



MINUTES
Committee on City Operations
Monday, November 13, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Spadafore called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Council Member Spadafore, Chair
Council Member Hussain, Vice-Chair
Council Member Kost, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Emily Linden, Internal Auditor
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA
Willie Hobbs
Matt Staples, OCA
Sharon Frischman, Assessor
Michael Lynn
Cathleen Edgerly, DLI
Walter Allen, Code Compliance
Jim Knowlton, Representative for Mr. Hobbs
Jason Kildea, Gillespie
Chuck Abraham
Laura Castle, Capital Hottie

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 16, 2023, WITH THE CHANGE TO THE LAST SENTENCE WHICH SHOULD STATE "NOVEMBER 13TH" NOT "OCTOBER". MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Abraham spoke on the special assessment and his two properties in Zone A and C. He requested more evaluations across the area, voicing his concerns on the amount and asked for more proportionate assessments. Lastly, he acknowledged the work the DLI is doing.

Mr. Kildea spoke on the special assessments and appealed to the Committee to table for further discussions.

Mr. Lynn spoke on the proposed Council Rule changes and his concern with the restrictions being proposed. He encouraged them to reach out, outside of the City, speak to East Lansing on their processes that appear to be working.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION – Claim Appeal #1991; Sandra Bingley for \$1,135 in brush/tree limb debris fees at 1839 Bradley Avenue

Council Member Spadafore stated that Council staff reached out to the claimant via phone and email with no response.

Mr. Allen stated to the Committee that the violation was written in March and after no clean up the contractor did the work in June, and all items in the photos were still present and cleaned up.

Mr. Staples stated the Claims Review Committee denied based on the information provided to them.

Council Member Hussain asked if the claimant reached out between the notices and clean up, and Mr. Allen could not confirm or deny if they had made contact with his office.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO DENY THE CLAIM APPEAL #1991; SANDRA BILINGLEY FOR \$1,135 IN BRUSH/TREE LIMB DEBRIS FEES AT 1839 BRADLEY AVENUE. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

RESOLUTION – Claim Appeal #1968; Willie Hobbs for \$3,622 in Code enforcement fees at 1217 Marquette Street

Mr. Allen informed the Committee that the violation was written in March, items were still there later in March, 2023 and then submitted to contractor.

Ms. Linden stated the claims reviewed denied it based on there was nothing out of the ordinary.

Mr. Knowlton, representing Mr. Hobbs, stated he delivered additional information to the City but was not part of the documents in front of Committee. Therefore, asked for additional time. The materials were copied, and it was noted the document stated “hand delivered to the City Clerk on 9th Floor”.

The consensus of the Committee was to move discussion and action the next meeting on November 27, 2023 and then Council final action December 11, 2023.

RESOLUTION – Community Funding Request; Capital Hippie, Scare on the Square event

Ms. Castle confirmed the event was held in October and was successful. It brought together local artists and vendors. The request is to defray the fees for street closures.

Council Member Hussain asked if there was a non-profit involved with this, and Ms. Castle stated there was not. Council Member Hussaini asked if community funding has been provided to a business owner that held an event in the past. Ms. Hagen-Lawrence stated she was not able to respond to that, however the application states it must be non-profit, neighborhood or Lansing based organization. Council Member Hussain stated that since they are non-profit can the Council do anything with the application.

Council Member Spadafore tabled the item for clear classification, and if not feasible he advised Ms. Castle that there might be a non-profit to assist her with the application.

RESOLUTION – Special Assessment; Principal Shopping District 2023 Roll

Council Member Spadafore distributed an email and memo from the Chamber of Commerce with their concerns on the assessments. He did respond to the Chamber letter. He then provided information he obtained from the DLI on where the funds go. This included \$1,375,000 in small business grants, building repairs and maintenance improvement grants \$2,500,000; Community Space improvements at \$290,000 and the general admin costs for those projects. Since the hearing, the Assessor has addressed the concerns with the parking lots.

Ms. Frischman explained all exempt properties have a 60% reduction and are now getting 25% reduction. The other change was the cap, which went from \$10,000; which was in place since 1996, and State law allows the CPI, which the City has not done ever. There is only one tax payer that reaches the newer cap of \$17,000. She also confirmed that Zone C did see bigger increases because they have always been assessed at extremely low rates. The first floor in Zone C was \$.01 per sq ft, but Zone A was \$.14 per sq ft. as development has gone out, it was felt that Zone C was starting to feel enough benefit to pay more proportionally.

Council Member Spadafore stated there was a question from Committee on a new public hearing being required due to the changes, and the OCA stated there was no new hearing required. The new roll in front of the Committee is now 15% lower than the initial roll presented. The roll represents a 5% increase, and 3% for 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028.

Council Member Hussain asked for what the process is to engage with the owners. Ms. Edgerly explained that in 2020 and 2021 the DLI Board discussed if an analysis should be done on the PSD roll and they determined to not do at that time. In 2023 the DLI Board was asked if they wanted to do an analysis, and broke into a subcommittee; evaluated it and took action. They then spoke to the assessor on what the Board recommendation was, and that analysis and roll was taken back to the Board. After the Board action letters were sent out to the property owners.

Council Member Kost has heard that the snow removal service is not being provided, and asked what funds covered that. Ms. Edgerly stated the services and costs cover snow and salting. If someone does not have the results they want, they should call the DLI office.

Council Member Spadafore encouraged them to reach out to some people who do not attend Board meetings on a regular basis to keep everyone informed.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT, PRINCIPAL SHOPPING DISTRICT 2023 ROLL. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

RESOLUTION – Lansing City Council Rules

Council Member Spadafore acknowledged Mr. Lynn on his comments, noting that the technology the City has is different from other municipalities and they do want to give people the ability to comment. The public can contact the City Clerk for Council meetings, and Council staff for Committee of the Whole meetings four (4) hours before each to sign up. For all other Committee meetings, it will have the link at the top of the agendas and they can participate similar to a town hall. The limit on the time to speak will remain was stated in the Council Rules currently at three (3) minutes. Lastly, he noted that Committee and Council members have spoken to City TV and they are being told they will be ready in January.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE LANSING CITY COUNCIL RULE 48 ADDITION.

Council Member Kost raised his concerns on the four (4) hour notice before Committee of the Whole and Council, asking for a change to two (2) hours. The Committee discussed the process involved by Council staff, and the City Clerk in those two (2) hours before meetings. Council Member Kost asked for clarification if the meeting starts at a later time due to an earlier meeting rolling over. Council Member Spadafore confirmed that with discussions with OCA, it is two hours from the start time as published on the agenda, per OMA. Council Member Kost again urged them to change it to two (2) hours, and Council Member Spadafore explained this is a new rule that can be tested and Council can always change their rules if they find this initial process is not accommodating or working. Mr. Lynn asked them to consider something different and what East Lansing is doing. Council Member Kost asked if they could add to the document that Council will revisit it in 3 or 6 months. The Committee considered and determined to introduce at Council tonight, and action cannot be taken tonight anyway, so on December 11, 2023 when Council takes final action Council Member Kost can approach the idea again.

MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

DISCUSSION – Andy Kilpatrick, City Street Project 2023 Status Update

Mr. Kilpatrick distributed a construction project map and bullet points which is included in the packet. He highlighted the projects including the outside agencies; MDOT, BWL and Ingham County Drain Commission. In the future he will be able to provide miles and funding sources.

Council Member Kost spoke on areas in Ward 1 that were addressed, and asked when Sheldon would be done. Mr. Kilpatrick stated it is scheduled for spring 2024. He was then asked about the Jenison area, and told that was part of the CSO area, next two construction season. A future map will also list the CSO areas. Council Member Kost asked about their progress on addressing timing on the traffic light at Clemens at Kalamazoo. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed they had reviewed it, and are considering increasing the time. Council Member Hussain asked about the unique lighting in the signals on Edgewood at Cedar and Pennsylvania. Mr. Kilpatrick stated those are MDOT and considered visor signals that work with turning and impacted timing on the green turns. Council Member Hussain asked about the jurisdiction lines on S. Waverly and walkability funds. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed it is a unique area with the City from the river to Jolly and then north and south of that is Ingham County. It could be said that there will be no changes until they have their project completed.

Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed that he will provide an updated document in the future with funding and miles.

Other

No other topics.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 4:30 pm

Submitted by Sherrie Boak

Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on November 27, 2023