

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 7, 2008
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers by Mayor Michelle Hyne and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call:

Mayor Michelle Hyne, Mayor Pro-tem John Pratt, Council Members Richard Couturier, Traci Smith, Carmen Siciliano, Scott VanAllsburg, and Kenneth Zichi.
Absent: None.

Also Present:

City Manager Lisa Hitchcock, Deputy Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Dave Stoker, Police Chief Mark Hetfield, Planner Zeb Acuff, Community Development Director Michelle Aniol, Associated Government Services Representatives Bert Gale and Bruce Dean, Chamber Representative Barb Burke, Enterprise Reporter Will Whelton, JFM Productions, citizens Penny Davis, Timothy Grossman, Craig Banwell, Sue Nichani, Terri Campbell, Bob & Jane Hanna, Barb & Jim Vandenberg, Earl Wolf, Karen McGarry, Julia Shaw, Linda Siciliano, Robin Olin, Amy & Blaine Kelley, Michelle Diamond, Rosemary Philip, Kirk Noren, Christine Eby, Rachel Olson, Scott Simmons, Raymond Bachman, John Donahoe, Joe Eiffert, and other members of the public.

4. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **.VanAllsburg**, to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion passed by voice vote.

5. Audience Participation:

Penny Davis commented that the special meeting cost the City \$1100 and asked why the meeting was called. She added that the Liquor Control Commission meets everyday or when needed. **She stated that the Mayor has violated section 2.85 of the City Charter regarding gratuities and section 2.86 regarding preferential treatment. She asked if it was true that there were Council members that have benefitted financially from the RiverHouse Inn fundraiser in the fall.** Ms. Davis stated was told that other City Council members encouraged the mayor to have the meeting and pointed out that although Councilman Siciliano voted no, he attended regardless and accepted payment for the meeting.

6. Council Minutes of December 10, 2007 & Special Minutes of December 19, 2007:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Siciliano**, to approve the Council minutes of December 10, 2007 and special minutes of December 19, 2007 as presented. Yes: Pratt, Smith, VanAllsburg, Siciliano, Zichi, Hyne, Couturier. **Motion passed.**

7. Accounts Payable:

Councilman VanAllsburg provided a list of the payables. Reference #'s 10019-10073.

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Couturier**, to approve the accounts payable as presented.

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to amend the motion to add reference #'s 10019-10073. Yes: Couturier, Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Pratt, Zichi, Hyne. No: None. **Motion passed.**

Vote on Motion: Yes: Couturier, Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Zichi, Pratt, Hyne. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8. Action Items

8a. Loitering Ordinance- 2nd Reading:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Smith**, to amend the ordinance by replacing "play any ball game in" with "obstruct traffic on" on page 2, section d. 2. Yes: Siciliano, Zichi, Hyne, Smith, Couturier. No: VanAllsburg, Pratt. **Motion passed.**

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Siciliano**, to approve the 2nd reading of Loitering Ordinance #304 as amended. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Smith, Siciliano, Couturier. No: Pratt, VanAllsburg. **Motion passed.**

8b. Ordinance Amending the City Council Meeting Dates & Times- 1st Reading:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Smith**, to approve the first reading of Ordinance #305 amending the City Council meeting dates and times with the amendment of changing the Wednesdays to the second and fourth Tuesdays. Yes: Couturier, Smith. No: Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Pratt, Zichi, Hyne. **Motion failed.**

8c. Ordinance Amending the Parks and Recreation Membership- 1st Reading:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the first reading of Ordinance #305 with the amendment of striking "shall serve without compensation but" in Section 2-361. Yes: Pratt, Zichi, Couturier, Siciliano, Smith, Hyne, VanAllsburg. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8d. Associated Government Services Contract:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Pratt**, continue the contract with Associated Government Services. Yes: Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Smith, Zichi, Hyne, Pratt, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

A task force will be formed at the next meeting to look into the building permit processes.

8e. McKenna Contract:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Zichi**, to continue the contract with McKenna Associates indefinitely noting that there is a 60-day out clause. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Couturier, Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg. No: Pratt. **Motion passed.**

8f. City Council Rules of Procedure:

Motion by **Siciliano**, second by **Zichi**, to amend the City Council Rules of Procedure to change #1 to "second and fourth Monday" and change "7:30" to "7:00" and strike the next sentence also strike #2 entirely, and change "6 hours" to "18 hours" in section 3. Yes: VanAllsburg, Pratt, Zichi, Hyne, Siciliano, Smith, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

Motion by **Smith**, second by **Siciliano**, to have the Legislative Director work with the City Manager on the revision of the City Council Rules of Procedure. Yes: VanAllsburg, Pratt, Zichi, Hyne, Siciliano, Smith, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8g. Key Control Policy:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Couturier**, to have a list of the people that have permanent keys to the City buildings provided to the Council at the next meeting and as of tonight have anyone that is not staff that have keys turn them in immediately. Yes: Couturier, Pratt. No: Hyne, Siciliano, Smith, VanAllsburg, Zichi. **Motion failed.**

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to have a key control policy drafted for Council review and the list of people that have keys distributed to Council at the next meeting. Yes: Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Pratt, Zichi, Hyne, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8h. Press Releases:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Siciliano** to table the press release issue until the next meeting. Yes: Smith, Zichi, Hyne, Pratt, Couturier, Siciliano, VanAllsburg. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8i. Identification of City Vehicles:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Smith**, to make sure that all City vehicles are identified with the City logo and where appropriate use a magnetic logo. Yes: Couturier, Pratt, VanAllsburg, Smith, Zichi, Hyne. No: Siciliano. **Motion passed.**

8j. Resolution Supporting DDA Streetscape Grant:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to resolve that the City of Williamston will provide a \$150,000 match towards the Michigan Department of Transportation Enhancement Grant that will be submitted by the City of Williamston on behalf of the City of Williamston's Downtown Development Authority. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Pratt, Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8k. Board Appointments:

Board Appointments are as follows:

Property Committee: John Pratt, Kenneth Zichi, & Scott VanAllsburg.

Finance Committee: Richard Couturier, Traci Smith, & Carmen Siciliano.

Personnel Committee: Richard Couturier, Scott VanAllsburg, & John Pratt.

DDA Representative: Michelle Hyne, Alternate John Pratt.

EDC/TIFA Representative: Traci Smith, Alternate Kenneth Zichi.

Planning Commission Representative: Carmen Siciliano, Alternate Scott VanAllsburg.

NIESA Representative: Richard Couturier, Alternate Scott VanAllsburg.

Cemetery Board: Scott VanAllsburg, Alternate John Pratt.

Legislative Director: Carmen Siciliano.

Cable Franchise Negotiating Committee: Scott VanAllsburg, Kenneth Zichi, & Carmen Siciliano.

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Pratt**, to approve the board appointments as presented. Yes: Couturier, Pratt, VanAllsburg, Smith, Zichi, Hyne, Siciliano. No: None. **Motion passed.**

8l. Set Budget Workshop Dates:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to set the next budget workshop date for March 13, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Yes: Couturier, Pratt, Smith, Hyne, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Zichi. No: None. **Motion passed.**

Councilmember Smith asked to be excused from the meeting.

9. Discussion Items

9a. Williamston Road/Putnam Street Speed Limit Study:

Councilman Pratt commented that he needs another copy of the study.

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that he would prefer to leave the speed limit on Williamston Road/Putnam Street at 25 miles per hour for safety reasons.

Councilman Pratt commented that he would like the engineer that did the study to be present at the next meeting so the Council can apologize for the previous Council's statements.

Mr. Kazewych commented that it is helpful to have the speed limit set at 25 when there is snow or fog present.

Karen McGarry commented that the speed limit is set at 25 for safety reasons and does not believe it should be raised. Ms. McGarry stated that she has never been given a ticket for speeding there and her clients have never complained of getting a ticket there either. She also asked why the issue is being discussed again.

Mayor Hyne responded that the item is on the agenda again because it was only addressed by the previous Council and the new Council wanted to discuss it and she believes it should be in an open meeting.

A citizen commented that she walks in that area and with no sidewalks present, a higher speed limit would be dangerous.

Christine Eby provided a copy of her letter to the previous Council regarding the issue and commented that she is not in favor of raising the speed limit due to safety reasons.

9b. Recommendation of Council Member to Chamber of Commerce Board:

Mayor Hyne commented that the Chamber of Commerce Board is looking to elect a new member. She encouraged any member of Council that is a Chamber member to look into the position.

Barb Burke of the Chamber commented that the Chamber Board meets once a month at 8am.

11. Staff Reports

11a. City Manager:

Manager Hitchcock submitted a written report and added that the City Hall is currently having a new server installed that will support the new scanning software. The City will be working with IT Right on the new system.

11b. City Attorney:

No report.

11c. Planning & Development Administrator:

A written report was submitted for Council review.

11d. Treasurer:

A financial printout was submitted for Council review.

11e. Community Development Director:

Director Aniol submitted a written report for Council review and added that McKenna has submitted a proposal for a brochure to help new developers, and home builders with the City's processes.

13. Audience Participation:

Jane Hanna welcomed the new Council members and encouraged them to take advantage of the training offered by the Michigan Municipal League.

Chamber Representative Barb Burke commented that the Chamber has ribbon cutting ceremonies January 10 at 9am, a mixer from 5-8pm on January 17 at Wood & Sons Corn Bin, and a Chamber Luncheon on January 17.

Bob Hanna commented that the Police and Kids spaghetti dinner will be January 12 and a Blue Mass will be held January 20 at St. Mary's Church.

14. Council Member Comments:

Councilmember Smith commented that there is still a street light not working from the tornado on Riverside Drive by the Elementary School.

Councilman VanAllsburg reminded everyone that the Theatre will be showing "Art" and added that he has provided all of the art they are using in the production.

Councilman Pratt commented that he has received calls regarding the two awnings that are hanging on the blue buildings on the corner of Putnam and Grand River. He also asked who approved having a brick wall built by Felpausch at the sidewalk.

Planner Acuff commented that he was not employed by the City when the site plan was approved.

Manager Hitchcock commented that it is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Councilman Pratt asked if the City applies for state grants.

Manager Hitchcock answered that they do.

Councilman Couturier commented that the jazz concert at the Williamston Theatre on New Year's Eve was very good. He also asked the status of the R&R Fence litigation.

Planner Acuff stated he did not have any information at this time.

~~Mayor Hyne thanked everyone for attending the meeting and commented that she and Councilman Couturier visited the businesses during the First Fridays event. She also addressed Penny Davis' comments. Hyne commented that she consulted the City Manager and Community Development Director on calling the special meeting and only held the meeting because potential action could be taken to help the applicants. The business has owned the property for nearly two years and the Council needed to act on the issue before the license was lost. She added that holding the meeting was a joint decision and laws were followed. Hyne stated that she believes in a transparent government.~~

Verbatim Excerpt of Mayor Hyne's comments:

Hyne: I guess, I would like to comment, and thank, we've had quite a full house this evening, and I would like to thank everyone for attending and voicing your concerns and questions and whether you did or didn't ask any questions, just your presence here is appreciated and encouraged. Also, I want to thank Dick for the two of us going out Friday night and visiting businesses during the Chamber event. It was enjoyable and informative and fun. It was a lot of fun. It was a very good event and very well attended, I thought, so thank you. Also, Personally I would like to address Mrs. Davis' earlier this evening with regard to the special meeting and I will defer to the Community Development Director and the City Manager if they choose to respond, that this was discussed openly between the three of us specifically, with regard to this that there was not going to be a special meeting called unless a potential action could be taken by the Council with a positive outcome, that would result and that would benefit to the City and to this process and also the fact that it was stated to me

that Liquor Control requested a resolution and that their meetings, it was my understanding that they were twice a year, which I now understand that is not the case. But being that I've never dealt with Liquor Control

Hitchcock: My understanding is that it's once a week.

Hyne: I don't deal with Liquor Control.

Hitchcock: No, I'm saying that it was stated today that it was stated that it was everyday, and my understanding is that it's once a week.

Hyne: There has been a lot of information on the dates floating around, because initially I was told it was twice a year and that they had a meeting coming up, I believe on the 3rd and that we need to act on this and being that this business has owned this property nearly two years, and has whether, whatever side of the fence you are on this, they have been attempting to go through the process for a year and a half and a liquor license is totally separate dealing with Liquor Control and when it was recommended that we act on this and we do it in a timely manner before this license is lost, and that it was noted by the Police Chief that certain events had taken place, that he could now issue his investigative report, correct it, or amend it, or revise, that it was to the benefit of our community that we do so. And I'm still confident and satisfied that the right decision was made, it was not a single decision, it was a joint decision. I am pleased to say that it we had a very productive meeting. We followed the rule of law under the Open Meetings Act, and that we had an open discussion between the board, not by telephone, not behind closed doors, it was out in the open with open discussion within the community and the board members, and a very positive outcome came out of that meeting. So, I guess if anyone has any questions, I strongly encourage them to feel free to come and ask questions, or e-mail. We're very available and in my position I totally encourage a transparent government, and that was one of the main points of that meeting that it be done and be effective and be open. I thank everyone for their comments and their attendance tonight. Lisa or Michelle, would you care to comment on any of that, or correct me?

Aniol: No.

Hitchcock: No.

15. Closed Session- Pending Litigation with RiverHouse Inn:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Smith**, to go into closed session to discuss the pending litigation with RiverHouse Inn. Yes: Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Smith, Zichi, Hyne, Pratt, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

*Closed Session started at 10:50 p.m.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to return to open session. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Couturier, Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Pratt. No: None. **Motion passed.**

*Closed Session ended at 11:44 p.m.

Action on Closed Session:

None.

16. Adjournment:

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Siciliano**, to adjourn. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

***Meeting Adjourned at 11:45 p.m.**

***THE PRECEDING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF A CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AND DO NOT REPRESENT A VERBATIM RECORD.**

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

Michelle A. Hyne, Mayor

Date Approved: _____