

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 12, 2008
RESCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 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, Council Members Traci Smith, Scott VanAllsburg, and Ken Zichi. Absent: John Pratt (arrived at 7:05) and Carmen Siciliano.

Also Present:

City Manager Lisa Hitchcock, Deputy Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Bonnie Toskey, Police Officer Jake Cortez, JFM Productions, citizens Michael Moody, Steve Eyke, Susan Graff, Dave Coker, Dawn Marie and Paul Joseph, Mike Thomas, and other members of the public.

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

4. Approval of Agenda:

Remove items 10a. and 10d.

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

5. Audience Participation:

Dawn Marie Joseph stated that she applied for a position on the DDA and distributed a post card with her information. She added that she held a position on the DDA a few years ago, but had previous commitments that did not allow her to attend many meetings. She owns two businesses in Williamston, Gracie's Place and Estate Planning and Preservation. Ms. Joseph feels her experience would make her a good choice for the DDA.

Steve Eyke, 2261 Rowley Road, stated that he has owned a business, LaFollette Custom Homes and LaFollete Kitchen and Design Studios and has been a custom home builder specializing in period reproductions for twenty years and opened the studio in Williamston seven years ago. He understands period style and vitality of the downtown. He believes it is a vibrant community and wants to keep the energy going. He asked that the Council consider him for the vacancy on the DDA.

Rosemary Phillips, 5350 Barton Road, stated that she owns Sign of the Pineapple Antiques and has had a business in downtown Williamston for 29 years and does not want a position on the DDA Board however she is a member of the Chamber Board and is in attendance to represent the Chamber. They meet every third Thursday morning at 8am in the Depot.

Michael Moody, 461 Winding River Drive, commented that he would like to be considered for the Council position.

Dave Coker, 1230 Berkshire Drive, stated that he is also interested in the Council position and distributed a resume` to the board.

Paul Joseph, 2833 Linn Road, commented that he is there to support his wife for the DDA. He personally knows she is a dynamic individual and has the utmost energy. How she gets everything done and does it in such perfect order is amazing to him and believes the Council would be proud to have her on the DDA because he is proud of her.

6. Council Minutes of May 27, 2008:

On page 11, item 15., 12 lines down add "administrative costs" after "paying".

Councilman Pratt commented that he does not believe he made the statement under item 15. 6 lines down, and wants to review the tapes before approving the minutes.

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to table the Council minutes of May 27, 2008. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

7. Accounts Payable:

Councilmember Smith reported that the accounts payable totaled \$84,217.02. Reference #'s 55103-55151.

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

8. Proclamations:

This will be tabled until the recipients are invited.

9. Introduction of Residents Applying for Vacant City Council Seat:

Manager Hitchcock explained that Brooke Locke was not able to attend the meeting because of a work commitment and was disappointed he could not attend.

Dave Coker commented he has three daughters, and lives in Plymouth Landing. He's been in politics since he was 18 and started to attend the hometown meetings. He was elected to the Council and served on Planning and Recreation Commission as Chairman who was responsible for doing the recreation plan. He's served on the Library Board, Chamber of Commerce, and also served as president of the Chamber. Mr. Coker is looking not to make changes but to give an outside perspective to some of the boards and give some of his ideas. He has been talking with the City Manager about things that could be done with Plymouth Landing and how they could work together. He has served as a member of the Michigan Township Association and held the position full term. He led the restructure of the board and has been involved in budget situations. He has a vast array of public knowledge, Roberts Rules of Order, and other things. He believes he would be a good addition to the Council and if appointed would likely run for the position when it is available.

Councilman VanAllsburg asked him if anything were possible, what would his dream be for Williamston.

Mr. Coker responded that he hopes to achieve some of goals the City is trying to work on such as the revitalization of the downtown, and the development of the corridor to the expressway. He added that he is not running to change the speed limit on Williamston Road. He believes the corridor development would give Williamston an improved tax base. He added that he has worked on

projects in Clare County that could be used in the downtown to attract and drive the business community. In addition he would work on the budget, playground, and river.

Councilman Pratt thanked Mr. Coker for applying.

Mr. Coker commented that he would also be interested in serving on other boards. He added that he is currently the president of the Plymouth Landing Association and is serving to clean things up, get the lots built out, lawns maintained better, new entrance signs, and improve their budget.

Michael Moody, 461 Winding River Drive, commented that he has a 6, 8, and 10 year old and is the Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He has resided in the City for six years. He loves the City and has coached the little league and attends baseball events. He has worked at the Attorney General's Office for thirteen years and is familiar with cities, states, and regulations. He understands how city regulations operate with the counties and state. He can bring information regarding the utility companies to the Council. He does a variety of areas of law in the state. Mr. Moody added that Williamston is a great City and moved here from the metro-Detroit area. He concluded that he believes he could add something to the City Council and appreciates their consideration.

Councilman Pratt asked how long he has lived in Williamston.

Mr. Moody responded that he believes it has been six years.

Councilman Pratt commented that he has served on the Zoning Board of Appeals and found that he is willing to serve the community.

Councilman VanAllsburg asked if the City government is performing at a high level of excellence what evidence of that would show up in the community.

Mr. Moody answered that the vibrant downtown that they have now is evidence of the City Council's hard work. He believes that there are always areas for improvement but Williamston has a great downtown and it is a reflection on the City Council and the fact that the community has a lot of different activities and events is a reflection on the Council.

Mike Thomas, 207 E. Riverside, asked the Council if they had any questions.

Councilman Pratt asked why he wants to run for City Council since he is so involved with everything else.

Mr. Thomas replied that he believes it is time to step it up. He has history and knows what is going on, and wouldn't take long to get up to speed. He believes the main issues are public works, public safety, and public communications and they sometimes go hand in hand. For instance public works making a sidewalk on every City street would be nice in the City and would add to public safety and public communication to allow people to walk to the library and get on the City website. He realizes how complicated things are and how they are entwined and that sometimes there are not very easy answers to the decisions that they make.

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that Williamston is a very safe place to live and asked what factors contribute to this safe environment and are there things the Council should do to make sure the City remains safe.

Mike Thomas answered that cities remain safe because of the number of people that are in a city. If you start killing the downtown by moving businesses out of it, people are no longer downtown and will have to get in their cars to move back and forth. As long as the City is walkable and people are out it helps safety. The loitering ordinance that was recently passed helps as well because there are stiff rules and they know what the rules are and enforce them. There is also a better police force and he believes this is the best police force they have had in a long time. It is also people caring about the community. People maintain their homes and businesses to keep them looking nice so people are deterred from breaking into places. He added that the other applicants would also be excellent choices.

10. Action Items

10a. 2008-2009 Budget Adoption:

Manager Hitchcock explained that the DDA has a budget adjustment of \$10,000 less in the Community Promotions item.

The Council discussed the ability to make changes to the budget after its adoption.

Mayor Hyne commented that she believes the replat should be removed from the budget. She does not believe the City should tell people what to do with their property. Hyne does not believe people should be forced to combine their lots.

Discussion ensued as to whether the replat should be removed from the budget.

Sidewalk construction on Williamston Road, the removal of the community center purchase and the cemetery contribution was also discussed.

The community center purchase was added to buildings and grounds and the cemetery contribution remained the same.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Zichi**, to approve the budget resolution as amended with the Major Streets Fund increase in revenues by \$52,500, for the sidewalk assessment and adding the community center back in to the Buildings and Grounds Department for \$77,500 in the General Fund expenses, and increasing the Water Fund by changing that from \$633,685 to \$678,810 for Water Line Maintenance, changing the DDA Community Promotions from \$30,000 to \$20,000 and changing the date from June 9th to June 12th everywhere it appears. Yes: VanAllsburg, Zichi. No: Hyne, Pratt, Smith. Motion failed.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Smith**, to approve the budget resolution as amended with the Major Streets increase in revenues by \$52,500, for the sidewalk assessment and adding the community center back in to the Buildings and Grounds Department for \$77,500 in the General Fund expenses, and increasing the Water Fund by changing that from \$633,685 to \$678,810 for Water Line Maintenance, changing the DDA Community Promotions from \$30,000 to \$20,000, removing the replat item of \$8,000 which will change the General Fund expenses to \$3,111,730, and changing the date from June 9th to June 12th everywhere it appears. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Smith, VanAllsburg. No: Pratt. **Motion passed.**

10b. Water & Sewer Rates:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Zichi**, to approve the resolution for modifications in water and wastewater rates as presented and changing the date from June 9th to June 12th everywhere it appears. Yes: Hyne, Pratt, Smith, VanAllsburg, Zichi. No: None. **Motion passed.**

10c. Appointments to Downtown Development Authority:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to concur with the Mayor's appointment of Dawn Marie Joseph and Steve Eyke to the Downtown Development Authority. Yes: Pratt, Smith, VanAllsburg, Zichi, Hyne. No: None. **Motion passed.**

10d. Construction Bids:

Manager Hitchcock recommended adding an additional \$600 for the quality of the roof. She recommended K&D General Contractors, but they do not have any specifications for the play structure.

The Council discussed the community center roof and the materials that are going to be used to repair it.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to allow Steve Eyke to address the Council. **Motion passed with no objections.**

Steve Eyke explained the differences in the materials and kinds of roofs that could be done on the community center and cautioned against asbestos.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Zichi**, to approve the bid from K&D General Contracting for projects b, c, d, e, f, g, and h in an amount not to exceed \$20,359 if the bid includes the play structure, if not the bid would go to Dennis O'Connor for an amount not to exceed \$21,654. Yes: Smith, VanAllsburg, Zichi, Hyne, Pratt. No: None. **Motion passed.**

10e. Meeting Time Limitation:

Council discussed the pros and cons regarding a meeting time limitation. Several ideas were given for end times and procedures to follow. The Council was concerned that Member Siciliano was not present and there is a vacancy.

Manager Hitchcock stated that the Council could always recess a meeting to another time if it goes too long.

Attorney Toskey commented that there are many ways to control how long the meetings are by having members make concise statements, having a time limit on the meeting, and reducing the audience participation. She added that attorneys are given time limits to speak their case and it forces the attorney to make their argument concise and clear.

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Zichi**, to table the meeting time limitation until more research can be done and there is a full Council. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

10f. 2007-2008 Budget Amendments:

Manager Hitchcock explained the budget amendments proposed.

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the budget amendments for the 2007/2008 fiscal year budget as presented. Yes: VanAllsburg, Zichi, Hyne, Pratt, Smith. No: None. **Motion passed.**

13. Staff Reports

13a. City Manager:

Manager Hitchcock submitted a written report for Council review and added that the tornado sirens did not go off immediately during the recent storms and they were set off manually. She is currently working with Ingham County to address the problem. There were three trees on Middle Street that sustained extensive damage and will be removed soon.

Councilmember Smith questioned when the Council would receive a corrected WWTP report.

Manager Hitchcock answered that it would be in the next packet.

Mayor Hyne commented that she has had opportunity to look at other budgets and would like the City to use a line item budget to allow taxpayers to understand where the money is going.

13b. City Attorney:

No report.

13c. Planning and Development Administrator:

A written report was submitted for Council review.

13d. Treasurer:

A financial printout for April was submitted for Council review.

13e. Community Development Director:

A written report was submitted for Council review.

14. Audience Participation:

Dave Coker gave kudos to the Council on the end time of the Council meeting tonight. He agreed that the Council should be encouraged to make their comments more concise. If they could try to state what they are thinking a little more clearly, he believes that is where a lot of their time is. He thanked the Council for allowing him to speak to the Council and added that the Council should consider allowing audience to participate during Council agenda items. He asked that the police or fire chief be on call during storms in case there is an emergency and they need to go door to door to warn people of an upcoming storm.

Councilman Pratt asked Officer Cortez who he has to call when a storm hits Williamston and what the protocol would be.

Officer Cortez commented that they definitely have protocols and would either call Sergeant Hull or Chief Hetfield.

Dave Coker stated that he believes the fire or police chief should be on call to dispatch their officers to announce a tornado warning on the streets. It bothers him because he had children sleeping in his house and was not aware of what was going on.

Mayor Hyne asked Manager Hitchcock if NIESA is aware of this and the sirens are staffed.

Manager Hitchcock responded that to her knowledge that is what will be done.

Michael Moody gave his phone number to the City Council to contact him.

Councilman Pratt thanked the people that applied for the position and taking time to talk to the Council.

15. Council Member Comments:

Councilman Zichi thanked DTE for only having the power out for twenty-four hours for the City. He saw the level of damage that was done in Williamston and they did a pretty good job.

Councilman Pratt commented that the Parks and Recreation Commission is discussing naming the island and do not know how they are going to go about it. Manager Hitchcock is going to have the Enterprise write an article about it. The island has started to be herbicided and trimmed and will have a controlled burn done soon. They are trying to save the plants that were planted by the DDA. He also reported that the Parks Commission wants to discuss with the City Council and community who is going to schedule who uses the bandshell to regulate it. There is research being done to see what other communities are doing to manage their bandshells. He personally believes it should go through the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Manager Hitchcock added that the Parks Commission is going to request that the Council allow them to come up with some policies. They are willing to do some background research of other communities and bring it to Council in the future. This will be on the next agenda.

Councilman VanAllsburg pointed out the success of the Williamston Soccer Team and there is a level of excellence with the athletic programs at Williamston including the girls tennis, girls soccer, and the boys track and field and cross country. His question to Mike Moody was with the idea that he is not convinced that the Council is performing at a level of excellence, that the people at the high school athletic program are. He is throwing out the idea of how the Council can raise their game.

Mayor Hyne reminded everyone about Jubilee week. The bandshell groundbreaking was a wonderful event and publicly complimented them on the tremendous community wide effort.

Councilman Pratt commented that they have also started the construction of the band shell.

Mayor Hyne commented she has had excellent communication with Paul Gantz of DTE during the power outages. He has represented the community and has worked tirelessly. There were 2000 without power. She thanked everyone for their patience.

She thanked the Parks Commission for their work on the island, stating it was long overdue. She has been in communication with the School Superintendent about the success of the athletic teams and is trying to work something out with the Jubilee committee to recognize them.

16. Closed Session- R&R Fence Litigation:

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

Closed Session started at 9:47 p.m.

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

Closed Session ended at 10:40 p.m.

Action on Closed Session:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Smith**, to add Attorney Toskey to assist on the R&R Fence litigation to the extent Council feels necessary. Yes: Hyne, Pratt, Smith, VanAllsburg. No: Zichi. **Motion passed.**

17. Adjournment:

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

***Meeting Adjourned at 10:50 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: _____