



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, July 29, 2019, 2019 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT

Councilmember Kathie Dunbar-excused
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
Joseph Abood, Chief Deputy City Attorney
Samantha Harkins, Executive Staff, Mayor's Office
Lisa Hagen, Assistant City Attorney & Council Legal Analyst
Eric Brewer, Council Internal Auditor
Sharon Frischman, City of Lansing Assessor
Mary Reynolds

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 22, 2019 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Ms. Reynolds asked about the Ordinance Amendment on the agenda, and what the amendments are for. Council President Wood stated that the ordinance speaks to minimum requirements for positions and this would be the minimum requirements.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

RESOLUTION – Immigration

Council Member Washington stated that on July 12th, when attending a rally, there was a discussion on the situations on the border. The discussions to her involved suggestions to have the legislature move in a more humanly and quick manner. Once Council takes action on the draft resolution, she is asking that it be sent onto the Legislature. Council President Wood stated her proposed timeline would be to have the Tribute Resolution before Council on August 12th for a special ceremony for members of the public to accept. Council Member Jackson supported the proposed resolution, but noted that Council should also consider future suggestions of funding and housing. Council Member Garza stated he would not be in attendance on August 12th, but did support it.

It was suggested that an amendment be added to state the resolution should be sent onto the legislation delegates in Washington DC after adoption.

DISCUSSION - Ord. Amendment Chapter 288 Section 288.21 – Chief Strategy Officer

Council President Wood recapped that during the budget Council spoke to funds being set aside for this position, but also a resolution that outlined the minimum standards for a Chief Strategy Officer. During that discussion, she reminded Council and OCA, that there was a reporting mechanism discussed, but since that time the OCA has now stated that requirement cannot be put in the Ordinance but can be in a resolution. Mr. Abood referenced the Charter – 401.1 indicating Council can set the qualifications of a person for a position, but Council does not have the authority to place requirements on the position, therefore the requested requirement of reporting would not be allowable in the proposed ordinance. The Committee then reviewed draft #4, which did not have that condition. Council President Wood reiterated that during the budget discussions it was asked for by Council and was agreed to by the OCA that checks and balances for this position could be put in the ordinance, and now there is frustration because the OCA is informing Council they cannot. Council Member Spitzley agreed discussions were held on the concept and strategy of this position by Council and the FHT, and the OCA should have made the recommendation and determination prior to this meeting. Council Member Hussain agreed with the statements made, and Council Member Washington noted that the FHT recommended the position report to the Administration and the Council. Without reporting to both parties, it will be hard to hire someone and not have them unbiased, therefore she too supported the requirement and asked for more time to review the documents. Council Member Spitzley asked that the Administration look into the best mechanism to be allow Council to receive reporting. Council Member Jackson spoke in support of the position in the Administration because since they are not elected, they can provide recommendations.

Council President Wood stated the Committee would review Draft #4 again on August 5th, and asked the OCA to draft a document to address the requirements after they have research additional options. Council Member Spadafore asked if the Budget Policies that Council adopted as part of the Budget Resolution be amended to direct the spending dollars for this position towards specifics. Mr. Abood confirmed the OCA would research that as well.

DISCUSSION – State of Michigan Department of Treasury RE: Tax Management Associates: Follow up Review of the City of Lansing's 2019 Assessment Roll

Ms. Frischman informed the Committee that the State and State Tax Commission do audits by county, by local units to make sure the basic procedures are met. She clarified that this is not an audit that would change any numbers but an audit of processes and procedures to meet minimum requirements. The audits have been performed in 2013 and 2018, and in 2018 they found the following four (4) deficiencies:

1) – Did not have economic condition factors. RESPONSE: this is done to make sure using the City is using information from the current market. The comment was that the City did not

calculate that factor for any industrial use for the year, however it was documented to the State that the City has very few industrial properties and so few sales to calculate.

2 – Land value maps. RESPONSE: The State wanted printed land value maps, however that would require 100+ so the City did obtain to provide and electronic version, therefore that requirement has been removed.

3 – Land values with adjustments without an explanation attached to them. RESPONSE: There were 1,700 and some were landlocked parcels, RR property with no road access, and wetlands. Any others, staff was instructed to take the adjustment off if there was no documented reason.

4- Form 5076. RESPONSE – this form is a form for small tax payer exemption on personal property accounts that have a true case value of \$80,000. They can complete the form to provide the proof and then do not pay taxes. The City processed 1,000+ in 2018 and apparently the State was not able to find the form on one. Council Member Spitzley asked what happens if someone has signed this form, but still getting notices. Ms. Frischman stated they could contact her directly.

Lastly, Ms. Frischman confirmed the four (4) concerns were addressed, and sent the database electronically. Council President Wood asked if now that there was an audit, if they will get audited for a period of time, and was told it is 5-year cycle no matter what, so the next audit is 2023. Council President Wood then asked about the recent data collection activity in the south area of Lansing, and Ms. Frischman confirmed it is a City-wide however they started in the south area. They will be doing property inspections to make sure their records are currently reflecting the property. They currently already do address changes with building permits. Lastly, Ms. Frischman stated she ran a search of the PRE and forwarded that to Scott Sanford in code compliance for a comparison on registered rentals.

Other

Council President outlined four (4) items for presentation at the Committee of the Whole on August 5th. That included the introduction of the new LPD Chief, Rank Choice Voting presentation, an update on BWL stump removal and an overview of Code Compliance by Brian McGrain.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on August 5, 2019