



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, July 27, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89156026643>; ID 891 5602 6643; Dial in: (312)626-6799

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Spadafore called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT- via audio/video

Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Carol Wood
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Kathie Dunbar- arrived online 5:11 p.m.
Councilmember Brandon Betz
Councilmember Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson

MEMBERS PRESENT- via audio/video

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Samantha Harkins, Deputy Mayor
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Lisa Hagen, Assistant City Attorney
Greg Venker, Assistant City Attorney
Kim Coleman, HRCS Director
Melissa Jeffries
James Anderton
Cara Nader
Mark Eagle
Matthew Solak
Doug Fleming, Lansing Housing Commission
Drew Macon, LPD

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 13, 2020 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 20, 2020 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL BOTE, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Discussion/Action:

ORDINANCE- Re-adoption of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Lansing

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE TO READOPT THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment - Melissa C. Jeffries; At Large; Board of Review; Term to Expire 6/30/2023

Council President Spadafore noted that all the reappointments are now listed as individual resolutions because at the last meeting there was push back from Committee members for individual interviews.

Council Member Spitzley clarified to Ms. Jeffries that there were no concerns with her reappointment specifically.

Ms. Jeffries referenced her application and stated there were was nothing specific to the Board she had concerns with and had no issues. Council Member Hussain asked if she was provided with training, and Ms. Jeffries stated she received training that was appropriate to the board,

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF MELISSA JEFFRIES TO THE BOARD OF REVIEW. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment-James V Anderton; Business Owner Members; Downtown Lansing Inc. Board; Term to Expire 6/30/2024

Mr. Anderton spoke briefly on his term on the Board and noted he is currently serving as the President of the board. Council Member Wood asked if the Board had any concerns on the recent issue with the downtown assessment and collection of that assessment. Mr. Anderton assured them that the DLI Director and their treasurer have addressed it and believe it is fixed. Council Member Wood then asked about the impact of COVID-19 and businesses downsizing, and if the Board was concerned or had future projections on the assessments. Mr. Anderton admitted they do not have any response for that at this time.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF JAMES ANDERTON TO THE DOWNTOWN LANSING INC. BOARD. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment – Cara E Nader; Business Owner Members; Downtown Lansing Inc. Board; Term to Expire 6/30/2024

Ms. Nader first acknowledged Mr. Anderton for his role as the Board President, and stated she believed that the Board is doing a lot of great things. Council Member Spitzley acknowledged Ms. Nader for her efforts in the community and asked if there were any road blocks the DLI was experiencing. Ms. Nader acknowledged that with COVID-19 vacant spaces is a concern. They are working on pop-up events to help the businesses. Council Member Hussain asked when the meetings were and Ms. Nader stated Thursday, via ZOOM at 11:30 a.m. Council Member Wood asked if she had participated in any trainings on the Board, and Ms. Nader stated they do have annual Michigan Main Street Trainings, but would also like more trainings to encourage a board setting and learn more on how city government works. She also acknowledged they have not had any trainings on the OMA.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CARA NADER TO THE DOWNTOWN LANSING INC. BOARD. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment – Mark Eagle; 4th Ward Member; Human Relations & Community Services Board; Term to Expire 6/30/2024

Mr. Eagle acknowledged the committee for reconsidering his reappointment. Council Member Wood asked if they have received new trainings with the new HRCS Director. Mr. Eagle admitted that having a training on OMA and FOIA would be helpful moving forward, and as with any leadership changes, there are changes to leadership style. He admitted that in the past they were involved in the complaint system process, however are no longer involved in that and wished they still had a role. Council Member Wood asked what the Board is looking at with the new initiatives from the Administration and new Director. Mr. Eagle confirmed they are working with the Mayor on racial injustice alliance, and his diversity council, along with the LPD Board on issues of discrimination. Council Member Spitzley asked how they were handling complaints on the Human Rights Ordinance. Mr. Eagle stated that is a problem, because over the last year that responsibility was taken away from the Board. Council Member Spitzley asked for a future discussion on how the Human Rights complaints are being handled. Council Member Hussain asked Mr. Eagle what the HRCS Board has been doing recently, and was told the grant process, literacy, actively working with the youth, and educating the public on the grant process.

Council Member Dunbar asked the OCA or the Administration to speak to the position of the Investigator that handled internal complaints. Mr. Smiertka stated the job was posted, but he was not sure of the current status and would report back to Council on that. Council Member Dunbar asked him to also find out if it is still housed in HRCS. Ms. Harkins confirmed Mr. Brantley retired in 2020, the position is not filled, and the duties are still in HRCS. After talking to the Mayor and Ms. Coleman the HRCS Director, they were not aware the complaints were not going to the Board and they should be. Officer Macon with LPD Board and stated that the position was filled. Ms. Harkins stated she would look into it further. Council Member Spitzley stated that an earlier meeting Council Member Wood asked for a list of positions that were on hold due to the hiring freeze, and Council President Spadafore stated she should have gotten that directly from the Mayor already.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. Eagle if the Board had held any trainings, and Mr. Eagle note the zoning administrator had provided them with a manual on the role of the Board, zoning code, impact criteria and board's role. They had not had any training on OMA or ethics. Council Member Wood asked the OCA to provide this board with those trainings. Mr. Smiertka stated his office has an open offer to train any boards that ask. Council Member Wood stated they should have annual trainings on OMA, FOIA and ethics, and Council Member Spitzley agreed they need a training as the general requirements to serve on the Board.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF MARK EAGLE TO THE HUMAN RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment – Matthew Solak; At Large Member; Board of Zoning Appeals; Term to Expire 6/30/2023

Mr. Solak briefly noted he has been a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals for 2 years, and has enjoyed his role, and appreciated the consideration for a reappointment.

Council Member Wood asked if the Board had received any training on the open meeting act, boards and commissions or other training. Mr. Solak confirmed they had information provided to them on the role of the BZA, the zoning code and the criteria they need to consider on the variance requests, but nothing on the OMA.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. Smiertka to look into her earlier request for an ordinance on board and commission trainings. Mr. Smiertka stated his office has a standing offer to all Boards if they ever want training the OCA would provide that. Council Member Wood stated that they should receive annual training on OMA, ethics and FOIA. Council President

Spadafore asked if they could require trainings for the Boards and Mr. Smiertka stated they could put in writing and the OCA could reach out to the Board. Council Member Wood stated the request was already made earlier in the year to the OCA from the Committee on General Services.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF MATTHEW SOLAK TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment – Jordan Leaming; At Large Member; Board of Zoning Appeals; Term to Expire 6/30/2023

Mr. Leaming introduced himself, went through his experience on the Board and confirmed they have not had any formal training.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF JORDAN LEAMING TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment - John Krohn; At Large Member; Board of Public Service; Term to Expire 6/30/2024

Mr. Krohn was not present so this item was pulled and moved to the next meeting.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment – Kurt Berryman; At Large Member; Board of Zoning Appeals; Term to Expire 6/30/2023

Mr. Berryman acknowledged the Committee for considering his reappointment, noted he has learned a lot but acknowledged the Board has not received any formal training while he has been on it.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF KURY BERRYMAN TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Disposition of City Property; Transfer of Properties Administered by the Lansing Housing Commission to the Lansing Housing Commission

Mr. Smiertka noted this for the transfer of properties that are currently owned by the City and/or LHC, and as a result his office determined today that a public hearing is needed. Therefore the request for action tonight is not to approve the resolution on the disposition of those properties, but to set a public hearing for August 31, 2020. Council Member Spitzley asked what the documents were in the packet, and Mr. Venker confirmed it is the resolution to authorize the Mayor to sign on the property transfer deeds to the LHC. Before COVID there was going to be a transfer of four (4) large sites, and then do the scattered sites later, however in the meantime LHC has decided they will do the transfer of all the properties at once. Council Member Wood asked if there were any outstanding fees on any of the properties scheduled to be transferred, and Mr. Fleming confirmed stated there are no outstanding fees; they pay them when they come in and any fees would be regular inspection fees which they pay on the spot. Ms. Smiertka stated he would confirm in writing. Council Member Jackson asked why the OCA forgot to set a public hearing. Council Member Spadafore stated they are setting the hearing tonight for August 31, 2020. They did not forget, when it was referred it was not include in the referral, so it is being asked for tonight at the meeting instead of what they referred from the last meeting. Council Member Jackson stated he wanted more public input, and was reminded that they are setting the hearing tonight for August 31, so there will be public input. Council Member Jackson asked if there were more public service dollars. Mr. Smiertka attempted to explain that over the last couple months there was discussion on public

hearings, and the Council already held one on the transfer itself. Council Member Dunbar asked about any restrictions on the fees as far as HUD is considered, and to make sure those homes stay low income housing. Mr. Fleming explained that the HUD process does require that the property remain affordable, but the big difference will be that it will be through the Section 8 program. The process has always been LHC would assume control of the properties they manage, and have a declaration of this with HUD. As part of the Section 8 process, properties have to remain affordable. The difference is that the resident had a project base voucher, which meant if they leave the unit they lose the voucher. With Section 8 they get tenant protection vouchers and can remain in property or chose to move to somewhere that accepts Section 8 voucher. Council Member Spitzley asked if there was an opportunity for an outside entity to take over the homes. Mr. Fleming first explained there are four (4) sites (S. Washington, Hildebrant, LaRoy Froh and Mt. Veron) and then individual homes throughout the City. He then explained the process that requires this action, which is the RAD process, which requires all properties to be in the LHC name, and the City Charter says LHC could not own the property in their name, so the earlier public hearing was to allow the properties to be placed in their name. They currently have approval of a loan with MSHDA and tax credits schedule to close 9/1/2020 with a \$12 million investment in Lansing. He did voice his frustration that this process started in November, 2019. Council Member Jackson asked all parties to consider giving a home to Mikey23 Foundation.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE TRANSFER OF PROPERTIES FOR AUGUST 31, 2020. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION– Social Districts

Council President Spadafore pulled the item from the agenda noting that because the areas would be in public places, there are more changes needed.

Council Member Wood asked if the Lansing Housing Commission hearing and passage would be the same day, and Council President Spadafore confirmed.

DISCUSSION – Committee Assignments (Updated with new Committee)

Council President Spadafore read into the record the newest Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and their members; Chair- Council Member Spitzley, Vice Chair- Council Member Dunbar and Member – Council Member Spadafore. The Ad Hoc on Policy has been dissolved.

Other

Council President Spadafore asked for an update on the Internal Investigator housed in HRCS and also for Mr. Smiertka to follow up on training for all Boards and Commissions.

Council Member Jackson asked why Council Member Betz was not on the new Committee since he initiated the police defunding resolution. Council President Spadafore acknowledged that he sent out an email to all Council Members on their interest in service and what the Committee structure would look like, and the decision on the membership was based on that interest. Council Member Betz confirmed he was okay with the Committee members.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee August 10, 2020