

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2018.

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

Present: Mayor Denise Lawrence and Council Members Joanne Bennett, Mike Jackson, Tim Schaiberger, Rusty Showalter, Aaron Tuttle, and Dan Weiler.

Absent: None

Other officers present: City Manager Heather Grace, Clerk/Treasurer John Dantzer, DPW Superintendent Mike Killackey, Police Chief Ken Walter, Ogemaw County Commissioner Bruce Reetz, DDA Chairperson Samantha Fabbri, and Wastewater Superintendent Dan Robb.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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As an addition to the agenda, County Commissioner Bruce Reetz spoke on the 911 board appointments and gave a County update which included the progress of their audit, an EMS building construction update, and noted they have three new Board members coming aboard in January.

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As another addition to the agenda, the annual MDOT Performance Resolution to authorize who could apply for road closure was submitted.

MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY SHOWALTER, TO APPROVE THE MDOT PERFORMANCE RESOLUTION FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND NAME MANAGER HEATHER GRACE, CLERK/TREASURER JOHN DANTZER, AND OFFICE ASSISTANT BRIDGET CHARLES AS AUTHORIZED APPLICANTS

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Bids were presented for a DPW service truck as follows:

Hart - \$30,555

Fernelius - \$30,825

Hodges - \$30,831

It was noted that the City is working on a grant in which USDA will pay for 55% of the cost of the truck and DPW Superintendent Killackey offered his recommendation to go with Hart because they were the lowest bid.

MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY SHOWALTER, TO AWARD THE DPW SERVICE TRUCK BID TO HART NOT TO EXCEED \$30, 555

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY TUTTLE, TO PAY BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$42,945.33.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO ACCEPT WITH REGRET THE RESIGNATION OF KENNETH KISH FROM THE BOARD OF REVIEW.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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A special event permit was submitted on behalf of March for Life to hold a walk downtown including a road closure for January 19 at 12:00 p.m.

Chief Walters noted that due to it being the winter and the possibility for bad road conditions did not recommend a road closure but recommended they walk on the sidewalks instead.

Member Weiler noted his concern for the safety of the participants and was in favor of having them use the sidewalks instead of the road. Members Showalter, Schaiberger, and Jackson noted their support for use of the sidewalk as well.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE THE MARCH FOR LIFE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT; HOWEVER, NOT APPROVE A ROAD CLOSURE FOR THE EVENT.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO APPROVE THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT NUMBER 18-5464 FOR THE N. VALLEY AND FAIRVEIW RD

RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AND AUTHORIZE MAYOR DENISE LAWRENCE AND MANAGER HEATHER GRACE TO SIGN THE CONTRACT.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY WEILER, TO APPROVE THE UPDATED WELLHEAD PROTECTION PROGRAM AS PRESENTED.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY LAWRENCE, TO NAME THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY CLERK AS MERS AUTHORIZED SIGNATORIES.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

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Community Development Fellow Mary Bickell introduced herself to Council and noted she will be working with the City for the next year on Project Rising Tide projects and noted she is looking forward to working with everyone. Manager Grace noted the Ms. Bickell was assigned to West Branch by CEDAM and that the City was not paying anything for Ms. Bickell employment.

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Manager Grace introduced the idea of creating a Community Development Board and merging it with the Industrial Development Board and that it would act as an advisory board to Council on development ideas for the City.

Member Bennett noted she liked the idea but recommended including one member of the DDA and Planning Commission.

Member Showalter noted his support for the program as well and liked the idea of having more than just industrial representatives on the board. He also noted that he would strongly recommend that one of the first issues they look at is making sure high speed internet is available for the Industrial Park.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE THE CREATION OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD WITH THE MEMBERSHIP TO INCLUDE THE EXISTING IDC BOARD MEMBERS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION THAT IS CHOSEN

BY THAT BOARD, AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DDA WHICH WILL BE CHOSEN BY THAT BOARD.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Manager Grace submitted approval for a health insurance change and an amendment to the Police Department union contract. Manager Grace noted the change in the Union Contract would switch the unioned employee responsibility from 20%-12% as well as changes in recitations as required by recent court cases.

Member Bennett and Showalter noted their concern that new union officers would pay 12% of the health care premium while other non-union employees are paying 14%. Member Showalter also noted his concern that the State down the road may be require employees to pay 20%

Chief Walters noted that the changes will benefit all of the employees of the City and that the union percentage can be adjusted in the future because health insurance rates are non-binding in their contract.

Member Schaiberger noted if they can help the employees save some money and not cost the City more than he was in favor of it.

Member Jackson noted that if the employees and the City can save money, it is a win-win situation.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO APPROVE THE CHANGE IN THE HEALTH CARE PLAN AND THE CHANGES TO THE POLICE UNION CONTRACT.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Manager Grace noted that an offer to purchase real property that was discussed in closed session at a previous meeting was not accepted by the deadline.

MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY SCHAIBERGER, TO AUTHORIZE CITY MANAGER GRACE AND CITY ATTORNEY DANTZER TO PURSUE BLIGHT ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS AND AUTHORIZE DPW SUPERINTENDENT KILLACKEY TO REOPEN GREENLAND STREET AT HIS DISCRETION FOLLOWING A CONSULTAION WITH ATTORNEY DANTZER.

Yes — Bennett, Jackson, Lawrence, Schaiberger, Showalter, Tuttle, Weiler

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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A Charter lineup change was shared.

The fire department annual contribution amounts were shared.

The MML Elected Academy Core Weekender update was shared.

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Member Showalter thanked the City for hosting the last MML training in West Branch and noted it was very successful. He also noted that this was his last meeting and it was an honor and privilege to serve the City of West Branch and that he always did his best and put his heart and soul into his position. He thanked the City staff and commended them for their work and thanked everyone.

Member Jackson thanked DPW for their help in a water issue that he had at his house.

Member Bennett noted she was also at the recent MML training and noted the great turnout. She thanked all the outgoing Council Members and welcomed the new incoming Members and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Member Schaiberger also noted that it was his last meeting and thanked everyone and noted he always tried to do his best for the City and also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mayor Lawrence noted that they recently passed out food baskets at the police department and that the food baskets were sponsored by the First United Methodist Church, Save A Lot Food Stores, and Northland Credit Union.

Manager Grace thanked all outgoing Council Members and welcomed the new members and also wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

PRT Fellow Mary Bickell gave a brief overview of her background.

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Commissioner Reetz asked if he could get a copy of the Wellhead Protection program.

Samantha Fabbri thanked Member Schaiberger and Showalter for their 10 years of service.

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Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 7:22 pm.

Denise Lawrence, Mayor

John Dantzer, Clerk