

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
December 8, 2015

The Regular City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Bronson in the Council Chambers at City Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Bronson, Temple, King, Riddle, Couture, Kwiatkowski and Lavender

Mayor Bronson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Approval of Agenda, and Receive and File all Communications:

Councilwoman Riddle moved to approve the Agenda and receive and file all communications; supported by Councilman King. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:

▪ **Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – November 24, 2015.**

Councilman King moved to approve the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of November 24, 2015 as presented; supported by Mayor Pro Tem Couture. Motion carried unanimously.

Bills and Disbursements:

▪ **Prepaid Bills and Disbursements for the Month of November 2015.**

Mayor Bronson inquired as to the bills for AT&T and Charter Communications. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski replied there was a three year agreement with AT&T that expired in September, noting the rates doubled. Staff has met with Charter and at the current time the Recreation Center and Ice Pavilion are with Charter and one week from today City Hall and the rest of the buildings will be with Charter. He informed Council the costs will be less than half the price for telephone and internet. Councilman King inquired if there are any hardware changes that need to be done. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski replied we will be able to operate with what we have.

Mayor Bronson asked as to frozen sick pay. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski answered five years ago there was quite a liability on the books for unused vacation, sick and personal time for the AFSCME Union and non-union. The agreement was the City would pay off those banks over a five-year period, so each year a payroll is run. In addition to freezing the hours, the rate in place at that time was also frozen for payment over the five year period. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski stated this payment is year five and there is no more rollover or accumulation of time.

Councilman King asked if the payment to DeVere Construction for the Locust Rebuild is the City's only bill for that. City Manager Eustice replied yes.

Mayor Bronson inquired as item no. 54, asking if this was for a water overpayment. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski replied yes.

A question was asked as to where the beaver was that needed to be trapped. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski replied across from LeDuc's Motel, noting that every few years we have to hire someone to do this.

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Councilman King moved to approve the prepaid bills and disbursements for the month of November 2015 in the amount of \$419,873.51; supported by Councilwoman Kwiatkowski. A roll call vote was taken; motion carried unanimously.

▪ **Unpaid Bills and Disbursements for the Month of November 2015.**

Councilman Lavender moved to approve the unpaid bills and disbursements for the month of November 2015 in the amount of \$23,849.90; supported by Councilwoman Riddle. A roll call vote was taken; motion carried unanimously.

General Business:

▪ **Consideration of Proposals for Water Meter Installation:** City Manager Eustice commented Requests for Proposals were sent out to install water meters that we purchased almost two years ago – we need to get these 85 meters installed. Only two proposals were received, labor only. The proposals received were from Werner Plumbing & Heating at \$255.00 per installation and Great Lakes Plumbing & Heating at \$1,173.00 per installation. It is staff's recommendation to go with Werner Plumbing & Heating at \$255.00 per installation. Mr. Jason Karmol, DPW Director explained to Council there was a lot of outside local interest but the time period they needed to respond was not conducive to them to meet with him like Werner Plumbing & Heating did. Mayor Bronson commented next year when the City has more to install, will this be open again. DPW Director Karmol replied yes, and would like to do this again the next fiscal year. He briefly stated different scenarios that the plumber can run into when installing a meter.

Mayor Pro Tem Couture moved to approve the proposal from Werner Plumbing & Heating for water meter installations, labor only, in the amount of \$255.00 for each meter; supported by Councilman Temple. A roll call vote was taken; motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: *(None.)*

City Clerk/Treasurer's Comments:

▪ **Gift of Stock** – Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski noted that David R. and Patricia L. Hubbard have given the City again this year stock, the value of which is about \$1,300.00, to be used for the Parks & Recreation program. He noted Council has a copy of the thank you he sent to the Hubbards.

▪ **Audit** – Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski stated he is waiting for the financial statements, noting the audit is done. As he previously reported, the audit went real well and the area we are going to take a tremendous hit in is the General Fund Balance, which is due to the unfunded liability in the pension plan because of the fact that we have to book it now. He noted the Council will see a deficit in the General Fund at the end of the fiscal year, stating this is the first time in his 20 years with the City. Clerk/Treasurer Kwiatkowski stated this scenario will happen all over the State of Michigan. Mayor Bronson commented Mr. and Mrs. Hubbard have been very generous at the Library, too.

City Manager's Report:

▪ **Consumer's Energy Tree Trim** – City Manager Eustice stated he met with personal from Consumers Energy last week in regard to the electric line clearing they are doing throughout the City and actually throughout the County. He noted that trees with blue x's are slated to be

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removed and trees with blue dots are slated for trimming. He went on to state Consumers will take all the brush away (will chip it). The trunk of the trees will be cut and left on the property and it will be up to the property owners to move the wood. The City's hope is that people that cut, use and sell wood will pick up the trees. The stumps will not be ground and will be the responsibility of the property owner. Councilwoman Kwiatkowski asked if there will be a time limit to have the wood removed by the property owner, or will it be open ended. City Manager Eustice stated this has not been discussed, but there probably will have to be a timeframe. He informed Council that Consumer's will begin cutting the first or second week of January, so we will probably have snow on the ground, which will make it difficult for people to remove the wood. There are some properties where the trees are deep into the property without road access and it may be difficult to get those removed. Councilman Temple stated if the work is going to be done in the City right-of-way it will be the City's responsibility to remove that wood. City Manager Eustice some of the work is and some is not. Mayor Bronson then asked if people will be pushing logs out in the street for spring clean-up. City Manager Eustice stated hopefully that does not happen, noting the City will have to send out a notice to the public not to move the logs into the street for spring clean-up. DPW Director Karmol commented he will basically have to see how much is left over when spring clean-up happens. A lot of times when homeowners coordinate with the DPW the City can help them; if we are already out doing spring clean-up that would be a helpful time to do it. He will have to wait to assess it at that time. DPW Director Karmol then commented the City already hires the stump removal from "Williams" now and that currently is not the DPW list. We will have to wait and see if the City is able to assist or not, depending on how many there are. Mayor Bronson noted pine and willow trees are not good for woodstoves and people will probably not want these. Councilwoman Riddle commented that people with outside boilers will burn willow and pine; maybe we need to be proactive and contact possible people what is going to be done and in the spring there may be availability of wood. Mayor Pro Tem Couture stated he feels there are enough people who do burn wood that would be grateful to spend an afternoon cutting up a tree and taking it. DPW Karmol commented that is exactly his hope. Mayor Bronson stated a lot of the trees got cleaned up after that August storm. Councilman Temple asked if the City is going to clean the wood chips up where Williams went through with the grinder. DPW Karmol replied the City raked everything flat and cleaned up the debris that was not level and recently purchased grass seed. Councilman Temple stated he noticed today on Young Street there is one that hasn't been raked, as well as one on Taylor Street. Councilwoman Riddle asked when Williams does the grinding, she has a stump in the right-of-way, asking if it is possible to have that removed. DPW Director Karmol stated the City has a tree and stump list. The rule is 33 feet from the centerline to be in the right-of-way and he is trying to enforce that. Councilman Temple asked if the City right-of-way is between the sidewalk and the curb. DPW Director Karmol replied the City right-of-way is stated 66 feet in the Ordinance and in order to have it cover more than 66 feet we would have to rewrite it. City Manager Eustice informed Councilman Temple that in most cases he is correct. Councilman King asked how often Consumers does this. City Manager Eustice replied he was told the last time they did this in Cheboygan County was in the early 1990's. DPW Karmol pointed out that more than a dozen trees on the City's list for removal are going to be taken down by Consumers and he feels some responsibility of helping with this. He noted the homeowners have been patient. Mayor Bronson commented that Consumers is notifying us as a courtesy – it is not like we have a choice. City Manager Eustice commented that any homeowner that is going to have work done on their property should have an information door hanger from Consumers, showing the Council an example. He noted that Consumers has also spoken with some property owners,

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adding there have been some concerns from property owners. Consumers personnel also offered to come to a Council meeting, if necessary. City Manager Eustice then noted this project will take six to eight weeks. Councilwoman Riddle stated if you get a door hanger then your trees should be marked. Councilwoman Kwiatkowski asked if there is a plan to replant. City Manager Eustice stated no, not by Consumers.

- **DDA Façade Project** – City Manager Eustice stated the application is in for the DDA Façade Program and we hope this month to get a letter of intent from the MEDC to tell us how they are going to fund the project. He noted there are six property owners still in the program after the funding decreased from 75/25 to 50/50. Most of the projects will be done in the spring.

- **Bois Blanc Township Purchase Agreement** – City Manager Eustice stated he waiting for a response from Attorney Steven Joppich, noting he spoke with him today. Attorney Joppich is drafting a counteroffer that the Council will see before Bois Blanc Township. He is hoping to get this Agreement this week. City Manager Eustice expressed that we want to move forward as quick as we can and see what the Township's response is because we do have other property owners that have interest in purchasing property. He is hopeful of having that this week and will forward it on to Council for review. He then noted we will probably have a special Port Commission meeting to review the Agreement when we get it from Attorney Joppich and have a recommendation for Council. Councilman Temple commented it is too bad we did not initially put on a time limit.

- **Blight Committee** - City Manager Eustice reported there will be a Blight Committee meeting next week and hopes Councilman King can find time to meet. He then noted that the Department of Public Safety has been working very hard on clean-up throughout the City and there is a lot of good clean-up that is happening. They will continue to work on this and City Council will receive a report at the next City Council meeting. Councilman Temple expressed concern with the X-Treme Asphalt business on Court Street (former meat market), asking when they are going to get the equipment out of there and noting it looks like some of the equipment is back in the trees for the winter. He went on to state he has received a couple complaints, noting they start the trucks up about 5:00 am to 6:00 am and let them run for one-half hour or so. It is his understanding they are not supposed to be there. City Manager Eustice stated the property is not zoned for that business and they are supposed to move to another location outside the City. He stated he will get with Brandon Doremire, the owner, and move that along. City Manager Eustice stated Mr. Doremire does want to run a snowmobile parts business there this winter, which is an allowable use.

- **Utility Committee**– City Manager Eustice stated he talked about this Committee at the last meeting, noting he is looking for a couple of Council Members to volunteer for this Committee, which will have monthly meetings. He asked if there is any interest to let him know, adding he and DPW Karmol will be on the Committee. City Manager Eustice then explained there are a lot of upcoming issues, one of which is Meijer's and how we are going to get water to that site and funding for a second water tower on the east side (we may get some funding in 2016 with construction in 2017). Councilwoman Riddle asked if these meetings would be during the day. City Manager Eustice replied they could be. Councilwoman Riddle then volunteered to be on the Committee, as did Councilwoman Kwiatkowski.

Messages and Communications from Mayor and Council Members:

- **Downtown Lights & Hospitality Night** – Councilman King complimented the lights and everything downtown, noting the Hospitality Night seemed to be a pretty big hit.

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▪ **Arbor Day/MSU Extension** – Councilwoman Riddle asked if one would contact the MSU Extension about Arbor Day. City Manager Eustice stated he believes so. Councilwoman Riddle then commented with Consumers getting rid of trees around the County it might be a good time, with Arbor Day, to do something smaller with bushes, etc. City Manager Eustice stated he will contact MSU Extension and see what kind of programs they might have.

Adjournment:

Councilman King moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.; supported by Mayor Pro Tem Couture. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Mark C. Bronson

Clerk/Treasurer Kenneth J. Kwiatkowski

Councilman Joseph Lavender

Councilwoman Winifred L. Riddle

Councilman Vaughn Temple

Councilman Nathan H. King

Mayor Pro Tem Nicholas C. Couture

Councilwoman Betty A. Kwiatkowski