

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 19, 2007
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 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, Carmen Siciliano, Traci Smith, Scott VanAllsburg, and Kenneth Zichi.
Absent: None.

Also Present:

City Manager Lisa Hitchcock, City Attorney Dave Stoker, City Attorney John Gormley, Police Chief Mark Hetfield, Community Development Director Michelle Aniol, Building Inspectors Bert Gale and Bruce Dean, RiverHouse Inn owners Sue Nichani, Debra Simmons, and Scott Simmons, citizens Penny Davis, Bob and Jane Hanna, George Monroe, Bev O'Malia, Steve Shaw, Marlene Epply, Frank Kolasa, and Fred Campbell.

4. Approval of Agenda:

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

5. Audience Participation:

Penny Davis, 1009 Foxborough, commented that she has received countless calls regarding the special meeting and why a special meeting was called, why the time was different, the cost of the meeting, and why the Council is trying to railroad things through. She commented that she believes the Council is handling the RiverHouse Inn issue unethically. She cited 2-85, 2-86, and 2-84 of the City Charter regarding gratuities, the preferential treatment, and disclosure of personal interest. She commented that these will be cited in a letter that will be formed for Council removal. She asked Mayor Hyne how the receptions held by the RiverHouse Inn to elect certain Council members would affect the Council's impartiality regarding the RiverHouse Inn and how much money was raised by this event.

Mayor Hyne responded that receptions are commonly held for various reasons. She commented that this does not necessarily influence anyone's reasons. She added that she was not going to call a special meeting until there was reason advised by City staff that sufficient progress had taken place and events that would warrant a resolution or substantially with reason there would be an outcome of the special meeting. She commented that she also discussed the cost of having the City staff and was given the figures. She further stated that she was advised by the senior planner of McKenna that a special meeting would be recommended.

Bob Hanna asked why the City is spending money on one business. The City is in at least four figures if not five figures. He added that he would like to see the entire amount spent on the RiverHouse Inn issue published.

The following e-mail was received as written correspondence:

I ask that this letter be read during the public comment portion of the meeting tonight 12/19/07:

Dear Mayor Hyne,

You were elected to City Council and then Mayor to represent ALL members of this community. With the universal tightening of the proverbial purse strings why would you spend "our" tax dollars by convening a special meeting of City Council. Exactly how much does a special meeting cost this city? Exactly what emergency has occurred to lead to the calling of this meeting? I have heard a lot of talk around the city about how the previous city council tried to do things behind the community's back. What do you call this? I am aware that this particular business distributed flyers endorsing members of the current City Council. Whether this was with or without their approval is immaterial. What is reprehensible is that you accuse previous City Council of improprieties and then in your first month as Mayor you pull a stunt like this. When has a "special" meeting ever been held for any other citizen of this community whether it be public or private? I am all for new businesses in this town. We need the infrastructure if we are going to remain solvent. However holding a "special" meeting for ONE business that hosted your OWN fundraiser is extremely suspect. If you want the support and trust of this community I implore you to keep your actions above reproach by abstaining from any vote pertaining to this action item.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Chisholm

6. Action Items

6a. RiverHouse Inn Liquor Control Commission- Issue and Application:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Pratt**, to adopt the resolution approving the proposed liquor license transfer for the specific site in which the request pertains. Yes: Pratt, Smith, VanAllsburg, Zichi, Hyne, Couturier. No: Siciliano. **Motion passed.**

6b. Motions from 12-10-07 Council Meeting Regarding the RiverHouse Inn- Discussion and Clarification if needed:

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Smith**, to instruct the City Manager to advise MDOT that the City has no position in regards to the two driveways at the RiverHouse Inn,

and no position in regards to the turning movements, that one driveway is used to enter, and the other is used to exit onto Grand River and to use site references such as Felpausch, Baryamas, and McDonalds and to include the number of years the property has been zoned commercial. Yes: VanAllsburg, Siciliano, Hyne, Pratt, Smith, Couturier. No: Zichi. **Motion passed.**

7. Audience Participation:

Scott Simmons thanked everyone for coming. He added that he understands everyone has an opinion and they are just trying to open a business.

Debbie Simmons commented that contrary to what everyone thinks, they have been struggling for a year and a half to open their business and she does not feel this is any special favor. If it was a special favor they would have been open eighteen months ago. It's important that the City is business friendly and she hopes that other businesses do not have to wait this long to open. They have owned this property for nearly two years.

Sue Nichani commented that the new City Council was elected because the community voted them on there.

8. Adjournment:

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

Meeting Adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Lisa K. Hitchcock, City Clerk

Michelle A. Hyne, Mayor

Date Approved: _____