

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

April 25, 2023

The Regular City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Mallory in the Council Chambers at City Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Kwiatkowski, Raab, Mallory, Darling, Mills, Dodd and Bedwin.

Absent:

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only:

- No comments.

Approval of Agenda and Receive and File all Communications:

- Councilwoman Dodd moved to approve the agenda and receive and file all communications. Seconded by Councilwoman Mills. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:

- Councilwoman Mills moved to approve the Regular City Council meeting minutes of April 11, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Councilman Kwiatkowski. Councilwoman Darling abstained from voting. Motion carried.

General Business:

- Consideration of Appointment.
 - Councilwoman Mills moved to appoint Winifred Riddle to the Historic District Commission, term to expire March 31, 2024. Seconded by Councilwoman Darling.
 - A roll call vote was taken. Councilwoman Raab abstained from voting. Motion carried.
- Consideration of Appointment.
 - Councilwoman Mills moved to appoint Mali Thomas to the Historic District Commission, term to expire March 31, 2024. Seconded by Councilwoman Darling.
 - A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.
 - Roll call vote was redone for Mali Thomas' appointment. A roll call vote was taken. Councilwoman Raab abstained from voting. Motion carried.
- Consideration of Appointment.
 - Councilman Kwiatkowski moved to appoint Mary Brown to the Historic District Commission, term to expire March 31, 2024. Seconded by Councilwoman Mills.
 - A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.
 - Roll call vote was redone for Mary Brown's appointment. A roll call vote was taken. Councilwoman Raab abstained from voting. Motion carried.
- Consideration of Appointment.

- Councilwoman Dodd moved to appoint Laurie Musclow to the Historic District Commission, term to expire March 31, 2025. Seconded by Councilwoman Mills.
- Councilwoman Mills stated that Councilwoman Raab abstained from voting on the first appointment and she recommends she abstain from voting on all of these for the same reason. Councilwoman Mills said that Councilwoman Raab recommended to appoint these people.
- Council went back to Mali Thomas' appointment and Mary Brown's appointment and redid the roll call.
- A roll call vote was taken for the appointment of Laurie Musclow. Councilwoman Raab abstained from voting. Motion carried.
- Planning Services Contract.
 - Councilwoman Mills moved to approve the City Manager to enter a Planning Services Contract with Northeast Michigan Council of Governments. Seconded by Councilwoman Darling.
 - City Manager Sabolsky said that he had a meeting last week with Doug Baum, he is the Director of this agency and former City Manager of Grayling. They had a long conversation about some of the things we need in the City. A few of those things include updating our zoning code, our comprehensive plan and our master plan. Sabolsky said he could create these documents, but with his other duties as City Manager, it would take him quite some time. Sabolsky explained that these documents are very important to have as we move forward with developing the City. Sabolsky would like to engage this group to start this process. Sabolsky explained that there is grant through the MEDC where we would receive 70% of the cost to produce those documents, 30% would come from us. Sabolsky explained the importance of proceeding with this in order to move the City forward. He also mentioned that the zoning code and the comprehensive plan are asked for in a lot of grants. Sabolsky mentioned that the parks and recreation plan also has to be redone soon.
 - Councilwoman Raab asked if our master plan has a date range.
 - Sabolsky said that they are usually good for five years. He believes that we are right at that five-year mark.
 - Councilwoman Raab said that she read the contract and its like a Planning Commission regionally; would they replace our Planning Commission.
 - Sabolsky responded that they would not take the place of our Planning Commission. NEMCOG is a Council of Governments. They are a regional planning agency. They will work with our Zoning Board of Appeals, our Planning Commission, general public and Council to come up with a document that truly represents the City and where we want to go. Sabolsky explained how this can be done.
 - Councilwoman Mills asked if the cost is coming out of the general fund.
 - Sabolsky said that he doesn't know yet. We will have to see what NEMCOG comes up with. This contract is allowing Sabolsky to use NEMCOG when he needs to. He wanted to make Council and the public aware that we are reaching out for help to speed up the process.
 - Councilwoman Raab clarified that Sabolsky is asking Council to approve him having a contract with NEMCOG.

- Sabolsky responded yes. Sabolsky said he doesn't anticipate initially using them for a lot of consulting work until we get the proposals. Once we get the proposals, he will bring those back to Council.
- Councilwoman Dodd asked regarding the membership fee.
- Sabolsky responded that we don't have one right now.
- Councilwoman Dodd asked about the membership dues.
- Sabolsky said that we are already a member and have been a member for some time.
- Councilman Kwiatkowski said there is usually an annual bill.
- Councilwoman Darling said that she thinks it will save Sabolsky a lot of time.
- A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.
- Opera House/City Hall Presentation.
 - Discussion on Hubbell Roth and Clark Proposal for Opera House and City Hall.
 - Sabolsky stated that we had a \$35,000.00 contract with Hubbell, Roth and Clark (HRC) to look at this building. We had an additional contract with an architect to review the engineer's findings. It was Sabolsky's understanding that when they were done, they were going to do a presentation on their findings. However, when they were trimming down their contract, they cut that out and Sabolsky did not notice that. When Sabolsky asked them to do their presentation, they submitted a proposal. They are asking for almost \$10,000.00 to come back and do a presentation. They also would want to do more testing. They estimate that more testing would be anywhere from \$100,000.00-200,000.00. Sabolsky would like Council to review these documents, have them available to the public, and these documents have been submitted to the Arts Council. Sabolsky discussed some of the problems. Sabolsky mentioned that there is about 3 million dollars worth of work that needs to happen immediately. Sabolsky discussed the possibility of having a 'townhall' discussion, where the public, Council and staff brainstorm on what we can do regarding these reports. Sabolsky said if we want to save City Hall and the Opera House, we need to get on the same page and figure out what to do.
 - Councilwoman Mills said that this will take a serious community effort.
 - Sabolsky discussed the amount of funds that have been put into this already and the funds we will need to fix things and make improvements. Sabolsky commented that this is a community asset and we all need to work together to figure out how to save it.
 - Councilwoman Mills asked Councilwoman Raab if we are eligible to receive historic grants or funding.
 - Councilwoman Raab responded no; we are not due to the exterior being changed from what it was before. We may be able to get funds for the interior but not the exterior.
 - Sabolsky also commented that we, as a City, own this building. Most of the State programs can help out a privately owned company that owns a building. When it's a public entity that owns a building, there is not a lot of money out there to help a public entity.
 - Mayor Mallory asked regarding the air handlers.
 - Sabolsky responded regarding the air handlers explaining that the air is not moving properly. In some areas, it will be cooler than what it should be. Sabolsky commented

that we have a “floating building” meaning that the building is not touching foundation in parts.

- Sabolsky and Council discussed having a public meeting to discuss the issues and what to do going forward.
 - Councilwoman Raab commented about how years ago, there was a large community effort to save the Opera House because it was going to be shut down and or torn down.
 - Sabolsky commented that Ms. Kathy Johnson gave him a large history regarding the Opera House. Back then when they were trying to fix the Opera House, they did some wonderful things, but then they ran out of funds to continue. When they started running out of money, one of the things Sabolsky read is they tapped into the brick wall and they used untreated lumber to hold that metal up. All that metal keeps falling down because they used untreated lumber to save costs.
- Seawall Improvements.

Discussion of Water Street Parking Lot and Washington Park Seawall Issues.

- Regarding the City parking lot between the BKC Insurance building and the ferry, there are sections of that that are collapsing. The reason the sidewalk is collapsing is because there is nothing under it; the seawall is giving out in that area. The seawall behind Washington Park is giving out. We have a tentative estimate of \$3,000.00-\$3,750.00 per linear foot. The bad thing about that estimate is that it doesn't fix the sidewalk, it doesn't fix anything that eroded out, it only fixes the pilings and the structural reinforcement. Where the sidewalk has collapsed, that is not included in this estimate. We estimate that we have about 600 linear feet to fix.
- Mayor Pro Tem Bedwin estimated that to be about 1.8 million dollars.
- Sabolsky wanted to make Council aware of this. We may have to close part of the City parking lot. We will try to get funds to help fix this, but Sabolsky wanted to make sure Council knew about this matter.

City Manager's Report:

- Sabolsky commented on the Federal Appropriations. We put in for 2 million dollars and it was included in Senator Peters' submittal to the Federal budget. That is for the Huron and Cuyler Street project. We passed the first step and we probably have at least four more to go but it is tough sometimes to even get out of the Congress person's district and we did.
- We put in for the County Youth Grant. We have requested \$100,000.00 for a concession stand with bathrooms and a warming area. The County said they will be discussing the grant applications in the next couple of weeks.
- Regarding the mural in Washington Park, all the panels are up and it looks great. Sabolsky has been working with Pat Gildner regarding the landscaping and the removal of trees from that area. Back towards the river, there are four trees that block the view of the mural. Sabolsky has talked to the Dodd family regarding the removal of the trees. Also, regarding the trees, Sabolsky needs to make sure we own those trees. He is in the process of checking on that.
- The first draft of the police Union contract with the edits were made. Pretty substantial changes were made regarding the wording and some of the content. It is on the Chief's desk and he will be reviewing it, getting back to Sabolsky and they will then be sitting down with the Union.

- Audit presentation is scheduled for May 9th. This presentation will be on the single audit.
- Regarding our sparks grant, we did not get that grant. We scored 83/100. We needed to be in the late 80's/early 90's to get funded. They are suppose to refund that program and there will be another round soon that we will apply for.
- Officer Wilson has left for Midland, Michigan and his last day is tomorrow.
- Sabolsky commented that we already discussed the Land Bank a bit with the Brownfield Redevelopment work session, but we are pushing for that. Sabolsky told Council he will probably be asking for some help from them to submit those applications.
- Sabolsky stated that Mr. Ron Van Den Heuvel is no longer in Cheboygan, Michigan. He was the consultant for Great Lakes Tissue. Sabolsky doesn't know what that means now for Great Lakes Tissue. Van Den Heuvel has been ordered not to come back to Cheboygan, Michigan.
- Sabolsky also mentioned some housing news that he can share further details about in one of the May Council meetings.

Public Comments:

- No public comments.

Committee Updates:

- Mayor Pro Tem Bedwin stated that Finance Committee has not met since the last meeting.
- Councilwoman Raab commented that the Historic District Commission meets May 1st. She also sent Sabolsky an email regarding the completion of the CLG application.
- Councilwoman Dodd commented that the DDA has not met since the last meeting.
- Mayor Mallory did not have anything to report.
- Councilman Kwiatkowski did not have anything to report.
- Councilwoman Mills commented that the Housing Commission has not met since the last meeting but they do have an Executive Director now. She is working as a consultant right now downstate in Inkster. She has hit the ground running. There should be a Housing Commission meeting before the next Council meeting so Councilwoman Mills should have more of an update at the next Council meeting.
- Councilwoman Darling went to the County Commissioners meeting. There are students at the high school that are trying to get a drug free community grant. There is a huge problem with vaping in schools. Councilwoman Darling reported on different things that were discussed at the Commissioners meeting such as the Circuit District Courts updating their software, the fairground will be adding more pedestals to connect the lighting, the State is discussing adding four new holidays to the 2023 year. There is an administrative planning session in Wolverine at the Senior Center on May 19th from 9:30-1:30 or 2:00. The County is looking into fair events for entertainment. The County building also updated their HVAC system and their electrical. Sabolsky, Jeff Lawson and Dale Rieger, Parks and Recreation Commission Chair, met and discussed the possible dog park. Parks and Recreation Commission will meet May 24th.

Adjournment:

- Meeting moved to adjourn at 7:46pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Brett Mallory

Clerk Alyssa Singles

Mayor Pro Tem Adam Bedwin

Councilwoman Diane Mills

Councilman Kenneth Kwiatkowski

Councilwoman Mary Darling

Councilwoman Diane E. Raab

Councilwoman Hayley Dodd