

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH CITY COUNCIL HELD JOINTLY WITH THE DDA AND PLANNING COMMISSION IN PERSON AT THE WEST BRANCH POLICE DEPARTMENT, 130 PAGE STREET ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2023.

Mayor Frechette called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: City Mayor Paul Frechette, Council Members Carol Adair, Joanne Bennett, Mike Jackson, Ellen Pugh, Rusty Showalter, and Cathy Zimmerman.

Absent: None

Other officers present: City Manager John Dantzer, City Clerk Lori Ann Clover, City Treasurer Michelle Frechette, DPW Supervisor Mike Killackey, City Attorney Greg Meihn (by phone), County Commissioner Craig Scott, Planning Members Corrine Lucynski, Bob David, Yvonne DeRoso, Kara Fachting, and Joshua Erickson, and DDA Members Joseph Clark, and Chief Ken Walters.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Scott gave an update on County activities. The county accepted a child care grant, purchased a new animal control vehicle from Boston, and made some adjustments on the first quarter budget. The road commission is considering in house training for CDL licenses and looking at hiring summer help. The DNR is not willing to sell the mineral rights for the gravel.

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Planning Chair, Corrine Lucynski discussed Planning Commission updates. The main project was the development and approval of an addition to the zoning code to allow for marihuana facilities within the City. The Masterplan and Capital Improvement plan were reviewed and updated. The Commission will continue plans to work towards achieving the ten goals identified in their annual report. The Planning Commission continued to work towards the implementation of the Redevelopment Ready Communities program guidelines, pursuant to the Resolution of Participation in the RRC Program that was passed by the Planning Commission in November of 2015.

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DDA Vice Chair, Joseph Clark gave a brief DDA update. In 2022 the DDA worked on the development of the Gathering Place, worked with City Council on the Houghton Ave redesign project, continued with the downtown flower and snow removal projects, seasonal themed banners, researched the Historical Preservation Designation for the City, and the Façade Program.

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Planning Member Fachting thanked the City Council for all their hard work. Mayor Frechette thanked both boards for their hard work and collaboration. Commissioner Scott stated that he liked the way that all the boards were working together.

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT OF BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$688,542.80.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Council discussed the Marihuana Facility application submitted by Richard Wing. Manager Dantzer reported that Clerk Clover, Attorney Meihn, and himself had reviewed the application to make sure it was all inclusive and met all of the requirements. The Planning Commission approved his special use and site plan. Mr. Wing stated that he was really looking forward to getting established in West Branch and introduced the Manager, Mike Casper.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE MARIHUANNA FACILITY APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY RICHARD WING.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY ADAIR, SECOND BY PUGH TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMITS FOR THE VICTORIAN ART FAIR AND CULPEPPER & MERRIWEATHER CIRCUS.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY PUGH, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE UTILITY BILL ADJUSTMENT REQUEST FOR 300 W HOUGHTON AVE. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,276.12.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY ADAIR TO APPROVE THE UPDATED CONTRACT AND AUTHORIZE MANAGER DANTZER TO SIGN THE NEW CONTRACT WITH DO-ALL FOR THE RECYCLE CENTER STAFF.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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No action was taken on the letter of support for West Branch District Library.

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Manager Dantzer explained that MDOT was requesting permission to grade what was outside of their road right of way and they are paying \$300 for the easement. They had also approached several property owners in the City for similar permission.

MOTION BY FRECHETTE, SECOND BY SHOWALTER TO APPROVE MDOTS CONSENT TO GRADE GOOD FAITH OFFER AND AUTHORIZE MANAGER DANTZER TO SIGN ON BEHALF OF THE CITY.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY ZIMMERMAN TO APPROVE THE SOLE SOURCE VENDOR REQUEST OF SPICER GROUP FOR THE BRIDGE DRAWING PROPOSAL AND UPLOAD INTO THE STATE BRIDGE PORTAL FOR \$1,700.00 AND TO AUTHORIZE MANAGER DANTZER TO SIGN ON THE CITY’S BEHALF.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer explained that during his research to fund the streetscape project the USDA has the lowest interest rates and the longest loan periods. However, they require an Architectural Feasibility report for the funding.

MOTION BY ZIMMERMAN, SECOND BY SHOWALTER TO ALLOW MANAGER DANTZER TO PROCEED WITH THE USDA FUNDING AND GRANT APPLICATIONS TO FUND THE STREETScape PROJECT FOR HOUGHTON AVE.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE SOLE SOURCE VENDOR REQUEST OF BECKETT & RAEDER PRELIMINARY ARCHITECTUAL FEASIBILITY REPORT

PROPOSAL OF \$5,000.00 AND TO AUTHORIZE MANAGER DANTZER TO SIGN ON THE CITY’S BEHALF.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY ZIMMERMAN, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE OGEMAW FIRE DEPARTMENT APPROPRIATION INVOICE OF \$27,393.00.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY ADAIR TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND SUMMARY FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JANUARY 16, 2023.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY BENNETT TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE TREASURER’S REPORT AND INVESTMENT SUMMARY; MINUTES FROM THE NCMF MEETING HELD DECEMBER 7, 2022; MINUTES FROM THE WEST BRANCH PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD DECEMBER 15, 2022; MINUTES FROM THE AIRPORT BOARD MEETING HELD DECEMBER 21, 2022; AND MINUTES FROM THE DDA MEETING HELD DECEMBER 27, 2022.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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Communications shared included the Michigan Public Policy Survey January 2023 addition.

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Mayor Frechette informed Council about the bus visit last week. It was a huge success with local businesses bringing food to the Silver Lining for the tour stop. They were amazed at our hospitality and the downtown area being “walkable”. They were headed to Detroit for a convention after the stop in West Branch and are looking at the possibility of making West Branch a destination this summer.

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Manager Dantzer requested council permission to remodel the men’s bathroom into a storage closet with all the work being done internally.

MOTION BY FRECHETTE, SECOND BY ZIMMERMAN TO REMODEL THE MEN’S PUBLIC RESTROOM INTO A STORAGE CLOSET AND MAKE THE WOMEN’S PUBLIC RESTROOM UNISEX.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Pugh, Showalter, and Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer reiterated that there are several steps that need to be taken to create a building department within the City. He requested a work session to review all the requirements with Attorney Meihn. Council and Attorney Meihn set a work session prior to our next meeting February 20, 2023 at 5:30 pm. During this time an additional topic will be the OPRA Plan as Manager Dantzer explained it may be easier to develop a plan than to bring every request to Council.

Council also discussed property tax collection. Council agreed to have Attorney Meihn to continue with collections as they are currently being done, not to add any additional steps. Member Zimmerman requested a list of delinquent taxes.

Mayor Frechette adjourned the meeting at 7:11 pm.

Paul Frechette, Mayor

Lori Ann Clover, Clerk