



CITY OF IONIA
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 6, 2016
CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBER

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Daniel Balice called the regular meeting of the City Council to order at 7:00 PM and led with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call revealed Councilmembers John Milewski, Jeff Winters, Gordon Kelley, Ted Paton, Kim Patrick, Tom Millard, Paul Lentz, Janice Gustafson and Mayor Daniel Balice present.

Staff present included DDA Director Linda Curtis, Finance Director Chris Hyzer and City Manager Jason Eppler.

Public present included Jason Washler and Mark DeHaan from Prein & Newhof and Jesse and Caleb French.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilmember Patrick, seconded by Councilmember Millard to approve the November 1, 2016 regular meeting minutes.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Milewski, Winters, Kelley, Paton, Patrick, Millard, Gustafson,
Lentz and Mayor Balice.

Nays: None.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation – SAW Grant Project – Prien & Newhof

The City Manager reported that at the November 5, 2013 meeting, Council authorized the submission of a grant application to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) for up to \$1,080,000 to complete a storm sewer system asset management plan and an associated system improvement project with professional engineering assistance provided by Prein & Newhof. The City Manager stated that the City was recently notified by the MDEQ that \$839,000 in funds for this project has been awarded, with no local grant match

required. The City Manager introduced representatives from Prein & Newhof who provided Council with an update on the project. No action on this agenda item was required.

Approve – Revisions to Policy No. 1-013 – Property Taxes – Poverty Guidelines

The City Manager reported that Public Act 206 of 1893, as amended (General Property Tax Act) requires municipalities to set the poverty guidelines and asset guidelines to be observed by Boards of Review in determining if a property owner should be granted an exemption from paying property taxes on an owned property. The City Manager also reported that although the Statute states that municipalities must follow the federal poverty and asset guidelines it does not adopt them by reference but instead requires the local governing board to adopt the guidelines from time to time. The City Manager stated that the City Assessor has recommended that Council approve an update to our current policy for use by the Board of Review.

It was moved by Councilmember Lentz, seconded by Councilmember Paton to amend General Policy 1 013, Property Taxes – Poverty Guidelines establishing updated poverty guidelines and poverty asset guidelines for 2017 assessments as required by PA 206 of 1893, as amended.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Winters, Kelley, Paton, Patrick, Millard, Gustafson, Lentz, Milewski and Mayor Balice.
 Nays: None.
 MOTION CARRIED

Approve – Introduction/First Reading – Proposed Ordinance No. 528 - Signs

The City Manager reported that for the past several months the Planning Commission has been working on revisions to the City's sign ordinance. This exercise was prompted by the 2015 United States Supreme Court decision in *Reed v. Gilbert (Arizona)*. This particular case involved a challenge of the Town of Gilbert's sign ordinance as a content based and unconstitutional regulation of speech. Most community sign ordinances across the country are content based. The City Manager stated that with the assistance of the City's planning consultants, the Commission analyzed the *Reed* decision and then reviewed its impact on the City's sign ordinance. The goal of the Commission was to revise the sign ordinance in order to eliminate separate rules for categories of signs that are defined by content matter (ie political signs, directional signs, etc), adopt content neutral regulations (duration of placement, placement location) and review exceptions to regulations making sure that they are not content based. The City Manager provided council with the results of the Commission's work in the form of Ordinance No. 528, which is a fairly exhaustive overhaul of the current sign ordinance. The City Manager also reported that at its November 9, 2016 meeting, the Commission conducted a Public Hearing on the proposed ordinance and took action to recommend that Council adopt the ordinance.

It was moved by Councilmember Kelley, seconded by Councilmember Winters to permit the record of the December 6, 2016 meeting to reflect the introduction and first reading of proposed Ordinance No. 528 regarding signs and to schedule a Public Hearing on the proposed ordinance for 7:00 PM, Tuesday, January 3, 2017 in the Council Chamber of City Hall.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Kelley, Paton, Patrick, Millard, Gustafson, Lentz, Milewski, Winters and Mayor Balice.
Nays: None.
MOTION CARRIED

Accept – Bid for Downtown Development Authority Office – Door/Window Project

The City Manager reported that the City’s FY16-17 General Fund budget includes funds (\$17,500) for replacing the windows and entry door at the DDA Office. The current windows and door are either original to the building or close to it and are very drafty. With the assistance of Gregg Yeomans, bid specifications were prepared and distributed to area contractors. Bids were opened on November 22nd with the following bids received:

Central Michigan Building Services, Ionia	\$14,297.00
Dan Vos Construction, Ada	\$27,318.00

The City Manager stated that after review of the bids, Gregg Yeomans is recommended that the low bid submitted by Central Michigan Building Services, Ionia, be accepted.

It was moved by Councilmember Winters, seconded by Councilmember Milewski to accept the bid submitted by Central Michigan Building Services, Ionia, for \$14,297.00 for the Downtown Development Authority Office door and window replacement project and authorize the City Manager to sign the necessary contract documents.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Paton, Patrick, Millard, Gustafson, Lentz, Milewski, Winters, Kelley and Mayor Balice.
Nays: None.
MOTION CARRIED

Approve – Request from Michael Cronk to Purchase MERS Service Credit

The City Manager reported that City employee Michael Cronk has requested permission to purchase two years of MERS (Municipal Employees’ Retirement System) pension service credit at this expense.

It was moved by Councilmember Paton, seconded by Councilmember Winters to approve the request from Michael Cronk to purchase 2 years of service for \$39,410.00 through the Municipal Employees’ Retirement System at his expense.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Patrick, Millard, Gustafson, Lentz, Milewski, Winters, Kelley, Paton and Mayor Balice.
Nays: None.
MOTION CARRIED

MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Lentz commented on the festive look of the City for the holidays and discussed the pros and cons of using natural, rather than artificial, garland on the ornamental lamp posts.

Councilmember Gustafson commented on the holiday parade and thanked the many volunteers involved in making it a great parade.

Councilmember Millard also commented on the holiday parade and introduced discussion regarding the cost savings of year's leaf removal program. The City Manager stated that the costs of this year's program will be reviewed by Council after the first of the New Year.

Councilmember Patrick also commented on the leaf removal program and stated that the nice fall weather assisted in getting leaves cleaned up in quick order.

Councilmember Paton inquired about the future removal of the house that burned on North Dexter Street. The City Manager provided an update.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilmember Patrick, seconded by Councilmember Millard to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Lynn Lafler, Clerk