



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, October 11, 2021 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT- via audio/video

Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Carol Wood- excused
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Kathie Dunbar
Councilmember Brandon Betz
Councilmember Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Lisa Hagen, OCA
Matthew Horwitt
Mark Lawrence, Mayor Representative
Andrew Fedewa, Economic Development & Planning
Brian McGrain, Economic Development & Planning
Mike Marriott
Randy Dykema
Elaine Fischhoff

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Public Comment

Ms. Fischhoff spoke in support of the appointment of Matthew Horwitt to the Lansing Board of Water and Light Board and asked for additional oversight of that Board by the Council.

Mr. Dykema spoke in support of the appointment of Matthew Horwitt to the Board of Water and Light, and the creation of the Arts and Culture Commission.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION – Appointment; Matthew Horwitt; At Large Member Board of Water and Light; Term to Expire June 30, 2023

Mr. Horwitt not present at this time, moved discussion and action to later in the meeting.

RESOLUTION – Setting a Public Hearing; Ordinance to Amend Part 12, Title 6 Form Based Zoning Code

Mr. McGrain, Mr. Fedewa and Ms. Stachowiak were present to provide a presentation on the amendments.

Mr. Fedewa outlined the amendments which were typographical and editing errors to provide corrections and clarifications and not intended to conflict with the code. Mr. Fedewa did note a few amendments specific to addressing mobile food vending or food trucks, corrections in the mapping to speak to properties that border two different zonings, and also parking revisions to condense the language and mapping errors.

Council Member Jackson asked how the new code speaks to solar projects or businesses. Mr. Fedewa noted they are allowed as an accessory use and clarifies installations.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR NOVEMBER 8, 2021 ON THE AMENDED FORM BASED ZONING CODE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

ORDINANCE – Establish Arts and Culture Commission

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION - Procedures for Hosting Virtual Meetings in accordance with Open Meetings Act (OMA)

Council President Spadafore passed the gavel to Vice President Hussain.

Council Member Spadafore noted to the Committee that recently the Open Meetings Act (OMA) was changed over last 18 months to accommodate with provisions for the public body of any boards to allow those members to participate if there is a medical reason, military service or state of emergency. Council Member Spadafore then read from the resolution “if a member of the public body has a medical condition that precludes in person attendance, such that attending the meeting in person could either exacerbate the member’s medical condition or expose other members to a contagious medical condition, then the member may request to attend virtually. Requests for a medical condition exemption shall be made in writing by the member to the chair of board/commission and the individual preparing the meeting agenda no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.”

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ON PROCEDURES FOR HOSTING VIRTUAL MEETINGS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS ACT (OMA).

Council Member Spitzley asked why a 24 hour notice, because it seemed excessive. Council Member Spadafore explained there is a 18 hour minimum notification for the meeting, and since the agenda has to be amended for the request, it allows time to meet the requirements.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Council Vice President Hussain passed the gavel to Council President Spadafore.

Council President Spadafore paused the meeting at 5:51 p.m. The Meeting was called back to order at 5:53 p.m.

RESOLUTION – Appointment; Matthew Horwitt; At Large Member Board of Water and Light; Term to Expire June 30, 2023

Mr. Horwitt acknowledged the opportunity to speak to the Committee and spoke on his interest on serving on the board. Mr. Horwitt then provided brief details on his experience, certifications and degrees in energy services.

Council Member Jackson acknowledge his training, education and experience for this Board then asked about his support for the international panel of reductions by certain years and how did he would categorize natural gas. Mr. Horwitt acknowledged the need to move away from natural gas to meet the goals, and it does emit 50% less than when burning coal, but if you add in unburned methane that acts as a powerful greenhouse gas, so natural gas is not much better than coal. Mr. Horwitt did respect the BWL decision on the new natural gas plant, but noted he was hopeful BWL will move away from natural gas before the expected life span of the new plant.

Council Member Betz asked for his perspective of trash burning and how he would suggest moving away from that. Mr. Horwitt admitted the BWL is burning gas captured from trash, and that would be methane, but if they do not burn then it is in the air as incombustible and could be worse. Mr. Horwitt admitted that he had no clear answer but would look at if there is a better alternative. Council Member Betz then asked what his perspective is on keeping utilities affordable. Mr. Horwitt acknowledged affordable utilizes are important, and the stats of the cost of wind and solar have come down and credited with fossil fuels. There is work to be done on reducing energy consumption, and informing people to assist and making people aware of reducing energy in their homes. Council Member Betz asked his position on the sale of BWL to a private entity, and Mr. Horwitt stated he opposed it.

Council Member Garza asked if information he had was on a single cycle power plant or a two cycle, because BWL is a combined plant. Mr. Horwitt stated he had statistics from the 2018 Journal of Science article and have seen statistics on the single cycle. Council Member Garza asked him to provide details on this question to him after the meeting when he is able to obtain the information.

Council Member Garza asked Mr. Horwitt if he believed that renewables such as wind and solar would be enough for the projected future of electric charging stations. Mr. Horwitt admitted he could not speak to it he would have to look at the data, but did look at the BWL integrated plan, and projected a range for electric vehicles. Mr. Horwitt added that there is an issue the Board will have to address in years ahead for how to meet the demand.

Ward

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF MATTHEW HORWITT TO THE LANSING BOARD OF WATER AND LIGHT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on October 25, 2021