

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

1776 E. Washington Street
Urbana, IL 61801

DATE: August 26, 2021**PLACE:** Shields-Carter Meeting Room
1776 East Washington Street**TIME:** 6:30 p.m.

Urbana, IL 61802

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ryan Elwell, Jim Randol, Tom Anderson, Marilyn Lee, Lee Roberts, Larry Wood**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None**STAFF PRESENT:** Susan Burgstrom, Stephanie Berry, John Hall**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joan Mathis, Bob Mathis, Barney Bryson, Collin Cisco, Derald Seeds, Patsy Seeds, Rena Wilson-Jones, Chris Graham, Maggie Watcher, Bryan Miller, Steve Halfar, Roger Faulkner, Charles Glass, Lisa Romero, Lesley Deem, Kacey Nelson, Amanda Morgan, Christopher Harmon**1. Call to Order**

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

2. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

The roll was called, and a quorum declared present.

Mr. Elwell informed the audience that anyone wishing to testify for any public hearing tonight must sign the witness register for that public hearing.

3. Correspondence - None**4. Approval of Minutes – July 29, 2021**

Mr. Elwell asked if there was any discussion for the July 29, 2021 minutes.

Ms. Burgstrom said that there are several potential revisions to the July 29, 2021 minutes. She said that Staff noticed a couple of errors in spelling that they will correct. She said that Mr. Elwell had just now pointed out that they had something on the first page of the minutes that refers to Zoom, and they didn't do a Zoom meeting at the July 29, 2021 meeting, so there is just a little administrative correction there. She said that they had a couple of revisions from Ms. Lee, so she is going to refer the Board to page four, line 37, where the sentence ends in, "to this question," and Ms. Lee would like it to say, "to this question tonight." She said that Ms. Lee did not say tonight on the audio that Staff checked, but if the Board is fine with adding that word tonight then they can. She said that the second revision she had was also on page four, lines 38 and 39, and on this one the sentence says, "She said the other thing that she looked at, which Mr. Hall had covered in his introduction for the Text Amendment, was beekeeping is Agriculture." Ms. Lee said something different on the audio, she said something simpler, and Staff had attempted to clarify Ms. Lee's statement a little bit by referring back to Mr. Hall's statement earlier in the meeting. She said

1 that Ms. Lee would like it to read what the audio said, which is, “She said the other thing that she looked
2 at was, and Mr. Hall did cover this, where beekeeping is Agriculture,” that is exactly what was in the
3 audio. She said that if the Board is okay with that revision then they can go ahead and amend that. She
4 asked if there were any other revisions that she did not catch.

5
6 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other comments from the Board.

7
8 Mr. Elwell entertained a motion to approve the July 29, 2021 minutes.

9
10 **Mr. Randol moved, seconded by Mr. Roberts, to approve the July 29, 2021 minutes. The motion**
11 **carried by voice vote.**

12
13 **5. Continued Public Hearings- None**

14
15 **6. New Public Hearings**

16
17 **Case 014-AT-21**

18 **Petitioner: Zoning Administrator**

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

- 21 **1. Amend Section 3.0 Definitions by adding a definition for “apiary”, “beekeeping”,**
22 **“honeybee”, “nucleus colony” and other related terms.**
- 23
- 24 **2. Add footnotes 29 to Section 5.2 Table of Authorized Principal Uses.**
- 25
- 26 **3. Add footnote 30 to Section 5.2 Table of Authorized Principal Uses.**
- 27
- 28 **4. Add new Section 7.8 Beekeeping in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts, with new**
29 **requirements for beekeeping.**
- 30
- 31 **5. Amend Section 9.3.1 G.6. by adding a \$33 Change of Use Permit Application Fee to**
32 **establish beekeeping in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts.**
- 33

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

37
38 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Hall if he would like to give them an update on the Text Amendment.

39
40 Mr. Hall stated that P & Z Staff did get an emailed comment this evening from Rachel Coventry, he said
41 he put a copy of that at every Board member’s desk. He said that they will post that on the website in the
42 morning and anyone interested can see it, and they will include it with the next mailing; he does hope
43 there is a next mailing. He said that after they reviewed the minutes from the July 29, 2021 meeting, he
44 and Ms. Burgstrom think that they can make some important changes to this amendment, probably not as
45 much change as some people would like. He said regardless of how the Board is thinking about their
46 position on this amendment, he thinks that the Board deserves to have the best amendment it can have
47 when it is finally referred. He said that they do not want to make any changes tonight, so he is hoping this
48 case will be continued at least one more night to come back with some changes, which will respond to the
49 testimony they have had to date. He said that they have speakers still from the last meeting that didn’t get

1 a chance to speak, so they didn't want to bring those changes out at this point. He said that is all he had.
2
3 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any further questions for the Board.
4
5 Mr. Randol referred to Attachment A in their packet that includes the public notice. He said item 4.A.
6 says, "Beekeeping shall be authorized only as a home occupation." He asked Mr. Hall if he considers a
7 hobby an occupation.
8
9 Mr. Hall said yes, that in all instances a hobby needs to follow within the parameters that they require for
10 a home occupation. He said he thinks a citizen looking at our Zoning Ordinance has a reason to think that
11 anything that they are doing on the property needs to fall under the ordinance. He said that his belief is
12 that even hobbies need to fit within the guidelines of a home occupation.
13
14 Mr. Randol said that to him, an occupation is a way of earning a living and he knows that not everybody
15 out here in their audience, pro or con, that has bees, raises them to make money. He said he looks at those
16 who do not have bees to substitute their income or even as a retired habit as an income, he thinks that is a
17 hobby.
18
19 Mr. Hall said that his view is that anything that someone is doing on their property needs to fall within the
20 parameters of the ordinance. He said for example, they are adding a Nuisance Ordinance Amendment to
21 go along with this to capture things that are nuisances. He said in the future, if this thing is adopted, and
22 if someone is beekeeping in a Residential District that is not permitted under the ordinance, that is going
23 to be a nuisance. He said whether someone is making money or losing thousands of dollars a year on it,
24 or because someone is just doing it for the love of the bees; it still needs to be permitted under the
25 ordinance.
26
27 Ms. Lee asked Mr. Hall if he had talked to any of the people that were beekeepers or associated with
28 beekeepers since the last meeting, other than at the meeting.
29
30 Mr. Hall said he spoke to those who contacted him and spoke to him, which was one.
31
32 Ms. Lee asked if they had any documentation for their records to see the input on that.
33
34 Mr. Hall said no, they don't.
35
36 Ms. Lee asked if they would get the documentation.
37
38 Mr. Hall asked her what kind of documentation she was expecting.
39
40 Ms. Lee said there was a discussion about working things out, where people said they would be willing to
41 discuss things that didn't occur at one of their meetings, but it would be nice to have a summary of what
42 the discussion was about.
43
44 Mr. Hall said that if the Boards wants, he can type up something for the next meeting, which would
45 summarize in a very brief nature the discussion they had. He said the way he intended to share that with
46 the Board is when they come out with their changes, because some of them will be based on that
47 discussion. He said he is not used to doing a more formal version of discussions that they have outside of
48 meetings, but he can do that if the Board wants.
49

1 Ms. Lee said she would like that.
2

3 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board. Seeing none, he informed everyone
4 that he would be moving to the Witness Register.
5

6 Ms. Lee said she doesn't think that they finished with Robert Meyer's testimony at the last meeting,
7 because they didn't have a chance to ask any questions from him at the last meeting.
8

9 Mr. Elwell said that is why he was going to move to the Witness Register to see if he was there.
10

11 Mr. Elwell called off last meeting's Witness Register for Mr. Robert Meyer to testify. Seeing that he
12 wasn't present at tonight's meeting, he called Mr. Jay Salmon to testify. Seeing that he wasn't present at
13 tonight's meeting, he called Mr. Derald Seeds to testify.
14

15 Mr. Randol asked Mr. Elwell that if someone that is talking at the testimony microphone could they
16 remove their mask while they are talking, so the voices aren't muffled.
17

18 Mr. Elwell said he would refer that to Mr. Hall.
19

20 Mr. Randol said that they are not in contact with each other very closely.
21

22 Mr. Hall said that they can certainly request that, but they can't require it, just like they can't require masks
23 to be worn at any time, but they can request it.
24

25 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Seeds to please state his full name and address.
26

27 Mr. Derald Seeds stated that he lived at 2005 Barnes Street in Urbana, Illinois. He said that they live catty-
28 corner across the street from Rena and Drew Jones. He said that they have been in the neighborhood for
29 about 40 years and they never had any problems with bees in the neighborhood until about six years ago.
30 He said it started out small, it has gotten worse, and progressed up until now, but has been better in the
31 last couple of weeks. He said that he has great-grandsons, and both of them have been stung. He said that
32 they have a little plastic pool that they put out in the yard for them to play in, and the bees would like the
33 water of course. He said the bees would get in the grass, then the boys would step on them, and they would
34 step on the sidewalk when they were going down to his daughter's house who lives down the street from
35 them. He said that his wife has been stung and was just stung about three or four weeks ago. He said that
36 they have friends come over to visit them on the back deck of their house, and they don't come anymore
37 because they are afraid that they are going to get stung by the bees.
38

39 Mr. Seeds said that they are here tonight to ask the Board to help them and limit the bees to whatever Mr.
40 Hall recommends, it looked to him like the two or three hives would be a good recommendation. He said
41 that they are not against the bees, because he knows they need bees, but they are a terrible problem when
42 someone has that many bees in a neighborhood or at least around his house. He said that they manure all
43 over everything, they get in the car and they try to turn their windshield wipers on when it is raining. He
44 said that doesn't work; they have to stop, get out, and clean it off with Windex, because the alcohol will
45 remove the bee manure. He said that it gets all over his boats, cars, and his trucks; as soon as he got done
46 washing the front of his truck, they would be all over the back of his truck doing their business on the
47 truck again before he even got the whole truck washed. He said that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones came over,
48 he doesn't recall when, but it was a while back. He said that she knew they had a problem, so she came
49 over and offered him seven dollars to go get his truck washed and a jar of honey. He told Ms. Wilson-

1 Jones no, he does not want that stuff, he just wants her to be a good neighbor and get rid of the bees, but
2 that didn't work. He said that he had called Drew Jones to come over to the house one day and when he
3 got there, he showed him his birdbath, it was completely covered with bees. He told him look here, look
4 at the problems they are causing, why don't they do something about it. He said Mr. Jones responded that
5 he knew, and he had talked to Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones and had told her she needed to put more sugar in
6 the water to feed the bees, so that it would help; well, it didn't help.

7
8 Mr. Seeds said that he is not against the bees, but he just doesn't think she should have that many bees in
9 a residential neighborhood. He said that there was a gentlemen here at the last meeting who stood up and
10 said how good Mrs. Wilson-Jones was that she had gotten rid of all her bees. He said that two days before
11 the meeting last time, he and his grandson were over there behind the house where there is a waterway
12 that runs behind it, and he counted four to five hives about four to five feet from her property line, with a
13 block wall about four feet high; he could see and hear them, but yet she was supposed to have them all
14 gone. He said he doesn't know where that guy gets his information from, but he told him after the meeting
15 that he had been hoodwinked, because she still has bees in her backyard, and he was just over there. He
16 said in closing, thank you, and that he hopes they vote and follow Mr. Hall's proposal. He asked the Board
17 if they had any questions.

18
19 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Seeds and asked the Board if they had any questions. Seeing none, he called Mr.
20 Charles Ledford to testify. He asked him to please state his full name and address.

21
22 Mr. Charles Ledford stated that he lived at 1709 Mayfair Road in Champaign. He said he would like to
23 thank them for allowing him to speak, he was sorry that he wore his jacket last week in honor of this
24 occasion, because this is important stuff. He said he came out of teaching today and he doesn't dress for
25 teaching at the University of Illinois, but he is in a t-shirt, so excuse that. He said that he is a beekeeper,
26 and he wrote a letter that was part of the packet for last month's meeting that detailed a bit about the
27 expenses that it takes to pursue this hobby. He said that it is not an occupation, it is not a money-making
28 venture, at least not for him, but he isn't sure if it is for any other beekeeper in the room. He said it is
29 expensive; he thinks his expenses at that time were about \$2,600 for the year after setting up five new
30 colonies. He said since then, he has spent several hundred dollars more to keep them healthy and to provide
31 space for them in their hives where they can store their honey, which is what we all love that they get from
32 them; that is why people have been keeping bees for thousands and thousands of years around the world.
33 He said any time someone adds more expense to something like beekeeping, it's \$35; he can spend \$35,
34 but there are people in this community that might be interested in beekeeping who can't, because every
35 nickel counts, and he thinks that is an important consideration.

36
37 Mr. Ledford said with all that said, he thinks they shouldn't be having this discussion tonight, and that the
38 Board and Staff all have better things to do than this, he feels quite certain. He said that they are not
39 discussing public policy, they are here because of a very personal dispute between two individuals. He
40 said this is not something that the overwhelming majority of people, even a slim majority, or even
41 significant minority of people in this county care about, because it is not on their radar, it is personal. He
42 said that if there is any doubt about that, then he would direct them toward the minutes. He would direct
43 them toward what was stated by one of the folks who has been at the tip of the spear of this in terms of
44 regulating beekeeping, who said he felt sorry for Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones's bees. He said that is personal,
45 right, so it is inarguable that they are here for a very limited purpose to attempt to solve a problem between
46 a very small group of individuals. He said with that said, and besides that, he thinks they all know that
47 the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance will not solve this problem. He said what they are all considering
48 will not solve the issue that was first brought forth a year or two ago, whenever it was, is not going to
49 solve it. He said as he understands it, the beehives that were in dispute are now on agricultural property,

1 and agricultural property may be a few feet, a few hundred yards, or may be a mile or more from where
2 they were on residential property, he doesn't know. He said the fact of the matter is, the bees are probably
3 going to continue going exactly where they have been going to get their water and this amendment will
4 not change that. He said the amendment is written in a way that addresses problems that don't exist; no
5 one has complained that he knows of who were getting stung by bees because they were walking too close
6 to the bees and the hives weren't separated from a thoroughfare by a fence with a self-latching gate. He
7 said that they started with a very specific personal issue and now they are talking about other things that
8 are growing into something that not only does not address the original problem, but it addresses problems
9 that don't exist. He said that it will cause problems, it will cause health problems in this county, and a part
10 of the text that he had saw indicates that in order to comply with this amendment to the Zoning Ordinance,
11 the beekeeper has to provide water for their bees. He said supplying running water to an area is a big deal,
12 but it doesn't have to be running water according to this amendment, so if there is not running water, then
13 that means it is stagnant water and it is a breeding ground for mosquitos, which brings Zika or West Nile.
14 He said that the way this amendment is written, it is not only not solving a personal problem and it is not
15 only attempting to address problems that don't exist, but it is going to cause more problems even if they
16 don't know what those are. He said that he can easily imagine and know what a bunch of stagnant water
17 does, because the city, and the county, and not only here, but in a lot of places, it is very specific that you
18 don't leave a piece of tarp out that gathers water, because it will be a breeding ground for mosquitos.

19
20 Mr. Ledford said that he was struck last week when Mr. Hall was explaining the language of this thing
21 and he mentioned, "don't worry, this isn't going to really be enforced unless there is a complaint," that is
22 not a quote, but that is what he got from it. He said anytime a government official tells him not to worry,
23 because of a law that is not going to be enforced even though it is written a certain way, that causes him a
24 great deal of concern and an issue. He said he believes that this is classic example of government
25 overreach; it is the kind of legislation and government activity that led Ronald Reagan to say, "government
26 is not the solution to the problem, government is the problem," they all have heard that, and this is a classic
27 example of why. He said another example of why this is a big government overreach problem, which they
28 already heard tonight, is that by passing this, there is going to have to be changes to the Nuisance
29 Ordinance; where does it end. He said that he is a hobbyist beekeeper, but he is also a journalism professor
30 at the University of Illinois and teaches photojournalism and that is what he did for around 30 years of his
31 life around the world. He said that he was a Board member for a long time of the American Society of
32 Media Photographers, and he is a member of the National Press Photographers Association, and they
33 didn't have any enforcement power of their members; they created a community for their members and
34 provided information to their members. He said that one of the things that their organization and
35 organizations like the ASMP did was that they had best practices that they followed in order to be a
36 member and a professional photographer in good standing with the ASMP. He said this goes back to the
37 1940s from Robert Capa, who was a founding member of the ASMP and made the photograph of the D-
38 Day landing. He said the ASMP has a set of best practices, and if someone was going to be a member of
39 their group, then they were agreeing to abide by these. He said he has a strong view that the solution to
40 this personal problem is not writing amendments to zoning laws, then amending something else, and
41 having language that addresses problems that haven't even been talked about, like the gates; it creates
42 more problems like the stagnant water.

43
44 Mr. Ledford said that he is a member, but not an official, of the local beekeeping association, and they
45 should come up with a set of best practices. He said that everyone who is a member, there are about 50 of
46 them right now, but he might be wrong about that, would agree to following those best practices. He said
47 it is the same way that the State Apiarist had been out and worked to solve this personal problem at Ms.
48 Rena Wilson-Jones's place, where he didn't have any enforcement power, but he is a beekeeper, he knows
49 bees, and he knows the community. He thanked the Board and Staff for all the time they have spent on

1 this and what they all do for each of them who lives in the county. He said the solution to all of this and
2 all this time they have all spent is for the beekeeping club to come up with a set of best practices that
3 everyone who is a member of the club will agree to abide by as best as they can. He said it doesn't have
4 any legal teeth, but it has the power of community and doing what is right by the members' friends, peers,
5 and the folks they associate with. He said in some cases, the right thing to do would be moving beehives.
6 He said there are no guarantees in life, but he can almost promise the Board that if folks who are in the
7 beekeeping club at least, anyone in there who agreed to abide by whatever these best practices are that
8 they come up with, that they would follow them. He said he doesn't know if this problem is going to be
9 solved as it exists in this neighborhood, because there are other bees around that are going to be attracted
10 to pools, etc.; there is no getting around that. He said if they are looking to have something that will be
11 proactive and forward looking, and actually be something that is possible for beekeepers, and is put
12 together by beekeepers as opposed to being written by a governmental body, that is the way to do it and
13 that would solve the problem.

14

15 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Ledford and asked if there were any questions from the Board.

16

17 Mr. Wood said yes, this goes back to some of the things that he listened to four weeks ago when they had
18 the last meeting. He said that he heard testimony then that there may have been as many as 400 to 500
19 hives in this county that are being taken care of, and then maybe just as many that are wild. He said the
20 number of licenses that he is aware of that are out there in the county are somewhere more in the
21 neighborhood of maybe a 100 licenses. He asked if someone that has 30 or 40 hives like he had heard
22 from a couple of different individuals' testimonies last meeting can be all on one license.

23

24 Mr. Ledford said he really doesn't know.

25

26 Mr. Wood asked him if it would be on multiple licenses, do they have to have a licenses for each different
27 location, or how does that work.

28

29 Mr. Ledford said he can't say that he knows. He said that he will say that he wasn't a member of the club
30 until a couple of months ago and where he kept bees before in Colorado and Virginia, they didn't have to
31 register their hives, but he found out recently that he does, so he registered his bees. He said that depending
32 on how two of his hives do that are under stress right now, he has either 6 or 8 hives, so they are all
33 registered.

34

35 Mr. Wood asked if that was all under one license with the State.

36

37 Mr. Ledford said he'll be honest with him, he got the envelope from the State and he hasn't opened it, but
38 it's on his desk. He said that they have to put a tag on each hive; the State asks how many hives they have,
39 and what the specific latitude and longitude are for the hives.

40

41 Mr. Wood said that he was just curious, and perhaps someone else can come up with that answer if they
42 are willing to come up and testify.

43

44 Mr. Ledford said he doesn't know.

45

46 Mr. Wood said okay.

47

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

49

1 Ms. Lee said that with him working at the University of Illinois, she asked if he had any knowledge of
2 how much the U of I is involved with bees and where they have them in the county.

3
4 Mr. Ledford said no, he does not.

5
6 Ms. Lee asked if he had any knowledge of who would know that.

7
8 Mr. Ledford said that Ms. Lesley Deem would know, because she works at the U of I's Pollinatarium. He
9 said he was going to say the Apiaryatarium, but that is not what it is, it is a Pollinatarium, but he doesn't
10 know.

11
12 Mr. Elwell asked if he could speak to his experience with bee feces and if he had anything to share to the
13 Board about his experience with bee feces on his car or the surrounding residences of his hives, and has
14 there been any concern for that.

15
16 Mr. Ledford said to be absolutely frank, when he got back into beekeeping here locally, he put out two
17 hives and he talked to his neighbors beforehand, because they live very close to their neighbors. He said
18 that the hives were on the south side of his house and were within four feet of his neighbor's property line
19 who have several kids, but they also have chickens, and they garden. He said he had spoken to them about
20 it, and they were fine with him putting the bees there, and a neighbor to the north of him was fine with it,
21 and as it turns out, he is allergic to bees. He said they had them there for a year, and the next time he had
22 to go in and do some manipulation of the hive, the bees got angry, and they stayed a little bit defensive
23 for a while. He said that his neighbor, Gretchen, had texted him and told him that one of her kids just got
24 stung, he had told her he was so sorry and apologized. He said that a few days later, Gretchen texted him
25 again and told him that one of her kids got stung again; he told her that he was going to move the hives,
26 because he doesn't want this to happen and he wants to be a good neighbor. He said that he moved the
27 hives out to Country Arbors for a while and now they are on a family's property in Champaign that is east
28 off Kirby Avenue before going over Interstate 57, and there are another three hives that are south of
29 Meadowbrook Park off Race Street in Urbana. He said he has had some experience with the bees not
30 working out in the place he puts them; he would have loved to have had them in his yard, and he has a
31 ten-year-old daughter, and she and her friends love to see them. He said the house is in a great spot because
32 it provided shelter from the north wind, and it provided some ambient warmth over the winter for the bees,
33 but it wasn't the right place, so he moved them.

34
35 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Mr.
36 Ledford.

37
38 Mr. Ledford said thank you very much.

39
40 Mr. Elwell called off last meeting's Witness Register for Mr. Devin Neunsinger, who was not present. He
41 called for Ms. Rachel Coventry, who was not present, and then called Ms. Lisa Romero to testify.

42
43 Ms. Burgstrom asked Mr. Hall if he wanted to talk about Ms. Rachel Coventry's email more or if he
44 covered it.

45
46 Mr. Hall said that he didn't cover it.

47
48 Mr. Elwell asked if they should do that at the end.

49

1 Ms. Burgstrom said that it had been passed out to the Board, and she didn't know how much more they
2 wanted to do with it.

3
4 Mr. Elwell said that he was planning on circling back to that after everyone had testified. He asked Ms.
5 Lisa Romero if she wanted to testify at tonight's meeting seeing that she was present.

6
7 Ms. Romero said yes, but before she speaks, Ms. Rachel Coventry had given her what she had planned on
8 saying at tonight's meeting. She said she was willing to read it, but if that doesn't work and they have a
9 copy of it, it's whatever the Board wants to do.

10
11 Mr. Elwell told Ms. Romero that they would go ahead and hear her testimony first.

12
13 Ms. Romero said that's fine, sure.

14
15 Mr. Elwell asked her to state her full name and address.

16
17 Ms. Lisa Romero stated that she lives at 1919 Trout Valley in Champaign. She said that she has been
18 keeping bees for seven years, and she has nine hives in eight locations throughout Champaign, Savoy, and
19 Bondville. She said that she chose to speak today because this proposal would directly affect her hives
20 with the exception of the hive in her yard. She said that all of her other hives are on properties of
21 homeowners who have requested that she puts a hive in their yard to help pollinators. She said that six of
22 these hives are on properties with children, six of them are in neighborhoods, and five hives are within
23 five feet of property lines. She said when she sets up a hive, she not only looks for a spot that works for
24 the bees, but first and foremost, a spot that will enable the bees to coexist with people. She said in every
25 case, she requires that the homeowners speak with their neighbors to get approval. She said that she will
26 briefly describe the locations of her hives and talk a little bit about how her hives are able to exist
27 symbiotically with people. She said the hive at her house is on the property line of her house and
28 Lincolnshire Fields Country Club golf course; it is 30 feet from her neighbor's property, because her house
29 in on the 15th Fairway, which is the most difficult hole on the golf course. She said she gets a lot of golf
30 balls and golfers in her yard around the beehive; there have never been problems with bees and golfers;
31 in fact, oftentimes the golfers will stop if she is outside and ask her how the bees are doing and thank her
32 for taking care of the bees. She said that she always works in this hive during slow golf times, and her
33 neighbors have never had any problems with the bees when they are outside gardening or cutting the grass.
34 She said that the County Club's lawncare cuts the grass twice a week and they usually come within two
35 feet of that hive since it's on the property line of the golf course.

36
37 Ms. Romero said that she also has a hive in the backyard of a family who lives on Porter Park in west
38 Champaign, and they have children, two dogs, a swing set, and they do a lot of gardening. She said that
39 another one of her hives is in a neighborhood in Southwood that is sandwiched between the sides of two
40 houses. She said one owner has children, dogs, and cats; the children love to watch out their bedroom
41 window whenever she works in the hive. She said that two more of her hives are in a spot that is
42 sandwiched between two garages next to the backyards in a busy neighborhood in Savoy; again, there are
43 children, neighbors, and no problems. She said that four of her hives are farther out closer to the country,
44 but still, they are on homeowners' properties with children, swing sets, dogs, cats, and a gardening
45 homeowner; there have never been any problems. She said that one of her new hives is on a property with
46 ten fruit trees that in previous years never bore fruit; the homeowner told her this year that this was the
47 first year that these trees had nectarines, peaches, and apricots. She said that next spring, the homeowner
48 would like her to put a hive on another property that her family owns. She said that in all of these situations,
49 she schedules with the homeowner when she can work with the bees, she notifies them ahead of time, and

1 they are very accommodating. She said that they inform their children how to behave around the bees,
2 like wearing shoes whenever they are outside playing, and the homeowners want to help pollinators and
3 together they have found a way that bees can live in neighborhoods with children, pets, gardeners, and
4 neighbors. She said the homeowners and their children learn a lot about nature, and they get a lot of
5 satisfaction out of contributing to nature and especially pollinators.
6

7 Ms. Romero said this proposal will not only significantly impact her economically, but she doesn't know
8 if all the homeowners will agree to the additional fencing guidelines of the proposal. She said the fact that
9 she would be required to move many of the hives to different locations on their property in order to
10 accommodate the required setbacks from the property lines would place the bees in locations that would
11 not benefit the bees, or the homeowners' use of the space. She said while many of the hives are currently
12 close to property lines, they are in locations far away from heavy trafficked areas. She said her point is
13 that in her situation, she, the homeowners, and their neighbors have been very successful at identifying a
14 location and a setup that enables the bees to live symbiotically with humans. She said that she doesn't
15 believe that the proposed guidelines do as good of a job at that, and in some cases would fall short of that.
16 She said she doesn't know of any beekeeper that would put a hive in a location that was not agreed to by
17 homeowners and neighbors. She said this proposal focuses on one specific beekeeper in one specific
18 neighborhood and a complaint arising from this situation. She said she has issues with the guidelines,
19 because they are not only unnecessary for the rest of the beekeepers, but they will also negativity impact
20 them and their efforts to benefit pollinators.
21

22 Mr. Elwell thanked Ms. Romero and asked if there were any questions from the Board.
23

24 Mr. Wood asked Ms. Romero if most of her hives were in the City of Champaign area.
25

26 Ms. Romero said yes, southwest Champaign.
27

28 Mr. Wood said that this particular amendment only applies to rural residential areas that are in the county.
29 He asked Mr. Hall if that was true.
30

31 Mr. Hall said that is true.
32

33 Mr. Wood said that it wouldn't have an effect on her, because he doesn't believe that there are any
34 regulations in the City of Champaign or City of Urbana for bees that he is aware of.
35

36 Mr. Elwell asked if Lincolnshire Fields is in the R-1 District.
37

38 Mr. Hall said that Lincolnshire Fields is in several different Zoning Districts, it is just not one, but they
39 are all residential. He said that he thinks it safe to say that virtually all of Lincolnshire Fields is in the
40 unincorporated area and would be affected by these regulations.
41

42 Ms. Lee said that in their materials, one of the people who spoke at one of the other meetings said that
43 they contacted the City of Urbana, and if Champaign County passed this beekeeping amendment, that they
44 would also do the same thing. She said this would affect both the County and the City of Urbana.
45

46 Mr. Hall said that based on their recent experience with the City of Urbana and several text amendments,
47 he actually would expect the City to protest this text amendment, but who knows.
48
49

1 Ms. Lee said that this person had talked to the City of Urbana, and City of Urbana said that if the County
2 passed it then they would pass it.

3
4 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other comments or questions from the Board. Seeing none, he thanked
5 Ms. Romero.

6
7 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Burgstrom if they should go ahead and ask for Ms. Rachel Coventry's letter. He
8 asked if they should add the letter as a Document of Record instead of hearing testimony.

9
10 Ms. Burgstrom said that is really up to the Board; Mr. Hall provided copies of Ms. Coventry's email to
11 each of them at their desks. She said it is written as testimony with a few photos, so they can discuss how
12 they would like. She said if they would like someone to read it to them on the record, they can do that.

13
14 Ms. Lee said that she thinks the benefit of reading it on the record would be that the audience would get
15 to hear it, whereas they don't know what is in it right now.

16
17 Ms. Burgstrom said that she would post it online like usual tomorrow morning after the meeting now that
18 they received it late this afternoon, so it is up to them.

19
20 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Romero if what she had to read tonight was the same as what the Board already
21 currently had.

22
23 Ms. Romero said it is.

24
25 Mr. Elwell said they already have that document, and it will be posted tomorrow morning.

26
27 Ms. Romero said sure.

28
29 Mr. Elwell said thank you.

30
31 Mr. Elwell called off last meeting's Witness Register for Ms. Amanda Morgan to testify. He asked her to
32 please state her full name and address.

33
34 Ms. Amanda Morgan stated that she lives at 2016 Burlison Drive in Urbana. She said she lives very close
35 to tonight's meeting at the Brookens Administrative Building here in Urbana. She said that she is entirely
36 disheartened to learn that the City of Urbana may possibly pass this as well, which would directly affect
37 her since she is not currently affected by the proposed regulations. She said that she is a social worker,
38 and she wants to talk about the extra burden that these regulations pose on people who are looking to
39 become beekeepers and to supply goods for their own use, which many of the beekeepers do. She said
40 this would be a burden to those who can't financially afford fencing considering the lumber prices right
41 now; she thinks someone would have to trade a firstborn child for that. She said that she thinks that some
42 parts of the regulation are not quite realistic; for example, keeping a nucleus colony for one month. She
43 said that she grew up in western Illinois that is just five miles from one of the leading beekeeping suppliers
44 in the world, Dadant & Sons. She said she ordered a hive body from them to put a nucleus colony in,
45 because they surprisingly caught three swarms this summer and they had never caught one before, but it
46 was just a booming year and they were thrilled. She said they did not have enough extra hive bodies to
47 accommodate these swarms, so as soon as they caught the swarm, they came home and ordered a hive box
48 from Dadant & Sons. She said that the hive body took two and a half months to arrive, so it is not realistic

1 for it to only be for 30 days. She said she cannot keep a supply to house any potential swarms when who
2 knows how many they will catch per year, and she thinks that 30 days is far too short of a time.

3
4 Ms. Morgan said that at the last meeting, there was some discussion about a website to register hives,
5 which is separate from the State registration, and she heard a little bit of murmur in the crowd when that
6 came up, and “my goodness they aren’t even registered.” She said that she would like to clarify what the
7 registry other than the State’s registry is; there is an app that beekeepers are allowed to register on if they
8 choose, they don’t have to. She said it maps the location of their hives so that if nearby fields are spraying
9 pesticides, they can take precautions to help protect their bees, because these farmers do understand the
10 importance of pollination and how much of what beekeepers do actually matters. She said that she also
11 wants to focus on the testimony that the Prairieview Subdivision neighbors are not able to have friends
12 over because of the bees.

13
14 Ms. Morgan said that she wants to share her experience, which is drastically different; in fact, she has
15 people begging to come to her house to see the bees. She said she has observation lids on the top of the
16 hives and yes, they can laugh, and they can mumble, but it is quite true. She said that she would be happy
17 to host any of them at her house anytime to see these hives, because it is certainly something magical
18 seeing them at work and their society at play, and knowing that they are extremely intelligent creatures.
19 She said that people are quite interested in this, and her neighbors are thrilled that she has bees. She said
20 she wants to mention about being stung. She said that she is 42 years old, and she grew up at a time where
21 she spent a lot of time outside and getting stung frequently was very normal. She said that she didn’t even
22 really notice that she wasn’t being stung much anymore, and then she put it together when she started
23 hearing about the decline in bee populations and was sad. She said as much as anybody would like to be
24 stung, it is something that is concerning, and she does want to note that she has been stung in her hive and
25 it was most certainly her fault for not wearing her protective gear. She said that when she was entering
26 their hive to take some honey, which they protect, it is their nature, she developed a toxic reaction and
27 now she has an EpiPen at her house; she has an extra or two, because being allergic to bees really isn’t
28 fun. She said that she continues to be a beekeeper, because she realizes the importance of this job and this
29 is not her primary job, this is a hobby, by the way. She said on the topic of bee manure, as Mr. Seeds so
30 lovingly called it, and probably more appropriately than what she would call it, she does have photos and
31 she is more than happy to share with them from a rather warm day when there was still snow on the
32 ground. She said that the bees will not defecate or urinate in their hives, because they are extremely clean
33 creatures. She said when they hold that in for the winter, because they don’t want to leave the hive if it is
34 too cold, then they leave and they do their business, but it is always within a very short distance of the
35 hive. She said since there was snow on the ground, they could actually see the spots from it; she thought
36 it was really cool, but she can see how other people may not think it is cool.

37
38 Ms. Morgan said that she would like to throw in that she has hives on their property within four feet of
39 their property line, and they are directed the other direction, because hives do need to be south facing to
40 help them. She said if you face the beehives different directions, the temperature and a lot of different
41 things can impact them. She said that she keeps all of their cars within 30 yards of the hives, and she has
42 never once seen bee manure on her vehicle, it’s frankly absurd to even consider that is a problem. She said
43 she wants to point out that they do live in the Midwest, where the number of bugs on her windshield just
44 driving a few miles at night is a lot, and she has never ever had anything like that, even remotely, with
45 bees. She said she thinks that covers everything, except she is hoping once Candyman the new movie is
46 released that involves bees, anyone would be happy to join them for a screening in their yard next to the
47 hives.

48
49 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.

1 Mr. Wood asked Ms. Morgan if she was a member of the bee association. He asked if, during the time
2 that she has been involved in that, has she ever heard of any complaints in Champaign-Urbana about bees.
3 Ms. Morgan said never; in fact, on a very frequent basis she gets many people pulling her aside seeing her
4 Facebook posts and saying thank you for what she is doing; she said even folks not near their area are
5 grateful.

6
7 Mr. Elwell said that Mr. Ledford had made a comment about the bee association having best practices,
8 and he just wanted to get her take on what she felt about his comment.

9
10 Ms. Morgan said that she does think that is a good idea; she thinks that almost all beekeepers follow these
11 best practices out of their love of what they do, it is a hobby that they enjoy. She said that it is something
12 that is quite a financial investment for them, so they don't want to mess this up. She said that she does
13 agree that best practices could be determined, and she would be more than happy to follow them. She
14 thinks that the regulations proposed in the ordinance, however, are very contradictory to what beekeeping
15 is about. She said if they were a member of NASA, they wouldn't ask a Board to approve a plan for a
16 space shuttle without ever speaking to an aerospace engineer, and she is highly disappointed that
17 beekeepers were not consulted when this ordinance was created.

18
19 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Ms.
20 Morgan. He called off tonight's Witness Register for Mr. Roger Faulkner to testify. He asked him to please
21 state his full name and address.

22
23 Mr. Roger Faulkner stated that he lives at 409 East Second Street in Homer, Illinois. He said that he has
24 been a lifelong resident of Champaign County and he was surprised to see this story that this text
25 amendment was actually being considered to discourage citizens from taking on the hobby of beekeeping.
26 He said that he understands how important the pollinators are, and without pollinators, the human race
27 would be wiped out in as little as four years. He said that it is so important that they maintain as many
28 hives as possible, because with deforestation and other developments where more and more trees are being
29 wiped out, they are losing more and more of their natural habitat, and this is one of the reasons he feels
30 this hobby is so important.

31
32 Mr. Faulkner said that he is not a beekeeper and he has never kept bees, but he has worked with many
33 different beekeepers. He said he is a contractor and occasionally bees will move into a structure whether
34 it be a building, barn, or even somebody's house. He said that he opens the house up so the beekeepers
35 can remove the bees as a live removal process that doesn't harm the bees, and then finds them a better
36 place to live. He said that he thinks people would be surprised just how many hives are around, even
37 without the beekeepers, that are wild. He said they live in trees, structures, and he has had several
38 homeowners where he has removed the bees where they said that the bees had just moved in this year. He
39 said the hive had clearly been there three or four years, so they were living with the bees and didn't even
40 know it. He said he has probably taken 60 or 70 hives out of structures over the last ten years, and he has
41 never heard anybody say anything about the bees going to the bathroom on their vehicles; that's a new
42 one - he heard that for the first time tonight. He said that he took time to read through some of the
43 complaints, and he was not surprised at how trivial they seem to be; bees in a pool, the soiling on a pickup
44 truck, and bees in a birdbath, these were all things that would happen with or without people keeping bees.
45 He said that he considered the complaint about the bees in the birdbath and then thought they are actually
46 attracting wildlife by having a birdbath out there. He said that he is certain that birds go to the bathroom
47 on peoples' trucks, drop feathers in pools, and they actually cause disease by bringing on flies and other
48 vermin; that would be okay, whereas bees provide so many different health benefits. He said that before
49 he was a contractor, he did collision repair for about 17 years, and getting bird feces off of someone's car

1 is a lot harder than the bugs. He said for the bugs, they had a simple spray that sprays on and wipes off,
2 and it doesn't damage the clear coat, whereas the bug droppings do not damage the clear coat on a
3 manufactured paint job, so the birds are much worse. He said that he hasn't heard any complaints about
4 bees restricting the number of birdfeeders, birdhouses, and any of those things that seem to be much worse
5 than the bees.

6
7 Mr. Faulkner said that makes him think it is a little bit more personal than just a real nuisance of bees,
8 because as he said before, there are bees everywhere, and anywhere there are going to be trees there are
9 going to be bees. He said this ordinance wouldn't reduce these things that the Board is proposing to solve,
10 and the ordinance as he read through it wouldn't slow this down any. He said that he is glad they live in a
11 society where each citizen has a voice; however, he is a little disappointed that the Board would be
12 spending this kind of time on something that is so trivial with so many other worse matters that are out
13 there, and this seems to be a pretty isolated incident. He said that he has worked with people with bees in
14 their houses who didn't even know it for years, so it just seems like a very small problem that doesn't
15 require any government oversight or interference for this issue that seems so small to him. He said thank
16 you.

17
18 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Mr.
19 Faulkner. He called Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones to testify. He asked her to please state her full name and
20 address.

21
22 Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones stated that she lives at 2002 Barnes Street in Urbana, Illinois. She said that she is
23 presenting this in response to the recent proposed text amendment to regulate beekeeping in the
24 unincorporated areas of Champaign County. She said that she apologizes in advance to the length of this
25 narrative. She said she is well-known in her professional nursing arena and in her apiary and pollinator
26 community as well. She said that she believes she needs to present a comprehensive history to adequately
27 explain her perspective on this matter. She said her reputation is on the line, and she takes this quite
28 seriously, especially since Mr. Barney Bryson has written hate letters about her, publicly humiliated her,
29 defamed her, and misrepresented her on many occasions. She said she wants to start by thanking all of her
30 fellow beekeepers and pro-bee supporters for their contributions to this cause. She said that Ms.
31 Burgstrom, Senior Planner for Champaign County Department of Planning & Zoning, reported to her that
32 561 petition signees are opposed to the amendment, not including the Change.org submitters, with 24
33 signees favoring it. She said there were 20 letters or emails opposed and seven in favor of the text
34 amendment. She said those numbers indicated strong opposition to this proposed amendment.

35
36 Ms. Wilson-Jones said the crux of the matter is this: the passing of this amendment is misdirected, since
37 she already moved her hives several years ago; it will only cause unrighteous impact to some of her fellow
38 beekeepers, and cause unnecessary burden for the county. She said the action she took was prompted by
39 an already established government body with the Department of Agriculture, and more specifically by an
40 Illinois State Apiary Inspector. She said the established system works, so it seems the County's
41 involvement is absolutely unwarranted. She said that as the Board has heard from many, honeybees are
42 such a vital component to their ecosystem. She said to have backyard beekeepers imposed with these
43 restrictions will severely handicap their endeavors. She said with such dramatically declining bee
44 populations due to several factors, such as disease, lack of forage, environmental chemicals, etc., they
45 need to foster and encourage managed bee activities. She said that beekeepers are unsung heroes in her
46 estimation, and they are supporting a portion of a fragile ecosystem requiring laborious, unique expertise
47 and expense with minimal compensation other than the satisfaction of knowing they have contributed to
48 a more sustainable ecosystem. She said that in the Board's packet in Attachment F, pages 32 to 34 from
49 the July 29 meeting, there is a narrative piece written by a local seasoned beekeeper. She said that he

1 comprehensively detailed the ramifications for beekeepers if this proposed amendment is approved. She
2 said that as a 16-year veteran beekeeper, she finds Bruce Pea's descriptions accurate and in reality, quite
3 daunting for the beekeeper to the point that would become impractical for some to continue in the practice.
4

5 Ms. Wilson-Jones said there are currently 88 beekeepers registered in the State Registry in this county.
6 She said Dan Wright, the local Illinois State Apiary Inspector, could not determine the exact number of
7 beekeepers that this proposed amendment would affect, but as Bruce Pea described, many of them have
8 multiple apiaries in various Zoning Districts in the county; therefore, she suspects it would impact a
9 significant number, especially over time. She said that she no longer manages honeybees in the defined
10 Zoning District described in the proposed amendment; therefore, she will not directly be impacted by the
11 decision since she took corrective action two years ago. She said she maintained that this is an isolated
12 incident, which originated with her, and she does not want her fellow beekeepers penalized. She said she
13 began corrective action two and a half years ago when she was contacted by Mr. Hall, the Director of the
14 Department of Planning & Zoning, when a honeybee complaint from Mr. Barney Bryson was submitted
15 to the County several months earlier. She said that Mr. Hall explained to her that she did not need to take
16 any action until the case was heard by the County committees several months in the future. She asked Mr.
17 Hall if that was correct.
18

19 Mr. Hall said that is correct.
20

21 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that even then, it would be several more months before any action might be needed.
22 She said however, the same week she was visited by Dan Wright, the local Illinois State Apiary Inspector,
23 and in consultation with him, she decided she would take proactive steps and promptly moved hives off
24 of her property. She said while it was a daunting and laborious task considering a six-day work week
25 schedule, her husband's 12-hour shifts at the hospital, and caring for her demented, disabled father in her
26 home, in addition to requiring rain-free days, they managed to move all the hives except one that spring.
27 She said that the remaining one was moved this spring; she still manages hives in this region, but they are
28 scattered among this county and others. She said it is a 90-mile circuit to visit them all. She said contrary
29 to critics she had recently read about, she has done her best to be a respectable steward to her honeybees
30 and the bee and pollinator community at large. She said she has been either the President or Co-President
31 of their local honeybee club, CEIBA, the Central Eastern Illinois Beekeeping Association, for multiple
32 years. She said she has captured and relocated numerous swarms around the county, instructed classes for
33 beginner beekeepers, presented multiple PowerPoints to local clubs, such as the local herbal society and
34 other honeybee clubs in the state. She said she has been a guest speaker with Prairie Gardens for several
35 different events, provided instruction to 4-H students, annually volunteered for the Illinois State
36 Beekeepers Association, and has ongoing mentoring with several new beekeepers, typically on a gratis
37 basis.
38

39 Ms. Wilson-Jones said regarding this isolated neighborhood issue, in retrospect, she concluded that years
40 ago she was an overzealous beekeeper and she quickly acquired a number of hives due to strong survival
41 rates, splitting hives, providing public service by capturing swarms, and removing colonies from areas
42 where they were not welcomed, all without compensation. She said in fact, she usually gave honey to the
43 individual who notified her. She said she noticed in one of the documents a very inflated number of hives
44 stated to be in her yard in the past; she believes they derived that number either by counting individual
45 hive bodies or counting uninhabited stacked bee equipment that would appear to be functioning hives. She
46 said regardless, at that time she started moving hives from her property to other locations to reduce the
47 number. She said that this included one neighbor who was an avid gardener several houses away from
48 her, but very close to the Mr. Barney Bryson's residence; the neighbor had expressed great pleasure in
49 observing the bees in her garden and had several bee friendly flowers, and innocently enough she obliged

1 her. She said that this avid gardener neighbor lives next door to another neighbor that lets her use her side
2 lot to plant a pollinator garden annually, they were excited to have the bees nearby, and they enjoyed the
3 bees and were glad to be pro bee supporters. She said that in all the years the hives were there, they were
4 never stung, even working closely among the bees in the gardens. She said they had annual garden parties
5 with numbers of attendees; she cautioned her neighbor to inform the guests of the hives and to keep a safe
6 distance from the bees' flightpath by cordoning that off. She said that everyone was fascinated by them
7 and no one was ever stung; she verified this information with her recently and maintains that position.
8

9 Ms. Wilson-Jones said when she proactively started removing hives from the subdivision after being
10 visited by Dan Wright, the local Illinois State Apiary Inspector, she started with her property given that
11 Mr. Barney Bryson had expressed complaints about bees visiting his swimming pool. She said that she
12 was trying to mitigate this for him since he lived close by, even though her one neighbor had no complaint
13 with the bees on her property and no other neighbors ever approached her with any complaints either. She
14 said that her neighbor expressed great sadness as the bees were removed from her property, and as they
15 were removing them, Mr. Barney Bryson and an acquaintance stood at the street goading her and her
16 husband as they worked. She said that this type of derogatory behavior by Mr. Barney Bryson escalated
17 by him displaying graphic vulgar body language of various types to her as she drove by his residence on
18 several occasions. She said that whatever the conflict, she finds this completely unacceptable; therefore,
19 they have a very degraded relationship, so yes, this is a personal situation.
20

21 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that around that time, she inquired of other neighbors, including one who also has
22 a swimming pool, and she wanted to get his perspective to see if it was consistent with Barney Bryson's
23 view. She said that he expressed that part of having a pool is regular skimming of debris, and he
24 acknowledged that he had skimmed some honeybees, but in addition he had skimmed June bugs, Japanese
25 beetles, moths, twigs, leaves, etc. She said that he expressed that honeybees were not an issue for him; in
26 fact, for many years he asked her for pollinator friendly plants that she grew from seed to attract the
27 honeybees. She said that she followed up with him this summer and he stated that he and his wife only
28 saw one honeybee near their pool the entire season. She said that one neighbor stated the bees were visiting
29 his hummingbird feeder, which is usually a temporary situation in the fall when forage is scarce. She said
30 the one neighbor who had small bee feces on his vehicle, which was already discussed in the meetings,
31 was a short-term situation while the bees were foraging his maple tree near his driveway. She said that
32 she offered him money, and it wasn't five or seven dollars; she had 40 dollars and honey that she had
33 offered him as compensation, because the maple trees only bloom about a week. She said that she felt this
34 was a reasonable compensation and that he could wash his vehicle, but he refused both, and she did not
35 believe they were creating a significant problem, because they were short-term situations.
36

37 Ms. Wilson-Jones said considering that bees fly a foraging distance of at least one to two miles, that is
38 8,000 acres from their hive; any one of these bee visits to the neighborhood could be from surrounding
39 bee colonies. She said that she knows of two apiaries, one being the University of Illinois hives, that are
40 both within a quarter of a mile of their subdivision. She said this does not include any feral colonies in the
41 wild, which Mr. Roger Faulkner just spoke of; there could be many, because they have timber patches in
42 this area and feral colonies can inhabit dead trees as he stated. She said that it is hard to judge the impact
43 that they have, but when food is scarce, bees will fly farther to forage and they are especially attracted to
44 large bodies of water, i.e., swimming pools. She said that Dan Wright, the local Illinois State Apiary
45 Inspector, informed Mr. Barney Bryson even after her hives were moved that he would still have unwanted
46 bees visiting his pool. She said that she recently read a letter included in the Board's packet in Attachment
47 E, page 3 of 12 from the July 29 meeting that she would like to expand on; this is from a previous next-
48 door neighbor who moved away about five years ago, Mr. Kenneth Mills, who is recently deceased. She
49 said that in the letter, he recounted some unfortunate events involving honeybees, such as some stings.

1 She said she was shocked as she read it though, because at no time did he ever disclose to her any objection
2 to the bees; in fact, he and his wife Nila would regularly visit their yard just to watch the bees. She said
3 they observed them catching a swarm and were fascinated by the experience, and he asked her many
4 questions about honeybee behavior over the years and appeared quite intrigued. She said that face-to-face
5 with her, he had only expressed a positive opinion, and he had many opportunities to openly discuss any
6 concern. She said that he summoned her to his home on several occasions to provide nursing assistance
7 to Nila, who had a debilitating chronic illness and is now deceased too. She said that she has no way to
8 reconcile this now and she is saddened that these were their true feelings, and that it negatively impacted
9 the sale of their home. She said that as she pondered this new information, she remembered a good friend
10 of Mr. Kenneth Mills by the name of Mr. Christopher Mackey of Urbana; he had been a previous honey
11 customer of hers who was introduced through Mr. Mills. She said that she had recently contacted Mr.
12 Mackey to get his opinion, and when he realized it was her he said, "oh you're the bee lady," and told her
13 that Mr. Mills loved her bees. She said that she explained that there was recently a produced letter typed
14 but signed by Mr. Mills a few months before his passing that expressed otherwise. She said that Mr.
15 Mackey reiterated that he only ever heard positive comments about the bees from Mr. Mills. She said that
16 he felt so strongly about this that he had submitted a letter in the Board's packet from the July 29 meeting
17 in Attachment F, page 35 of 39, that questioned the validity of that letter, and he invites anyone to contact
18 him about that. She said that she sincerely thought that she was making reasonable and responsible
19 management decisions about her honeybees based on the reporting from credible neighbors.

20
21 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that when the County became involved and she received a visit from Dan Wright,
22 who came within 24 hours of Mr. Barney Bryson notifying the Illinois Department of Agriculture, she
23 acted by removing her hives well an advance of a decision by ELUC, in which the case was tabled in the
24 fall of 2020. She said that she recognizes that she has hives within flight distance of this subdivision,
25 which she has been relocating, and she still has some bees not far from her property line, but they are not
26 on her property. She said that there is no regulation that dictates the amount of distance that a beekeeper
27 has to have from a property line; in fact, these hives sit in a hedgerow between two cornfields and there is
28 nothing back there except her and her dogs when they walk them. She said that Mr. Derald Seeds walked
29 clear in the back between the two cornfields to look at her hives, which is Mr. Donald Flessner's property,
30 and she has full permission from Mr. Flessner to have those bees there. She said she thinks he was
31 committee member at one time. She said that she had reiterated with him again recently, and he has given
32 her full permission to have those hives located there. She said that those hives are a great distance from
33 any other neighbor and are basically in a cornfield, but she has been moving them based on the recent
34 observation of Mr. Derald Seeds browbeating one of her fellow beekeepers here after the last meeting.
35 She said that if it makes him that upset, she guesses she will take further action, but she will continue to
36 explain how few bees she is actually seeing in her neighborhood. She said that she has been regularly
37 scanning her yard and her pollinator garden located near Mr. Barney Bryson's residence, specifically
38 assessing the number of honeybees. She said for quite some time and currently, she has observed many
39 bumblebees and wasps, but very few honeybees. She said in fact, she would welcome anyone to come to
40 her house or walk the neighborhood and see for themselves.

41
42 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that Ms. Lesley Deem, who spoke at the last meeting, just did that unbeknownst to
43 her and she later informed her that she could only identify one honeybee, but also observed many
44 bumblebees and wasps. She said that yellowjacket wasps, which are many times misidentified as
45 honeybees, have become more obvious lately as food scarcity increases, and may alter honeybee
46 visitations as well. She said that she cannot control this phenomena; these are insects in our environment,
47 and they are flying in areas of their choice. She said that she has had several calls from individuals outside
48 her subdivision in the last two weeks with claims that honeybees were flying in unwanted areas, and two
49 of the individuals were stung. She said that after gathering a bit of information and asking them to send

1 her a picture, every one of them was a yellowjacket wasp, which delivers quite a burning sting, and they
2 can sting multiple times due to their smooth stinger. She said that she gets these calls every year in the fall
3 due to the prevalence of yellowjackets seeking sweet substances, so misidentification is common and has
4 clearly contributed to her neighborhood issue. She said for example, years ago a neighbor insisted that her
5 honeybees had taken residence behind his house where he was trying to wash his windows. She said she
6 came to inspect and explained that the decayed timber he pointed at was in fact inhabited by yellowjackets;
7 she went ahead and washed his windows for him, so he wouldn't have to risk a sting.
8

9 Ms. Wilson-Jones said back to the existing system that prompted her corrective action, the Illinois
10 Department of Agriculture has a number of State Apiary Inspectors; they perform site visits, assessing
11 health of hives, diagnosing and intervening to mitigate communicable disease, they coordinate and execute
12 studies on honeybees for various organizations, including academia, state, and federal, and they also are
13 experienced at problem resolution. She said they can relate to beekeepers, because they are beekeepers;
14 that goes a long way in any kind of conflict. She said that in her case, Mr. Dan Wright visited her in person
15 within 24 hours of being notified by the Director of Rural Affairs, an affiliate of the Department of
16 Agriculture, following the complaint from Mr. Barney Bryson. She said that after the inspector visited
17 her, he went directly to Mr. Barney Bryson's residence to inform him that she would be moving her hives
18 off of her subdivision zoned property. She said the inspector told her later that Mr. Barney Bryson was
19 impressed at the promptness of his action; the point is, Mr. Barney Bryson got results from an existing
20 system and it was effective a second time. She said that she moved all but one hive off her property in
21 April 2019, but remember she was under no obligation to move any of her hives per the County since the
22 proposed amendment had been indefinitely tabled in the fall of 2020. She said that she had planned to
23 move that remaining hive in the spring when it was depleted of its heavy winter honey. She said that
24 apparently, Mr. Barney Bryson took a close inspection of her property and discovered the rather hidden
25 hive, and that was not intentional, it was just placed there for wind protection. She said again, the
26 Department of Agriculture was notified, and Mr. Dan Wright promptly contacted her and requested that
27 she move the remaining hive; she explained that was her plan and she did so as the weather permitted, and
28 upon finding a suitable location. She said that again, the existing system in place worked, therefore,
29 implementing arduous, complex, potentially expensive, and handicapping amendments to her fellow
30 beekeepers is absolutely unnecessary and unjust. She said that especially given its extremely rare
31 occurrence, Mr. Dan Wright had told her himself it was extremely rare. She said a CEIBA member sent a
32 letter to the County that stated in his 49 years of beekeeping, this was the only instance that he was aware
33 of and he felt that this proposal was at the very least overkill.
34

35 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that she recalls Mr. Elwell asking at the last meeting who someone could turn to
36 in situations like this. She said she has the answer: the existing system, which utilizes State inspectors
37 who understand the dynamics of all aspects of beekeeping and can truly relate to fellow beekeepers, and
38 can therefore get results. She said in addition, the Illinois State Beekeepers Association has a prepared a
39 document called Best Management Practices for Beekeeping in Illinois; it is very comprehensive and
40 available on their website, and she plans to make this available to their CEIBA members. She said thank
41 you for the Board's patience and presentation of this, since she has taken up much narrative to support her
42 perspective and reputation. She said that she maintained that this is isolated to the historic issues regarding
43 honeybee complaints in her subdivision, which she took action to remedy two and a half years ago. She
44 said she does not believe these proposed amendment restrictions are necessary, and they will unduly
45 discourage much needed current and future beekeepers. She said on a lighter note, for anyone who would
46 like to visit a beehive up close, she will extend an invitation and will of course put them in protective
47 clothing, and show them the wonders of the amazing honeybee.
48

49 Mr. Elwell thanked Ms. Wilson-Jones and asked if there were any questions from the Board.

1 Ms. Lee said that Ms. Wilson-Jones stated she moved her one remaining hive this spring. She asked about
2 what date she moved the hive.

3
4 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that it was probably in April 2020; they could check records and Mr. Dan Wright
5 probably has evidence of it, because he has evidence on the first visit that he made to her; in fact, she
6 found that document, and it was April 2019.

7
8 Mr. Elwell asked her if it was correct that there are five beehives on her property with active bees.

9
10 Ms. Wilson-Jones said that is incorrect, because they are not on her property; they are on agriculturally
11 zoned property owned by Mr. Donald Flessner.

12
13 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board. Seeing none, he thanked Ms. Wilson-
14 Jones. He called Ms. Joan Mathis to testify. He asked her to please state her full name and address.

15
16 Ms. Joan Mathis stated she lived at 2004 Burwell Street in Urbana. She said that she is not a person that
17 can tell the Board what committees she has been on, what education she has, etc. She said that she is a
18 neighbor, she is 83 years old, and she has lived in the Prairieview Subdivision since 1988. She said that
19 they were under the impression that being in a residential area, they wouldn't have to deal with this thing;
20 and since they were residential and not agriculture, they did not expect this. She said that she is not against
21 Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones and Mr. Drew Jones; they were neighbors and on good terms for a long time up
22 until they had all this heavy bee problem. She said that the people who have said that the bees don't go to
23 the bathroom on their cars haven't left their car outside, because they can't get all theirs in the garage. She
24 said she can describe it; it's little yellow and gold streaks that sets on like concrete, and they just scrub
25 and scrub, and it gets on the garage doors too. She said that she would like to know why Ms. Wilson-
26 Jones' husband has to cover his car at times. She said that she spoke of a lot of these problems at the last
27 meeting, and she doesn't want to go over them all again, but they didn't have any ordinance to help them,
28 or it would have never gotten to this, because they didn't have anything that was going for them, and she
29 didn't know anything about the State stuff. She said that it was becoming a problem at her house when
30 her neighbors who were on her porch at the time and the bees were swarming, but not swarming to the
31 point that there were hundreds and hundreds, but she is just saying that they were there, and they were
32 coming up on the porch around her neighbors to the point they got up and left.

33
34 Ms. Mathis said that they are not liars, she doesn't know where all this is coming from, but they never
35 bother anybody. She said that she wants this to be solved in some way; they need sensible restrictions, but
36 she doesn't know how extreme they have to be, because she has listened to these beekeepers and she feels
37 some of them are very responsible, and she is not calling anyone liars, but she feels like they are calling
38 them liars. She said that their neighborhood is only one block in and a block around, and there are not that
39 many people in the neighborhood to come to this meeting to fight this; there are some who don't like to
40 come to public meetings and don't like to speak who have voiced their opinions. She said that at the last
41 meeting, there were eight of them there and tonight there are five of them there; it's just not one person,
42 that is not true. She said that she is getting completely off of what she actually wanted to say, because she
43 has been listening to this meeting and last time the beekeeper said, "well I don't make any money off the
44 bees and he gives the honey to friends, family, etc.," and she believed him. She said that she knows Ms.
45 Rena Wilson-Jones makes money and showed a jar of her honey. She asked if the Board knew what it
46 says on it, and read, "pure honey, wildflowers, Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones Honeybee Haven." She said what
47 is wrong with her haven, can't she have a haven in her neighborhood, the bees need a haven.

1 Ms. Mathis said that she is not against bees, they need them, and she knows that, but she thinks they have
2 to keep them out of the residential neighborhoods where there are children and bee problems. She said
3 that these things that some of the beekeepers are coming up with of how interesting the bees are and
4 everything else, because people like to learn about them, but someone doesn't like to be stung by them.
5 She said that is about all she has to say, and she does know that here is a bottle of Ms. Rena Wilson-
6 Jones's honey and a picture of the label. She said she knows she sells it, and she is sure it is probably
7 worth selling, but just give them some sensible restrictions, and if they would have had them in the
8 beginning it would have never gotten to this. She said for the number of beehives on a small residential
9 property, and she is under the impression that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones has just moved those hives on the
10 other side of her property line onto Mr. Donald Flessner's property, they are still going to have the same
11 problem. She said thank you.

12

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

14

15 Ms. Lee asked Ms. Mathis where the bees were located now in relation to where her residence was.

16

17 Ms. Mathis said they don't have as many bees as when Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones started with so many in
18 her yard; she did downsize. She said that they still have some and they still have the feces on their car,
19 and she and her husband can't afford to run out and have their cars cleaned all the time. She said she cleans
20 their cars, and they can't just do a normal wash, they have to scratch it off just about.

21

22 Ms. Lee asked her when she had this bee feces on her cars and if they are still having the bee feces on
23 their cars right now in August.

24

25 Ms. Mathis said yes, because there are still bees, and the way that she understands it, Ms. Wilson-Jones
26 just moved the beehives to the agricultural zoning right on the other side of her property line.

27

28 Ms. Lee asked her how close the bees were to her residence now since she is saying that Ms. Rena Wilson-
29 Jones bees are not on her residence now.

30

31 Ms. Mathis said that she is not sure the exact distance, but she knows the farmer that is on the other side
32 of her property line, and Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones has said that the farmer has given her permission, which
33 would be probably just a couple to a few blocks away. She said that it wouldn't make much difference
34 from where the bees were before.

35

36 Mr. Elwell asked her how she feels about this Zoning Ordinance not being able to do anything for hives
37 that are not in a R-1, R-2, or R-3 District.

38

39 Ms. Mathis said that she doesn't know, she is not the one writing the ordinance; she is just the one trying
40 to get relief. She said that she doesn't mind bees in the agricultural areas, but they are only going to be
41 block or two away.

42

43 Mr. Elwell told Ms. Mathis that he doesn't think that they would be seeking relief from this ordinance and
44 how it is written. He said that he is assuming that the hedgerow between the two cornfields would be in
45 an AG-1 or AG-2 District, which would not be covered under this ordinance. He asked Ms. Mathis that if
46 they did pass this ordinance and if she kept the bees there, how would that further her petition.

47

48 Ms. Mathis said that she really doesn't know, she just wants relief and something to help them, because it
49 is just not one person and they have tried to work it out. She said that she likes the part about the ordinance

1 that isn't going to allow a bunch of hives on a small lot; there are parts in it that would really be beneficial
2 in the residential areas. She said that she doesn't know about the other parts of the ordinance, about the
3 fences and all that stuff. She said that she admires the beekeepers that want to do this, and she admires the
4 fact that they need beekeepers, but this has been a very difficult thing in their neighborhood.

5 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.
6

7 Mr. Wood said given that the residential property is adjacent to AG-1 or AG-2, whichever Mr. Donald
8 Flessner's ground is, then this ordinance would be ineffective.
9

10 Mr. Elwell said that is kind of what his concern was from what he has heard from Ms. Mathis. He said
11 that she wants relief, but even if this was fully enacted, it wouldn't provide the relief that she is looking
12 for.
13

14 Mr. Wood said no, that it wouldn't provide relief.
15

16 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Mathis if that made sense.
17

18 Ms. Mathis said that part of it does because it may prevent those beehives from going back onto Ms. Rena
19 Wilson-Jones's property that she had on there before, so there are parts that are necessary. She said that
20 maybe it has to be rethought, but at least there are parts that are necessary.
21

22 Mr. Wood said the Board heard testimony at the last meeting that there are other beehives in the area. He
23 said that the bees travel quite a distance, and there is no way to tell exactly where they are coming from.
24

25 Ms. Mathis said that they did not have a bee problem until the large number of bees came into the
26 neighborhood; they didn't have them before, and they have lived there since 1988. She said that they just
27 want some relief, that is all.
28

29 Mr. Wood said he understood that.
30

31 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Ms.
32 Mathis. He called for Mr. Barney Bryson to testify. He asked him to please state his full name and address.
33

34 Mr. Barney Bryson stated he lives at 2102 Barnes Street in Urbana. He said to clarify, the property that
35 those beehives are sitting on is in the City of Urbana. He said that it is marked for construction as R-2
36 District, but that is an Urbana issue. He said to clear up some of the misstatements that have been made
37 tonight, Urbana did not say they would do what Champaign County said; Urbana stated that they would
38 support the County in whatever they chose to do. He said that if the County chose to develop a zoning
39 issue or regulation, they would support that, and that has been two or three years ago, because they have
40 been fighting this for that long. He said just as a point of clarification, Urbana did not say they were going
41 to copy the County's ordinance.
42

43 Mr. Bryson said that he would like to say one thing here that is kind of disturbing to him, and he takes
44 great offense at personal attacks. He said that he never made lude reactions towards Ms. Rena Wilson-
45 Jones and Mr. Drew Jones while they were doing whatever it was they were doing or claimed they were
46 doing. He said that the beehives that were on his neighbor's property were actually on public property;
47 they were on a right-of-way. He said during one of those parties, a lady walked right by those beehives
48 and started saying, "what are these bugs." He said she was fortunate she didn't get stung. He said not all
49 bees sting, because bees aren't out to sting people. He said that the bees want pollen, nectar to feed their

1 hive, and to stay warm through the winter. He said that they were very close to a sidewalk, which should
2 be blatantly and clearly illegal. He said that comment about him making comments to Ms. Rena Wilson-
3 Jones and Mr. Drew Jones is nothing but garbage. He said regarding the issue that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones
4 moved the beehives off her property, if he moved somewhere else in the meeting room, then the Board
5 couldn't tell him that he didn't move; it's ridiculous. He said that the other thing he wanted to address is
6 the Mr. Kenneth Mills letter in Attachment E, page 3 of 12 from the July 29 meeting. He said he does
7 have access to his widowed wife, and he sat next to him up in the chemotherapy section at Christie Clinic.
8 He said that he has on his old phone where Mr. Mills wrote to him and he can provide that to the Board
9 with his phone number, and to suggest that he typed a letter and had him sign it is insulting not only to
10 him, but to someone's intelligence. He said that when he comes up before the Board and swears before
11 this meeting that what he is going to tell them is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and
12 to have Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones come up here and pontificate falsehoods is terribly insulting, very
13 unfortunate, and shows the character of the person they are dealing with. He said that he can get Mr.
14 Mills's wife to come and talk to the Board if they would like.

15
16 Mr. Bryson said that he would like to take this opportunity to clear up some of the confusion that came
17 about at the last meeting on July 29. He said Ms. Lee had a question about the nuisance in the State
18 ordinance and he answered that the nuisance refers to contamination of a beehive as the nuisance, not the
19 ill effect that it has on some people in a residential area. He said that he would point out that the
20 Department of Agriculture deals mainly with health issues and areas zoned agriculture, because the
21 residential areas are not conducive for agriculture activity; they do not address those issues and are left to
22 the local area residential zoning. He said that Mr. Bryan Miller, who is the copresident he believes now,
23 has wisely acknowledged at the last meeting that he has one beehive on his residential property, and he
24 has his other beehives spread out as they have heard other beekeepers say they have done. He said logical
25 and acceptable, probably so; he is not saying that he doesn't want one bee on his property, because it is
26 nature, it happens. He said that the Illinois Department of Agriculture Apiarist and the Illinois Zoning
27 Director for agriculture told him that what they thought were 27 beehives were actually 54 beehives, and
28 those were the Director's words, not his. He said that he wanted to recognize Mr. Bryan Miller for that,
29 and acknowledge his respect for his neighbors, and the appreciation for what he did.

30
31 Mr. Bryson said that as for determining what bees or where the stinging is coming from, there is a lab in
32 Arizona that works with bee DNA, and he had purchased sterile vials because he had worked in
33 laboratories in his job previously when he was working. He said that he has suggested to those who get
34 stung on his property to keep the stinger while he gets the vial, and they will send it to the lab in Arizona
35 to get a DNA test to see which hive it had come from. He said that yes, it is expensive, but once it is
36 proven and shown, then somebody else can take care of the cost on that. He said regarding the February
37 25th bee issue, when Mr. Bryan Miller stated that bees will go no further than a few feet from a beehive
38 during February and suggested that he would have to have a beehive on his property to be encountering
39 bees in those temperatures, he provided in the Board's packet from tonight's meeting in Attachment C,
40 pages 1 to 4, pictures of the bees he took that day. He said there was frass on his windshield and on the
41 snow on the ground, and the Board can see that in the background of the picture. He said that he went to
42 the weather station online and looked up the history, and he believes the maximum temperature on that
43 day was 45 degrees, and the day before that it was 52 degrees. He said that the Board can see from the
44 pictures that these bees were lethargic, and some were already dead, and when the bees are close to the
45 ground, the temperature is much colder. He said that the bees were on his upper deck where he tried to
46 enjoy a little bit of sunshine and warmth in the middle of winter, but then he put his arm down on his table
47 and there was a bee next to his arm; fortunately, he missed the bee, and has learned to look around first.
48 He said that he wants the Board to think about living in that kind of environment where they have to look

1 behind, above, beside, and everywhere before they sit down or do anything to make sure they aren't
2 smashing or getting stung by a bee; he has been stung five times.

3
4 Mr. Bryson said that as for the one gentleman's comment in the meeting that it is a personal issue, he
5 thinks that some of the other people in the meeting can attest that it is not something that is just between
6 Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones and him. He said that he has tried to work with her for several years, and he pulled
7 her bees out of his pool and put them on zebra grass to dry off so they could fly away; all that garnered
8 him was more bees. He said that when he told her that her bees were getting out of hand and she had told
9 him that she would put a little more sugar in the water, and told him not to wear cologne, lotion, bright
10 colored clothes, and not to swat at the bees, he got a lesson on how to live on his property. He said that as
11 far as the temperatures and the pictures that are in the Board's packet, he thinks that will dispel anything
12 as far as his pool being a block of ice, which was covered by the way. He said the other thing is that if
13 those bees are only going to fly three or four feet, or even yards for sake of conversation, then why did
14 they fly four houses down to his house. He said that would be the closet beehive that is in their
15 neighborhood, and he knows where a lot of the beehives are and the bees have been there a long time, and
16 they have never had this kind of problem with bees before. He said that he would suggest that the bees
17 only flying three to four feet were a little bit further away from the beehive than that, because he can
18 guarantee that he does not have bees; his neighbor does or did.

19
20 Mr. Bryson said that he emailed and talked to the Illinois Beekeepers Association inquiring about how
21 much water it takes to sustain a beehive on April 18; and all he received were the copresidents' names of
22 the East Central Illinois Beekeeping Association which were Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones and Mr. Bryan
23 Miller. He said that then he received a berating response from the person from the Illinois State Beekeepers
24 Association, and he called him underhanded and some other things; he has the email at home. He said that
25 the thing is, if you go against these beekeepers or say something against the bees, then it is like all of
26 sudden it is their fault, they hate bees, they are doing it wrong, they shouldn't do this, and they are
27 unscrupulous. He asked why he is so unscrupulous when he asked that the beekeepers take care of their
28 bees in a proper manner and even at 27 beehives, none of these responsible beekeepers that he has heard
29 testify at the meeting have 27 beehives in a residential area. He said that it was reported to him from one
30 of their members that was present at a meeting they had, and he was referred to as a relentless sphincter,
31 which is fine, he really doesn't care what someone says about him; if someone is picking on him then they
32 are leaving someone else alone, that carries no water with him. He said that the whole issue is that when
33 you have a copresident who is addressing an entire Board and telling them that guy is relentless, then that
34 all of sudden sets the stage for the attitude of these other people that he is the wicked, mean, and rotten
35 neighbor guy who just wants to enjoy his yard, and he hates bees. He said that in his opinion, from the
36 responses the Board received at last month's meeting, those people did not know the answers to their
37 questions. He said that he sat here and listened to those folks at the last meeting say, "it is situational,"
38 and the Board would ask well what about this, they'd respond, "well that is situational" or "it is
39 circumstantial." He said that they don't have an answer for the Board, because there is no answer for
40 insects and that should be a supporting factor for this ordinance. He said the only thing the Board can do
41 is regulate it, because the self-regulation is not working for their copresident and a supposed leader of this
42 organization. He said that the beekeepers can't give the Board a definite answer, which is understandable
43 when dealing with unharnessed livestock, and they do not belong in residential areas without any control.

44
45 Mr. Bryson said that he can assure the Board once again, in the event of a sting there is great potential
46 particularly regarding his case, because dead is not situational, it is final due to the EpiPen not working
47 on a person with heart problems. He said that someone is not to use an EpiPen if someone has a heart
48 condition; it will and can lock someone's heart up. He said that Ms. Maggie Wachter suggested the
49 neighborhood meeting with Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones, and when he was initially working with the County,

1 the Champaign County Executive Director suggested that they have a mediation. He said that he put a
2 notice on Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones's door with a date and a time of the mediation, and he never got a
3 response; therefore, the communication had been attempted and not only that, but attempted with the
4 Champaign County Executive Director, who as she had told him, is a mediator. He said that Ms. Rena
5 Wilson-Jones doesn't feel like they need to talk to their neighbors, even with a mediator present, in a
6 situation like this. He said that Ms. Annette Donnelly stated at the last meeting that this issue only involves
7 two people; he doesn't think that is true and he thinks that the Board can see that it doesn't only involve
8 two people. He said that her statement is false and is misleading to this Board; it involves the
9 neighborhood, and that evidently she did not hear where this involves more than just two people. He said
10 that she made some statement about colony collapse disorder, and the Board will have that report a little
11 bit later, but it is from the Environmental Protection Agency. He said they talk about Colony Collapse
12 Disorder and how 60 percent of the total beehives were lost in 2008 from this, but the percentage has
13 dropped to 31.1 percent in 2013 and in initial reports the 2014-2015 losses have not been mentioned yet.
14 He said that while the colony loss from Colony Collapse Disorder has declined, and why is it happening,
15 because of inadequate forage and poor nutrition, it would happen with human beings as well.

16
17 Mr. Bryson said that Ms. Sara Brown made some misleading statements, and she forgot to tell the Board
18 that she parks a block's length away from Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones house to go do her job, because of the
19 bee frass. He said that testimony from Mr. Derald Seeds earlier this evening had asked Mr. Drew Jones
20 one day if they were going to have a garage sale, because Mr. Drew Jones had parked his car halfway
21 down the block. He said that Mr. Drew Jones responded to Mr. Seeds that he didn't want that bee frass all
22 over his car. He said that he finds it very disappointing that a person would make accusations of a deceased
23 man, Mr. Kenneth Mills, contradicting his written word for Ms. Sara Brown's employer, Ms. Rena
24 Wilson-Jones, and he knows Mr. Kenneth Mills's wife, and if needed he would contact her at the Board's
25 order to straighten out some of the falsities that have been told. He said that he doesn't hold a hundred
26 percent of the fault on Ms. Sara Brown for speaking for her employer, Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones, as
27 instructed, but his point is how would Ms. Sara Brown know what a neighbor said if she was taking care
28 of an ill person, other than what she was told. He said that Mr. Ryan Shosted had stated that the apiarist
29 craft was passed down for generations by his family members, and then he turned around and said that
30 Mr. Bryan Miller was his mentor - four generations of beekeepers and he needed a mentor - he found that
31 confusing. He said that someone cannot tell from a satellite view that a beehive is active and that is true.
32 He said as he stated earlier, the population report came from the State Director, and once again, he has
33 made several attempts to contact the Illinois Beekeepers Association and communicate with the people in
34 the association. He said that when the subject of an issue came up, nobody wanted to talk to him, and if
35 they don't have answers or there are no answers, why don't the people from the association just say so
36 instead of telling people that beekeeping is circumstantial. He said he can assure the Board that the death
37 of what a bee sting can cause is final. He said that in his discovery, a bee sting can be circumstantial also
38 because no one knows when or if an anaphylactic reaction will occur when stung. He said there is no age
39 designation, and it does not matter how many times someone has been stung that would cause the reaction;
40 it could be once, three, or even 80 times and someone won't have a reaction. He said if someone or their
41 loved one gets that special sting, they can watch in terror when the person's bronchial tubes are restricted,
42 and the air is not available, along with the swelling; these circumstances increase in a residential area
43 where a large number of bees are attempted to be kept.

44
45 Mr. Bryson said that Ms. Lesley Deem offered her opinion on the subject of bees to the Board, and he
46 appreciates her willingness to share what she knows. He said if a beekeeper was to go as far as to choose
47 to ignore the people who lived in the residential neighborhood nightmare personally, he feels it would be
48 better to discuss the topic with a person that has the discipline in the apiary behavior. He said that unless

1 the Board wants to continue to hear it is situational or circumstantial, then that may be just what the Board
2 hears; it is not math, it is not definite, and *en masse* they do not belong in a neighborhood.

3
4 Mr. Bryson said Mr. Ben Clegg on Washington Street in Urbana had made a comment about his statement
5 as to why the State does not regulate the physical issue of keeping bees in one county, and let him be clear
6 that he misunderstood what he said that it was just one county. He said that the state is very diverse as the
7 Board knows, and there are different landscapes, environments, and populations that require more specific
8 and local jurisdiction than what the State could efficiently perform. He said that it is like the federal
9 government requiring everyone to use snow chains over icy mountain passes and there are no icy mountain
10 passes in most states, and that regulation would be best if it were left to the state to decide; he hopes this
11 helps explain his comment from Mr. Ben Clegg, as he misunderstood.

12
13 Mr. Bryson said that Mr. Robert Meyer had made a statement, and he was surprised to hear an educator
14 say that honeybees pollenate corn; corn is wind drift self-pollinating, and insects are not needed to
15 pollinate corn. He said that some farming practices can be damaging to bees as the farmer tries to protect
16 the corn from other insects, and an earlier comment he made about Colony Collapse Disorder comes to
17 mind. He said that bees can assist in pollinating soybeans, but are not essential for soybean production,
18 and the same situation is applied to soybeans, with farming practices by farmers to avoid insect damage
19 can have a negative effect on bees and cause Colony Collapse Disorder. He said that he does appreciate
20 Mr. Robert Meyer's recognition that bees do not belong in a residential area; it is unfortunate that he didn't
21 get expand on that topic, because he was looking forward to hearing that. He said that Mr. Robert Meyers
22 had told the Board that the bees were gone from Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones's property in their neighborhood,
23 but now the way Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones tells the story is that the bees from last year have been removed,
24 leaving out that there are new bees to replace them. He said Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones had mentioned earlier
25 that there were no bees on her property, but she failed to tell the Board that ten feet off her property line
26 there are some beehives. He said that he had sent a message to the P & Z Department stating that one of
27 his neighbors saw the beehives a couple of mornings before July 29 and the bees were working, and his
28 neighbor could hear them buzzing. He said that he would like to reiterate his neighbor's integrity and
29 recognize the oath they agreed to take at the opening of this meeting. He said that he and his neighbors
30 have no stories for the Board, just the negative experiences that they live with daily, and nothing can be
31 done. He said that imagine five years of him and his neighbors not having one leg to stand on, but when
32 they ask for help, they get berated by the beekeepers that are raising these bees, and they get shrugs from
33 their officials in their local area, because there is nothing on paper that gives them any opportunity to tell
34 the beekeepers to be responsible.

35
36 Mr. Bryson said that self-governing is not working here, particularly when it comes from a copresident.
37 He said the beekeepers try to wear them down in hopes that they'll give way and just give up, and they
38 have too much invested in their homes to do that. He said that he has worked many years trying to get his
39 house in order, so that when he retired he could rest and relax outside a little bit and cook; he hasn't done
40 anything in three years. He said that he is not talking about one or two bees. He said the Board saw the
41 192 bees he pulled out of his pool one day in six hours, and he has more collections of bees from different
42 days including 48, 67, and pick a number any number; those are live bees he has pulled out of his pool,
43 not out of the skimmer, and his pool is not filthy. He said that the stories of the beautiful flowers, and the
44 most delicious fruits and vegetables are very nice and agreeable; however, it has been pointed out that the
45 bees will fly far away from their hives to pollinate, which is part of nature. He said that the bumblebees
46 come through and do a great job of pollinating, and so do the butterflies; he wonders why people don't
47 take such efforts to secure the bumblebees or the butterflies. He said is it because they can't make money
48 off of them; European honeybees are not indigenous to the United States, because they are from Europe.
49 He said that he has read one article where a vegetarian group condemned stealing the bees' food and

1 suggested that is what caused it and he is not saying that is what it is, but he has read and learned way too
2 much about bees than he cares to know. He said that there are other insects that pollinate like moths,
3 butterflies, birds, and other bees that have no interest in people.
4

5 Mr. Bryson said in closing, let him be very clear that he was sleeping when he was stung on the neck two
6 different times, his guest was just sitting by the pool with their legs in the water when they were stung,
7 stings while hosing off the deck, stings sitting on the upper deck five feet above the pool level, and he
8 doesn't understand what the bees are doing five feet above the pool if all they are wanting is the water.
9 He said that in Texas, they like copperhead snakes because they eat locusts, crickets, and other invasive
10 insects as well as mice, and they know how damaging locusts can be. He said that he would like to keep
11 and raise copperhead snakes in his residential area; unfortunately, they are venomous, but so are bees, and
12 they are much easier to control than bees are. He said to allow this to go on will do nothing but create ill
13 will of people, their guests towards bees, and beekeepers in residential areas. He said for the ability of the
14 neighbors to enjoy their properties without the nuisances and the danger of numerous amounts of bees,
15 please enact this ordinance in residential areas, and he thanked the Board for their time and consideration.
16

17 Mr. Elwell thanked Mr. Bryson and asked if there were any questions from the Board.
18

19 Mr. Wood said that at the beginning of Mr. Bryson's testimony, he had mentioned something about the
20 land that was to the north of him that was part of Urbana, and asked if that was true.
21

22 Mr. Bryson said that is correct.
23

24 Mr. Wood said so it is not zoned AG-1 or AG-2.
25

26 Mr. Bryson said no sir, it is not.
27

28 Mr. Wood said okay, that is the land that Mr. Donald Flessner farms.
29

30 Mr. Bryson said that is correct, and Mr. Flessner is developing that property now, or has had the property
31 all zoned so that he can develop it. He said that the property goes from R-1 down to R-2 and it goes right
32 up across the back of their yards, so that is the City of Urbana.
33

34 Ms. Lee said that Mr. Bryson had addressed her about the comment she had made about the City of Urbana
35 Council, and she will read what is in the documentation that the Board was given for tonight's meeting:
36 "He has also gone to the Urbana City Council and they stated that they would support anything that the
37 County did."
38

39 Mr. Bryson said that is correct.
40

41 Ms. Lee said that when they say, "they would support anything that the County did," she thinks the City
42 of Urbana Council has the power to do anything within the City of Urbana. She asked that if the City
43 Council says, "they would support anything that the County did," how does he know what they actually
44 mean by those words.
45

46 Mr. Bryson said that he was told to go to the City of Urbana by the ELUC committee. He said he has been
47 involved with the County Board before and ran as a candidate two different times. He said that he
48 understands how governmental politics work, and he understands that by sitting in some of these meetings
49 that the different parties have, how they consider Champaign, Urbana, and the University of Illinois when

1 it comes down to making regulations that affect everyone, not just this residential area in the county. He
2 said that as he said in that meeting with the City of Urbana, he was told when his time was extended by
3 Eric Jacobson, because he could not give him the information in the three-minute time period that he had.
4 He said that at the end of his presentation, the City of Urbana had told him that they couldn't do anything
5 about this, and he had told the City of Urbana that he knew that, but he was told by ELUC that he needed
6 to come out and talk to City of Urbana, so here he is, he is talking to them and giving them this
7 presentation. He said that the City of Urbana suggested that he let them know that whatever the County
8 came up with that Urbana would support it, in other words, they would not go against or oppose it. He
9 said that City of Urbana has no jurisdiction, they can't oppose it, but they would support whatever issue
10 was brought up. He said that Ms. Lee is correct, the City of Urbana said they would support it, they didn't
11 say they were going to copy it like these other people were saying. He said that the other people said they
12 were going to adopt that resolution and that is simply not true.

13
14 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Bryson if it was true that in his email dated July 29, he referenced Mr. Derald Seeds
15 counting five beehives on Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones's property, and those bees were working.

16
17 Mr. Bryson said yes.

18
19 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board. Seeing none, he thanked Mr. Bryson.

20
21 Mr. Elwell asked Mr. Wood if he could a motion to take a five-minute recess until 8:47pm.

22
23 **Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Mr. Randol, to take a five-minute recess until 8:47pm.**

24
25 Ms. Lee asked if they could make it 10 minutes instead of five minutes.

26
27 Mr. Elwell said that is not the motion that is on the floor, but if Mr. Wood would like, he could amend his
28 motion.

29
30 **Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Mr. Randol, to take a ten-minute recess until 8:57pm. The motion**
31 **carried by voice vote.**

32
33 Mr. Elwell called the meeting back to order at 8:57pm.

34
35 Mr. Elwell called Ms. Christine Graham to testify. He asked her to please state her full name and address.

36
37 Ms. Chris Graham stated that she lives at 2231 County Road 675 East in Champaign. She said that she
38 was at the last meeting, and she has a couple thoughts about that. She said that she is very sorry that this
39 particular neighborhood has gone through such trauma due to bees. She said that the beekeepers are not
40 here to simply defend Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones; she said that she for one wants to see an optimal solution
41 to the issue that has so detrimentally affected this neighborhood. She said that she came to the first meeting
42 to see what was going on, and she is here again in hopes of being able to participate in finding a realistic
43 and logical solution to a problem that involves a very small area in the county, but has repercussions for
44 the entire county.

45
46 Ms. Graham said that at the last meeting, there were four comments made that she believes needs
47 clarification. She said first, honeybees generally attack only when their colony is threatened or they are
48 seriously disturbed; if a honeybee is near a person, they do not flap their arms wildly like a baby chicken,
49 because bees see this as a threat. She said that a curious bee lands on a person and it will go away without

1 incident if the person just gives the bee a second, and she expects that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones has told
2 that to her neighbors. She said second, she is sure that no beekeeper ever said wear dark clothes;
3 beekeepers wear light colored bee suits, because wearing dark clothes makes a person resemble a bear,
4 raccoon, or a skunk, which are arch enemies to bees. She said third, at the hearing on July 29, Mr. Barney
5 Bryson said he killed 18 bees on his porch or patio, and she is sure that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones told him
6 that if someone kills one bee they release pheromones, which is a scent that draws all bees within smelling
7 distance to investigate the potential threat. She said by killing bees, Mr. Barney Bryson is causing more
8 problems for himself. She said fourth, and to Mr. Elwell, he is not going to randomly be attacked by a
9 swarm of honeybees in Illinois, because bees swarm when half the colony leaves with a new queen to
10 create new hives, or when their hives are threatened. She said that some beekeepers don't wear a shirt or
11 gloves when working with bees, not her. She said that as she had said in the last meeting, they do not have
12 Africanized bees or Asian hornets (killer hornets) in Illinois, and both are prone to simply attack for little
13 reason. She said Snakes on a Plane, Sharknado, and Twister all make for great action packed horror
14 movies, but they have little basis in reality.

15
16 Ms. Graham said that bees return to their hives at sunset, so if people are getting stung after sunset, then
17 it is probably by something else. She said to be totally truthful, she would not have cleaned the windows
18 for a neighbor in a miserable hot bee suit, when it was not honeybees, but wasps that were preventing him
19 from cleaning the windows himself. She said that she has two grandchildren who have not been stung
20 when at Nana's house; they swim in a pool with grapevines on a protective fence directly connected to
21 the pool deck while the bees are having sorority parties getting drunk on fermenting grapes on the trellis
22 - no bee stings received. She said that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones has been a beekeeper for 17 years and she
23 takes excellent care of her bees; she puts many of the beekeepers to shame. She said that Ms. Rena
24 Wilson-Jones got into a situation where she was overwhelmed, which she admits and was trying to do her
25 best for her bees in the neighborhood, trying to compensate the victims, educate neighbors, and keep her
26 bees healthy and safe. She said that the Champaign County's bee situation appears to be the exception to
27 the rule; there are yards in Champaign-Urbana neighborhoods with multiple beehives as well as all over
28 the country with no such apparent issues. She said that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones removed her hives from
29 her property over two years ago and her beehives are now on adjacent agricultural land nearby, and she
30 intends to move those also, but does not have to. She said that from two years ago, this is still a problem,
31 because of one tiny neighborhood that wants to dictate to the whole county. She said that a county can
32 lock up puppies or kittens in the neighborhood to find them a new home, but to place a bee colony, a
33 county needs to find a beekeeper with the proper equipment and the desire to add another colony. She said
34 that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones made a mistake having too many hives, and she is still trying to remedy the
35 problem by working on placing the colonies that are on the neighboring farmland somewhere else. She
36 said that when a spouse makes a bad decision, does an individual continue to stare, harass, and heckle
37 them even after the situation is corrected, have their spouses or kids ever made a mistake or error in
38 judgment, and how long do they continue to be rude or belligerent to them. She said that as a community,
39 if the neighborhood wants the bees gone, maybe they could get rid of them by filling the pools, cutting
40 down every elm, maple, flowering tree, shrub, and dig up all the flowers, and then maybe the bees won't
41 pass through to get to someone else's property.

42
43 Ms. Graham said now let's return to real solutions, since bees who fly aren't going to stop flying. She said
44 that it is obvious that Mr. Hall did a lot of research and invested a lot of time writing a proposed
45 amendment; however, it sets up the county for multiple problems; not only limiting the rights of
46 individuals in a particular neighborhood, but it can potentially affect all Champaign County subdivisions.
47 She said to call and report any change in a hive would be overwhelming for the P & Z Department, because
48 Mr. Hall had stated that they don't have the staff to check on all the bees anyway. She said that in a season
49 the beekeepers combine hives, hives die from multiple reasons, hives pick up and leave, and 40 to 50

1 percent of hives die during the winter; and to call every time there is a change in a hive sounds like an
2 unnecessary burden to staff and beekeepers. She said that nucleus colonies have multiple purposes, to
3 raise new queen replacements, to hold a small swarm, and it's a smaller space for bees to keep warm in
4 the wintertime, so what is the reason for limiting nucleus colonies or putting a time limit on how long a
5 beekeeper should have a nucleus colony. She said as evidenced by this complaint, too many hives in one
6 location is less than ideal, so if a beekeeper places his hives on multiple properties with permission from
7 the property owners, then the amendment will charge a fee for each location of the beehive, and it is very
8 impractical to put fences up on all those different locations specified in the amendment. She said that
9 designated spacing of hives on somebody else's property needs to be a discussion between the beekeeper
10 and the property owner, because some decisions may be best left up to individual beekeepers, as stated in
11 the last meeting by Ms. Lesley Deem, about how important the direction of the beehive door faces is
12 perhaps much more important than a fence. She said that there are many cities and towns around the world
13 that are bee friendly.

14
15 Ms. Graham said that Mr. Hall, Mr. Elwell, and Board members, she believes, have tremendous resources
16 in this community with long term beekeepers who know bees behaviors and understand them. She said
17 that Ms. Lesley Deem is a teacher of beekeeping classes, Ms. Maggie Watcher is a master beekeeper, and
18 Mr. Bryan Miller and Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones are longtime beekeepers; and she is sure there are others.
19 She said that they would help create a solution or an amendment that would benefit all beekeepers. She
20 said she suggests that the Board members utilize their knowledge and expertise to brainstorm and find the
21 best solution for all involved. She said that the State of Illinois Department of Agriculture also has apiary
22 inspectors to help beekeepers with multiple bee problems, advice, and to handle complaints. She said that
23 Mr. Barney Bryson expressed his surprise at the last meeting when the inspector showed up within two
24 days after his complaint. She said that she has really failed to understand why they are at this meeting
25 when the State has a solution in place. She said as a side note that when the fall weather is here and the
26 bees are snug in their beehives, she really misses the buzz that permeates the yard, because it is so silent,
27 and she hates it. She said thank you for the Board's time and consideration.

28
29 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he called Ms.
30 Lesley Deem to testify. He asked her to please state her full name and address.

31
32 Ms. Lesley Deem stated that she lives at 1205 North Division Avenue in Urbana. She said that she runs
33 the University of Illinois's Pollinarium or Pollination Learning Center at the south end of the Arboretum
34 on campus. She said that she is trying to help mitigate things, answer questions, give information about
35 bee behavior, and in the way things kind of work. She said that the beekeepers are hoping that the
36 ordinance does not pass, and if it does pass, then the beekeepers appreciate that the Board and Staff are
37 willing to listen and work with them on, "bees do this, bees do that," and the beehives can be close to the
38 property line if the flyway is away from the property line, and that type of thing. She said that if the
39 ordinance is passed, it is not going to change the current situation, because now that Mr. Barney Bryson
40 said Ms. Wilson-Jones's beehives are in the City of Urbana and in different zoning, but she doesn't know
41 when it changed, what it changed to, or what the actual zoning is where the bees are. She said that the
42 bees are not on Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones's residential property, they are behind it, whatever that is now
43 zoned, but she has also moved most of the hives off to other locations. She said that now Ms. Rena Wilson-
44 Jones's beehives are down to a number where she can easily move them if the number of beehives in the
45 ordinance ends up passing. She said that she was hoping for six beehives to pass in the ordinance on a
46 residential property, but four beehives would be good too, so if the Board passes four, then that is the
47 number of beehives that Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones already has there.

48

1 Ms. Deem said that she doesn't know how to help the neighbors who will be upset if the ordinance passes
2 and things still remain exactly as they are, because four hives will be allowed. She said that there are hives
3 that are across the road, there are hives on Perkins Road, and so there are other hives that are involved
4 within flight distance of the neighborhood. She said that these were not all there when the homeowners
5 moved in, so the numbers are never going to go back down to what they used to be when they first moved
6 in. She said that she doesn't know how to mitigate it other than to help them through it, but she thinks it
7 helps them to be able to come and say that there has been a problem, and that they were upset, so she
8 hopes that will help them deal with it. She said that she is trying to help by putting articles in the newspaper
9 and getting people to learn about differentiating between if it is yellowjacket wasp or this is a honeybee;
10 there are a lot more wasps and bumblebees this summer. She said that there have been more stings in
11 general from the reports she has been getting this summer at the Pollinarium. She said that a lot of times
12 when she asks them for pictures to identify them, the pictures they send are indeed a yellowjacket or wasp
13 instead of the honeybee. She said that in one case, it was bumblebees and they tried to work around the
14 bumblebee nest, but they ended up having to destroy it, because it was right on the edge of the sidewalk
15 by the steps the person used and that person wasn't able to mitigate that. She said that she appreciates
16 when people call in and try to work out their solutions to see if they can help the bees before trying to
17 destroy them.

18
19 Ms. Deem said that she thinks it would be difficult if they pass the ordinance to identify where the bees
20 are coming from that are the problem. She said that the more Mr. Barney Bryson talked, the more she
21 wrote down in her notes and thought maybe he has a feral hive somewhere near his house, because of
22 some of the things he was describing about location and how close the bees are to his deck or pool. She
23 said that she is curious to know if all the insects that Mr. Barney Bryson is talking about are honeybees
24 and she would like to see some of his pictures, but she hasn't seen those yet or the insects that he has
25 collected. She said that one of the Board members asked for questions about apiary inspectors, so the
26 document that is up on the projector screen in the meeting is the form that a beekeeper would send into
27 the State for giving locations of their inspections. She said that there is a spot on the form to put the address
28 of the resident, but then if they scroll down on the page, there is a spot for locations where they would put
29 the number of colonies, County, Township, GPS coordinates, and then landowner names. She said the
30 beekeeper can have multiple locations and all the information that is on the form is given then for each of
31 the apiaries that that beekeeper runs, so that beekeeper can have multiple locations and multiple
32 landowners involved with where they keep their beehives.

33
34 Mr. Wood asked if that would all be under one license.

35
36 Ms. Deem said that it is all under one license, but she thinks the State sends the beekeepers different tags.
37 She said that if the Board looks at the top of the form, the beekeeper fills in in their mailing address, but
38 they can have multiple locations at the bottom of the form.

39
40 Mr. Wood said that he was just curious what the beekeeper had to go through and how that was structured.

41
42 Ms. Deem said that she is not as savvy with her phone as some other people, so for her the hard part of
43 the form is the GPS coordinates, and she has to work at that to get that part; she said that it is easier for
44 her with the townships and that type of thing. She said that she thinks by passing this ordinance, the P &
45 Z Department is going to have difficulties figuring out what all the insects involved are that are a problem.
46 She said that she thinks that the in-place system has worked pretty well, because the State Inspector came
47 and stepped in, Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones's fellow club members spoke, and things have moved out. She
48 asked the Board if there is any other information that would be helpful to them.

49

1 Ms. Lee asked what type of things the University of Illinois does with their research, and where and how
2 many beehives they have in the county.

3
4 Ms. Deem said that Nate is the beekeeper for Mr. Gene Robinson, so in the Department of Entomology,
5 Mr. Gene Robinson's whole research program is on honeybees. She said that Ms. May Berenbaum, the
6 Department Head and Professor of Entomology, is now doing bee research, but she doesn't keep her own
7 individual hives, because her students work with Mr. Gene Robinson's beekeeper, and his students and
8 post docs. She said that Mr. Adam Dolezal from the Department of Entomology is another professor
9 working on honeybee things, and Alexandra Harmon-Threatt does native bees, so there are at least four
10 faculty members who are working on bees in the department. She said that their main research facility is
11 on South Lincoln Avenue and East Windsor Road, but they do have bees throughout the county on
12 different properties and the one property on Perkins Road in Urbana is one of the U of I's. She said that
13 the U of I spreads their hives around in different locations too, and part of it will depend on what they are
14 studying the bees for and how close the students need to have access to the beehives. She said that if the
15 students are doing aggressive bee studies, they tend to do those in a flight tunnel or in a wooded area
16 where there is not a lot of contact with other landowners or residential areas, so the U of I does have their
17 beehives spread throughout the county as well.

18
19 Ms. Lee said that she looked a little bit online, and she didn't write it down, but she saw there was some
20 research project that started with a "D" as in dog.

21
22 Ms. Deem said that she didn't know the names of their research projects. She said that she is familiar with
23 their graduate students and the research projects she is most familiar with are how do honeybees do at the
24 edge of an agriculture field, what kind of forage do the honeybees need, and what impact are the honeybees
25 having. She said that each graduate student gets to pick their topic, and some of the more advanced topics
26 are that they put little microchips and things on the bees, so they can follow the bees in and out of the
27 beehives to see different flight paths and what the different bees do. She said that there are some very
28 intricate studies that are done in the lab or in flight tunnels, and then they have other studies that are out in
29 the apiary yards. She said that she is trying to think if she can remember a research project that starts with
30 a "D," but she can't remember.

31
32 Ms. Lee said that is fine.

33
34 Mr. Elwell asked Ms. Deem if she had heard of DNA testing of bees.

35
36 Ms. Deem said she has not, so she had written that down. She said that she is going to go looking for that,
37 because they do DNA studies on bees, but she has not heard of being able to send in a bee and get the
38 individual beehive that the bee came from identified. She said that part of the problem is going to be that
39 if the beekeeper splits a beehive and the beehives sit right next to each other, then they are going to be
40 related bees, so that would have to be a very specific test to be able to tell someone what beehive that bee
41 came from. She said that she thinks that would be part of the problem if the County had problems with
42 enforcement later; it made her cringe a little bit when she read about abatement, and asked if abatement is
43 getting rid of the beehives completely or has the P & Z Department decided what abatement is if the
44 Nuisance Ordinance amendment fails.

45
46 Mr. Hall said that the proposed ordinance will let the beekeepers have, at this time, three beehives, and as
47 long as there are no more than three beehives then that is fine, but if a beekeeper has more than three
48 beehives, then the beekeeper will have to move the beehive or beehives.

1 Ms. Deem said okay.
2

3 Mr. Hall said he is assuming that the beehive or beehives could be moved, but he supposes that if worse
4 came to worst, then there could be destruction of the excess bees, but that seems unlikely to be necessary.
5

6 Ms. Deem said that the beehive or beehives can be moved. She said that abatement for part of the disease
7 thing, there is sometimes burning of beehives, but moving the beehive or beehives would be possible. She
8 said that it is going to be very hard to determine where the different bees are coming from when there is a
9 problem.
10

11 Mr. Hall said again, the P & Z Department knows that they are not going to know where the bees are
12 coming from, but they just want to make sure that within a block and a half radius that all the bees that
13 are there are within the limits of the regulation. He said that they are not going to try to assess blame, they
14 just want whatever bees are there to be within the limits of the regulation.
15

16 Ms. Lee said that is where the problem comes in, is when they talked about how far the bees could fly and
17 it was a 12.42-mile radius, that is a long way.
18

19 Mr. Hall said yes, and they are not going to be looking at that long of a radius and they don't have time to
20 do that, and even if they did they probably wouldn't know where the bees were coming from. He said that
21 all this is about is setting a limit on a beehives, just like the neighbors said tonight in the meeting, they
22 just want a limit on the number of hives. He said that their staffing limits them to a pretty small radius, to
23 a block and a half or something like that, and even then they can't go on private property, so it is going to
24 be a rare instance when they will see the beehives to begin with. He said that it is unlikely that they will,
25 but if staffing does get a complaint, then just like in everything else they do, the complainant will let them
26 get on their property and staff will be able to see the beehive on the adjacent property, and they will know
27 if the beehive is registered with them or not. He said that if the beekeeper does not have a permit, then
28 they will have to get a permit for that beehive.
29

30 Mr. Roberts said that if they pass this ordinance with three beehives on each residential property in that
31 subdivision, that means that the rest of the neighbors in that subdivision, if they want to, can put three
32 beehives on their property. He asked if the Board can't do anything about it or does the Board want to do
33 anything about it.
34

35 Mr. Hall said that as long as all the beehives have been permitted through their office, then that is fine. He
36 said that this has never been about getting a beekeeper to get rid of their bees, it is just to get the numbers
37 down to a reasonable level. He said yes, there can be that many beehives on each residential lot.
38

39 Mr. Roberts said that all the other neighbors can have three hives on their residential lot.
40

41 Mr. Hall said yes.
42

43 Mr. Roberts said that Mr. Barney Bryson is not going to like that.
44

45 Mr. Hall said that Mr. Barney Bryson is well aware of that.
46

47 Mr. Roberts said okay, but it seems rather absurd to him that the Board is doing this. He said that he
48 doesn't know if he is missing something or what is the issue, but as several people have testified at the
49 meeting, the Board is making rules that they don't need to be making. He said that he doesn't know if he

1 is making himself clear or not, but he is just kind of confused about limiting the three beehives for each
2 residential lot, and he has driven around that neighborhood and there are a lot of people out there with
3 flowers and stuff like that. He said that those neighbors could say that they might want to put honeybees
4 on their property and that is going to be a really crowded mess out there.
5

6 Mr. Hall said that given how difficult beekeeping is, the number of people that want to keep bees is really
7 very small, and as long as they keep bees within these limits, that is great.
8

9 Ms. Lee said getting back to her question to Ms. Deem about how many different beehive sites the U of I
10 has with all these students, and a lot these beehives could even be located in the proposed ordinance for
11 regulating the bees in the three residential districts, she asked Ms. Deem if she knew how many different
12 projects and if there is a different set of beehives for every grad student who has a research project.
13

14 Ms. Deem said that there is not, so the beekeeper has a set number of beehives and then the students give
15 them the research proposals of what they want to do. She said that sometimes they don't need the beehive
16 themselves, but they might need the beekeeper to go in the beehive and for example, get the student 50
17 worker bees every two days, so the student can do something with those bees for their research project.
18 She said that some of the beehives the beekeeper maintains, and he goes to retrieve the bees that the
19 students need to study and gives the students the bees. She said that some of the students don't work the
20 beehives themselves or they will go out with the beekeeper while he is gathering the bees and gather those
21 bees. She said that it fluctuates what the students can do based on the number of healthy beehives the U
22 of I has. She said that the student has to limit what they can do based on the bees available.
23

24 Ms. Lee asked how many beehive sites the U of I has; do they have 50 or 100 different sites.
25

26 Ms. Deem said that the U of I doesn't have 100 and probably not even 50 sites, but she can't give her a
27 number. She asked if Ms. Lee would like her to text Nate, their beekeeper, to see if he would give her a
28 number.
29

30 Ms. Lee said no, that is sort of in the ballpark if she thinks it is less than 50 beehives.
31

32 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board. Seeing none, he thanked Ms. Deem.
33

34 Ms. Lee said she had one more question for Ms. Deem. She asked her if she and Mr. Hall had conversed
35 about this issue since the last meeting on July 29.
36

37 Ms. Deem said yes, she conversed with Ms. Burgstrom and Mr. Hall on some of the details. She said, for
38 example, the flyway path is more important than the distance from the property line, so in her opinion a
39 hive can back right up to the property line, but usually she wants working and walking room behind the
40 beehive. She said that four or five feet from the property line for her is fine, but it is where the beekeeper
41 directs the flyway path that makes a bigger difference. She said that regarding the ten feet on each side of
42 a beehive for the fence, the ordinance really doesn't need that either, they could have a smaller distance.
43 She said that if the beekeeper wants them to fly over something, then they should put a six-foot fence in
44 front of the flyway path to put the bees up and over a sidewalk or a road, for example.
45

46 Ms. Lee said that she appreciates her testimony from the last meeting and tonight.
47

48 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any other questions from the Board. Seeing none, he thanked Ms. Deem
49 again. He asked if there was anyone else in the audience who would like to testify in this case tonight.

1 Mr. Wood asked Mr. Elwell if the Board was going to need to make an extension for the meeting.

2
3 Mr. Elwell said that he was about to ask for one. He asked the Board for a motion to extend the meeting
4 until 9:45pm.

5
6 **Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Ms. Lee, to extend the meeting until 9:45pm. The motion carried by**
7 **voice vote.**

8
9 Mr. Kacey Nelson stated that he lives at 1001 North High Cross Road in Urbana, Illinois. He stated that
10 he lives in the R-3 District in Champaign County, and he has been a beekeeper for over seven years. He
11 said that his beehives have always been registered with the Illinois Department of Agriculture and he has
12 been a vendor at the Champaign farmer's market for five of the last six years selling local honey. He said
13 that he does bee removals at no cost to the landowner within the community and not just honeybees, but
14 local residents who have issues with bumblebees in their brush, garage, or wherever, and often. He said
15 that he has taught locals the importance of pollinators to their food ecosystem, and as many would argue,
16 the survival of the human race. He said that he currently keeps four beehives on his property and both his
17 daughters have been stung more than once, and they survived. He said that as far as he is concerned,
18 getting stung as a child is a rite of passage, and the temporary welt is a badge from playing outside.

19
20 Mr. Nelson said that it is with extreme bewilderment and disappointment that he read the draft ordinance,
21 and it is difficult to express what an egregious amendment this is. He said that he began his beekeeping
22 journey in the City of Champaign on South Prairie Street near Hessel Park; it is near the old part of town
23 where the first houses were built in Champaign. He said that they lived on a small 4,000 square foot lot
24 and kept up to four beehives at this property for four years with zero problems with their neighbors, and
25 no ordinance was required to achieve this. He said that seven years ago, he would have been effectively
26 prohibited from keeping bees at this residence if this proposed ordinance was enacted and based on the
27 required setback alone. He said that there are many lots in Champaign-Urbana where the required setbacks
28 alone would effectively ban beekeeping, especially in the older parts of town where the lots are smaller.
29 He said that not only will this ordinance outright ban beekeeping for a great number of Champaign County
30 residents, it would also deter aspiring beekeepers from ever getting started, and it would force many
31 current beekeepers who are unable to comply with the proposed ordinance regulations, or alternately, turn
32 them into outlaws.

33
34 Mr. Nelson said that he would like to end with a few questions to the Board. He asked them if the recent
35 ongoing issues in the Prairieview Subdivision were the impetus for drafting this ordinance, or have there
36 been other problems elsewhere. He said if not, it seems to him that the County is imposing a restrictive
37 ordinance upon all the residents of Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy, with whom there have been no issues,
38 and attempt to stamp out an isolated issue in the county. He said that if this proposed ordinance were to
39 be enacted, then Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones would legally be able to keep several beehive colonies on her
40 one-acre residential property and the issue would still remain, because of years of sensitivity to the issue
41 by her neighbors and animosity, yet dozens of beekeepers and potential beekeepers would be negatively
42 affected. He said that while steps have been taken by Ms. Rena Wilson-Jones, so it seems, the damage has
43 already been done. He said this proposed ordinance can do nothing to repair the relationships in the
44 Prairieview Subdivision. He said that there are better ways to address issues than through amending with
45 an ordinance, that is why he requests the amendment to not be enacted, thank you.

46
47 Mr. Elwell asked if there were any questions from the Board or Staff. Seeing none, he thanked Mr. Nelson.
48 He asked if anyone else would like to testify in this case tonight. Seeing none, he closed the Witness
49 Register. He asked how the Board would like to proceed.

1 Mr. Randol said that given the time frame of tonight’s meeting that they table this until a further meeting.

2
3 Mr. Hall asked him if he meant table or continue, because it has to be continued to a certain date.

4
5 Mr. Randol asked him what he said about table.

6
7 Mr. Hall said that the Board can’t really table a zoning case hearing.

8
9 Mr. Randol said alright, then the Board will continue Case 014-AT-21 at another meeting, whenever it is
10 available on the docket.

11
12 Mr. Hall said the next available date is October 14.

13
14 Mr. Randol said okay.

15
16 **Mr. Randol moved, seconded by Ms. Lee, to continue this Case 014-AT-21 until October 14. The**
17 **motion carried by voice vote.**

18
19 **7. Staff Report - None**

20
21 **8. Other Business**

22
23 **A. Review of Docket**

24
25 Mr. Wood said he would be absent at the September 16 meeting, because he has a class to teach in
26 Southern, Illinois.

27
28 **9. Audience participation with respect to matters other than cases pending before the Board**

29
30 None

31
32 **10. Adjournment**

33
34 Mr. Elwell entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35pm.

35
36 **Mr. Roberts moved, seconded by Mr. Randol, to adjourn the meeting.**

37
38 Mr. Elwell requested a roll call vote.

39
40 The vote was called as follows:

41 **Lee– yes Randol- yes Roberts – yes**
42 **Anderson– yes Elwell - no Wood - yes**

43
44 **The motion carried.**

45
46 The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

47
48 Respectfully submitted,
49 Secretary of Zoning Board of Appeals