

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
MAY 23, 2006
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Kenneth Zichi and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call:

Mayor Kenneth Zichi, Mayor Pro-tem Robert Hanna, Council members Michelle Hyne, George Monroe, Penny Davis, and Scott VanAllsburg. Absent: Brian O'Connell.

Also Present:

Deputy Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Dave Stoker, Police Chief Mark Hetfield, Enterprise Reporter Will Whelton, JFM Productions, Capital Area District Library Representatives Linda Thibadeau, Pat Taylor, and Deb Linquist, EDC Member Mike Thomas, Planning Commissioner Frank Buzzitta, Zoning Board of Appeals Members John Pratt and Robert St. John, and citizens Billie Jo O'Berry, and Eleanor St. John.

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Davis**, to excuse O'Connell. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

4. Approval of Agenda:

Delete item 9d. and add item 9e. Budget Amendments, item 9g. Set Public Hearing for Budget Presentation, and item 10c. Fire Hydrants.

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Monroe**, to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

5. Audience Participation:

Billie Jo O'Berry announced that she is running for 55th District Court and added that she appreciates the support in Williamston.

6. Council Minutes of May 8, 2006:

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the regular Council minutes as presented on the table for May 8, 2006. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

7. Accounts Payable:

Councilman Hanna reported that the accounts payable totaled \$52,495.58 and included consultants, insurance, utilities, and other miscellaneous supplies and services. Reference #'s 6751-6800.

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Davis**, to approve the accounts payable as presented. Yes: Davis, Monroe, VanAllsburg, Hanna, Zichi, Hyne. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8. Presentation of Capital Area District Library:

Williamston Library representative Linda Thibadeau reported on the programs that the library was able to put on this year. Some of the programs were story time for kids, Mexican heritage month, black history month, a Halloween magician, tween book discussion, teen advisory board and book discussion, volunteers, adult e-bay classes, and senior center programs. She thanked the City for their support of the library and distributed their annual report.

9. Action Items

9a. Hickory Lane:

Mayor Zichi reported that the parking issues on Hickory Lane should be taking care of themselves with the completion of the school parking lots that are closer to the tennis courts. A “no parking” sign was installed in front of Bryan Smith’s residence and there has been more patrolling in the area. The problem should be nearly taken care of with these modifications.

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Monroe**, to table the Hickory Lane issue indefinitely. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

9b. 1st Reading of Burning Ordinance:

On page 1, item 4. delete “City” before “fire department” and include the statement “to include outdoor fireplaces that adequately contain ashes and cinders” in sections 1 and 2. **Councilmember Hyne voiced a concern that she would like to see a screened fireplace that would be adequately screened.**

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the first reading of the Burning Ordinance as presented. Yes: Hanna, Zichi, Hyne, Davis, Monroe, VanAllsburg. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9c. 1st Reading of an Ordinance to Adopt by Reference the Uniform Traffic Code:

Attorney Stoker explained the purpose of adopting the Uniform Traffic Code. **Councilmember Hyne asked the Police Chief his position on the Uniform Traffic Code and he stated that he supported it.**

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Davis**, to approve the 1st reading of the ordinance to Adopt by Reference the Uniform Traffic Code as presented. Yes: Monroe, VanAllsburg, Hanna, Zichi, Hyne, Davis. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9d. Traffic Control Order No. 19- Jackson St. & School St.:

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Davis**, to approve Traffic Control Order No. 19 as presented for Jackson St. and School St. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Davis, Monroe, VanAllsburg, Hanna. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9e. Budget Amendments:

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Monroe**, to approve the budget amendments as presented. Yes: VanAllsburg, Hanna, Zichi, Hyne, Davis, Monroe. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9f. Set Public Hearing for Budget Presentation:

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Monroe**, to set a public hearing for the budget presentation for June 12, 2006 at 7:05 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

10. Discussion Items

10a. Joint Meeting:

Mayor Zichi reported that they met at the Williamstown Township Hall and discussed potential WIFI connections. Councilman Monroe commented that he was disappointed that other townships did not attend. Councilmember Hyne commented that it was nice to be able to meet all of them and thought it was nice that there was a representative from Mike Rogers' office to take notes on any concerns that were brought up. Councilman VanAllsburg asked if the Library Foundation was present and indicated a time line for the library project. Mayor Zichi reported that Ed Noonan was there and indicated that they did not have a time line yet.

10b. City Manager's Employment Contract:

Councilmember Hyne asked if it was appropriate to continue with Lisa not present and that the Mayor said it was appropriate to proceed. She questioned the benefits package of the City's contribution. Also questioned the benefits package, the City contribution, and that she had questioned also the severance package and the six months pay.

Monroe commented that he and Councilman Hanna worked on the draft of the City Manager contract based on input from the rest of the Council and the previous agreement. Councilman Hanna reported that he received written comments from Councilman O'Connell regarding his views of the contract. Councilmember Hyne thanked members Hanna and Monroe for their work on the contract. She expressed that she has many concerns about the contract renewal. She felt that the severance pay was too much. She added that she has received complaints from residents regarding communication from the City. Member Hyne also believes that the wage increase is excessive and the clause regarding outside work should be specified that it is for teaching purposes only. In her opinion she felt that the contract should not be for a period as long as five years. She asked if the majority of the Council felt that the contract should be renewed.

Councilman VanAllsburg asked if it was member Hyne's intent to not continue the contract.

Member Hyne stated that it was.

Member Hanna commented that he has received no complaints from residents about Lisa's performance.

Member Hyne stressed that she has received complaints from residents regarding communication with the City.

Councilman VanAllsburg questioned if she would rather the contract be for a year instead of five. He added that he would not want to send someone out without severance pay. Attorney Stoker reminded the Council that the draft agreement is only suggestions and is not yet in contract form.

Councilmember Hyne commented that the community views are just one of the issues she has. She was also concerned that City staff could not be talked to by Council.

Hyne stated that it is also the taxpayer's money.

Mayor Zichi responded that it is stated in the City Charter.

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that there will never be a situation where everyone is happy.

Councilman Hanna read some of Member O'Connell's suggestions aloud. He stated that he would like to see the contract only for a term of one year and also would like to see it with no severance package.

Councilmember Hyne commented that she does not want to get locked in to a five year contract.

Councilman Hanna replied that it is just a matter of money.

Attorney Stoker commented that severance packages are very typical but can vary in amounts offered.

Mayor Zichi had concerns regarding the vacation time. He believes that any more than four weeks is excessive.

Councilman VanAllsburg agreed that four weeks is enough.

Member Hanna read aloud that Councilman O'Connell also agreed that four weeks is enough.

Councilman Hanna commented that one year is not a good idea because of the time it takes the Council to draft the new contracts and do the evaluations.

Councilmember Davis commented that she would be ok with having the contract be for four years.

Councilman Hanna commented that he did not want to see a cap on the pay.

Councilmember Davis commented that perhaps the pay should be tied to the CPI or an annual review.

Attorney Stoker said it is possible to tie it to the CPI or to tax dollars with the Council giving additional increases when appropriate.

Councilman Monroe commented that a five year contract is appropriate because of the length of time some projects can take and the amount of dedication to the project from the employee is more confident if they know they are going to be around for a while.

Councilmember Davis commented that some employees may not have the commitment to do a long term project with a one year contract.

Member Hyne replied that it is more incentive to do better work if the contract is shorter.

She felt that she has concerns that are serious.

Councilman Hanna reported that Member O'Connell wrote that the pay should be based on the COLA plus an evaluation.

Councilmember Davis commented that the City Manager often puts in a lot of hours and is always on call weekends, nights, and holidays. She added that she also has concerns with behavior and communication. She also has concerns with the automatic percentage increase.

Mayor Zichi commented that he would like to see pay increases based on CPI and performance evaluation.

Councilman Hanna and Councilman Monroe will meet with the attorney to draft a final contract.

10c. Fire Hydrants:

Councilmember Hyne commented that although she believes the fire hydrant fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity is a good idea, she is concerned that the fire hydrants on South Putnam Street were just painted by the Eagle Scouts and she does not want to see their project ruined. Mayor Zichi commented that the plans have not yet been submitted for the project and they will look at the problem at that time. **Hyne stated that it was a two year Eagle Scout project and she would like to encourage community service and she would like the hydrants painted by the Eagle Scouts exempt.**

12. Staff Reports

12a. City Manager:

Manager Hitchcock submitted a written report for Council review.

12b. City Attorney:

No report.

12c. Police Chief:

Chief Hetfield submitted a written report for Council review.

12d. Community Development Director:

Director Alfredson submitted written reports fro Council review.

13. Committee/Sub-Committee Reports

13a. Legislative Director:

No report.

14. Audience Participation:

EDC Member Mike Thomas reported that the TIFA Board has approved of him looking into future needs for internet connection. He believes Arialink does not

reach all of the areas previously agreed upon. He also stated that unfortunately he was not able to get the EDC/TIFA meetings reduced.

Bryan Smith commented that he was pleased that the parking issue on Hickory Lane is slowly taking care of itself with the completion of the school parking lot and the no parking sign installed. He thanked the City for their attention to this matter.

15. Council Member Comments:

Councilman VanAllsburg encouraged people to attend the first play at the Williamston Theatre in June.

Mayor Zichi commented that the river clean up was very successful and Mark Ritzenheim did a great job. Between 50 and 70 people volunteered. He reminded the Council that there will be a budget work session Thursday night.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Holly M. Thompson, Deputy Clerk

Kenneth V. Zichi, Mayor

Date Approved: _____