



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, February 27, 2023 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT

Council Member Carol Wood
Council Member Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson
Councilmember Jeffrey Brown
Councilmember Ryan Kost

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Lisa Hagen- Lawrence, OCA
Jim Smiertka, OCA
Barb Kimmel, EDP
Doris Witherspoon, EDP
Jane DiSessa, Deputy Mayor
Chief Sturdivant, LFD
Mike Dombrowski, Parks Board
Loretta Stanaway
Stephen Purchase
Deborah Muluy

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 13, 2023 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Public Comment

Ms. Stanaway asked for the updated contact information to be posted on the website for the Parks Board members with contact information. She also asked that agendas be put on the website by the Monday before the meeting at 5 p.m.

Council Member Jackson stepped away from the meeting at 5:33 p.m.

Ms. Stanaway elaborated on her request and opinion on the public comment on the Park Board Agenda.

Ms. Muluy spoke on forestry and how it is reflected on the Park Board annual report. She then expanded on examples of trees in the City.

Council Member Jackson returned to the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

The public comment continued by the impact and work done on trees during the CSO project.

Presentations

Lansing Fire Department Update on their Acquire ARPA Funds and Budget

Chief Sturdivant acknowledged Council and made them aware of the \$2.7 million of ARPA, earmarked for 3 initiatives. One, \$300,000 for turn out gear, and that order has been placed. The vendor is running 4-6 months behind, however they members have been sized and they still anticipate May-June this year. They also received \$1.7 million for fleet upgrades, which will be used for an aerial truck at \$1.5 million and the balance will be rolled over to the fleet budget. They will use this towards trucks and ambulances, with combining with the fleet funds. The last initiatives was for \$750,000 for EMT upgrade, and recently signed a 10 year agreement with Stryker for upgrades. This equipment is already being delivered, and they have increased the level of safety.

Council Member Jackson asked if there is anything about turn out, fleet or EMS that was exasperated by COVID pandemic. Chief Sturdivant stated not exactly directly, but there was a significant increase in call volume, and impact on the staffing model. These items were tools of the trade, and during the height of the pandemic there was some impact.

Council Member Wood touched on the turnout gear impact. Chief Sturdivant explained the impact of the monitoring fire service and carcinogenic. There are extracts in 4 of 6 fire houses, and turn out gear dryers in all fire houses. There is a gross decontamination policy to help with starting the decontamination process on the scene.

Council Member Spitzley asked about the process, and Chief Sturdivant outlined the steps. The extractors will be installed in the new buildings that are currently being designed.

Council Member Garza asked about the protocol of the vehicle cleaning. Chief Sturdivant outlined the process for clearing up, taking back to stations, a wash down before they back into the station.

Council Member Wood asked if the washing water is held in a separate tank, or in the sewer system. Chief Sturdivant confirmed a separate tank, filtered and at no time does it enter into the City system.

Council Member Spitzley asked if there is a State standard on that dark water, and spoke on other contaminants. She asked if the City has a PFAS concern as relates to fire fighting. Chief Sturdivant confirmed that the dark water is isolated and has a proper level of disposal. Regarding the PFAS, all foam used in the City is clean foam. Most foam is used at airport fire fighting, but with no airport in the City itself, the City does not have that concern. He does work with the Airport Fire department on addressing any foam and PFAS issues.

Chief Sturdivant spoke briefly on the current budget, and confirmed it is doing well, they are monitoring expenses on a monthly basis, and he has implemented a couple programs they will look at reconciling with transfer. One of those initiatives was with Lexpol LLC to update the policy manual, and another one was a strategic planning process.

Council Member Wood asked about the staffing, and Chief Sturdivant noted they are down 25 positions right now.

Council Member Spitzley asked about training, and if it acquired new fire fighters in the community. Chief Sturdivant acknowledged the academy is acquiring fire fighters in the region, not just in the City. There are multiple students, but they are not able to apply until they are 18.

Council Member Brown acknowledged the work on the policy and asked for the reasoning behind that. Chief Sturdivant explained what his research found, and the good work taking place but not directed. However there was not direction on where things were heading. Over the last couple years there was a change in leadership and so he engaged with the community for the impact the public wants to see. They contracted with an outside agency on strategic planning process, and the vision to become an accredited agency.

Council Member Garza asked how City pay reflect and compare to other areas in Lansing. Chief Sturdivant confirmed we are competitive, but most departments offer bonuses that the City does not. The City is looking at upgrades and focusing on becoming the employer of choice. Council Member Garza asked if they would consider signing bonuses, and Chief Sturdivant admitted they have moved forward with paramedic bonuses. They continue to have those discussions.

Council Member Garza asked if the fleets were ordered, and Chief Sturdivant confirmed the ladder truck and ambulances will be delivered this year. Council Member Garza asked if fuel costs were figured into the budget and Chief Sturdivant confirmed.

Council Member Jackson spoke on filling of the positions, and asked what about the application process and resume, how they determine moral character. Chief Sturdivant the department used to use a psychological vendor and moved away from them. They have gone to another vendor to review character references based on the application surveys. They use a psychological exam for character background check, and maintain the standard. With the public safety bond and initiative, they want to transition candidates into careers and retention. Council Member Jackson asked if some candidates do not pass the test by a third party, and if they are written. Chief Sturdivant stated with the vendor they were using, which the City no longer uses. They forwarded a questionnaire to be completed before they met in person with the psychologist, and since those forms were from 1983 they did not updated by federal guidelines. They have a new vendor now and work to be objective as they can, but there is some subjectivity involved. At the entry level hiring piece, there is a command chief interview process to review the assessment. This would employ the layers in the process to make sure they are targeting that high quality candidate.

Council Member Hussain acknowledged that they moved away from the former vendor. He then asked about attraction and retention, and if there is a component in the nature of calls in the City. Chief Sturdivant noted the call volume is going up but the resources are going down. The 25 vacancies are mostly fire operations and fire suppression. Those are the entry level positions, and then you move into the other positions.

Park Board 2022 Annual Report

Mr. Dombrowski referenced the report the Board does every year, what they have done, and where their concerns are. They are back up to 8 people, the department continues to provide services, maintain parks, run forestry, and have main concern on resident input to projects. The Board role is to make sure the department is running efficiently as possible. The Park Department is spending a lot of money for projects and maintain parks. But the question has been, is that what the people wanted, so the Board has a concern on if the residents are seeing what they want. Most people attending the meetings had concerns with the most part of the removal of infrastructure in parks that the neighborhoods were not aware of before it happened.

Council Member Jackson stepped away at 6:24 p.m.

Mr. Dombrowski noted that a significant CIP funds were spent on removal of parking equipment and replaced with other park equipment. The board and residents are concerned that neighborhoods that use those neighborhood parks are not asked for their input in advance.

Council Member Jackson returned to the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

The Board is trying to source the CIP projects from the community instead of from the departments.

Council Member Garza asked if the administration was looking at the public input, so when it was brought to the administrations attention how did they react. And in the future will they have more public input. Mr. Dombrowski stated the Board is not aware of the City processes.

Council Member Jackson asked what is the best practice for the public. Mr. Dombrowski encouraged them to come to the Park Board.

Council Member Spitzley stepped away at 6:29 p.m.

Council Member Hussain asked Ms. DiSessa for the Park Department to post the agendas and minutes. Regarding resident input, he asked Mr. Dombrowski where they meet, and he stated they meet regularly at Foster. He was then asked about moving to other locations. Mr. Dombrowski confirmed they have talks about rotating board meetings to parks and outside the 1st Ward.

Council Member Spitzley returned to the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Council Member Hussain asked Ms. DiSessa to address better communications and solicit input to the neighborhoods. Regarding the CIP he asked if they have considered CIP disbursement throughout the City. Mr. Dombrowski acknowledged they talk about it, but the process does not include enforcement of spreading the projects through out the City.

Council Member Brown asked if the Park Board is not being informed of the projects, where do they think there is a disconnect. And what advising is the Board doing. Mr. Dombrowski stated the Board exists and informed of what the department is doing, outside of the CIP. They are not informed of the ideas before they happened. The disconnect is the Board is not approached during the design. Council Member Brown asked why that is happening and what can change. Ms. DiSessa stated she would speak to the Park Director and acknowledged it is important to speak to the Board and so they can help guide the administration. She stated she would speak to the Mayor and director. Mr. Dombrowski stated the Board should not be advising but the public should be.

Council Member Garza asked Mr. Dombrowski about the five-year plan and the destination playgrounds per ward. Mr. Dombrowski stated he is not sure where that status is or where those are. However they are still working on it.

Council Member Wood noted in the past the Parks Board went out to the community with the designer and interaction. It has been done in the past, and encouraged to the Administration that they need to make sure the people in the community around that park feel ownership to it. She asked the Park Board to put together a public participation plan and present to the Administration. Council Member Wood encouraged the Board to reach out to the experts on forestry to put a plan together on how to replace trees and encourage people to take care of new trees.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION -Affirming the Appointment of Danielle Grubaugh; Workforce Development Member; Community Corrections Advisory Board (CCAB); Term to Expire September 17, 2023

Council Member Wood stated this Board is made up by Ingham County, and even though the City sits on it, they City just affirms those appointments.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO DISCHARGE THE RESOLUTION FROM THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE AFFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF DANIELLE GRUBAUGH TO THE CCAB BOARD WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE SEPTEMBER 17, 2023. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION –CDBG Amendment for FY2020 Annual Action Plan and FY2021 Annual Action Plan

Council Member Wood noted at the last meeting there was a presentation, and the updated presentation is in the packet due to incorrect information in the original report. The public hearing is tonight, however the Department is asking for approval tonight as well. This would be done as long as there are no significant comments from the public.

Council Member Hussain referenced Rawley Van Hausen with Capital Area Housing Partnership in the audience and asked for him to speak to concerns Council have gotten on ownership. Mr. Van Hausen stated that no one affiliated, employed or connected is financially benefiting. As a resident agent for an LLC which is required by the State. The resident agent has to have the mailing address on file, someone there to obtain anything from LARA. It has nothing to do with ownership, but contact for LARA. He then elaborated on the LLC creation and tool and function as required by the State. The non-profit cannot be the recipient directly and not a new practice. Since CAHP is a non-profit they have the ability this year as sole general partner. No employee or board member can have any financial benefit.

Council Member Hussain asked about the 76 units, 19 supported housing for homeless of the highest need, and what management would be for those units. Mr. Van Hausen stated they do not self manage any of their units, majority outside of the City of Lansing. They work with the State on contracting for site managers.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE AMENDMENTS TO FY 2020 AND FY 2021 CDBG ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR FEBRUARY 27, 2023. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Other

Council President Wood asked Council members to notify Ms. Boak about BWL agenda suggestions for the March 20th, 2023 meeting. These items should be provided by Wednesday, March 1st.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,
Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee March 13, 2023