



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, February 26, 2018 @ 5:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Wood called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councilmember Kathie Dunbar
Councilmember Jeremy A. Garza
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Council Member Brian T. Jackson
Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Jody Washington
Councilmember Carol Wood

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Eric Brewer Internal Auditor
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Samantha Harkins, Mayors Executive Assistant
Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation Director
Deb Parrish
Dirk Spilleaeckers, LEPFA
Elaine Womboldt
Julia Tarsa, Friends of Ormond Park

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 12, 2018 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 15, 2018 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Public Comment on Agenda Items (Up to 3 Minutes)

Council President Wood clarified to the public that this meeting did not include any discussion or presentation on the Red Cedar project, but will be held at the Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Parrish asked for the Committee to ask questions on the LEPFA budget and what support comes from the Park budget, where the funds come for the golf course and where the former golf course employees are.

Mr. Spillemaeckers brought to the Committees attention his concern as a Lansing Center employee with lack of safety on the site. He admitted that they are currently in contract discussions on regulations, but stated his opinion that LEPFA will not address issues and they lack transparency. Council President Wood informed Mr. Spillemaeckers that there is a meeting on Tuesday, February 27th that Council Member Washington attends and she will be asked to address his concerns with LEPFA then.

Ms. Womboldt acknowledged the budget update meetings the Council is holding, and asked the Committee inquire into the funds for Ormond Park.

Ms. Tarsa asked the Committee to find out where and when the park equipment will be replaced along with the basketball court.

Friends of Ormond Park representative asked the Committee to ask for details on the proceedings of the Ormond Park case, the cost of the roadway and how much it will be to restore. Council Member Spadafore stated it will be discussed at the Committee on Public Service on March 6th at 4 pm and all public were invited. Council President Wood asked other Council Members to inform Council staff if they plan to attend this Committee so it can be posted correctly to meet open meetings for quorum. Any Council can attend but not participate unless on the Committee.

Council Member Spitzley voiced her concern with the comments on LEPFA and the Lansing Center, and asked Committee Member Washington to report back to Council. Council Member Washington confirmed she would be reporting back and also provides updates monthly on all the outside Boards she sits on.

Council President Wood stated she would be adding "Board Updates" to the Committee agenda for the first meeting of each month.

Presentations

2017/2018 Budget Update– Parks and Recreation

Mr. Kaschinske went through his handout which highlighted projects including bank stabilization, bridge replacements, kayak launches, and parking lot maintenance. The grants are in place and they are going out to bids. Regarding the bridge replacements, they will be reaching out to Council to help them spread the word to the residents of when the trails will be closed for these projects. The work on the bridges will be in September 2018, and the \$3.1 million in County millage will address the Oakland Avenue Bridge, the Lansing Center stairwells on Michigan Avenue on the north and south side, and along with decking from the steps to where it meets the trail. They will be redoing the Potter Park Bridge under the rail road via dock, east of Kregg Park, and they have already done the bridge that connects Moore's Park to Eckert. The next topic was the bank stabilization on Moore's River Drive at Francis Park, and crossing from Elm Street to the Grand River by GM and Eckert Station. The plan is to install a seawall because the current rock basket stabilization is not working. It was noted however that with the recent flooding they have not seen any additional damage.

Council President Wood asked if the funding from the County millage is not spent in a designated time, does it roll to another County year cycle or return. Mr. Kaschinske confirmed that once the contracts are issued they have a 2 year timeline. If there are circumstances

outside that, they will have to provide an explanation on why they need an extension, but currently they are on track.

Regarding the kayak launch projects, there are currently two (Cherry Hill and Tecumseh) and both survived the flood and are in place. They are looking to expand the number in the system by adding 3 more. With the combination of a DNR Trust Fund Grant and the County millage, they intent to place them at Krueger landing near Krego, the City Market and at Moore's Park. The grants themselves scored high and they are currently looking to pass through the legislature, recommended by the County and hopefully will be fully funded. Council Member Hussain asked if they considered any other locations, and it was noted they considered Sheffield, Fulton Park, Hunters Ridge and Pathway however there is a concern with the distance from the parking lot making it accessible.

Council Member Dunbar asked about a time line on the DNR Trust Fund Grant and the time to purchase acquisition and develop and asked if they considered a development grant. Mr. Kaschinske acknowledged it is a possibility and they have had contact with the owners.

Moving back to the topic of the trails, Mr. Kaschinske highlighted the project on the River Trail Bridge, near Potter Park that would be extended and to do that it would raise it 3'-4' higher. This is located in the middle of the river trail system and needs rehab and replacement, and will take it out of the flood plain, which would reduce but eliminate any flooding issues. Once the construction bid comes back from the contractor, Mr. Kaschinske stated he would be able to provide a timeline

Mr. Kaschinske noted to the Committee that the project for parking lots maintenance will be addressed in spring 2018 with the north and south lots of Foster Community Center. It will be impervious and will the grade the water flow off into detention area. The play area is staying open and will be not impacted.

The millage chart in the handout (in the packet) speaks to the trails and the color coding reflects the year it will be awarded. Council President Wood asked what funds were being set aside for maintenance on the projects. Mr. Kaschinske noted the Park Millage is used for projects, they have the City millage, County Millage and have grants, noting most projects are capital expenses. Routine maintenance is covered in the Parks and Recreation budget. Council President Wood asked him to program out the life expectancy of what they are doing. Mr. Kaschinske was able to confirm that the trails have a 20 year expectancy, and it is hard to determine the bank stabilization because of the moving water way.

Regarding staffing, Mr. Kaschinske confirmed that the department is fully staffed and they are always in need of staffing for the kid camps, summer camps, and youth baseball officials. In regards to the golf course staff, the employees are still full time in current jobs in the City of Lansing and Parks Department.

Council President Wood referred to his performance measurers, and asked if they had accomplished the strategies for kids camps. Mr. Kaschinske acknowledged a grant from Vanderbilt which offered assistance, and his programming staff recently presented at the National Conference on their strategies. They have also partnered with the YMCA at Baker for the nutrition program which led to the opportunity to have an AmeriCorp on site for food and nutrition assistance and resources.

Council President Wood asked where the former Groesbeck Golf Course workers were at. Mr. Kaschinske confirmed one was staff as a Parks Supervisor in his department, one went to Public Service working on their park projects and one went to the Waste Water department.

All three (3) were in unions and it was expected by the Administration they would not leave their unions with LEPFA taking over, so they chose to move elsewhere in the City positions then to become an employee of LEPFA. LEPFA hired a PGA Pro to manage the golf course, and was formally from Forest Acres Golf Course. Mr. Kaschinske was not able to provide any other information on the golf course. Council Member Washington stated she would ask for an update at the LEPFA meeting on March 27, 2018.

Council Member Jackson asked addition questions of Mr. Kaschinske, including an inquiry into what plans the department had to refurbish the pavilions at Comstock Park and Moore's River Park; if they planned to install basketball hoops at Ormond Park, if they planned to continue naturalization at Tecumseh Park; and what the estimate was on the savings to the City by keeping parks in the naturalized state instead of mowing. Council Member Spitzley added her belief that when Council was informed about Ormond Park they were given the information that the playground equipment would be replaced, not part of a future budget cycle. Mr. Kaschinske noted that they do not have anything at this time for the pavilions mentioned, any work at Ormond would be part of the CIP in the next budget cycle, and in terms of the naturalization, it is their plan to continue, and at this time he does not have the estimated savings vs. mowing, but can get those costs. The Park Board will address Ormond Park when they look at their park planning, and they will need input before going further. Council Member Washington stated to the Committee that her understanding regarding Ormond Park was that there was no promise for equipment replacement. This topic should also be discussed in Public Service Committee meeting on March 6th. She then added she was opposed to the naturalization of parks. Council Member Spadafore asked Mr. Kaschinske to provide an estimate on the cost to bring all parks to bring back from naturalization. Mr. Kaschinske admitted there are multiple differences in the options, and the last cost comparison he was aware of was in 2011, so he would to look at the cost now, which would now include the cost to brush hog and chemically treat, remove any trash, then mow. Council Member Hussain asked if Mr. Kaschinske could include in his research the savings cost by not mowing. He also encouraged Mr. Kaschinske to relay that the Park Board should also consider buffering when they plan for Ormond Park.

Council President Wood asked when the Parks Board will be reviewing their budget and their deadline. Mr. Kaschinske stated the Board will discuss on March 14th. Their budget proposal will then be part of Mayors package to Council. Council Member Wood asked that Mr. Kaschinske find out the age of the equipment and value of the equipment that was removed from Ormond before the Park Board meets on March 14th and makes their decision.

Council Member Hussain asked if the Park Board had any vacancies, and it was confirmed there was on At-Large position, but the Council should receive a referral for that replacement at the next Council meeting.

Council Member Garza asked if the play equipment is removed when it is in bad repair. Mr. Kaschinske detailed issues they have with some of the equipment including the plastic and play components. There are 77 playgrounds in system, and they can replace, but it depends on how damaged the entire system is. They need to look at they should maintain 77 play grounds, or do bigger destination playgrounds. This would a require looking into continuing the same model or changing it up. Council President Wood and Council Member Washington spoke in opposition to eliminating the smaller park playground equipment.

Discussion/Action:

RESOLUTION – Setting a Second Public Hearing Due to Publication Error, for the PILOT; Porter Senior Apartments; 503 Townsend Street

Council President Wood informed the Committee that the reason for the resolution is because the former notice to set the hearing was not published. Therefore a new hearing needed to be set.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO SET THE HEARING FOR MARCH 12TH, 2018. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Other

Council President Wood referenced Resolution 2017-148 that was placed at the Dias for Council which was based on a reference to it at the joint BWL/COW meeting on February 15, 2018. The public comments at that meeting pointed to a belief that Council stated they would create a climate control action plan by December 2017. It was noted that Council was never in a receipt of a proposed plan or create a proposed plan.

Council Member Spitzley confirmed that the resolution in question was done in 2017 during the early term of President Trump when the public was calling for municipality support in the Paris Agreement because President Trump was pulling the United States from the Paris Climate Accord.

Council Member Spadafore confirmed other agencies have done reports, such as Meridian Township and East Lansing, and he asked that the IGR Committee address this topic. Council Member Spitzley asked if the BWL had done any reports. Council President Wood stated they had not and Council Member Spadafore suggested they provided all their comments from the February 15, 2018 meeting for guidance. Council Member Dunbar informed the Committee and the public that the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations will be meeting on Wednesday, March 7th at 8:30 a.m. to begin their discussions. She had already reached out to Meridian Township, East Lansing, Mr. Kilpatrick with Public Service and Dick Peffley with BWL.

Council President Wood referred the Resolution 2017-148 to the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations to work on the recommendation of the plan and bring back to the Committee of the Whole by the end of 2018.

Council Member Hussain asked for a list of the Lansing School Board members who are their counterparts. Council Member Spadafore stated he had received a communication recently from his counterpart and received the list and will forward it on.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary
Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on March 5, 2018