

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2015.

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

Present: Mayor William Ehinger, Council Members Kim Evans, Jim Hasty, Denise Lawrence, Rusty Showalter, and Timothy Schaiberger.

Absent: Dave Lucas.

Other officers present: City Manager Heather Grace, Clerk/Treasurer John Dantzer, Police Chief Ken Walters, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Frechette, County Commissioner Bruce Reetz, and DPW Superintendent Dennis Jameson.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

* * * * *

MOTION BY LAWRENCE, SECOND BY SCHOWALTER, TO EXCUSE MEMBER DAVE LUCAS FROM THE MEETING

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace noted there were several additions to the agenda. The first was that the Fireworks Committee would be having their first meeting of the year at September 29 at 6:00pm at G's Pizzeria.

* * * * *

Mayor Ehinger noted that they have a public hearing scheduled to discuss any changes to the zoning ordinance.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING ON CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORIDINANCE AT 6:05 PM.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

No one present in the audience or the Council wished to speak on the subject.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:06 P.M.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

County Commissioner Bruce Reetz updated Council on the County meetings. He noted they increased appropriations to the Health Department, they approved their agreement with MSU, Doug Casselman was there and noted they had to buy a dishwasher for the jail and they are looking into a water softener, Judge Noble asked to have a special prosecutor to help with the overflow of court cases due to the retirement of Judge Baumgartner, approved the hiring of an IT person for 911, purchased a truck for building and zoning, Dwight McIntyre noted the land tax sale would be in Bay City on Sept. 29, received a CCAB grant, and paid bills in the amount of \$162,945.00

* * * * *

Heather Johnson thanked the Council for choosing her to go to the MML conference as a community leader. She noted that it was very informative. She also congratulated Member Showalter for being chosen as a Board of Trustees delegate.

She noted that the Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau City pole decorating contest will be getting underway, that they have been receiving new members to the Chamber, and that they are getting new flooring put in their office.

* * * * *

Lois Bergquist also thanked Council for choosing her as a community leader delegate and congratulated Rusty as well for his selection to the Board of Trustees.

* * * * *

Manager Grace updated Council on the regional housing plan presented to them from James Espinoza of MSHDA. She noted that he continues to talk with other municipalities and businesses. She further noted that Mr. Espinoza had asked if Council would write a letter showing support of the program and pledging funds if other communities would as well. Member Showalter shared his support for the program.

MOTION BY SCHOWLATER, SECOND BY EHINGER, TO APPROVE WRITING A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE NEW REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM.

Yes – Ehinger, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – Evans

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

MOTION BY LAWRENCE, SECOND BY EHINGER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND SUMMARY OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 1, 2015.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace noted that the City has received a \$2,500 grant from Consumers Energy for the purchase and planting of trees.

* * * * *

Manager updated Council on the status of the proposed Pale Face Concert and the poll on the City's Facebook page. It was the consensus of Council to leave the poll up longer on the Facebook page.

* * * * *

Manager Grace noted that they have received bids on several road projects and DPW Superintendent Jameson presented his priority list for road repairs. Superintendent Jameson recommended N. Third and N. Second from Sydney to Willow St., S. Seventh, and S. Eighth.

Manager Grace noted that the IDC had a recent meeting and voted to pay for 60% of the cost to redo the roads in the Industrial Park if the City were willing to pay the rest.

Manager Grace noted that part of their plans for the road priority lists also took into account the condition of the water and sewer lines underneath the roads and that the lines underneath these roads seem to be in good shape.

Superintendent Jameson shared results on the traffic count of Griffin Rd and Parkway Drive. Member Hasty shared his concern on having these roads redone when there are more citizens on other roads that also need to be redone. Member Showalter noted that if we lose businesses because of bad service roads then it would hurt the City tremendously. Member Evans further noted that to be able to help those businesses which are a huge tax base to the City and have the IDC pay for the majority of it is a huge advantage to having those roads redone.

* * * * *

MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY LAWRENCE, TO APPROVE THE REPAVING OF GRIFFIN ROADS FROM VALLEY TO THE MAILBOX AT AUSABLE VALLEY MENTAL HEALTH AND ALL OF PARKWAY DRIVE NOT TO EXCEED \$129,444.00.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

MOTION BY EVANS, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO APPROVE THE REPAVING OF NORTH SECOND FROM 120' NORTH OF SIDNEY STREET TO WILLOW STREET NOT TO EXCEED \$62,097 AND NORTH THIRD STREET FROM SIDNEY STREET TO WILLOW STREET NOT TO EXCEED \$66,790.00.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

MOTION BY LAWRENCE, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO APPROVE THE REPAVING OF SOUTH SEVENTH ST FROM HOUGHTON AVE TO THE END AND INCLUDING THE INTERSECTIONS NOT TO EXCEED \$71,480.00.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent – Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Superintendent Jameson also noted that if people on these roads want their driveways done while they are doing the roads, they would be able to get it done at a significantly lower price than if it were done by itself.

* * * * *

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGR, TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD AUGUST 11, 2015, THE WEST BRANCH REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING HELD JULY 27, 2015, AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT FOR AUGUST 2015.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Letters in support of Pit Bulls being allowed in the City's limits were presented to Council.

* * * * *

A flier for the Oscoda Lions Club Arts and Crafts Show on October 3 from 10:00 a.m. -4 p.m. at the Oscoda High School was presented.

A flier for the Fall Color Orchard and Farm Tour on Oct. 3rd and 4th from 10:00am – 6:00 pm at 3058 Green Rd, West Branch was presented and read.

* * * * *

Marcia Young and Ken Neubecker thanked Council for allowing them to use the park for the Victorian Art Fair. They also thanked the DPW and the Police Department for all of their help. They asked if they would be able to use the park again next year on August 13 and 14.

Member Showalter asked them if the Arts Association would be willing to be a part of an Arts Commission if they could get one developed. He noted that if they could get a commission started then they have the potential to apply for grants for arts related activities. Mrs. Young noted that she would definitely take that back to their board for approval.

Superintendent Jameson and the Council thanked the Association for their help in paving the walkway in the park and for all of their work in putting on the fair.

MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY EHINGER, TO ALLOW THE WEST BRANCH CREATIVE ARTS TO USE THE PARK FOR THE VICTORIAN ART FAIR ON AUGUST 13 AND 14, 2016.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Mayor Ehinger noted that he attended the Christmas for Kids auction and that it did quite well.

Member Showalter thank the City for their support in him for the MML Board of Trustees and that he is looking forward to serving in his new role. He also shared information from the MML Convention

Member Lawrence noted she went to the last Fabulous Fridays meeting and they are looking at putting more kid related themes into next year's plans.

Member Lawrence attended the last EMS meeting and had their budget approved.

Member Lawrence noted she also attended the Christmas for Kids auction and also noted it went very well. She noted they are also having a soup cook off at the Crafts Emporium on Oct. 10 to raise money for Christmas for Kids

* * * * *

Manager Grace shared that the Houghton Ave paving project is complete. She noted that the intersection and the parking spots were not done because MDOT did not approve funds to have that done.

Manager Grace updated Council on the home project for Brenda Peters

Manager Grace noted that they are in need of a new police car and Chief Walters presented Council with the car he recommended for purchase. He noted that he is writing a grant to help pay for it and that it should cost the City about \$14,000 for the new car with all of the equipment that is needed added to it. He further noted that this price included a new radio for the car.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY ERVANS, TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE POLICE CAR AS PRESENTED.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace noted that the City participated in a mock catastrophe event that was planned by the Ogemaw County Local Emergency Planning Committee. She further noted that they would like the City to sign a five year agreement that they would be part of the program. Clerk/Treasurer Dantzer, as the representative for the City for the event, updated Council on some of the happenings and the requirements of the City during the event. Chief Walters noted that there were some planning problems and that he believes there was a lack of coordinating. It was the consensus to find out more information on the program before Council signs the agreement.

Superintendent Jameson noted that the signage was up for the new Schick Service Drive. He also noted that the fencing project for the Victorian Park was to begin.

Manager Grace noted that the sidewalk project off of Griffin Rd and Valley Rd has been put on hold and that they are planning to apply for a DNR grant and connect it to the Riverwalk.

* * * * *

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO PAY THE BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$121,812.31.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaibberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace presented Council with some examples of other City's fines as requested at the last meeting in order to adopt resolution 15-17 which sets the fines for violating the park and recreation ordinances. Member Lawrence shared that she liked a set fee for an occurrence as opposed to an open ended amount that is to be decided upon based on the severity. Chief Walters shared some of the fines charged in the past and his opinions on the fines. Superintendent Jameson shared some of the cost associated with the cleaning of the fountain if required. Discussion was held on the amount of the fines to charge. Discussion also revolved around the cameras at the Victorian Park and how the Police was able to get the information.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO TABLE THE DECISION ON THE FINES TO GATHER MORE INFORMATION.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaibberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace noted that there were no comments during the public hearing on potential changes to the zoning ordinance and that she would recommend holding off any decision until Council could have their special joint meeting with the Planning Commission. She also noted the IDC had come up with a couple of changes that they would like to see incorporated.

MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY SHOWALTER TO TABLE ANY DECISIONS ON CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCAE.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace presented a water bill insert from the Tolfree Foundation for the Northeast Michigan Premier Food Festival and Culinary Competition on Thursday, October 29 from 5:00pm-9:00 pm at the Ogemaw Fairgrounds to raise money for needed equipment at the hospital.

MOTION BY HASTY, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO ALLOW THE TOLFREE FOUNDATION TO PLACE THE INSERT IN THE WATER BILLS AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT INCREASE THE POSTAGE RATES.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Manager Grace shared that she received correspondence from Tim Lapham asking Council if they would consider purchasing a building he owns in order to convert it to a parking lot. Member Showalter asked

if there was an amount he wanted to sell it for. Manager Grace noted that it was her understanding that he wanted around \$80,000-\$90,000. It was the consensus not to purchase the property.

* * * * *

Manager Grace noted that they were still waiting on an estimate to redo the parking lot across from City Hall.

* * * * *

Bids were opened and read for the vacant lot that is located currently next to the West Branch Greenhouse. The only bid received was from David and Rebecca Evergreen for the amount of \$5,800.00. Manager Grace noted the submitted price was in line with the appraised value given to her by the City appraiser. Member Hasty had some questions on the zoning in that area and it was determined that it was zoned in the Central Business District.

MOTION BY ERVANS, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO AWARD THE BID FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE LAND NEXT TO THE WEST BRANCH GREENHOUSE AS PER THE BID NOTICE TO DAVID AND REBECCA EVERGREEN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,800.00.

Yes – Ehinger, Evans, Hasty, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter

No – None

Absent - Lucas

Motion carried

* * * * *

Superintendent Jameson shared the plans for the fencing and gate for the front of the Victorian Park.

* * * * *

Member Lawrence had questions as to how the electronic portion of the recycling center worked. Manager Grace noted that she would look into how we are currently billing the other participating Townships for this.

* * * * *

Chief Walters noted that we may have to review the ORV route in the City.

* * * * *

Eric Young of the Ogemaw Herald noted some website issues with the City's website.

* * * * *

Mayor Ehinger adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm.

William Ehinger, Mayor

John Dantzer, Clerk