

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 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023.

Mayor Frechette called the meeting to order at 6:01 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, and DPW Supervisor Mike Killackey.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Mayor Frechette announced that Commissioner Scott was at another meeting and they are in the middle of budget talks. He also announced that he would be absent at the next meeting.

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Manager Dantzer explained Bolen Asphalt Paving is doing the paving work for MDOT and quoted for the portion on Wright from South Second to South First and South First from Wright through the intersection at Ripley. Their quote came back cheaper than what was in the budget. Member Showalter expressed concern that it would interfere with our annual bid for patchwork. Manager Dantzer explained that the annual bid was just for patchwork and would not conflict with the repaving and milling of Wright and First Street.

MOTION BY PUGH, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE SOLE SOURCE VENDOR REQUEST FROM BOLEN ASPHALT PAVING FOR WRIGHT AND FIRST STREET REPAIR NOT TO EXCEED \$25,500.00.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$47,774.37.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer stated that he prepared the resolution in response to the National Suicide prevention month based on several statistics and to raise awareness in the city. Working with The Coalition of Hope and allowing them to use Iron’s Park already raises awareness.

MOTION BY ZIMMERMAN, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-24 NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

RESOLUTION 23-24

WHEREAS, suicide is a national public health issue that affects all Americans, including veterans, their families, and friends; and

WHEREAS, suicide has no single cause and no one approach can end it; and

WHEREAS, the month of September is recognized as National Suicide Prevention Month; and

WHEREAS, according to the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 49,449 people died from suicide making it the 11th leading cause of death in the US in 2022; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, Nationwide, we lose 22 veterans a day to suicide; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, the number of U.S. suicide deaths reached an all-time high in 2022; and

WHEREAS, on December 22, 2021, the Senate signed Bill S6194B, also known as the 9-8-8 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Act, which established the 9-8-8 suicide prevention and mental health hotline where individuals can connect directly to trained suicide prevention counselors for critical support; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that raising awareness for the mental health of all its residents, including its veterans, is of vital importance to the social fabric of this City, as is the remembrance and acknowledgment of those lives lost to suicide and those impacted by losing a loved one to suicide;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, the West Branch City Council hereby recognizes National Suicide Prevention Month and designates September 22, 2023 as Veterans Suicide Awareness and Remembrance Day.

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Manager Dantzer explained the resolution would be to assist a resident with the cost of replacing a bad sidewalk in front of her house. The city would cover 50% of the cost.

MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY ADAIR, TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-25 SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION ALLOCATION FOR 223 S. FOURTH ST. SIDEWALK REPAIR NOT TO EXCEED 2,180.00.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

**RESOLUTION 23-25
SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION ALLOCATION FOR 223 S. FOURTH ST.**

WHEREAS, § 94.24 of the City of West Branch Code of Ordinances provides that cost allocations for sidewalk construction may be altered, indexed, waived, or paid by installation upon Council resolution, and

WHEREAS, City Resolution # 97-12 found it to be in the best interest of public health, welfare, and safety to promote an aggressive sidewalk improvement effort by allowing subsidy scheduled to provide for the payment of sidewalk assessments in the City as follows: “Very Low Income – City responsible for 75%[] Lower Income – City responsible for 50%[] with income thresholds as determined by MSHDA Section 8 Existing Eligibility Income Limits for the current year, and . . . that residents opting to pay full assessment in the same calendar year as construction receive a 5% discount from total responsibility for construction, and . . . that residents opting to pay in installments be billed three annual payments, each equaling 1/3 of total responsibility for construction, and . . . that individual cases may be examined by City Council and fees for sidewalk construction and related costs (engineering, grade work, retention walls, etc.) may be amended or waived by City Council motion at an open, regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council”; and

WHEREAS, the owners have requested City Council to approve a reconstruction of the sidewalk in front of their home, located at 223 S. Fourth St, West Branch, MI; and

WHEREAS, the owners have chosen to contract with Finished Concrete to perform the work, at a cost of \$4,360.00; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, West Branch City Council approves to pay for 50% of the cost not to exceed \$2,180.00

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Council Members expressed concern about the Tie Michigan Teal Special Event Permit that there would be volunteers to take the ribbons down at the end of the month. Manager Dantzer stated he would verify that with the applicant.

MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE SPECIAL EVENT PERMITS INCLUDING TIE MICHIGAN TEAL, OHHS HOMECOMING PARADE, AND HYPERION TRUNK OR TREAT.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Manager Dantzer explained that the delinquent water/sewer policy was not truly a new policy. It is just re-establishing the pre Covid policy in existence and per our ordinance.

MOTION BY BENNETT, SECOND BY ZIMMERMAN TO APPROVE THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE DELINQUENT WATER/SEWER POLICY.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY PUGH, SECOND BY SHOWALTER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND SUMMARY FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD AUGUST 21, 2023.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY SHOWALTER, SECOND BY FRECHETTE TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE TREASURER’S REPORT AND INVESTMENT SUMMARY; MINUTES FROM THE DDA REGULAR MEETING HELD JULY 25, 2023; AND MINUTES FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING HELD JULY 25, 2023.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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MOTION BY FRECHETTE, SECOND BY SHOWALTER TO APPOINT ALAN BRUDER TO THE DDA.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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Member Jackson stated that town was very busy this week end, more so than anticipated.

Member Showalter gave kudos to DPW for staying on top of repairs at Iron’s Park.

Member Adair reported that when MDOT made the light at Fairview blinking red and the light on Houghton yellow this weekend drivers were very confused.

Manager Dantzer reported that Catch Basin cleaning would begin tomorrow. DPW would be flushing hydrants starting September 11th. Road milling and pavement replacement will begin on Wright and First Street tomorrow. The police Tahoe has been delivered. Ordinance 23-01 will take effect tomorrow.

Manager Dantzer asked Council about the city sign. The digital sign based on three different companies will be between \$20,000 and \$30,000. Council expressed concern over spending that much money on a sign. Questioning if we get enough traffic on Fourth Street and if there will be enough information to make the scrolling worthwhile. It will also be one more thing to break

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MOTION BY FRECHETTE, SECOND BY ADAIR TO PUT OUT AN RFP FOR THE TRADITIONAL NON-DIGITAL SIGN.

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

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

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DPW Supervisor stated that he is right in the middle of all the different MDOT, AT&T, and DTE projects going on.

Mayor Frechette adjourned the meeting at 6:31 pm.

Paul Frechette, Mayor

Lori Ann Clover, Clerk