

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON  
CITY COUNCIL  
FEBRUARY 11, 2008  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Call To Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 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 Timothy Perrone, Community Development Director Michelle Aniol, Enterprise Reporter Will Whelton, MDOT Representative Larry Doyle, citizens Rick Williams, Rob Oesterle, Scott Simmons, Sue Nichani, Barb Burke, Lea Estes, Gary Weston, Toby Weston, Robert St. John, Kevin Smith, Timothy Grossman, Terri Campbell, Bob & Jane Hanna, Mike Thomas, Paul and Dawn Marie Joseph, Melinda Wilson, Joanna Poynter, and other members of the public.

**4. Approval of Agenda:**

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Couturier**, to approve the agenda as presented.  
**Motion passed by voice vote with Pratt voting no.**

**5. Audience Participation:**

Jane Hanna, 792 Winding River Dr., asked why JFM was not present.

Mayor Hyne explained that Ms. McGraw had been in an accident and has been unable to cover the meetings.

**6. Council Minutes of January 7, 2008 & January 28, 2008:**

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to approve the Council minutes of January 7, 2008 as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Siciliano**, to approve the January 28, 2008 Council minutes as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**7. Certificate of Appreciation- Will Whelton:**

Mayor Hyne and Council presented Will Whelton with a certificate of appreciation.

**8. Accounts Payable:**

Councilman Couturier provided a list of the payables and reported that they totaled \$60,328.68. Reference #'s 54616-54666.

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

## **9. Action Items**

### **9a. MDOT Response Letter Regarding RiverHouse Inn:**

Mayor Hyne commented that she wants to see a group of two Council members and the City Manager with MDOT to resolve the RiverHouse Inn issue and the Access Management Plan.

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Siciliano**, to create a task force with the City Council, City Manager and MDOT to address the issues in order to examine the issues created by the Access Management Plan and to address how that can be applied to the City appropriately with the appointments at the discretion of the Mayor. Yes: Smith, Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Pratt, Zichi, Hyne, Couturier. No: None. **Motion passed.**

Mayor Hyne appointed Council members Pratt and Couturier to serve on the task force.

### **9b. Website:**

Manager Hitchcock reported that she and staff have been looking at websites that are promotional and informational. She asked the Council for direction on what they want out of the City's website.

Councilman VanAllsburg volunteered to look at websites and bring back examples to show to Council.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to have Councilman VanAllsburg look into examples of other city websites and bring back the information to Council. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

### **9c. ArtFest:**

Director Aniol reported that due to personal situations, the ArtFest currently does not have a director. She is asking if there is interest from the City to take on the event as a City project. There has been interest in volunteers to work the ArtFest, but not to run it.

Council discussed options to continue the ArtFest.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Couturier**, to make ArtFest a City event and direct Michelle Aniol to find a Chair to head the ArtFest this year with no financial commitment from the City. **Motion passed by voice vote with Siciliano and Pratt voting no.**

### **9d. Traffic Control Orders (Handicap Signage):**

Manager Hitchcock will present a traffic control order for handicap parking in the Middle Street parking lot at the next meeting.

**9e. Nuisance Ordinance:**

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to have a traffic control ordinance drafted to address the situation of running vehicles. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**9f. Key Control Policy:**

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to have the City look into getting three bids on the cost to change the locks in the City Hall and Public Services building and have a policy drafted to have only staff given keys with the Police Department opening the building only for Council members by logging them in and out as needed. **Motion passed by voice vote with Siciliano and Zichi voting no.**

**9g. Press Releases:**

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to direct the City Manager to look into doing press releases if not once a week, then twice a month. **Motion passed by voice vote with Siciliano voting no.**

**9h. Ordinance #306 Changing Council Meeting Dates:**

Motion by **Couturier**, second by **Pratt**, to put Ordinance #306 on the next Council agenda for the first reading and change the meeting dates to the second and fourth Tuesdays. Yes: Couturier, Pratt, Smith, Hyne. No: Siciliano, VanAllsburg, Zichi. **Motion passed.**

**9i. City Council Rules of Procedure:**

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Couturier**, to adopt the drafted City Council Rules of Procedure as amended with the two changes of audience participation being changed to non-reserved and may to shall be recorded. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**9j. Report on Lawsuits Against City:**

This will be on the next agenda.

**9k. Set Building Plan Workshop:**

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Siciliano**, to hold a special meeting at 6pm, February 18 to discuss the building plans for the City buildings. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

The Council asked City Manager Hitchcock to give a presentation on the City buildings for the meeting.

**10. Discussion Items**

**10a. Hickory Lane Paving:**

Manager Hitchcock commented that a plan will be coming from the engineers regarding paving Hickory Lane perhaps by March.

**10b. Task Forces:**

Mayor Hyne commented that she wants to create task forces to work on projects like the building department complaints, a permit checklist, and updating the waste water treatment plant.

**12. Staff Reports**

**12a. City Manager:**

Manager Hitchcock submitted a written report and thanked the Council with providing her and City staff with training. She is also working on getting grants for paving the roadway in the industrial park phase II and the Parks and Recreation Commission for tree replacement and the McCormick Park improvements.

**12b. City Attorney:**

No report.

**12c. Planning & Development Administrator:**

A written report was submitted for Council review.

**14. Audience Participation:**

Bob Hanna, 792 Winding River Drive, commented that he wants to raise the Council's awareness that there is a perceived conflict of interest by the public regarding Council and their personal relationships with individuals.

Councilman Couturier responded that he has asked the City Attorney if there was a conflict of interest and was told there was not.

Bob Hanna restated that a question regarding a conflict of interest will be raised.

Mayor Hyne commented that the Council has asked the City Attorney regarding a conflict of interest and was told there was not one.

Bob Hanna commented that appearance is a lot stronger than fact.

Council asked the City Manager to request an attorney opinion regarding the conflict of interest issue.

**15. Council Member Comments:**

Councilman Zichi commented that there is still an opportunity to see Art at the Williamston Theatre. He added that he was very impressed with the production.

Councilman Siciliano commented that the Governor's budget has a 4% increase proposed for revenue sharing.

Councilman Pratt stated that he wants to see police presence at every meeting and wants the Police Chief directed to be here. He stated that he wants the City Manager to provide a report before the next meeting regarding the number and cost of the City

cell phones. He wants a time clock installed for all staff and wants to meet more on the budget.

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that Hate Mail starts at the Williamston Theatre in March and added that Art is worth seeing.

Councilmember Smith reminded the Council that she will not be in attendance the next meeting.

Mayor Hyne commented that she saw Art and thought it was very good. She added that she went to the Habitat's Mardi Gras, and the Lion's Club meeting. She thanked all the groups for their service.

**16. Closed Session- R&R Fence Litigation:**

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

\*Closed Session started at 11:00 p.m.

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Pratt**, to return to open session. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

\*Closed Session ended at 11:25 p.m.

**Action on Closed Session:**

None.

**16. Adjournment:**

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

**\*Meeting Adjourned at 11:26 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

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Michelle A. Hyne, Mayor

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_