



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Wednesday, January 8, 2024 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT

Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Tamera Carter
Councilmember Trini Pehlivanoglu
Councilmember Jeffrey Brown
Councilmember Ryan Kost
Councilmember Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Shelbi Frayer, Mayor's office
Muhammed Qawee, DEI Advisory Board
Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation
Allen Fox, Ingham County
Heath Lowry
Amber Paxton, Financial Empowerment

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 3, 2024 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Public Comment

Mr. Allan Fox introduced himself.

Presentations

Office of Financial Empowerment; Lansing SAVE First Capital Campaign Update

Ms. Paxton updated the Committee on the program. She began by outlining what the program is, which is the process of opening a savings account, which began in November 2014. Ms. Paxton then went through a presentation on collaboration with the City of Lansing, the Lansing School District and MSUFCU. There are over 1700 accounts in the City, and are opt out options do not opt in opened with a student ID number, not a SS number. It is combined with financial education, and those educators go into every classroom monthly. It is set up with multiple accounts, so if they leave the district they can withdraw their funds, but any money the

City has put in, comes back to the City and it gets put towards the students still involved. Ms. Paxton spoke briefly on the mission and the goal for the program which has met needs. Ms. Paxton concluded by listing the organizations that contribute throughout the year.

Council Member Brown asked about a partnership with Kroger. Ms. Paxton stated it is the Kroger rewards program, and on their website, you can enter the program they want to support; The Desk drawer Fund. This gives 1% spent, and currently only 90 cards, so they will do further outreach on that program.

Council Member Hussain asked about the community program and if they are specific faith based, and Ms. Paxton stated they are, but do not need to be.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION – Appointment; Heath Lowry; Board of Zoning Appeals; Term to Expire June 30, 2026

Mr. Lowry spoke briefly on his goals, noting he is an attorney and in law school studied the relationship between land use and quality of life. He assured the Committee he felt he would serve it well.

Council Member Kost acknowledged him and asked about his recent application to the Charter Commission. Mr. Lowry stated that if he is elected, he would resign from this Board. Council Member Kost noted his concern with filling the position now and then if he left it would have to be filled again. Council President Garza noted there might be an issue with quorum issue to address business, but if appointed he could have 5 meetings.

Council Member Jackson noted this is the applicants first choice, his volunteer work resembles his initiative to serve, and would support.

Council Member Hussain, asked if he is not elected, would he stay on the BZA. Mr. Lowry stated if he is not elected, he will stay on BZA, and this application was put in long before the Charter Commission went on the ballot. Mr. Lowry assured them he believes in a public servant.

Council Member Kost assured him he supported him in the role on this Board.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HEATH LOWRY, BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Participation in the Ingham County Treasurer Payment Reduction Program

Mr. Fox explained the funding from the Federal relief money. The State of Michigan and the Federal government recognized that the COVID virus magnified some household concerns. In Ingham County, instead of sending out flyers, they brought the program to people in the community to meet with counselors, start application, get other financial assistance, and worked with MSU Extension. There were 340 families in the City of Lansing that were assisted, and other assistance towards costs related to home ownership. In the 2024 foreclosures cycle, there is a record low number, and very few are owner occupied. The funds are running out and there are a few things that can be done locally that comes through County. This option in front of the Council is for no cost to the City, the school district or other taxing authorities, but does require City approval. This ties certain tax reliefs to poverty exemptions. This will be to address the county assessed taxes and fees and will not take funds away from the schools or the City.

Council Member Hussain asked for confirmation it is all interest, and fees, and Mr. Fox stated these are funds charged and due to the County. Any other options, the County would need to come back to the City, and at this time they are not looking to pursue that option.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INGHAM COUNTY TREASURER PAYMENT REDUCTION PROGRAM. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION - Special Outside Legal Counsel specific to Case Fitzpatrick v. City of Lansing Case no. 23-cv-01125; T Joseph Seward of Seward Henderson, PLLC

Mr. Smiertka explained that since a City employee has been sued also, there is a conflict of interest. The insurance company has asked the Mr. Seward to represent. City Council has to approve all outside counsel and that is why it is before Council.

Council Member Jackson, asked for clarification on the parties. Mr. Smiertka stated in addition to the City there is also a code officer on the case. There is insurance with MMRA, and they want to employee Mr. Seward and Council has to approve. Council Member Jackson asked if the City and the individual has competing interest and how can the City approve for the individual employee. Mr. Smiertka stated it all comes out of the same insurance policy.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR OUTSIDE COUNSEL SPECIFIC TO CASE 23-CV-01125 FOR T JOSEPH SEWARD OF SEWARD HENDERSON, PLLC. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – GRANT ACCEPTANCE; MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND (MNRTF) FUNDS FOR THE SYCAMORE CREEK CAVANAUGH ROAD AND WAVERLY ROAD ACQUISITIONS

Mr. Kaschinske explained these were grants received through the MNRTF and they are for the appraised value of the property. The State of Michigan pays for 75% of the appraised value and were before the City before in 2023 when the City went to the DNR for the grants. Mr. Kaschinske went through maps of the area that is affected at Cavanaugh. There cannot be buildings if they are not used for a park purpose, so they will be removing the structure.

Council Member Hussain asked where the funds for the demolition would come from. Mr. Kaschinske stated the demo costs not part of the acquisition grant, but until out to bid do not have exact cost. That would come from park operations. To use grant dollars the building has to be removed first, and this grant is for acquisition of the property. There is a clause in the grant for park land, it is permanent park property and there are rules for what can be done with the property.

Mr. Kaschinske then moved to a presentation on Waverly Road which is wooded property with no structures. The river trail extends up to the property, and there is a consumer's easement on the west side of Waverly. The area is owned by Lansing Christian Center Church, (LCCC) on the map, and own the property north of the easement. The goal is to extend the Lansing River Trail towards the larger population density. This is still City of Lansing property and connecting Lansing residents, and since there are no sidewalks, this assists in connections with non-motorized all the way to Lake Lansing. Mr. Kaschinske noted this is the first step, they still need to agree on the appraisal, get with Consumers on the easement, and a long process but is an area they really want to get to. In the past, there has been permission given by Consumers on other property easements.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE GRANT ACCEPTANCE FOR THE MNRTF GRANT FOR SYCAMORE CREEK CAVANAUGH ROAD AND WAVERLY ROAD ACQUISITIONS. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

DISCUSSION – DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY BOARD RULES OF PROCEDURE

Council Member Hussain and Jackson stepped away from the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Mr. Qawwee outlined the process the Advisory Board used on the rules, which was using other rules procedures as a template. The draft was submitted to the leadership team, and they had a couple weeks to provide edits. Most of the discussion and debate was on time for public comment, and they edited those to mimic what City Council uses. The Advisory Board approved unanimously and then sent to the City Attorney for final approval.

Council Member Hussain returned to the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Council President Garza asked if this should be discharged or place on file and no comments or concerns from Council.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT GARZA DISCHARGED TO THE COMMITTEE ON EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

CLOSED SESSION

Council Member Jackson returned to the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION AT 6:23 P.M. TO PURSUANT TO MCL 15.268(C) OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, CITY COUNCIL WILL

RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR STRATEGY AND NEGOTIATION SESSIONS CONNECTED WITH THE NEGOTIATION OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY OF LANSING AND TEAMSTERS LOCAL 214 SUPERVISORY AND NON-SUPERVISORY UNITS FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2024- DECEMBER 31, 2024, AND NEGOTIATION OF WAGE REOPENERS PURSUANT TO THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY OF LANSING AND TEAMSTERS 243 CLERICAL, TECHNICAL, PROFESSIONAL UNIT AND SUPERVISORY UNIT EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 1, 2024 AS REQUESTED BY THE CITY. ROLL CALL VOTE. MOTION CARRIED 7-1.

RECONVENE

Council President Garza reconvened the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION – Ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement; Teamsters Local 214 Supervisory and Non-Supervisory Units

Council Member Hussain outlined the changes for the one year contract.

MOTION BY COUNCIL HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO RATIFY THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH TEAMSTERS LOCAL 214 SUPERVISORY AND NON-SUPERVISORY UNITS. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement Wage Reopener; Teamsters 243 Clerical, Technical, Professional Unit

Council Member Hussain outlined the changes.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO RATIFY THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WAGE REOPENER FOR TEAMSTERS 243 CLERICAL, TECHNICAL PROFESSIONAL UNIT. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION - Ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement Wage Reopener; Teamsters 243 Supervisory Unit

Council Member Hussain outlined the changes.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO RATIFY THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WAGE REOPENER FOR TEAMSTERS 243 SUPERVISORY UNIT. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

OTHER

No other topics.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at: 6:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,
Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,
Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee January 22, 2024