



MINUTES
Committee on Public Safety
Tuesday, April 4, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Hussain called the meeting to order at 3:30pm

PRESENT

Council Member Adam Hussain, Chair
Council Member Carol Wood, Vice Chair
Council Member Ryan Kost, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Richmond, Council Staff
Amany Williams, OCA
Councilmember Spitzley
Emily Linden, Internal Auditor
Barb Kimmel, EDP
Shelbi Frayer, EDP
Kim Coleman, HRCS
Jane DiSessa, Mayor's Office
Willard Walker, HRCS
Denise Kenny
Jody Washington
Elaine Womboldt

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WOOD TO APPROVE THE MARCH 21, 2023, AS PRESENTED.
MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elaine Womboldt spoke on discussions of Code issues and so many problems with the pink/red tags, lack of certs and no tags. She supports Ms. Kimmel request for a private/public consultant firm to review the department top to bottom, and hopes the mayor gives his full support.

Belinda Fitzpatrick spoke on an article in the Bar Association Journals on a study about code compliance, and that Nancy Mahlow brought up in the last COW meeting about the department used to have green, yellow, orange, pink and red tags to show different things and maybe that needs to be brought back.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

RESOLUTION – Orders to make Safe or Demolish to the owners of property located at 651 E. Jolly Road

Councilmember Hussain indicated that nobody was present at the Show Cause Hearing, owner is listed as Carolyn Englehard Smith Living Trust, cost of repairs is over \$75,000 no permits have been pulled.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER KOST TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ON ORDERS TO MAKE SAFE OR DEMOLISH TO THE OWNERS OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 651 E JOLLY RD. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

DISCUSSION – Red Tag Displacement Update; Economic Development & Planning, LPD and HRCS
Councilmember Hussain talked about the previous nights Council meeting and impressed with Council and doing homework on the issues and asked the Committee thoughts on having dept in on first or third of the month to report out. Councilmember Wood said her thought was first the number of discussion items in the process and that Ms. Kimmel put through moving forward and timelines, as well as what HRCS talked about. She would like to see the timelines for the Committee to determine and based on that who they would need to come in, goal is once a month and then as Chair of Committee Councilmember Hussain can report out at Council meetings, Councilmember Kost agreed on paying close attention to the matrix and timelines. Councilmember Hussain stated there are approximately 11 pages of minutes from the meeting and he envisions begin talking about every two weeks, and mentioned the Enforcement Team as a thinking out loud and want's everybody to know what is expected. Councilmember Spitzley spoke that last years Ad Hoc Brian McGrain said he created a red tag focus group with a representative from each department, what is happening with that, Councilmember Wood said nobody knows. Councilmember Hussain said it was his understanding that Mr. Abood talked about putting a binder together and it fell flat, and asked both Ms. Kimmel and Ms. DiSessa if they knew anything since it was thought to be brought up at Cabinet and both indicated no.

Economic Development & Planning

Councilmember Hussain asked Ms. Kimmel if she's connected with Captain Diehl, Ms. Kimmel indicated that the Captain is out this week but emailed her options to meet. Councilmember Hussain asked Ms. Coleman what the issue was with LPD and Mr. McDonald saying he couldn't coordinate with the social workers, Ms. Coleman said Ms. Kimmel would be better to answer. Ms. Kimmel stated it is believed that LPD is asking code to provide extensive information on occupants of the homes that isn't available and need to speak with the Captain. Councilmember Wood stated each day someone is in a home there is potential danger and suggested reaching out to AC Backus.

Councilmember Kost asked if any headway was made on the vacancy list to shuffle into. Councilmember Hussain said he asked Joe the question and he made the commitment to reach out to landlords about rapid rehousing. Ms. Coleman said she knows he has gotten an agenda, Councilmember Wood asked if she knew when the meeting was, Ms. Coleman didn't not recall from their conversation in the morning.

Councilmember Wood added for Ms. Kimmel in her comment from last night that BS&A isn't helping, they signed a contract and it's April and nothings started, they were told when approved there would be a contract manager to help and nothing. Ms. Kimmel agreed and said the problem is with Finance.

Councilmember Spitzley asked about a coordination with Code/Law and that a city attorney over view was shared with her that Mr. Smiertka stated you cannot enter a home but this states about a process that you can enter a home to make repairs and put on the taxes or lien. Ms. DiSessa asked for the date of the report, Councilmember Wood said she looked up IPMC Section 109 and double check and read 109.04 in regard to emergency repairs adding that Code doesn't have the staff to do that. Councilmember Spitzley stated some just need simple things like a smoke detector. Councilmember Hussain said some are looking at a huge cost when getting into furnace etc., adding that regarding law/LPD he wants to hear a process ironed out and applied for the next meeting and why not bring

prosecution and asked Ms. Williams, she indicated that the Simtob properties are currently in litigation so cannot discuss.

HRCS

Councilmember Hussain asked Ms. Coleman from the last meeting she stated she only had \$125,000 left and were spending \$50,000/mo. where she is with that. Ms. Coleman answered they have gotten another \$200,000, Councilmember Hussain asked from where, she responded from finance she didn't ask and that gives them another four months. Councilmember Wood asked if this was projected in her budget for this year, Ms. Coleman stated no and she has \$100,00 for warming/emergency, and probably the same for the upcoming year but she would have to look, saying they also have carry-over funds. Councilmember Wood said she doesn't recall approving carry forward, Ms. Coleman said they asked and she would look for the resolution. Councilmember Kost asked regarding the money for emergency/ warming does that all go to one group, Ms. Coleman said they are not giving it to anybody right now, the funds are sitting in an account then drawn from and assigned. He then asked if this agency we use for the hotel one, Ms. Coleman said they have two Holy Cross and Advent House. Councilmember Kost asked if this money is used for housing or administrative cost, Ms. Coleman said she would have to look, then added they have three hotels the Travel Lodge, Red Roof Inn and Causeway Bay. Councilmember Spitzley asked if our building enforcement do inspections on these, Councilmember Wood said the Fire Marshal would. The Committee then discussed that two are in Delta Township and the other on the Southside of Lansing giving away City dollars and why not hotels within the city. Ms. Coleman didn't know and said it is between the agencies. Councilmember Wood then mentioned maybe talking with Ingham County Commissioners to make an effort that represents the City, Ms. Coleman said she would ask. Councilmember Wood added that over 2/3 of the Commissioners are residents of the city and Ingham County charges hotel/motel tax based on occupancy. Councilmember Spitzley added she is concerned about transportation if the hotels are not in the City.

DISCUSSION – Problem Property Enforcement Action Team (OCA, LPD, and ED&P) on Simtob Properties

Councilmember Hussain again referenced what he said earlier about brainstorming this idea and for the three Departments to talk about the problem properties, this was all prior to litigation. Ms. Williams stated again that anything in regard to Simtob is off the table. Councilmember Wood indicated she understands laws position but all this was prior to the litigation and the goal is to get action and not be in the same position as Autumn Ridge.

DISCUSSION – 2022 Ad Hoc on Housing Report and Implementation

Councilmember Hussain indicated there were a number of recommendations and some budget priorities, his intention is to have this semi-regular on the agenda and since folks are here from the departments, they can maybe get answers. Councilmember Wood mentioned to Councilmember Spitzley if she recalls they did turn over to the administration and asked the Mayor, who said he was going to meet with the department heads and they would look at it, on a follow-up they were told under discussion it was not assigned to anyone and she then asked Ms. DiSessa if she can speak on it. Ms. DiSessa said she had nothing to report and will take back to the Mayor.

Councilmember Hussain asked if Councilmember Spitzley could speak on items a & c, Councilmember Spitzley mentioned item a, as they all know some inspections have not had a follow-up in a timely manner, and items b & c, is a little different because they can be timely, but making sure they have their license and inspection prior to move in.

Councilmember Kost asked the Deputy Mayor if she could tell them when she will come back with the information, next meeting or before on the Ad Hoc report. Ms. DiSessa confirmed the date of the report (09/26/202) and she if she gets the information prior to the next meeting she will forward to Council President Wood.

Councilmember Spitzley referenced item b, and the intent was to do a review of rental inspection fees/red tag fees and if inline with community of their size. She said she understands Ms. Kimmel is sending an RFP for that, Councilmember Hussain asked Ms. Kimmel for a timeline. Ms. Kimmel stated the intent is to do a recommendation at the end of July. Councilmember Hussain said he'd like to see an annual report of red tags, NEAT team, units untagged as a result of uncooperating and moved to Demo process.

Councilmember Spitzley went to item d, saying they were told law implied they could do the landlord registry, thought that if they had a few landlords consistently not doing what supposed to and there is a red tag then we have a list of bad guys and should be public. Councilmember Kost asked if legal said why it couldn't be done. Councilmember Wood said redlining if you standardize and just pick certain landlords it's redlining.

Mike & Erica Lynn both said they'd be happy to do a yelp out.

Ms. Kenny asked where the list was, Councilmember Hussain responded online.

Councilmember Kost left at 4:36

Councilmember Hussain asked about part II of HRCS item b, Councilmember Spitzley said that's part of the red tags having the Ombudsman and seeing the statistics, Councilmember Hussain said being candid he doesn't know what they get out of that position.

Councilmember Kost returned at 4:38

Councilmember Hussain said he seen Ms. Coleman's face when talking about Ombudsman but asked if he is actually getting out in the field, he can't continue to support certain numbers in line items if don't know what the position is doing. Ms. Coleman acknowledged her facial expression and said she felt attacked but now listening they do not have the information, and it is not a field position, Joe works hard in the office and for those that need help. Councilmember Hussain confirmed he knows more about it than she realizes and historically handled doesn't mean it's the best/effective way and he is out in the field all the time and most people couldn't pick Joe out of a lineup. Councilmember Spitzley said if he's working in the office, they need to know what he does, which get's them to item c under HRCS and getting this out to people. Councilmember Wood mentioned back when this position was created Triple J was in office and asked for the position and explained what it was used for, to help tenants and was supposed to have a legal background, it didn't get filled and then at the time Mr. McDonald needed a place so was put there and was told he got the position because he is a landlord. Continuing that the bottom line is they want Ms. Coleman these recommendations where what he was supposed to do when he got the position and it's not happening. Ms. Coleman said she understands the job description are not in sync but he is doing his job and see the need of the Committee and will move this forward.

Ms. Lynn mention that Mr. McDonald was at Reutter Park where there was a protest and spoke to someone and they didn't know who he was or what he was doing there, why at a protest. Adding that someone called him and never got a return call, when someone is calling it is urgent and important to them and they are upset and crying.

Ms. Washington added that nobody in this room deals with the homeless more than her and she volunteers to do this. She spoke on calling on a Friday afternoon at 3pm both HRCS and the Clerks office with no answer, then Joe and he had no clue how to help her with a situation. Adding that these people are getting put into horrible disgusting places and thanked Councilmember Wood for her sternness.

OTHER

Councilmember Hussain mentioned in 2018 there was a change in Ordinance 1237 on trash bins and if they weren't taken care of they would be stickered and a seal would have to be broken to use. Councilmember Wood added that at the end of 2018 Code and Public Service were pointing fingers as to who was responsible, she then stated in 2019 Mr. Kilpatrick updated the then Committee that they have determined who should be cited and will get a list and Code will issue the tickets. She asked for Mr. Kilpatrick to attend the next meeting along with Code to figure out where the fall out is and why it's not being enforced.

Councilmember Spitzley asked about the 1317 Kalamazoo properties and if they are pink tagged and need to get people out of the hotels, Ms. Kimmel confirmed all were and her understanding the building permits needed to be pulled and inspected, she can get an update. Councilmember Wood spoke on the issue of landlords doing their own repairs when they need a licensed contractor, you don't know if they've hit a wire or not again put it on the taxes. Councilmember Kost mentioned those that signed new leases at 2222 W Holmes and if Section 8 vouchers are they still collecting rent, Ms. Kimmel said they are working with the voucher program to ensure they are protected.

Mr. Lynn spoke on appreciating Councilmember Wood for what she said, people need to be held accountable. He continued to ask what the OCA opinion on HRCS Board and Councilmember Wood is said they don't have an answer.

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 5:20pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee as Amended on April 18, 2023