

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
JULY 14, 2008
REGULAR 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 Michael Moody, Carmen Siciliano, and Ken Zichi. Absent: John Pratt (arrived 7:05 p.m.), Traci Smith, and Scott VanAllsburg.

Also Present:

City Manager Lisa Hitchcock, Deputy Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Bonnie Toskey, Police Sergeant Jeff Hull, Community Development Director Michelle Aniol, JFM Productions, 55th District Court candidate Bille Jo O'Berry, citizens Brooke Locke, William and Melanie Schall, and other members of the public.

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

4. Approval of Agenda:

Remove item 9c.

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

5. Audience Participation:

Billie Jo O'Berry commented that she is running for the 55th District Court Judge. She commented that she has run for the position before and was encouraged to run again. She believes there is a need for experience in the 55th District Court and she has that experience. She has worked for the City of Lansing for 21 years. She feels the experience she could provide to the taxpayers would be a benefit.

6. Council Minutes of and June 23, 2008:

*John Pratt arrived at 7:05 p.m.

Motion by **Siciliano**, second by **Moody**, to approve the Council minutes of June 23, 2008 as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

7. Accounts Payable:

The accounts payable totaled \$290,702.95 and included payments to MERS, RS Technical Services, and other miscellaneous services and supplies. Reference #'s 55220-55318.

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

8. Proclamation:

Mayor Hyne presented a proclamation to Bev O'Malia for her work on the Downtown Development Authority.

9. Action Items

9a. Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Moody**, to appoint Brooke Locke to the Zoning Board of Appeals as of 7:12 p.m. Yes: Zichi, Hyne, Siciliano, Pratt, Moody. No: None. **Motion passed.**

9b. Bandshell Guideline Clarification:

Phillis Chirico of the Parks and Recreation Commission commented that they have come up with a list of guidelines for the bandshell to base their regulations on:

Management

Maintenance

Policies & Procedures

Application for Use

Hold Harmless Clause

Liability Insurance

Security

Trash Removal

Decibel Level

Rental Fees

Rental Equipment (if any) sound, lights, chairs, music stands, etc.

Food Service

Free Will Contributions

Need for Additional Restrooms

Traffic Control if Needed

Budget

Program Committee

Restrictions

Council agreed with the list given and gave permission to proceed.

No action was taken.

9c. International Property Maintenance Code- Recommendation to Hold Complaints in Abeyance:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **Moody**, to recommend that the investigation and enforcement of the International Property Maintenance Code complaints be held in abeyance until the code has been reviewed at the first meeting in August unless there is a safety issue then take immediate action.

Yes: Pratt, Siciliano, Moody, Zichi, Hyne. No: None. **Motion passed.**

10. Discussion Items

10a. Police Complaint Procedure:

Councilman Pratt commented that he wants to table the issue because he is waiting for a letter from his attorney.

10b. Membership of the Planning Commission Under the New Planning Commission Enabling Act:

Mayor Hyne commented that the Planning Commission Enabling Act would allow the City to appoint non-residents to the Planning Commission.

Attorney Toskey pointed out changes that would need to be made to City Ordinances and recommended that the Council direct the attorneys to identify the options with the new Planning Commission Enabling Act for Council consideration so the Council can consider changes to their ordinances point by point.

Councilman Zichi commented that he does not want to dilute the taxpayers vote on the Planning Commission. He believes that the Planning Commission currently coordinates with surrounding townships, but there is no need to have a township resident on the City's Planning Commission.

10c. Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth Grant:

Councilman Moody expressed his interest in the grant and his experience in dealing with energy issues. He offered to put something together for the grant and believes the money could be used to educate Williamston residents on energy conservation and incentives could also be offered to the residents. He added that there are a lot of local people that know about energy conservation and he will ask for an extension on the grant.

Councilman Siciliano asked how many staff hours it would take to write the grant.

Director Aniol answered that it depends on whether or not the City already has a specific plan for the use of the grant funds.

Councilman Zichi commented that he believes the Council should have a plan before applying for the grant funds. He added that people did not appreciate being told how much light to use before and he does not believe they will want the advice now.

Mayor Hyne commented that applying for the grant does not have to cost the City anything if she and Moody work on it and she believes it will be a tremendous benefit to the City and its residents.

10d. Chain of Command in Absence of City Manager:

Mayor Hyne commented that since there is not a chain of command in the absence of the City Manager she consulted Attorney Stoker and was advised that the Council may be wise to adopt one.

Attorney Toskey commented that normally there is a policy or procedure that is worked out but it is not unusual not to have one in writing either. A policy would not have to be adopted from a legal standpoint.

Mayor Hyne commented that concerns have been raised for example when the light at the four corners is out or there is a storm, on who to contact if the City Manager is unavailable.

Councilman Siciliano commented that he believes the current procedures are working and the Council should leave it alone.

Mayor Hyne asked Manager Hitchcock if there is any written communication regarding the procedure to set off the tornado sirens.

Manager Hitchcock responded that the letter will be in the next packet.

12. Staff Reports

12a. City Manager:

Manager Hitchcock submitted a written report for Council review and invited Moody to meet with her to go over Council issues.

12b. City Attorney:

No report.

12c. Community Development Director:

A written report was submitted for Council review and Director Aniol added that there will be a public visioning session for the downtown regarding the RFQ/RFP for the building at 109 E. Grand River Avenue on Tuesday, July 15 at 8:00 p.m. after the DDA meeting.

13. Audience Participation:

Mark Giller asked Council if they could get a P.A. system so the audience can hear them better.

Melanie Schall, 3150 N. Williamston Rd., commented that the International Property Maintenance Code was abused. There are many properties that also have code violations that were not brought forward and she believes there should be equal treatment for everyone. She asked why Councilman Pratt would single out only her building. She commented that she finds it interesting that the Council voted to put the complaints on hold and wondered if it was because of the addresses she submitted and Councilman Pratt is on the sub-committee. She commented that there were two men taking pictures of interest in the greater Lansing area of their house and she wondered if she should tell them to leave because of the complaint that was made. Mrs. Schall stated that she has listened to the Council tapes for the last few months and found that when people speak during audience participation the Mayor has dialogue with everyone but her. She asked how she could get notification of the International Property Maintenance Code Sub-Committee meetings and stated she would just call City Hall to find out.

Phillis Chirico commented that she was a former member of ArtFest and has received a number of phone calls from people saying that they saw an advertisement in the Michigan Crafters magazine with a schedule of events for the ArtFest and it has her name and contact information. She does not know why this was published.

Director Aniol commented that there was a "save the date" advertisement in the Michigan Festivals and Events magazine but there were no names or contact information given.

14. Council Member Comments:

Councilman Pratt commented that he was told by someone from the Williamstown Township board that the \$12,000 cemetery contribution to Williamstown Township could be regulated by state law because there is not a cemetery within the City limits. He asked if the attorney could find out if that is true. He commented that he received five calls over the weekend regarding a couch in the right of way at Fuller and Church Streets.

Manager Hitchcock responded that she would look into the cemetery issue.

Councilman Pratt commented that the Council needs to decide whether or not the City is going to enforce the yard sign ordinance because many of the yard signs were taken down the previous weekend, but there were not any taken down this past weekend.

Sergeant Hull responded that the officer on duty was not able to take down signs because they were very busy.

The yard sign issue will be on the next agenda for discussion.

William Schall commented that he found it interesting that Councilman Pratt wants equal application of rules and laws and is concerned with the citizenry of the law.

Councilman Zichi echoed Director Aniol's comments about the public hearing after the DDA meeting. He wants the focus to be on what the community wants. He added that he and his wife will be celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary and wants to congratulate his wife for putting up with him for so long.

Councilman Moody asked if the Council needs to do anything further to allow him to proceed with the Energy Grant application.

Mayor Hyne answered that he could go forward with the grant.

Councilman Siciliano congratulated Councilman Zichi on his anniversary.

Mayor Hyne congratulated Councilman Zichi on his anniversary. She commented that the visioning session will be a good opportunity. She welcomed Brooke Locke to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Michael Moody to the City Council.

15. Adjournment:

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

***Meeting Adjourned at 8:24 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: _____