



MINUTES
Committee on Public Safety
Wednesday, June 27, 2018 @ 2:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to order at 2:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Member Carol Wood, Chair
Council Member Adam Hussain, Vice Chair
Council Member Jeremy Garza, Member- excused

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Council Member Spadafore – left at 3:21 p.m.
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney- left at 3:38 p.m.
Lisa Hagen, Assistant City Attorney
Scott Sanford, Code Compliance
Chief Yankowski, LPD
Andi Crawford, Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement Department
Lisa Hagen, Assistant City Attorney
Joseph Abood, Chief Deputy City Attorney- arrived at 3:22 p.m.
Mark Lawrence, Citizen Advocate; Mayor's Office
Ryan Peterson, Intern City Attorney
Scott Sanford, Code Compliance
Eric Pratl, LPD Community Service Officer
Mayor Schor- arrived at 2:40 p.m. left at 2:59 p.m.
Brian McGrain, Economic Development & Planning
Juanita Peters
Willie Peters, Old School Car Club #68
Dagmar Olds
Jason Wilkes
Kathy Miles
Rachelle White, SWAG and Center of the Plate Catering
Elaine Womboldt
Money Singh
Chris Jerome, VFGroup
Mandeep Singh, Von's Food Market
Money Singh, Von's Food Market
Ben Singh, Von's Food Market
Mandup Singh, Von's Food Market

Mary Ellen Purificato
David M. Wiener, Southside Community Coalition
Harold Leeman

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 6, 2018 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 7, 2018 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

Introductions

DISCUSSION/ACTION:

DISCUSSION – Plaza at the intersection of Pleasant Grove/Holmes

Ms. Miles asked for action and stated her opinion it was too late for task forces.

Mr. Jerome spoke on his businesses near Edgewood and Cedar, and asked Council to consider taking advantage of the Brownfield programs.

Ms. Womboldt spoke on conversations she had with other residents regarding the issues at this property.

Mr. Wiener acknowledged that the neighborhoods, non-profits, Council and the LPD have been making attempts to bring up the quality in that area, and he was looking for support and partnership to face the challenges.

Council Member Wood asked for a show of hands from those present that had businesses in the center, and six (6) people raised their hands. Council Member Wood asked for a show of hands for those present that were part of SWAG, and four (4) raised their hands. She then outline that the discussion at this meeting was to discuss the recent police activity.

Mayor Schor acknowledged that he has been aware of the issues in this area and has put together a team to address solutions. Those team members he included were Chief Yankowski, Mr. Mc Grain, Andi Crawford, City Attorney's and Mr. Lawrence. This team has begun discussing solutions and are willing to sit down with Council and members of the public, and encouraged everyone present to contact his office.

Chief Yankowski updated the Committee and public on recent events at the site, confirmed there have been multiple discussions over the years, and gun violence will not be tolerated in the City and they will hold those responsible accountable. The recent activity was the first shooting in 2018, and from the LPD standard they are taking a community policing approach. Common complaints they hear are loitering, drug transactions, and nuisances. The Chief continued by assuring the Committee and the public that the LPD will have a presence with visual uniform officers and community outreach programs. The LPD has also had a public safety camera on site since 2007 and utilize it often to keep track of the issues. There is a detailed action plan, which does not have all law enforcement, but a presence on sit.

Council Member Wood asked the Chief if the LPD had "No Loitering" letters from all the businesses. Chief Yankowski admitted that recently they have approached all the businesses to "re-up" them, and as of this date have two. They are also approaching them with a "No Drug Loitering" letters.

Officer Pratl confirmed they have the letters from Center of the Plate Catering and the Meat Market. They will be holding a Community Engagement Event on June 28, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. were they reach out to the rest of the businesses with the hopes of having those letters signed on the spot.

Mr. Singh with Vons, asked for the letter to sign and also asked for clarification on what it covered. Chief Yankowski explained it would authorize the LPD to authority to take action if the owners are not present if someone is trespassing, and if the owner is present authorizes them to intervene. The letters can specify "general" or a person specific, and is renewed annually. Council Member Wood asked that the LPD report back at a future Committee meeting on the number of letters were signed.

Council Member Wood asked all the businesses that were present if they had cameras and if they had notified the LPD they had them. Three (3) businesses raised their hands. Chief Yankowski asked them sign up for the "Scram Program", which he will get forms for that to them on June 28th as well. This program, he explained, would allow the LPD to view the camera, but not give the LPD their access or passwords but makes them aware for investigations if they need it.

Council Member Hussain spoke strongly on the community in the area, the affect that the property is placing on not retaining its residents and businesses and asked the Administration to take the topic seriously.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. McGrain to address the building safety issues and any future plans. Mr. McGrain deferred to Mr. Sanford who stated to the Committee that premise inspectors went in area this week along with Logan Square. They wrote up violations based on the complaints they had received. Mr. Sanford wanted it noted that the department now also has a code officer working after hours on residential streets.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. McGrain if building safety was able to go in and do a site evaluation or if the Fire Marshall was. Mr. McGrain noted their department is addressing the premise, and he was then asked to follow up with Building Safety to perform inspections inside the buildings. Council Staff was asked to reach out to the Fire Marshall for an update on Fire inspections at the next meeting. Ms. White confirmed her unit was inspected last year for the business to occupy. Mr. McGrain stated he would follow up with Mr. Bennett on any inspections. Council Member Hussain also asked him to reach out to the property owner regarding the concrete barriers which invite loitering, and ask him to consider other options such as bollards. Ms. Crawford stated that currently there is a plaza owner, Dr. Salama, who is selling on a land contract. Mr. Singh confirmed their family is in the process of purchasing on the land contract and they plan to add camera's to the front of every tenant space for safety. They have also begun work on the parking lot by fixing the potholes in half and striping that half. Once the sale is complete, they will sell the proposed Town Square portion to SWAG and then complete the work on the parking lot.

Council Member Wood asked the purchasers, Singhs, if the sale will close in 90 days, they confirmed noting the seller has the final documents currently so they are waiting on those; if the cameras at the front of the tenant spaces would be installed in 30 days, they confirmed. The liens on the titles are part of the paperwork that Dr. Salama currently has, so those should be cleared with the sale. Council Member Wood asked if the Singhs could complete the parking lot repairs after the SWAG project is complete, they confirmed. The steps that will take place is the sale will occur with Dr. Salama and the Singh's, then the Singh's will sell the Town Center portion to SWAG and appropriate easements, then the parking lot will be completed.

Chief Yankowski noted that they have reached out to MSU to meet with their crime and prevention enforcement design group to look at the area for improvement for safety. They currently have no timeline, but he will update the Committee in the future.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. Smiertka if it would help in their prosecution on the violations if they had impact statements from the residents. She noted for the public that the area is flagged as a “zero tolerance” area, so there are no plea bargains. She then asked Law for a point person so that any cases coming forward, residents can be notified to their statements put together.

The City Attorney Interns obtained the contact information for all the businesses that were present.

Council Member Wood asked if the points stated earlier could be written into a Letter of Agreement for everyone to sign off as the agreed upon expectations. The City Attorneys agreed and stated they could get to the owners.

Ms. Miles asked if the Public Safety camera was working, and the Chief assured her it was. He added that LPD recently met with Quality Dairy and all their technology has been upgraded at all their locations.

Council Member Wood made a statement to all the public present that the City will not tolerate intimidation of businesses or owners who are working to make change.

Ms. Crawford wanted the Committee to know that the Southside Community Coalition has been working in the area, the Beacon Field received a \$75,000 award and hopes to be built this year and the Town Square project has acquired an art project that is under contract, but recently extended until the project can begin.

ORDINANCE - Amendment to Chapter 664, Section 664.04; Gambling

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO RECONSIDER THE ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 664; SECTION 664.04. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

MOTIN BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO WITHDRAW THE COMMITTEE’S ACTION FOR RECOMMENDATION OF THE ORDINANCE CHANGES. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

Mr. Petersen spoke to the Committee on the recent changes based on discussions at the last meeting and prior to the public hearing at Council. Those included the affect this ordinance would have on “claw games” or “crane games”. Mr. Petersen referred the Committee to the changes that are now reflected in the definitions for *Gambling Game* which not states it will “not include any redemption game; crane game; or game, lottery, or there activity authorized or licensed pursuant to State law or regulation.” In addition, a definition for “Redemption Game” and “Crane Game” were added to the ordinance. Council Member Wood inquired into a question at an earlier meeting about if there was any statue that would allow or prohibit card games at Senior Centers. Mr. Abood stated you can call anything a “senior center”, but he was not sure if it would be the criteria to fall under the State Statue just used for “*Gambling Game*” definition.

Council Member Hussain asked Mr. Petersen if the entity that reached out to Mr. Smiertka after the last meeting was aware of the recent changes and are satisfied with the answers to their questions. Me. Petersen confirmed a copy was sent to them. Council Member Hussain then asked Chief Yankowski if this new ordinance would help the LPD with enforcement. The Chief acknowledged it will allow the LPD to use their resources and prioritize.

After a brief Committee discussion it was determined the Ordinance came out of Committee, a hearing was held, and was referred back to Committee. The Committee then took action to adopt it, however that is when it was pulled from the Council agenda. Mr. Abood assured the Committee that the changes were significant enough, he agreed a hearing should be held.

Mr. Wilkes asked if the new ordinance would allow the LPD to recoup funds from the State, and Chief Yankowski stated that the forfeiture laws are to the point where they will not be able to. Council Member Wood asked if there is any authority in the forfeiture laws that lets them take property that was purchased with gambling funds. Chief Yankowski did not have that response, and would look into it.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO INTRODUCE AND SET THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 664; SECTION 664.04 FOR JULY 23, 2018. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

UPDATES – Fence Tickets at 3801 Walton Property

Mr. Sanford confirmed tickets were issued, but then rescinded because the owner installed a new fence. Photos of the fence were submitted.

UPDATES – Logan Square Enforcement

Mr. Sanford confirmed the new code officers were present at the site on July 26th. He added that the new officers have been assigned one premise will be covering the corridors in the City.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. McGrain if the tickets had been issued for the parking lot violations, which the Committee was told were zoning violations. Mr. McGrain could not provide an answer, but stated he would investigate and report back. He did confirm tickets were issued on the signs. Council Member Wood asked if the department was able to get into vacant tenant spaces, and Mr. McGrain committed to speaking to Mr. Bennett in Building Safety to see if inspections were done on non-occupied buildings.

Council Member Wood asked Council Staff to place a request to the Fire Marshall to attend the next meeting, July 11th to speak on inspection updates.

Council Member Hussain informed Mr. McGrain that there was working being performed in a tenant space and was informed there were no permits pulled. He asked for an updated on that violation.

Council Member Wood recapped for Mr. McGrain and Law that the City had met with the owner in the past with a list of items which he stated he would be addressing, however none of those items have been followed up on. Mr. McGrain stated he would follow up on those as well.

Council Member Wood asked what the status of the parking lot lighting ordinance was that went to the Planning Board. Staff was going to look into its progress.

Council Member Wood asked Mr. Abood if a letter of agreement was ever done for the Logan Square and if not, if it could be done now. She also asked if it could be added to a resolution or Committee Report that is adopted at Council, and then in turn would provide more validity. Mr. Abood stated he would look into the enforcement through a resolution.

Other/Place in File

- Communication from T.J. Moore; RE: Gambling Ordinance

Mr. Wilkes mentioned a concern with the parking lot lights that are not working at the Averill School and asked if a Council Member could contact the school on his behalf, and Council Member Wood stated she would reach out.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Submitted by

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager

Lansing City Council

Approved: July 25, 2018