

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 25, 2010
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 Pro-tem Michael Moody and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call:

Mayor Pro-tem Michael Moody, Council members Timothy Grossman, Randy Pail, John Pratt, Andy Simmons, and Scott VanAllsburg. Absent: Michelle Hyne.

Also Present:

City Manager Tim Allard, City Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Bonnie Toskey, Police Chief Mark Hetfield, Community Development Director Michelle Aniol, Deputy Treasurer Geral Jeffrey, C2AE Engineer Scott DeVries, Habitat for Humanity Director Todd Pierce-Ryan, *Enterprise* Reporter Brad Ritter, and citizens Terri Campbell, Brooke Locke, Larry Stafford, Dave Smeak, Jim and Jackie Wheeler, Jane Reagan, Lea Estes, and other members of the public.

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to excuse Hyne. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

4. Approval of Agenda:

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

5. Audience Participation:

Brooke Locke, 223 E. Grand River, commented that he is disgusted with the letter that was sent to the business owners regarding the temporary signs. He stated that the Zoning Ordinance was worked on for 14 months and people were welcome to attend the meetings and give their input.

Dave Smeak stated that he wants to see real estate signs exempted from the sign ordinance.

Jackie Wheeler commented that the Zoning Ordinance still needs tweaking and is not self explanatory. She believes the information did not come through well in the letter.

Terri Campbell, 308 Fulton St., asked why there is no one to video tape the meeting tonight.

Clerk Thompson explained that the company that was supposed to record the meeting cancelled.

Terri Campbell questioned when the Council would make a decision on a company.

Clerk Thompson responded that it should be on the next Council agenda.

Larry Stafford commented that the real estate sign in front of the empty lot next to Sunnyside needs to be moved because it is blocking the view of traffic.

Jane Reagan, 646 McCauley St., asked if the second reading of the Zoning Ordinance had been taken off the agenda.

Mayor Pro-tem Moody answered that it was.

6. Proclamation- Hannah Miller:

Mayor Pro-tem Moody read aloud the proclamation for Hannah Miller and presented it to her.

7. Council Minutes of January 11, 2010:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Grossman**, to approve the Council minutes of January 11, 2010 as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

8. Accounts Payable:

The accounts payable totaled \$197,916.21 with reference #'s 57616-57672.

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Grossman**, to approve the accounts payable as presented, reference #'s 57616-57672. Yes: VanAllsburg, Grossman, Moody, Pail. No: Pratt, Simmons.

Motion passed.

9. Discussion of Temporary Signs and Proposed Zoning Ordinance Changes:

Director Aniol explained that the letter was meant to inform people about the temporary signs and apologized on behalf of Planner Acuff and Manager Allard if there was confusion.

Dave Smeak asked about open house signs and stated that they are often placed in the right of way.

Director Aniol stated that they are still considered real estate signs and would not be permitted in the right of way.

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that he believes the City should create a form that shows people how they can put up their signs and make it positive rather than stating how things cannot be done.

Terri Campbell commented that there is a safety concern with signs in the right of way and children could be behind those signs and run in front of traffic.

Manager Allard commented that sign pollution also could become a problem and there are people that may not want to see signs in the right of ways.

Brooke Locke commented that the Zoning Ordinance is not changing for temporary signs. The issue is about enforcement.

Councilman Grossman stated that no matter what was in the letter it would have been misinterpreted by someone.

Dave Smeak commented that there should be an exemption for open house signs because they are very small and are only out for a few hours. He also stated that the Zoning Ordinance should not be open to interpretation because it could create preferential treatment.

Councilman Simmons stated that he understands what Mr. Smeak is saying and relayed that he feels his family is being singled out with their sign when the Eagles have the same sign and have not been told to take it down.

Director Aniol explained that enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance is complaint generated.

Councilman Pratt asked why it has to be complaint generated and stated that the City needs a code enforcement officer.

Manager Allard will invite the previous Code Enforcement Officer, Howard Dahlstrom to the next meeting and will look into what other communities are doing.

10. Action Items

10a. Appointment of Carmen Siciliano to Planning Commission:

Motion by **Pratt**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to concur with the Mayor's appointment of Carmen Siciliano to the Planning Commission. Yes: Grossman, Hyne, Pail, Pratt, Simmons, VanAllsburg. No: None. **Motion passed.**

10b. Habitat for Humanity lease agreement:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Grossman**, to approve the outline of the agreement terms and conditions to be executed with the Habitat for Humanity and allow the City Manager to work out any details as necessary. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

10c. Recommendation to expand C2AE McCormick Park improvement project contract:

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Pratt**, to approve the expansion of the C2AE McCormick Park improvement project contract as presented for up to \$8,000. Yes: Grossman, Moody, Pail, Pratt, Simmons, VanAllsburg. No: None. **Motion passed.**

10d. Police Officer in uniform at meetings:

No action was taken.

11. Discussion Items

11a. Fox Run cul-de-sac island south of Rowley Road:

Manager Allard reported that it is approximately \$8,000 to remove the island in the Fox Run cul-de-sac, but would cost more to decrease the size of the island. He will be talking to the affected property owners to get their feedback on the issue.

13. Staff Reports

13a. City Manager:

Manager Allard reported that the tree debris clean up on the Linn Road site will be done by the company in Flint. The grant application for the N. Williamston Road improvement project was delayed, but the project is still scheduled for 2011. The old restroom in McCormick Park has been demolished. A committee has been established by the Parks Commission to work on the details of the McCormick Park project with the engineer. He found out that the 109/115 E. Grand River building used to have a dry cleaning business on the premises and needs at least a Phase 1 environmental assessment. The City may be able to use Brownfield grant money to perform the assessment. After hearing Brooke Locke's concern regarding snow and ice removal downtown, he and the Community Development Director have come up with a letter to send to the business owners regarding their responsibilities in snow removal. The Rowley Road pedestrian bridge has been fixed temporarily, but they will be looking into whether the City can get help from Ingham County to fix the bridge long-term.

13b. City Attorney:

No report.

13c. Police Chief:

Statistics for December were submitted for Council review.

13d. Community Development Director:

A written report was submitted for Council review.

13e. Building Inspector:

A written report was submitted for Council review.

14. Audience Participation:

Larry Stafford asked if the Council was considering selling City Hall.

Mayor Pro-tem Moody answered that they were referring to the 109/115 E. Grand River building.

15. Council Member Comments:

Councilman VanAllsburg commented that he appreciates the detail Manager Allard provides to the Council. He also appreciates how the town is moving positively through the recession. He stated that he is not in favor of tabling items when only one member is not present. He is glad the ice sculptures lasted so long this year and were not vandalized.

Councilman Grossman commented that he would like to see the ice sculpture event expanded next year and maybe include wood carving.

Councilman Pratt commented that there were at least 15-20 people watching the carvers at all times. He stated that he agrees the Manager is trying.

Mayor Pro-tem Moody commented that the tree sculptures are great and he appreciates everyone accommodating the Mayor and City Manager on tabling the items.

15. Adjournment:

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

***Meeting Adjourned at 9:02 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Holly M. Thompson, City Clerk

Michael Moody, Mayor

Date Approved: _____