

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 27, 2007
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 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 Timothy Grossman, Penny Davis, George Monroe, Scott VanAllsburg, and Michelle Hyne.
Absent: None.

Also Present:

City Manager Lisa Hitchcock, Deputy Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Dave Stoker, JFM Productions, Enterprise Reporter Will Whelton, Head Librarian JoAnne Hegedus, Capital Area District Library Representatives Sue Hill, Deb Bloomquist and Sally Trout, and citizens Mike Thomas, Patty Kuptz, Earl Wolf, Trent Allen, Rodney Palmer, Terri Campbell, Rachel Olson, Gwen Hulbert, John Pratt, Wayne Mears, Phillis Chirico, Robert St. John, Lois Mead, Joe Eiffert, and Larry Wittrup.

4. Approval of Agenda:

Add 9g. 2nd Reading of Ordinance # 302, 10a. Emergency Gate- Georgia St., and 10b. Tornado Siren.

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

5. Audience Participation:

Terri Campbell, 308 Fulton St., asked if the City Council could direct the City Manager to have someone send the Planning Commission agendas out ahead of time and also e-mail out the lighting ordinance meeting notices.

Mayor Zichi commented that nothing has happened with the lighting ordinance issue.

Manager Hitchcock commented that the e-mail list was done by former Administrator Wilson, but was not passed on for someone else to do.

Terri Campbell commented that she does not like the new Planning Administrator's staff report because it is difficult for her to read. She is also concerned with the public's perception of the City scheduling morning board meetings. Ms. Campbell believes that the City web-site should include office hours, and how to contact the Planning Administrator if they are not in the office.

She believes there is a lack of communication with the Lighting Ordinance sub-committee and added that the sub-committee e-mails should also be sent out to the public. She added that she is bringing this up because McKenna is on a probationary period.

Mayor Zichi commented that there may be information sent by e-mail, but there cannot be debate over e-mail.

Terri Campbell commented that there is an obvious lack of communication with the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Hyne questioned if she is saying there is Planning Commissioners discussing items without holding a meeting.

Ms. Campbell answered that she is concerned that McKenna's probationary period is six months and they are already half way through and she believes it is not going smoothly.

Manager Hitchcock commented that McKenna is not responsible for the Planning Commission being able to get a quorum, posting the meetings, or scheduling the meetings. They also may not know that there is an e-mail list for agendas.

Councilmember Hyne asked Manager Hitchcock to review and address these issues at the next Council meeting.

Joe Eiffert of N. Putnam St. commented that people parking over the sidewalk at the Speedway station is not as critical as people using excessive speeds on N. Putnam St. He believes people speeding should not just receive warnings when caught by the police.

6. Council Minutes of August 13, 2007:

On page 3, item 8c., 12 lines down, add "Councilmember Hyne commented that she was concerned of the lack of notice."

On page 4, item 9a., 5 lines down, delete "commented that she believes the historical designation of City Hall would cost too much and they are not sure what is going to be done with the building" and add "asked for clarification of costs and implications of a historical designation."

On page 4, item 9a., 10 lines down, delete "will cost too much in maintenance" and add "maintained should be considered."

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Grossman**, to approve the Council minutes of August 13, 2007 as amended. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

7. Accounts Payable:

Councilmember Davis reported that the accounts payable totaled \$52,073.38 and included permits and inspections, 1500 building loan, McKenna Associates, MML

membership, utilities, and other miscellaneous supplies and services. Reference #'s 9277-9340.

Motion by **Davis**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the accounts payable as presented. Yes: Monroe, VanAllsburg, Hanna, Zichi, Grossman, Davis. No: Hyne. **Motion passed.**

8. Sue Hill from Capital Area District Library Presentation on Capital Improvement Plan:

Sue Hill of the Capital Area District Library distributed their drafted Capital Improvement Plan to the City Council. The plan includes new libraries, downtown central services, a new Impression 5 building, and improvement in overall services. The plan would encourage more young people to read. The libraries carry books, movies, music and have internet access. Most of the cost of the project would be paid for by public referendum. CADL wants to work with the City and Library Foundation and utilize the property already purchased by the Library Foundation. CADL is planning for the needs of libraries in 2030 and will not be skimping on any of the project. The millage would appear on a 2008 or 2009 ballot. The cost estimate over a five year period would be \$3.8 million which would include the costs of the buildings, technology, and furniture. CADL is concerned that the property purchased by the Foundation would only be able to support a 10,000 square foot building.

Councilman VanAllsburg asked why the libraries could not be built simultaneously.

Councilman Hanna commented that Williamston's library is considered the poorest in the County, yet it is last on the list for a new library.

Councilmember Davis commented that with the plan for Williamston's library not being built until 2012, it could be pushed out even longer because of all the construction before it.

Sue Hill questioned if the primary Council concern is with the timeline.

Council agreed that it was.

Councilman Hanna asked if CADL would own any properties with this proposal.

Sue Hill answered that she was unsure.

Councilmember Davis commented that it is disappointing that Williamston has been ranked so low.

Sue Hill commented that when they talk to municipalities, everyone wants to be first, and the reason they ranked it the way they did is because the most people

would benefit from the Lansing and Okemos libraries being built first. She added that Council can call her with more concerns or questions.

9. Action Items

9a. School Street Basketball Court Proposal from Williamston Basketball Boosters:

Trent Allen commented that he does not see kids at the courts on School Street anymore because of the disrepair. He added that he has the money to replace the backboards and wants to have One Way Asphalt repair the court and widen it. The money has been raised through the Williamston Basketball Boosters. The court may one day host a basketball camp. He believes that since Williamston has the best of everything, they should have a basketball court they can be proud of.

Councilman VanAllsburg asked if there would be lights.

Mr. Allen answered that there will not be lights there.

Councilmember Hyne thanked them for their generosity and added that this will be an asset to the community.

Motion by **Hyne**, second by **Hanna**, to approve the basketball court proposal for the School Street basketball court as presented. Yes: VanAllsburg, Hanna, Zichi, Hyne, Grossman, Davis, Monroe. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9b. Board Appointments- EDC/TIFA:

Rachel Olson introduced herself and commented that she has lived in Michigan for three years and became involved with the Zoning Board of Appeals and frequently attends the EDC/TIFA meetings.

Councilmember Hyne asked Ms. Olson what she thinks about community/economic development.

Ms. Olson answered that she is more into urban growth and wants to help the EDC identify it's goals and help them get more organized.

Councilmember Hyne commented that she believes the EDC is much more structured and ~~has better plans now~~ **there are defined goals now.**

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Grossman**, to concur with the Mayor's appointment of Rachel Olson to the Economic Development Corporation and TIFA 2A & TIFA 2B board for a term to expire 2013. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

9c. Street Sweeper Purchase:

Manager Hitchcock reported that they were unable to find a comparable machine to the new machine that was proposed. The goal is to have only one machine to sweep the streets freeing up one DPW worker.

Councilmember Hyne asked if this machine was the only one they could come up with that is used. **Hyne asked if the parts are obsolete and if the current equipment is still in working order.**

Manager Hitchcock answered that it is the only machine available.

Councilmember Hyne questioned if the purchase of the street sweeper needs to be done right away.

Manager Hitchcock responded that the purchase was discussed during the budget work sessions, and is being recommended by the DPW Director.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Monroe**, to approve the purchase of a street sweeper from Bell Equipment in the amount of \$139,500 as presented with the trade in value for the Pelican at \$2,500, and the trade in value for the WWind for \$25,000. Yes: Hanna, Zichi, Grossman, Davis, Monroe, VanAllsburg. No: Hyne. **Motion passed.**

9d. Set Public Hearing for TIFA 2B Plan Amendment:

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Grossman**, to set a public hearing date for the TIFA 2B plan amendment for Monday, September 24, 2007 at 7:05 p.m. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

9e. Truck Purchase:

Motion by **Hyne**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to accept the bid from Red Cedar Auto Sales for a truck for the Department of Public Works in the amount of \$7,665.40 as presented. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Grossman, Davis, Monroe, VanAllsburg, Hanna. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9f. RFP Island/Riverbank Vegetation Removal:

Mayor Zichi commented that Round Up is dangerous to use in watershed areas and could adversely affect the fish in the river. He distributed information regarding the chemical that would affect the fish.

Earl Wolf commented that he is sure that every precaution will be taken before spraying anything on the island and riverbanks.

Councilmember Davis asked what the hurry is for the approval.

Mr. Wolf responded that certain parts of this plan need to be done at certain times of the year.

Councilman Hanna commented that he does not want to see cottonwood trees on the island.

VanAllsburg and Hyne stated it is important to delegate and to trust the Parks and Recreation.

John Pratt commented that there was a lot of public input on the island issue, and he believes the community does support the project.

Councilman Hanna is concerned what is going to have to happen to it after the project is started.

Larry Wittrup commented that there could be a cost savings if they can get volunteer help. He added that the Parks Commission needs the Council's approval to go forward with the project.

Councilmember Hyne commented that she has had concerns about the appearance of the island. She supports the cleaning of the island and the banks **due to comments from the community.**

Councilman Grossman commented that he is concerned that there is only one bid received.

Larry Wittrup commented that the Parks Commission would like more bids, but would like the approval to start working on the island. He added that there was a proposal to remove the logs in the river.

Councilmember Hyne commented that the proposal has already been approved.

Manager Hitchcock responded that she is trying to get the DPW Director and someone from Bill's Wrecker to discuss the issue.

Councilmember Hyne asked if they can get an update at the next meeting.

Motion by **Hyne**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to accept the plan to clean up the island and riverbank as proposed with the understanding that a project manager will oversee the clean up and the Parks and Recreation Commission is not restricted to this specific bid, and are able to accept a bid up to \$12,635 **in coordination with volunteers**. Yes: VanAllsburg, Hanna, Zichi, Hyne, Grossman. No: Davis, Monroe. **Motion passed.**

Davis thought it was irresponsible to approve an amount up to \$12,000 now all the bids will come in at that amount.

9g. 2nd Reading of Ordinance #302- Regulating Irrigation Wells:
Copies were not available at the table.

Motion by **Grossman**, second by **Hyne**, to table the second reading of ordinance #302 until the next meeting. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

10. Discussion Items

10a. Emergency Gate- Georgia Street:

Councilmember Hyne commented that she was contacted regarding the fire trucks not being able to access a fire on Wells Drive due to NIESA not being given a key to the gates.

Manager Hitchcock commented that the City is currently working with NIESA to get the right locks for the gates and she has addressed the matter with the Fire Chief and was told there was no problem getting through the gate, because they have bolt cutters that could have allowed them to get through it if they needed to, but the fire issue was with DTE Energy.

Councilmember Davis commented that she is confident NIESA could get anywhere if they wanted to.

Councilmember Hyne commented that she is just responding to a residents concern regarding NIESA not having keys to the locks on the gates and asked what the timeline is.

Manager Hitchcock will have a timeline for the next meeting. Executive Secretary Stevens is currently working with Paula Curtis at the Fire Department on the issue.

10b. Tornado Siren:

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that he received several complaints that the tornado sirens did not go off during the tornado warning on Friday.

Manager Hitchcock responded that she just became aware of the issue and the Police Chief is supposed to be looking into it with dispatch.

Mike Thomas commented that he also did not hear the sirens go off on the north side of the City.

Councilman Hanna commented that he also did not hear the sirens while at the Theatre.

Robert St. John commented that there should be a second way to set off the alarm at City Hall if it is not done by dispatch.

Councilmember Hyne commented that she heard the sirens in downtown Lansing at 4:40 p.m. on that day.

Mayor Zichi commented that the tests have gone off without a problem.

12. Staff Reports

12a. City Manager:

Manager Hitchcock submitted a written report and added that the City has received the Code of Ordinances book updates and the Council will need to bring their books to the next meeting to receive their updates.

12b. City Attorney:

Attorney Stoker commented that a Zoning Clean Up Act is being considered that would affect procedural changes for the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission. Specifically with regard to public notices, effective dates, and appeal procedures.

12c. Community Development Director:

Director Aniol submitted a written report for Council review.

12d. Planning and Development Administrator:

Administrator Acuff submitted a written report for Council review.

12e. Police Chief:

Chief Hetfield submitted statistics for July for Council review.

14. Audience Participation:

John Pratt questioned if the Governor has lifted the fire ban.

City Council was not sure.

15. Council Member Comments:

Councilman Hanna commented that September 14th is the home opener for varsity football. The dedication of the new stadium will also take place the same night. The new stadium holds 2500 people.

Councilmember Hyne commented that the CB's Bucket Bar and Grill has reopened and looks very nice.

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that not everyone is in agreement regarding the state of the island and riverbanks. He believes there should be a chat room with issues to be aware of, to get the feelings of the residents.

Councilman Hanna commented that First Fridays is September 7th with the Theatre hosting a person that will give tips on do-it-yourself decorating.

Mayor Zichi commented that the third annual Labor Day bridge walk will be held again on Labor Day beginning at 9:30 a.m. at City Hall. The theme of this year's

walk is Sex, Drugs, and Rock and Roll in Williamston. He added that most of the walk is wheelchair friendly.

16. Adjournment:

Motion by **Hanna**, second by **Grossman**, to adjourn. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

Meeting Adjourned at 9:10 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

Kenneth V. Zichi, Mayor

Date Approved: _____