

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH CITY COUNCIL HELD IN PERSON AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 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, Rusty Showalter, and Cathy Zimmerman.

Absent: Council Member Ellen Pugh

Other officers present: City Manager John Dantzer, City Clerk Lori Ann Clover, Police Chief Ken Walters, DPW Supervisor Mike Killackey, City Realtor Yvonne DeRoso, City Attn: Gregory Meihn (via Zoom), and County Commissioner Craig Scott.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Commissioner Scott gave a county update. The county approved resolutions for an abuse prevention policy, the annual MSU Extension agreement, USDA grants for the Sheriff’s Department, the annual agreement with Rhea Family Animal Shelter. They approved a 2% compensation increase for non-judicial elected officials. The annual 23/24 budget was approved. The Road Commission also approved their 23/24 budget.

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MOTION BY FRECHETTE, SECOND BY ADAIR TO EXCUSE MEMBER PUGH FROM TODAY’S MEETING.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer and DPW Supervisor met with the owner of Horizon Sealcoating. They had the lowest bid and they went to each of the spots where the striping would occur to ensure everything was covered under the bid.

MOTION BY ADAIR, SECOND BY ZIMMERMAN TO APPROVE THE BID FROM HORIZON SEALCOATING NOT TO EXCEED \$4,997.50 FOR STRIPING ON VARIOUS CITY PARKING LOTS.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer and DPW Supervisor Killackey reviewed the bids for the asphalt on S. Fourth St. Both Mid-Michigan and Hodgins have done work for the city in the past and did a good job. Mid-Michigan was the lowest bid for this project.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY ZIMMERMAN TO APPROVE THE BID FROM MID-MICHIGAN ASPHALT NOT TO EXCEED \$12,950.00 FOR REPAVING S. FOURTH ST.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY SHOWALTER, TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$110,241.99.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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MOTION BY ADAIR, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMITS FOR THE CHRISTMAS LIGHT PARADE AND THE WEST BRANCH LIGHT POLE DECORATING CONTEST.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO HAVE MEMBER SHOWALTER ABSTAIN FROM VOTING ON RESOLUTION 23-26 AND THE SALE OF LOT 21 DUE TO A CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer informed members there was an offer on Lot 21 and it is the full asking price of \$40,000.00. The IDC Board approved their support with the inclusion of a reverter clause. This would allow the city to purchase the property back if they do not have a site plan and building permit within two years. The city will continue to have the hay taken off until they start construction and would be responsible for the survey of the south lot line and commission fees for Realtor DeRoso.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY FRECHETTE, TO APPROVE THE SALE OF LOT 21 CONTINGENT UPON A REVERTER CLAUSE INCLUDED IN THE SALES AGREEMENT AND TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-26 WITH THE CORRECTION NOTED ON THE CITY MANAGER NAME AND TO HAVE MAYOR FRECHETTE AND MANAGER DANTZER SIGN ON BEHALF OF THE CITY.

Yes —Adair, Bennett, Frechette, Jackson, Zimmerman

Abstain – Showalter

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

RESOLUTION #23-26

WHEREAS, the City of West Branch is in the process of selling Lot 21, Industrial Park West, and

WHEREAS, the purchaser is interested in signing a purchase agreement,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the West Branch City Council hereby authorizes City Manager, John Dantzer, to sign the purchase agreement for Lot 21, Industrial Park West with Progress Street West Branch Leases LLC, and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that as long as all the conditions of the purchase agreement are met that Mayor Paul Frechette and City Manager John Dantzer are hereby authorized to sign all documents pertaining to the sale of Lot 21, Industrial Park West.

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MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE THE FIRST HALF OF THE AIRPORT APPROPRIATION.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer explained that the city would be eligible for grant funds to cover the cost of the installation of the lights and guardrails. The city would be responsible for the street markings and an annual maintenance fee from the State (currently \$2,300.00) if we approve the upgrade. If we were to disagree, this would bring the chance of additional liability should anything happen and the possibility of no grant funding.

MOTION BY ZIMMERMAN, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE THE N. SEVENTH ST. RAILROAD UPGRADE PROJECT BASED ON THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATE SAFETY DIVISION AND AUTHORIZE MANAGER DANTZER TO SIGN ALL GRANT FUNDING PAPERS REQUIRED.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND SUMMARY FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 18, 2023.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY JACKSON TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE TREASURER’S REPORT AND INVESTMENT SUMMARY; MINUTES FROM THE AIRPORT BOARD MEETING HELD AUGUST 16, 2023; MINUTES FROM THE LAND BANK AUTHORITY MEETING HELD AUGUST 16, 2023; MINUTES FROM THE DDA MEETING HELD AUGUST 22, 2023; MINUTES FROM THE WWTPA MEETING HELD JUNE 20, 2023; AND MINUTES FROM THE IDC MEETING HELD JUNE 19, 2023.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Communications included a thank you from both the Summer Music Series and The Brook, Question. Persuade. Refer – Suicide Training flyer, Halloween flyer, and an Active Shooter training flyer.

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MOTION BY FRECHETTE, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPOINT MATTHEW THOMPSON TO THE ELECTION COMMISSION.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Mayor Frechette expressed his thanks to DPW Supervisor Killackey and all of his staff for the extra effort they are putting into their jobs due to the construction and various issues caused by it.

Member Jackson stated that the construction is causing financial issues in the downtown business district. He also reminded those present that the EDC and Airport Board meetings were during the MML Conference.

Member Bennett asked if Council and Manager Dantzer would keep their eyes open for any grants the 12 Step Club might be able to use for the exterior of the building. They have done such a good job cleaning up the area she would like to see some assistance given to them.

Member Showalter thanked the powers that be for keeping trick or treating on Halloween night. He also noted that there was a red cooler next to the USDA building transformer. DPW Supervisor informed Council that it has concrete cylinders in it. Mike will contact them and have them pick it up.

Manager Dantzer stated that there is still an opening on the Board of Review if anyone has recommendations. Manager Dantzer noted that Council had previously approved work for parts of Wright St and S. First. He noted the work on Wright St was finished but S. First was still not completed. He asked to get Councils thoughts on

cancelling the S. First work due to it being a part of the recently approved grant, He recommended using that portion of road work on the parking lot off of N. Third instead.

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MOTION BY ZIMMERMAN, SECOND BY SHOWALTER, TO REMOVE S. FIRST ST. FROM THE APPROVED ROADWORK.

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

No – None

Absent – Pugh

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer will put out an RFP for repaving the parking lot on N. Third St. He also explained to council costs on the Houghton project. His recommendation is to use the committed infrastructure funds to cover the city’s portion so it doesn’t have to come out of the annual general fund budget and get a 25-year bond for approximately \$2 million. The water fund and DDA can support the annual payments required. The bond council will draw up the resolution.

DPW Supervisor Killackey reported that Fairview Rd. would hopefully be opening at the intersection on Wednesday. There will still be lane closures on Houghton Ave due to AT&T replacing their lines for the next four to six weeks. Fleis & Vandenbrink is working on a topographical survey for the DWSRF water system upgrade.

Chief Walters informed members that Officer Bicoll’s last day of law enforcement was today. He is getting out of the law enforcement field totally. There is a private entity that donates the cost of a dog for the K-9 team. That however, will be a couple of years out. The new police vehicle will hopefully be ready to hit the road next week. There are currently two police vehicles still in the shop.

Attn. Meihn informed members that there would be a draft building ordinance for their review at the next meeting.

Ms. Garza informed members that her last day at the paper would be tomorrow. Members wished her luck in all her future endeavors.

City Realtor DeRoso gave a report on the EDC meeting. There are three training events coming up Effective Use of Social Media for Business October 5th, Business Collaboration for Mutual Benefit October 12th, and Economic Outlook Breakfast October 19th. They have some new loans available through their revolving loan fund. They just finalized a survey on child care in our area.

Commissioner Scott asked about Victory St. being paved with some of the road construction that is happening.

Mayor Frechette adjourned the meeting at 6:55 pm.

Paul Frechette, Mayor

Lori Ann Clover, Clerk