

CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2021
IN COMMUNITY CENTER

1. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Mayor Taylor led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Melanie D. Ryska, City Clerk, gave the Invocation.
3. Council Members present at roll call: Deanna Koski, Michael V. Radtke Jr., Maria G. Schmidt, Liz Sierawski, Michael C. Taylor, Barbara A. Ziarko.

Absent: Henry Yanez

Also Present: Mark Vanderpool, City Manager; Marc D. Kaszubski, City Attorney;
Melanie D. Ryska, City Clerk; Carol Sobosky, Recording Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

5. **REPORT FROM CITY MANAGER**
Mr. Vanderpool reminded that the City offices will be closed for business on Monday, February 15, for President's Day, and is an in-service training day for all employees. He advised that refuse collection will not be impacted by the in-service training day. Through the aid of Power Point slides, he highlighted some of the events taking place in Sterling Heights in recognition of February as Black History Month, including an extensive list of programming activity that has been put together by the Library, in conjunction with the African American Coalition. The Library will be having a virtual story time about Black history, featuring the

Sterling Heights Ethnic Community Committee members, scheduled to be available on February 9 at 10:30 a.m. on Facebook. There are three sessions of the Library's youth programming, featuring a Black history theme, with registration required by calling the Library. The Library will be hosting the documentary, "Black Men in White Coats", on February 12 at noon, and he provided some information on the documentary, which brings awareness to an issue that not only affects the black male population but also the nation as a whole. He added that participants will be emailed instructions on how to view the documentary on the morning of February 12. An expert from the Detroit Institute of Arts will present the creative contributions of African Americans from the 19th century through the present, and the program will be taking place via Zoom. He noted that registrants will be emailed instructions on how to connect, and he urged those interested to call the Library or go to their website to register for that event. A panel discussion, "Walking in our Shoes", is scheduled for February 20 at 11:30 a.m., and registration is required. He explained panelists include members of the Sterling Heights African American Coalition and the Sterling Heights Ethnic Community Committee, as well as other prominent local figures. Mr. Vanderpool announced a regional event where residents are invited to explore an interactive exhibition on how African Americans shape the notion of what it means to have the right to vote. He added this event requires registration and will be held on February 23 at 3 p.m., brought to the City by the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. He recommended

anyone interested in any of these events and programming should visit the Library's website for more information and registration.

Mr. Vanderpool highlighted Mr. Ron Pickett, an employee in the Sterling Heights Department of Public Works, who served the country as a boiler technician in the U.S. Navy from 1988 to 1992, spending a majority of that time on the USS Dale. He explained what his duties entailed on this ship, adding that his skill set transferred nicely to his current job working on the water distribution system for the City. He stated he would like to recognize Mr. Pickett in light of Black History Month and to thank him for his service to the country and his dedication to the City of Sterling Heights. Mr. Vanderpool noted that the Halo will be lit this weekend in the themed colors in honor of Black History Month.

Mr. Vanderpool introduced City Planner Chris McLeod to talk about a new COVID grant program targeted toward small businesses in the City.

City Planner Chris McLeod provided a brief update on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that are available for Small Business Relief grants, available as of yesterday. This is available for businesses throughout the City of Sterling Heights that have 500 employees or less, and they are invited to submit an application that is available online, with the potential of receiving grant funding for up to \$10,000 per business. He pointed out this is through their CDBG funding, so there are a number of conditions required. This is an extension of Phase I, which was for micro enterprises having five employees or less. Phase 2 is much larger, with double the amount of money available for the small

businesses. Mr. McLeod outlined some of the conditions, including demonstration of revenue loss due to the Covid-19 pandemic, having a total of 500 employees or less, can document that at least 51 percent of their full-time or part-time employees receive a pay rate of less than \$44,000 per year, and a DUNS number and a SAM number. He outlined the scoring criteria, adding that a lot of them are non-negotiable from the City's standpoint because they are being passed down by the federal government. He noted that smaller businesses will actually score higher because they are trying to help out the small local businesses in the City. He explained the process for the awarding of these grants, with those being selected having fifteen days to complete a grant agreement with the City, and once that occurs, they can begin the process of bringing the checks to City Council for approval. He anticipated this to be a 30- to 40-day process. He advised that a website has been developed for this process, which is easy to navigate and has an FAQ page as well, and the City has been promoting this grant opportunity through social media and on the City's main webpage. He urged anyone with questions to contact the City's Development Department or CDBG. He reiterated that this application is now available.

Mr. Vanderpool anticipated they will be able to help about sixty businesses through this program, and it is less rigid than Phase 1, which had some unreasonable requirements from the Department of Housing and Urban

Development (HUD). They were able to work through those and this is far more flexible, with many more small businesses.

Mr. Vanderpool requested that, at the conclusion of tonight's meeting, the City Council convene in Closed Session pursuant to Section 8-E of the Open Meetings Act, for Council to consult with the City Attorney regarding trial settlement strategy in connection with U.S. District Court for Eastern District of Michigan Case 19-CV-11022.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider the application by Ultimate Hydroforming, Inc. to amend the final cost of the real property investment made pursuant to Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption Certificate (IFEC) No. 2019-048 at 42605 Van Dyke Avenue. He invited Senior Economic Development Advisor Luke Bonner to give a presentation.

Senior Economic Development Advisor Luke Bonner explained this is an amendment to a previously-approved IFEC from May 7, 2019 by Ultimate Hydroforming after they took over the formerly vacant, 76,000-square-foot speculative building on Van Dyke. Their real property investment, based on their original application, was \$4,288,053, and based on that investment, they qualified for a nine-year tax abatement. Due to increased cost for the project, over and above the ten percent increase which would be allowed administratively, there is an increase of \$1.7 million to the overall project, making the final overall cost at just over \$6 million. He informed that the term of the abatement does not change, but it increases the amount of city and

school taxes generated from this project. He advised there will be an increase of \$77,550 city tax dollars and \$44,900 school tax dollars generated as a result of this increase. He added that a representative from Ultimate Hydroforming is here to answer any questions, and he offered to answer questions as well.

Mayor Taylor opened the public hearing, and after no one spoke, he closed the public hearing.

Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution approving the application by Ultimate Hydroforming, Inc. to amend the final project cost of the real property investment at 42605 Van Dyke made pursuant to Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate No. 2019-048.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

7. **ORDINANCE ADOPTIONS**

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider adoption of a Tax Exemption Ordinance providing for payment of service charges in lieu of real property taxes for the proposed Theriot Terrace apartments development at 13001 Fourteen Mile Road and 33333 Red Run Road. He opened the floor for comments from the public, but no one spoke.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Sierawski, **RESOLVED**, to:

- A. Adopt the City of Sterling Heights Tax Exemption Ordinance providing for payment of service charges in lieu of real property taxes for the proposed Theriot Terrace apartments development at 13001 Fourteen Mile Road and 33333 Red Run Road; and
- B. Approve the Municipal Services Agreement between the City of Sterling Heights and Theriot Terrace Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the Agreement on behalf of the City.

Councilman Radtke stated he is strongly in favor of this, and it will bring affordable housing to the City and help their workforce development.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Taylor stated this item is consideration of the Consent Agenda. He opened the floor for public comments, but no one spoke.

Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- A. To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 5, 2021.
- B. To approve payment of the bills as presented: General Fund - \$595,060.41, Water & Sewer Fund - \$1,974,489.62, Other Funds - \$3,075,693.34, Total Checks - \$5,645,243.37.
- C. **RESOLVED**, to approve the purchase of the surveillance camera system and accessories recommended by the Sterling Heights Police Department at a total cost of \$13,950, and authorize a budget amendment using State Forfeiture Fund reserves.
- D. **RESOLVED**, to purchase seven (7) Sharp Aquos interactive display boards and Dell Optiplex computers, two (2) LCD display boards, audio equipment and accessories from UTEC, 1995 Highland Drive, Suite C, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, at pricing available through a Sourcewell cooperative purchasing contract, #083116-SEC, at a cumulative cost of \$50,070, inclusive of delivery, installation, and training.
- E. **RESOLVED**, to approve final payment to Pro-Line Asphalt Corporation, 11797 29 Mile Road, Washington, MI 48095, in the amount of \$176,593.23, plus interest on retainage, for Merrill Road Improvements, 18 ½ Mile Road to Dobry Drive, City Project #19-345, subject to a retainage from the final payment in the amount of \$6,000 as surety for successful tree plantings.
- F. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for turf and concrete restoration services to Luigi Ferdinandi & Son Cement Company, 16481 Common Road, Roseville, MI 48066, at unit prices bid through November 30, 2022, and authorize the City Manager to extend the bid award one (1) additional two-year term at the same terms and conditions.
- G. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating the meeting place for the Sterling Heights Board of Review for 2021.
- H. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution approving the 2021 Real Property Tax Hardship Exemption Guidelines for Tax Relief under Section 211.7u, Public Act 206 of 1893.
- I. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution approving a Plan providing reimbursement funding to the Road Bond Construction Fund using Michigan Transportation Fund bond proceeds.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

9. CONSIDERATION

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider approval of a memorandum of understanding between the City of Sterling Heights and MAPE Professional and Technical Employees. He invited Mr. Vanderpool to give a presentation.

Mr. Vanderpool explained this item involves refining and upgrading a soon-to-be vacant position. He stated that historically, the Human Relations Division of the City Administration department has been understaffed based on the number of full-time employees, which is currently at 486. He informed that for the past twenty years, City Management has dedicated one Human Resources Professional and Administrative Assistant to discharge the Human Resources duties, which he outlined. He noted that recently, the City's Assistant City Manager has lent support to labor relations, including collective bargaining, disciplinary proceedings, grievances, and coordination of labor counsel. He stressed that for a city with this number of full-time employees, this is not an ideal situation moving forward. He advised that the Human Resources Division's longstanding Administrative Assistant's retirement in April 2020, there is an opportunity to upgrade the position to a Human Resources Coordinator, providing more skills directly benefiting the core functions of the HR Division. This Coordinator will possess the educational and work experience directly related to Human Resources rather than the more general administrative support skills currently required. He outlined the baseline qualifications required for the new Coordinator position, which includes a bachelor's degree in Human Resources or directly related major; professional HR designation, and

three years of job experience with a Human Resources department. He emphasized that, with the increase, there will be no increase in the number of full-time employees, and the cost will be cost-neutral because the upgraded position still fits within the current job classification as far as wage and rank. In order to create this classification, the City was required to negotiate with the MAPE Professional and Technical Employees bargaining unit, and these negotiations produced the memorandum of understanding presented this evening. He respectfully requested the Mayor and City Council approve the memorandum of understanding, and he offered to answer questions.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to approve the memorandum of understanding between the City of Sterling Heights and MAPE Professional and Technical Employees creating the Human Resources Coordinator classification and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign it on behalf of the City.

Councilwoman Ziarko felt Mr. Vanderpool explained it very well, and it is good when Administration and labor units agree, so she felt this is a good thing.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

B. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider appointments to City of Sterling Heights Boards and Commissions. He opened the floor for comments from the public, but no one spoke. He noted that one individual nominated last week for the Board of Review has withdrawn.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Joseph Bedford and Michael Bargowski to the Board of Ordinance Appeals II as an Alternate to a term ending June 30, 2023, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint John Fenn to the Zoning Board of Appeals to a term ending June 30, 2022, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Mariem Aboutaleb to the Youth Advisory Board to a term ending June 30, 2021, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

C. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider a nomination to the City of Sterling Heights Board of Review. He opened the floor for comments from the public, but no one spoke.

Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Ziarko, to:

- A. Acknowledge and accept the withdrawal by nominee Dariusz Gabrel from consideration for appointment to the Board of Review; and
- B. Nominate Laura Robinson for consideration as an appointee to the Board of Review at the February 16, 2021 regular City Council meeting.

Councilwoman Schmidt stated Ms. Robinson has served on a Board of Review in a different municipality, so she felt Ms. Robinson will bring knowledge and will be a great addition to this board.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

10. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS**

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for comments from citizens.

- Mr. Charles Jefferson – questioned when 19 Mile Road will be completely done; questioned whether there are plans to honor participants in varsity sports; talked about Black History Month; hoped the City will come together as one city for all.

11. **REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION AND CITY COUNCIL**

Mr. Vanderpool addressed the question regarding the completion of 19 Mile Road, and informed that all punch list items will be finished in the Spring, which

includes permanent lane markings, school crossings, etc. He clarified that the road is open to traffic.

12. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

13. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

14. **CLOSED SESSION PERMITTED UNDER ACT 267 OF 1976**

Mr. Kaszubski stated there is one item for Closed Session this evening.

15. **ADJOURN**

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to recess into Closed Session.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 7:32 p.m.

The meeting adjourned from Closed Session at 7:59 p.m.

MELANIE D. RYSKA, City Clerk