are kept by beekeepers and another 500 are wild hives where they're in a tree or something. He said if you
6 have a 1,000 hives, and each hive has 50,000 bees, you have maybe 50,000,000 bees flying around, so
7 things are going to happen where occasionally, people are going to get stung or there's going to be bees
8 in the birdbath or whatever. He said let him flip sides for a second, he thinks having a bunch of hives in
9 a residential neighborhood is too much, and when CEIBA knows about this, they are going to address it.
10 He said Rena was made aware there was a problem and she has moved her hives out into the country, and
11 as far as he knows, there is no one else in these subdivisions who has a multitude of hives, more than ten
12 hives in one place.

13
14 Mr. Elwell apologized for interrupting Mr. Meyer, and said he wants to be respectful of the Board's time
15 and the public's time. He said they are approaching 9:45 and said they are going to either extend the
16 meeting or ask for a continuance. He asked how the Board would like to proceed.

17
18 Mr. Randol said if there were six more to go, we need to have a continuance.

19
20 Mr. Elwell said Mr. Meyer would need to finish, and then there are seven more.

21
22 Mr. Randol said we need to have a continuance, or we could be here until midnight. **He made a motion**
23 **to continue the meeting to August 26, 2021.**

24
25 Mr. Elwell told the audience that if this case is moved to August 26th, they are more than welcome to come
26 back and testify. He asked if there was a second to continue the meeting to August 26th.

27
28 **Mr. Roberts seconded the motion.**

29
30 Mr. Elwell requested a voice vote. **The motion carried.**

31
32 Mr. Elwell requested a five-minute extension to this meeting.

33
34 Mr. Randol said not a problem, so Mr. Meyer can finish his speech.

35
36 Mr. Elwell said we also need to finish the rest of the agenda.

37
38 Mr. Meyer asked if he could have 30 seconds.

39
40 Mr. Elwell said sure.

41
42 Mr. Meyer said that he just wanted to say as far as he knows, this problem ended a year or two years ago.
43 He said he knows that CEIBA is dealing with it, and he would discourage any more rules than they need.
44 He referred to the presentation sheets the Board has that listed his phone number. He thanked the Board
45 for their time.

46
47 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Meyer, and asked if there were any questions from the Board or staff.

48
49 Mr. Randol thanked everyone for their patience and their comments tonight. He said it has been an

1 informative and peaceful evening, unlike some other meetings they have had.

2

3 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Randol for a motion to extend the meeting.

4

5 **Mr. Randol moved, seconded by Mr. Roberts, to extend the meeting for ten minutes.**

6

7 Mr. Elwell requested a voice vote. **The motion carried.**

8

9 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Hall if there was a Staff Report.

10

11 **7. Staff Report**

12

13 Mr. Hall said no.

14

15 **8. Other Business**

16

17 **A. Review of Docket**

18

19 No one reported absences.

20

21 **9. Audience participation with respect to matters other than cases pending before the Board**

22

23 Ms. Burgstrom told the audience if they cannot make it to the next meeting, or don't want to make it to
24 the next meeting, they are free to send emails and letters, call or stop by the office, and staff will make
25 sure any of their comments get to the Board for the next meeting.

26

27 Mr. Randol told the audience that even if they spoke tonight, if they have something new that they want
28 to contribute at the next meeting, please do that, but don't come back and be a broken record.

29

30 **10. Adjournment**

31

32 Mr. Elwell entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

33

34 **Ms. Lee moved, seconded by Mr. Wood, to adjourn the meeting.**

35

36 Mr. Elwell requested voice vote.

37

38 **The motion carried.**

39

40 The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

41

42

43 Respectfully submitted,

44

45

46

47 Secretary of Zoning Board of Appeals

48

49