



MINUTES
Committee on Public Safety
Thursday, July 29 , 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.
Lansing City Council Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Garza called the meeting to order at 4:02PM

ROLL CALL - PRESENT

Council Member Jeremy Garza, Chair
Council Member Carol Wood, Vice Chair
Council Member Brian T. Jackson, Member - absent

OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Richmond, Council Staff
Lisa Hagen, OCA
Mary Bowen, OCA
Sgt. Dave Burke, LPD
Jim Smiertka, OCA
Scott Sanford, Code Compliance
Susan Stachowiak

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WOOD TO APPROVE THE MINUTES JULY 15, 2021 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Discussion/Action Items

RESOLUTION – Setting a Show Cause Hearing; Make Safe or Demolish Orders to the owners of property located at 125 E. Mt. Hope

Mr. Sanford stated the Demolition Board met May 27th and determined to Make Safe or Demolish by 6/27/21 there for they request a show cause hearing. Council Member Garza asked if the house has been boarded up and a couple times people have gotten in it and if he could give us an update. Scott indicated that as of this morning no permits have been pulled, on June 7th he received a call from Paubla and this person was going to have someone tear it down but hasn't done anything yet. Building Safety deemed over \$13,000 in damages and request for MSD 60 days of passage. Council Member Wood asked because of fire damage is there any possibility or state law to give them another notice before we do the resolution. She stated she was thinking if Council can set the Show Cause Hearing on the 23rd and pass the same day for MSD 60 days from passage. She said she knows there is certain notice requirements so wondered if notice of hearing and passage can be done on the same day.

Scott indicated the timeline would be it goes to Council on the 9th for the hearing the 23rd and back to Committee on the 26th with a final time at Council on 9/13 and it would be 30-60 days from that, Mr. Smiertka asked Council Member Wood if she was looking at taking it down sooner rather than later and she said yes. Lisa Hagen confirmed that it cannot be passed the same day as show cause hearing because of the 30 days.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER WOOD TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR SETTING A SHOW CAUSE HEARING; MAKE SAFE OR DEMOLISH ORDERS TO THE OWNERS OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 125 E. MT. HOPE. MOTION CARRIED 2-0

UPDATE – City Attorney; Auto Zone, 610 N Cedar St.

Council Member Garza asked Mr. Smiertka what communication he received last week. Mr. Smiertka indicated he received communication from the Attorney for Auto Zone and that they wanted to resolve it internally with their resources and would follow up on July 27th with an email which they did proposing to clear trees and install an 8ft fence with razor wire. Council Member Wood asked if razor wire or barbed wire is prohibited and she would prefer a wrought iron fence to deter people jumping over it and plastic would easily be broken, this serves the purpose and barbed wire sends a bad message. Mr. Smiertka indicated he was in talks with the Planning Board and doing a zoom, Council Member Wood asked for a timeline that this has dragged on long enough and Mr. Smiertka indicated that was on the Agenda to ask for in their meeting. Susan Stachowiak asked if Auto Zone was under any obligation to do what we request, Council Member Wood said no and Mr. Smiertka said if they don't cooperate we can file a nuisance against them. Council Member Wood asked Mr. Sanford if they were cited and he confirmed yes for trash but they said they would mow the grass themselves. Council Member Wood reminded from the last meeting that the local manager was receptive to help but took it to corporate and they delayed their response. Susan asked if it was a heavily populated homeless area and Council Member Garza responded that yes they have put up tents and looks like an encampment. Council Member Wood indicated the outreach that the mission is responsible for and because of the trees you can't see. Council Member Garza asked where we sit going forward with Auto Zone and Mr. Smiertka said after the meeting he will reach out to find out about the zoom set up with Andy Kilpatrick and Susan Stachowiak. Council Member Wood asked to have a follow up at the next meeting August 12th.

UPDATE – LPD; Operation Slow Down

Sgt. Burke spoke of the Mayor's press release and gave the numbers from the spreadsheet provided by LPD and indicated that they are targeting problem areas with speed trailers and taking the call-ins and tag teaming with motor officers to address the speeding issues and will continue to collect data and responding to emails and requests for speeding. Council Member Garza asked if the stats included MSP and Officer Burke stated no just LPD and believes it may be from April 2020 through December 2020 and not full year on the top spreadsheet. Council Member Garza asked Officer Burke if he knew if there was any movement on the COPS grant for additional officers and he was unsure but could get the information for the next meeting on August 12th. Council Member Garza mentioned he receives lots of call in the MLK/Holmes area on motorcycles racing and a family moved out of Cedarbrook neighborhood because of it and then asked Officer Burke if he could also get the numbers for stops involving not having registered plates. Officer Burke said he would see what he could get but his understanding is SOS if caught up and people should be able to get what they need now. Council Member Wood asked about quads driving up and down with mud packed wheels and thought they were illegal to drive on roads hitting 60-70 MPD. Mr. Sanford mentioned he knows in certain counties north that if they are registered they can drive on the side of the road. Council Member Garza added they don't have plates or blinkers and asked Officer Burke to bring information on that to the next meeting as well.

Council Member Wood stated an additional issue in the last couple days as the Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon stated their office was not going to proceed with repercussions with people getting pulled over for minor traffic violations if something additional came from the stop. Council Member Wood continued that it is causing problems for the officers as people are in their face saying they can't pull them over and are just leaving because they aren't afraid of anything happening to them from the prosecution side and we need some education on what the law is. Mr. Smiertka indicated that if someone is stopped and it comes to them as a misdemeanor they will write them and proceed. Council Member Wood was vocal on stating that there is a misperception with the process coming from Prosecutor Siemon with her job and oath to uphold the laws and not pick and choose which should be followed through on and if she can't she should leave. Lisa Hagen indicated that Chief Sosebee reiterated this wouldn't change how LPD operates. Council Member Wood said as the press conference from the Ingham County Prosecutor was happening a Lansing man was pulled over in Kalkaska on a minor traffic violation with a gun found and it was confiscated and a warrant later issued but our prosecutor won't do that. Council Member Garza stated that is a felony since the individual didn't have a CPL so that can go straight to court and Mr. Smiertka stated he understands the frustration and that is Ms. Siemon's discretion not to proceed. Council Member Garza ended with stating if people know they aren't going to get in trouble they won't care and will be bolder to not enforce the laws and there will be more guns out there.

OTHER

LPD update from 7/15 Committee Meeting

Officer Burke read excerpts from the email from Cpt. Diehl on 1917 Osband and that the squatters were vacated per the courts and the owners have begun the cleanup process, nobody is currently residing in the home and currently has a pink tag meaning it cannot be rented, no red tag as of this meeting. Code Compliance has not had access inside or the backyard yet either. Council Member Garza said there is nothing preventing it happening again and Mr. Sanford said if the house gets red tagged it would be trespassing but cannot be boarded up unless there is a legal reason to do so.

Council Member Garza said he had something else for our "other" topic about a bike club on Reo/MLK and some valid concerns for people turning onto MLK because of all the traffic and parking along North West corner of Reo cars are lined up and only one vehicle can get down at a time which is an accident waiting to happen and sometimes has traffic stopped on MLK because of it, what can be done? Officer Burke said he would drive by and look at signage and report back at the next meeting as well and that it is already dangerous because of the speeding and the hill there.

Public Comment

None

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Submitted by Renee Richmond

Council Administrative Assistant, Lansing City Council

Approved as presented: August 12, 2021