



**MINUTES**  
**Committee of the Whole**  
**Monday, October 25, 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  
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley - excused  
Councilmember Kathie Dunbar  
Councilmember Brandon Betz  
Councilmember Jeremy Garza  
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff  
Joe Abood, City Attorney  
Lisa Hagen, OCA  
Mark Lawrence, Mayor Representative  
Elizabeth O'Leary, HR  
Chris Swope, City Clerk  
Jake Brower, Finance  
Cathleen Edgerly, DLI

**Minutes**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 11, 2021 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**Public Comment**

No public comment on this time.

**Presentation**

Ms. Edgerly went through the presentation on the recovery plan in the packet. There is a focus on realistic mortgage and lease rates and what business can expect moving forward. In the strategic plan, there is an update on the plan with a self-assessment, how to move forward. Another project includes front filling and filling the parking lots, and look forward to working with the City on flexible uses, and lastly increasing capacity at a staff level.

Ms. Edgerly presented to the Committee the "From the Ground Up" program for their recovery project.

Council Member Wood referenced the plan, and noted a lot of the funding for Downtown Lansing Inc. comes from assessments, and so asked where the City was with those assessments, and also the impact of no events and fundraising in two years. Ms. Edgerly

admitted the assessment levels have been stagnant and no increase. The income has been 60% assessments and the rest fundraising, therefore they have focused less on event driven, but looking at partnerships with Lansing 501, and other organizations. This allows the DLI to focus on small business support. Council Member Wood then asked about downtown maintenance if the primary income for that charge was from assessments. Ms. Edgerly state they have continued discussions with the contractor and have ear marked funds for those priorities. Council Member Wood then asked what percentage is maintenance, and was told 50%, with promotions at 20-25%, but now that is down to 5-8%. Council Member Wood asked for any detail on the number of vacant store fronts and Ms. Edgerly admitted it is up 35% because of COVID.

Council Member Dunbar asked if there were any conversations on the vacant office buildings, not owned by the government and what to do with those in the future, and potentially the State buildings as well. Ms. Edgerly confirmed they are working on ideas. Council Member Dunbar then asked if the State has mentioned anything about a funding mechanism or consolidating all their buildings back into downtown. Ms. Edgerly state she has not heard anything definitive.

### **Discussion/Action**

#### **RESOLUTION – Appointment; Elizabeth O’Leary as Chief Labor Negotiator**

Ms. O’Leary made herself available to answer questions.

Council Member Wood asked about contracts that are ratified and approved by Council, but not yet given to the Retirement Boards or on the website. Ms. O’Leary acknowledged they should be posting 214 and IAFF soon. Council Member Wood pointed out that IAFF was already ratified, and Ms. O’Leary explained they are working with IAFF to finalize the document itself. Ms. O’Leary explained Council sees the red line version when they ratify it, then her office and the unions work together to put all the new language into the contract. In the case of IAFF they are working with them on the final document at this time. Council Member Wood stated that there is 90 days from the date of ratification to make changes in the retirement ordinances that match the new contract. At this time the retirement board has not gotten the contracts. Council President Spadafore asked OCA what could hold up the final contract and Mr. Abood stated it could be sorting out key terms, word processing, selecting final form for document to be approved.

Council Member Wood asked for a closed session on November 8, 2021 in Committee of the Whole to discuss 214, IAFF and any other contract not in writing yet and on the website. Ms. O’Leary informed the Committee that 243 expires in January and 214 will expire in December so they are negotiating on those right now with the unions. Council Member Wood asked for copies of all the contracts.

Council Member Dunbar asked what is so substantive that it would was changed or negotiated that it would hold up publishing of a ratified contract. She concurred with Council Member Wood on the need for more information.

Ms. O’Leary explained to the Committee that once Council ratifies the tentative agreement it is reduced in the CBA. Council Member Dunbar asked if what Council see is final, and Ms. O’Leary confirmed that what they see is the tentative agreement with two bodies, then compiled into the final document. HR then does all the word processing on the document, and it is sent to the union for one last review to confirm nothing was changed. Council Member Dunbar asked if the hold up with the IAFF was with the union or HR. Council President Spadafore halted the discussion because of a concern that with contract discussion there might be unfair labor practice if they are not in closed session. Council Member Dunbar asked if the union asked for changes. Ms. O’Leary stated it would be in the best interest of Council any further discussions on negotiations should be held in a close session. Council President

Spadafore confirmed a closed session would be scheduled and Council Member Wood asked for Dan Komm with IAFF to be invited.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR APPOINTMENT OF ELIZABETH O'LEARY AS CHIEF LABOR NEGOTIATOR.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER DUNBAR TO TABLE ACTION ON THE RESOLUTION FOR APPOINTMENT UNTIL NOVEMBER 8, 2021. MOTION CARRIED 6-1.

RESOLUTION - City of Lansing Ward Apportionment Plan

Chris Swope explained to the Committee that the Election Commission is charged by the Charter to realign the Wards every 10 years after the Census. The Election Commission has already adopted it, and per State law it is up to Council to make a final determination. He added it does not fully align, but is within the limits of 10%. Regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward, they found it could have been undercounted in the past and with new apartments, etc. that has increased. They have also seen that some of the changes will accommodate voters to a convenient polling location from their home.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE WARD APPORTIONMENT PLAN.

The Committee discussed the changes from the east side and south Washington into the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward and along with some areas from Ward 1 into the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward. Council Member Hussain asked who created this particular plan, and Mr. Swope acknowledged his office did and presented it to the Election Commission. Council Member Wood asked if they have had discussions residents. Mr. Swope confirmed the feedback he has gotten was issues with current voting locations. He added for details that the Charter gives the Election Commission 60 days, however earlier in the year they were told months with a census release of 9/30 but then a new release came out 10/11. Therefore there was confusion on when the 60 days began. Council Member Wood voiced her concern that some residents will be voting for what they think will be their Ward representative, but then after this is established it won't be, and they wouldn't have been able to vote for the new Ward. Mr. Swope stated this does happen every 10 years. Council Member Wood then asked how long before it is in effect, and Mr. Swope stated it can't go into effect for 120-180 days. Any changes to the process or the elections would require a Charter change.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – City Council Meeting Schedule for 2022

Council President Spadafore informed the Committee the document is a substitute from what was referred. The substitute puts all the meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, except the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in May, which per Charter is when the Budget has to be adopted.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO ADOPT THE SUBSTITUTE FOR THE 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE.

Council President Spadafore noted the first meeting on January 3, 2022 will be for leadership action only.

MOTION APPROVED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – Emergency Rental Assistance Program Grant Amendment

Council President Spadafore first explained to the Committee that normally a grant would be referred and sent onto the Committee on Ways and Means, however this information was just provided to Council staff last week, Thursday 10/21, and the funds will run out in November. This grant will expand on the funds before they run out.

Mr. Brower explained that during February – March they accepted these grants for COVID Emergency Rental Assistance for residents with income less than 80% of the median income. The grant was \$14 million and in July it grew to \$30 million, and now with this grant it is increasing to a total of \$46,039,243. All funds are spent in Ingham County and through grant anticipation note, have not had to rely on grant reimbursement from MSHDA but the city gets wire transfers weekly. As of 2 weeks ago, \$22 million into the City and going forward hope to extend this offer to the end of the holidays.

Council Member Wood asked for clarification on his statement that the funds were going to all of Ingham County, not restricted to the City of Lansing. Mr. Brower confirmed that the City is the fiduciary for Ingham County on this. Council Member Wood asked if there were any administrative funds disbursed for this administrative act. Mr. Brower confirmed there is \$2 million eligible in total for administrative reimbursements. Currently there is a contracted worker managing the reporting, and staff is allocating their time to this grant.

Council President Spadafore asked about the borrowing costs. Mr. Brower confirmed there were borrowing costs and is reimbursed. Mr. Brower stated his concern that the municipal advisor could have a conflict of interest. Council Member Wood noted her concern with the borrowing costs since the advisor has the power to do borrowing and get paid. Mr. Brower added it is a fine line with Baird. Mr. Brower assured the Committee that since they have received the grant note, achieved the financing and they will just be adjusting the number, they do not anticipate any additional borrowing costs.

Council Member Dunbar asked about the borrowing costs and with the admin costs as a pass through, some of those admin costs are going back to Baird. Mr. Brower stated it is the cost of the total issuance cost, and without this financing they would not be able to get funds to the community on a fast track. Council Member Dunbar asked if the role Baird is playing could be done by the City itself, and asked how much of the admin cost goes to Baird off this project. Mr. Brower was not able to provide the exact number, but estimated it was less than a fraction of a percent. Council Member Wood asked the Internal Auditor to review the Baird contract and track payment to make sure there are no concerns, and report back to Council.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT AMENDMENT. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 6:23 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,  
Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee November 8, 2021