MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, April 25, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER
Council ~~Vice~~ President Hussain called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Carol Wood
Councilmember Peter Spadafore – arrived at 5:33 p.m.
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley- excused
Councilmember Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson
Councilmember Jeffrey Brown
Councilmember Brian Daniels

OTHERS PRESENT
Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Joseph Abood, OCA
Eric Brewer, Internal Auditor
Mark Lawrence, Mayor Office
Jake Brower, Finance
Desiree Kirkland, Finance
Anethia Brewer, District Court
DeLisa Fontaine, NCE
Brian McGrain, EDP
Linda Sanchez-Gazella, HR
Bryan Kauffman, HR
Brett Kaschnske, Parks and Recreation
Kim Coleman, HRCS
Chief Sosebee, LPD
Jane Bias DiSessa, Deputy Mayor
Anthony Mullen
Calvin Jones, LBWL
Andy Kilpatrick, Public Service
Susan Kneiling, District Court
Chief Judge Buchanan
Amber Paxton, NCE
Kim Dunbar, HRCS

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WOOD TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 11, 2022 WITH THE CORRECTION TO THE DATE FROM APRIL 13 TO ARPIL 11. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Public Comment

Ms. Stanaway spoke about the ballot proposal language, and asked for altered language "otherwise disposed of".

Ms. Bonney distributed documents and gave an overview of the program for Circuit Court. Ms. Bonney then requested funding from Council for handling all the small claims cases.

Discussion/Action:

PLACE ON FILE – Executive Directive 2022-01; Michigan Protection Advocacy Service, In. Records Request Policy

Council President Hussain explained for the record that the OCA provided a review of this, and it was confirmed that it deals with internal policy, and does not need action by Council, but was referred in error.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WOOD TO PLACE ON FILE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointment; Anthony Mullen; At-Large Member Board of Water and Light; Term to Expire June 30, 2025

Mr. Mullen briefly spoke on his last 10 years on the BWL Board. He highlighted his role on the Board, the questions to ask, what the Board has done over the last couple years including the future battery plant with GM, the Delta Plant other energy sources. Mr. Mullen then spoke on the importance of the rate payers and what BWL has planned for the future with rate income on new business and not the residents.

Council Member Garza asked when the Erickson Power will be decommissioned. Mr. Mullen within 2022-2023, and they are looking at Bell River plant for 2025.

Council Member Jackson asked if they factor in fracking and natural gas before it is burned, and Mr. Mullen stated no. He was then referred to his application and asked if he had done any continuing education and read any reports on natural gas. Mr. Mullen confirmed they have annual training through the national society, learning on coal plants, solar power, and wind power. Council Member Jackson asked his opinion on if he believes it is local, state or federal responsibility. Mr. Mullen spoke in support of increasing the renewables. Council Member Jackson asked for his thoughts on the future generation. Mr. Mullen concurred that everyone needs to be taken care of, and they are represented by the workers and rate payers. Council Member Jackson asked about the new gas plant, the bonding for the future, and asked what the balance is. Mr. Mullen stated with the new Delta plant, there is a percentage of output dedicated for peak power, and a certain amount pulled from solar plants, and other sources.

Council Member Wood asked his opinion of the sale of the Board of Water of Light, and Mr. Mullen stated he is 100% opposed to the sale of the BWL.

Council President Hussain asked the Administration for an explanation on why it took so long for Council to consider this reappointment, since his term expired June 2021. Mr. Lawrence was not aware of any issues or could explain why there was a delay. Council Member Wood asked for a response as soon as possible from the Administration since it has been a year.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WOOD TO APPROVE THE REAPPOINTMENT OF ANTHONY MULLEN AS AN AT LARGE MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF WATER AND LIGHT. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Presentations

Department Budget

Council President Hussain went through the process for the budget season, noting that there were five (5) questions each department was asked to answer, and any presentations or reports were asked to be submitted ahead of time and were included in the packets. No presentations would be shown on the TV.

District Court

Ms. Brewer, Ms. Kneiling and Judge Buchanan were present and answered the Council questions. Ms. Brewer began by noting there are vacancies, but they are analyzing from the changes that were made during the pandemic. The budget is status quo, and there are no official changes they have added that they are responsible for. They have made changes in services to address fees to accommodate people's needs. Ms. Brewer then noted the civil infraction fee will be increased by $5. Regarding equipment purchases, they do not have any but any equipment has been allocated in the upcoming budget. Overall, it was noted the budget has not changed.

Judge Buchannan acknowledged Council.

Council Member Wood referenced the budget and spoke to a difference of $500,000 in retirement fringes, and asked, since they stated there were no staff changes how was the amount accumulated. Mr. Brower stated that overall the calculation of fixed fringe benefits from the actuary. In this fiscal year, they are moving to a "pay as you go" plan. When paying down the underfunded liability results in increase costs for police and fire, but less for employee retirement because they do not need to pay on the amortization side. Council Member Wood referred to Public Service, under retirement there is a difference of $429,000, and asked for other breakdowns on the other departments. Council Member Wood then referenced the court line item for IT, and it went down by $40,000 and asked for an explanation on the decrease. Council Member Wood then referenced the earlier comments from the public on small claims. Ms. Brewer stated that the program was able to address cases, in comparison to the City being closed during the pandemic.

Council Member Spadafore stepped away at 5:38 p.m.

Ms. Brewer stated that with speaking to the Mayor, they did not think it would be in the courts budget, but looking for future discussions and advise from the Administration on what budget to take the funds for the program spoken about by Ms. Bonney. Council Member Wood summarized that it appears it is beneficial and if Council can do anything to continue the program would District Court support that, and Ms. Brewer confirmed.

Neighborhoods, Arts and Citizen Engagement

Ms. Fontaine briefly noted there is a difference of $98,034 which is an increase for the new 311 program, and a grant administrator position. It was noted that a portion of the grant administrator position will be covered by the grants and there is a decrease due to some grant funds being taken from the ARPA budget. Ms. Fontaine confirmed the service changes will be with the 311 Program but no other rate or fee changes, no major equipment purchases and lastly no combining or contracting positions.

Council Member Wood began a discussion on the 311 program, and asked about the determination of the cost breakdown. As an example Council is being charged $37,562 for this 311 service when there are full time Council staff to answer phones. Mr. Brower stated the 311 service is an assistance, currently active and currently allocated. On a per capita basis, the reason being that some departments are not currently using it, and if they only charged the current departments using it, it would be a huge charge on those currently limited departments. He added that there will eventually be charges per call also. Council Member

Wood noted there has not been a discussion amongst Council Members that they even want the Administration to handle Council issues, and she spoke in opposition to this particular line item. Council Member Wood then provided examples of Council work with constituents. Mr. Brower stated they would be open to discussions on alternative breakdowns, and could consider the 311 staff referring Council inquires directly to Council staff. Council Member Wood asked Ms. Fontaine about her statement of the ARPA funds for neighborhood grants for 2 years, and asked about any discussion on this program of 20 years; and in 2 years it will be absorbed into the budget again. Ms. Fontaine confirmed they we will continue to have neighborhood grants and welcome the increase, and the goal would be fight for the increased amount in 2 years.

Council Member Brown asked about the role of the grant administrator. Ms. Paxton stated over the last few years, they have written multiple successful grants, and this will allow the City to stay on top of municipal grant funding and administration. This role will track the grants, making sure things are done, and in the future they will write grants for 5% for grant administration. Council Member Brown asked if there was an infrastructure in place for the 311. Ms. Fontaine referenced the handout they received earlier on the 311 program and provided examples of the difference of 311 with Lansing Connect. Council Member Brown asked if these were City employees, and Ms. Fontaine confirmed there are 6 call center staff, 1 supervisor.

Council Member Spadafore asked if the total cost was close to $1 million, and Mr. Brower confirmed. Council Member Spadafore asked if the $37,562 was added to the Council budget, and Mr. Brower confirmed it was a new line item. He continued by stating that costs are being shared instead of being added to the General Fund. Mr. Brower stated if Council did not want to be included, it would be reallocated. Council Member Spadafore referenced the presentation to Ms. Fontaine noting a 150% in neighborhood grants, but that was a reduction of $80,000 in this year and next year. He asked Mr. Brower how $80,000 from this budget is being taken out because of ARPA, if they will then be low $80,000 in the next two years. Mr. Brower stated the continued programs; such as neighborhood grants, the Advance Peace, Arts and Cultures and the façade grant will each receive funds through ARPA. Council Member Spadafore asked why not use the GF number the same in this budget and then use ARPA to supplement. Mr. Brower confirmed it was an accounting decision, effectively they were doing it so as not to spend the funds twice. It was confirmed again there is no intention to eliminate the programs.

Council Member Garza spoke on his concerns with 311, and acknowledged his discussions with staff in the City who currently handle those calls, and they are concerned their positions will be eliminated. Mr. Brower confirmed there will be no positions eliminated, but they are considering once with retirements, and a change in work load they might consider restructure. Council Member Garza voiced his concern with the overlapping services and redundancy of the 311 Program and Lansing Connect. Council Member Garza then spoke to Ms. Fontaine, asking her to explain the staff and job duties, including asking if Ms. Andrea Crawford has returned as an employee. Ms. Paxton explained the structure of the office of Financial Empowerment with the operations coordinator, another contract coordinator position, and a position for Ms. Crawford for the grant process on what the City has received. Ms. Paxton added that Ms. Crawford is under contract for $4,500 until June 30, 2022 to handle the grant administration. Council Member Garza pointed out that when Ms. Crawford left last time, the department asked for $60,000; where did those funds go. Ms. Fontaine responded that there are two positions under her. Council Member Wood asked if Ms. Fontaine had an issue with her former department director; Ms. Crawford, now working under her. Ms. Fontaine acknowledged that Ms. Crawford reports to Ms. Paxton on the contract she is working under for the grants.

Council Member Daniels asked Mr. Brower to find a different way to cover the 311 cost for Council.

Council Member Garza stepped away from the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

Council Member Daniels asked for other options on the 311 allocations and the breakdown.

Council Member Wood asked for details on the charges per call, and Mr. Brower stated he would review the funding model on that. Council Member Wood pointed out for the record that in the past Council asked for a Legislative Assistant and the administration removed that from their budget.

Council Member Brown asked how the Administration had come up with the $37,562, how it was calculated, what data they used and what the call volume is. Mr. Brower confirmed there are other funding possibilities, but right now they are using the per capita from what the IT budget uses. This service does not include those departments covered by 911.

Council Member Garza returned to the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

Council Member Brown asked for details on the staffing. Ms. Paxton explained the difference between the Office of Financial Empowerment and the Financial Empowerment Center, noting her positions and the operations coordinator positions are the only ones paid by the City.

Council Member Spadafore spoke in support of the new 311 Program, however had concerns with the allocation determination of using the IT allocations.

Council Member Jackson spoke in support of the 311 program.

Human Resources

Ms. Sanchez-Gazella went through the five (5) questions in the budget with the assistance from Mr. Kauffman. Regarding the changes in the budget, Mr. Kauffman noted acknowledged the increase due to a Deputy HR Director and Health & Wellness Specialist. Regarding change in services, fees or charges, there were none proposed, along with no plans to purchase any equipment. Mr. Kauffman e. Lastly, regarding positions, he noted that other than the two mentioned earlier, there will be part time for assistance to the hiring, benefits and labor relations; but no position eliminations.

Council Member Wood asked about the residency incentive program, which is currently at $25,000, and if that is helping with the hiring incentive.

Council Member Jackson stepped away from the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

Ms. Sanchez-Gazella spoke in support of the program and would be encouraged with expanding it.
Council President Hussain asked how many staff there currently are in the department and was told 13. Council President Hussain then asked what the best practice would be for HR staff person per 100 employees. Ms. Sanchez-Gazella acknowledged they are currently under funded for the number of employees, and Mr. Kauffman noted there are currently 1,084 total employees including seasonal and contract. Ms. Sanchez-Gazella added there are four (4) Hiring Specialists and adding would make it five (5) including the recruiting specialist.

Public Service

Mr. Kilpatrick responded to the questions, confirming the only increase was in the operational item increased by $57,000 for sustainability efforts.

Council Member Jackson returned to the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Kilpatrick continued explaining there will be changes due to the 311 system, and allocations of the fleet services. Regarding changes in services, there were not changes in the services they provided. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed that as they have done every year, the trash/recycling will increase along with an increase in the CSO program of 4%. With the question on equipment, in the current year it was $1.5 million and this proposed budget has it at $3 million, but some departments will be paying for their items directly and this will be the first time recycling and trash will be in the enterprise fund. Lastly, Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed they are down to 227 positions with a technician position eliminated in waste water along with an engineering position.

Council Member Garza spoke on the projects in Ward 2.

Council Member Wood asked about the fee structure on the carts and if that adjusted the revenue and Mr. Brower confirmed there was an error in the first resolution with the fees and that was corrected. Council Member Wood asked about sidewalk leveling equipment and if it was contracted out. Mr. Kilpatrick stated they have hired a contractor and have not purchased any equipment. Council Member Wood asked LFD vehicles were now in the LFD budget, and Mr. Kilpatrick explained they are in enterprise fund currently, but trash, yard waste, WWTP, and parking will purchase directly. Council Member Wood asked if there has been talks about someone purchasing the waste water portion from the City. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed there had not been, however Johnson Controls did a study on efficiencies and improving the process with what the ideal staffing model would be. BWL is also doing a study on a joint process.

Council Member Daniels asked about the spending on the streets. Mr. Kilpatrick briefly explained funding on State and local streets. Council Member Daniels asked for clarification on the 9.9% decrease on local streets asking if that will that effect repairs. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed it could effect it, but for a long time major street funding supplemented the local street funding and this year there is a transfer so local funding would go to $400,000 in fund balance. Council Member Daniels then asked about the $383,000 in this budget for the 311 program and his thoughts. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed that many calls that were coming to the department are now going to the 311 line, and being transferred. Council Member Daniels asked if the 311 line was making this department more efficient and Mr. Kilpatrick acknowledged it was.

Council Member Jackson asked about the sustainability they planned for. Mr. Kilpatrick noted there is no budget specific, prior to this the funds were in the administration portion of the department budget.

Parks & Recreation

Mr. Kaschinske went through page 101 in the budget book highlighting the projects in parks. Regarding the other questions, there were no changes in services, the new fees are part of the resolution, any major purchases are for the parks listed in the budget book, and there are no staffing changes.

Council Member Garza asked about the maintenance of parks in Ward 2, and then voiced his concerns on those parks.

Council Member Daniels asked about their progress on hiring seasonal employees, and Mr. Kaschinske outlined the process they have taken so far and the success at the State where they can now hire 16-17 year olds as well. He added they still do not have enough so they have limited their camps to only Lansing residents.

Council Member Daniels then asked about lighting and if they have worked with Friends of Bancroft park on their lighting since it is not in the budget. Mr. Kaschinske confirmed they are still meeting with that organization.

Council Member Garza stepped away from the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Council Member Wood asked about reducing the subsidy for Groesbeck. Mr. Kaschinske confirmed it continues to go down and is currently at $100,000 from the earlier $500,000. Council Member Wood asked about tree planting.

Council Member Garza returned to the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Mr. Kaschinske stated Forestry is working with residents on the proper species for specific for locations. Council Member Wood encouraged them to create an education piece. Council Member Wood asked for an update on Moores Park. Mr. Kaschinske informed the Committee they are waiting on the organization, and they are looking for more money for the study on the construction. The first analysis was for 30% completion at $4-6 million. The organization is now going back to that company asking for construction documents for them to submit for grants.

Council Member Jackson questioned why $374,000 for parks and only $57,000 sustainability.

Council Member Wood stepped away from the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Kaschinske stated that all the parks he went through in the beginning from page 101 are full replacement.

Council Member Wood returned to the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Council Member Spadafore asked if they use park millage to subsidize cemetery operations, and Mr. Kaschinske confirmed the cost has been higher, and he would have to research the historical reason on why they do because it has been that way since 2011. Council Member Spadafore asked when the Francis Park trail will be done, and Mr. Kaschinske acknowledged the delay stated the intention is June.

<u>Human Relations & Community Services</u>
Ms. Coleman and Ms. Dunbar were present to answer the five (5) questions, and answered no to all questions.

Council Member Garza asked if there is a standard or practice on allocations to organizations, and if an organization does not get the funds if there is a process they follow to reach out to those organizations to explain why not and what they can do in the future to qualify. Ms. Coleman confirmed there is process in the ordinance that they follow, which includes applications, scoring of the applications, presentation to the HRCS Board and their scoring and recommendations. She noted the ordinance was just approved in 2021, so this year is the first year they will be following that ordinance.

Council Member Daniels pointed out that Holy Cross Overnight Shelter closed, and inquired to what the plan was with Advent House. Ms. Coleman clarified that Holy Cross did not close it was the City Rescue Mission that closed. They are working with Advent House to get overnight drop in. Council President Hussain referred to the Council agenda later in the evening where there is a resolution to fund Outreach at Advent House.

Council Member Brown voiced his concerns with Holy Cross discontinuing services, but the City still providing them funding. Ms. Coleman stated the services they ended were not services funded by the City, and all the funds the City provides are used for their shelter.

Council Member Brown then asked about the increase in personnel funding from $455,599 to $1.1 million. Ms. Coleman state the difference is a 1.5% increase due to retirement funding. Mr. Brower added to the conversation that one effect on HRCS grants is that the grants cover the administration of those grants and is offset by salaries. They budget is the full cost of salaries then they apply their time to the grants. So of the $1 million just mentioned, $500,000 was applied to various grants. Council Member Brown then asked if during the application process if they check to make the agencies or directors are licensed. Ms. Coleman stated she could not speak to that, and Council President Hussain asked her to look into it. Council Member Brown asked if they have made changes due to COVID, and Ms. Coleman confirmed they did and those still exist.

Police

Chief Sosebee was called away from the meeting before this slot on the agenda. This item was moved to the next meeting May 9, 2022.

Discussion/Action:

RESOLUTION – Ballot Proposal; Act-2-2022; Sale of a portion of North Cemetery

Due to time constraints, this item was moved to the next agenda, May 9, 2022.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at: 7:31 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by,
Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,
Lansing City Council
Approved as amended by the Committee on May 9, 2022