CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2019

IN CITY HALL

1. Mayor Michael C. 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.


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, to approve the Agenda as presented.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

5. **REPORT FROM CITY MANAGER**

Mr. Vanderpool reminded everyone that the Cultural Exchange Program will be held on Friday, March 1, 2019 at the Senior Center. He explained it is very well-attended each year, and they are growing out of the current venue and anticipate being across the street in the new Community Center next year. He noted it will have all of the usual festivities they have had in past Cultural Exchange Programs, and they will have a free shuttle bus for attendees. He urged everyone to attend the event being held from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on March 1 at the Senior Center.
Mr. Vanderpool anticipates another robust year for road improvement projects, which are currently in the planning stages. Highlights for major road work for the upcoming year include the following: 19 Mile Road resurfacing, in both directions between Hayes and Schoenherr; 14 Mile Road resurfacing, from Ryan to Dequindre, although a water main project has to be completed along that stretch prior to the road work starting; Metro Parkway resurfacing, from Van Dyke to a point just past Home Depot; Merrill Road resurfacing, in both directions between 18-1/2 Mile and M-59; 18 Mile Road resurfacing from Mound to Ryan, working with the Macomb County Department of Roads; Utica Road (Phase II), in both directions between Dodge Park Road to Van Dyke; and Schoenherr (Phase II) from approximately the Plumbrook Drain to 19 Mile Road. The total cost for these projects is estimate at just over $15 million. In addition, they have the biggest year planned in the City’s history for local road improvements, totaling over $7 million. This amounts to over $20 million in various road improvements in Sterling Heights this year. Some banners will be going up the first week in March to alert motorists that these projects will be commencing.

Mr. Vanderpool informed that Assessing notices will be mailed out next week, and he provided an update as to how Sterling Heights ranks statewide in terms of property valuations. He reviewed the comparison of the top five cities in terms of property valuation, which include Ann Arbor, Detroit, Troy, Grand Rapids and Sterling Heights, noting that Sterling Heights ranks very favorably,
with the third highest ranking in residential property valuation statewide. He felt that is an indicator that the City is headed in the right direction and doing all it can to make sure neighborhoods are well-maintained and property values are going up. The City also ranked very high in manufacturing property valuation, scoring second in the State of Michigan in this area. He felt to be in the top five is a significant accomplishment, but to rank even higher in the top five is noteworthy. He compared the City of Sterling Heights with the top five valuation communities in Macomb County, which include Sterling Heights, Macomb Township, Shelby Township, the City of Warren and Clinton Township, and indicated that Sterling Heights ranks number one in residential property and commercial property and very favorable in manufacturing and personal property. Sterling Heights has the highest valuation across Macomb County. Mr. Vanderpool explained that high valuation does not correlate to property taxes, and he showed a slide depicting what the average home in Sterling Heights equates to in property taxes. He compared the figures in 2007, at the peak before the recession, with the figures in 2018, and pointed out the property values have recovered nicely, although it took eleven years to get back to where they were in 2007, which is around a market value range of $200,000 for the average-priced home, although taxable value is much lower. He compared the total property taxes for an average-sized home, which were approximately $2,700 in 2007, and just over $2,900 recently, so over an eleven-year period of time, property taxes on the average-sized home have increased
just over $200, which is less than one percent per year and way below the rate of inflation over that eleven-year period of time. He broke that down to an average property tax increase of just over $18 per year on the average-sized home over the eleven-year period of time, and he added that includes the voter-approved millages for safe streets and ReCreating Recreation. He stated he will continue to provide annual updates on property values in Sterling Heights, and he reminded the assessment notices will be going out next week.

Mr. Vanderpool stated the City’s ice rink has been incredibly successful, and a brief video was shown, showcasing the ice rink and the first Sterling Winter Skate, which was a free event where people could skate with Sterling Heights police officers and fire fighters. Residents attending had an opportunity to support the Guardian Angels Medical Dogs charity, which was at the event raising funds for a service dog, named “Sterling,” who will be donated to a veteran or first responder in need. Mr. Vanderpool concluded his report by informing that anyone wishing to contribute to “Sterling” can go to the City’s website to click on the link.

6. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Taylor indicated this item is consideration of the Consent Agenda, and he invited comments from the audience.

- Mr. Jerry Sieja – would have liked G & I as Consideration items for more explanation; age of current roof at Fire Station #1; Item J – status of Island Park; Item L – urged people to attend budget meetings.
Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, RESOLVED, to approve the Consent
Agenda as presented:

A. To approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 29, 2019, as presented.
B. To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 5, 2019, as presented.
C. To approve payment of the bills as presented: General Fund - $858,570.32, Water & Sewer Fund - $6,377,598.47, Other Funds - $2,736,889.22, Total Checks - $9,973,058.01.
D. RESOLVED, to accept the proposal by National Communication Corporation, 1463 Premier, Troy, MI 48084, for an inter-agency video conferencing system at a total cost of $1,220,568 and approve a budget amendment in the amount of the purchase from Capital Project Fund Reserves.
E. RESOLVED, to accept the proposal by EFI Global of Michigan LLC, 33955 Harper Avenue, Clinton Township, MI 48035 and authorize the City Manager to sign it on behalf of the City.
F. RESOLVED, to accept the proposal by Jem Tech Group, 23537 Lakepointe Drive, Clinton Township, MI 48036, for professional information technology consulting services to upgrade the City's back-up data center at a cost of $29,975.
G. RESOLVED, to award a bid for the purchase and installation of upgrades to the City's telephone system to Teoma Systems, 560 Kirts Boulevard, Suite 120, Troy, MI 48084, in the amount of $244,070.10.
H. RESOLVED, to purchase Armor Express TORC tactical vest plate carrier systems and accessories from Central Lake Armor Express Inc., PO Box 516, Central Lake, MI 49622, at pricing available through General Services Administration cooperative purchasing contract, #GS-07F-0153T, in the amount of $43,517.15; and approve a budget amendment from Capital Project Fund Reserves in the amount of $43,517.15.
I. RESOLVED, to receive the report of the Purchasing Manager pursuant to City Code §2-221(B) regarding emergency roof replacements at Fire Station #1 and the Department of Public Works’ Salt Barn by Garland/DBS Inc., 3800 E 91st Street, Cleveland, OH 44105, in the amount of $240,985.72 and approve a budget amendment in the amount of $82,623.41 from General Fund Reserves.
J. RESOLVED, to approve final payment to Z Contractors, Inc., 50500 Design Lane, Shelby Township, MI 48315, in the amount of $11,959.41, plus interest on retainage, for the Northlawn Drive Pedestrian Bridge Rehabilitation, City Project #18-321, and the Lakeside Island Park Bridge Bank Stabilization, City Project #18-328.
K. RESOLVED, to:
(A) Approve the cost sharing agreement between the city of Sterling Heights and the Macomb County Department of Roads for Mound Road joint repairs, from 14 Mile Road to 2,500 linear feet north, subject to approval by the Macomb County Department of Roads;
(B) Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Agreement on behalf of the city of Sterling Heights; and
(C) Authorize a budget amendment in the amount of $124,537 from Major Road Reserves.

L. RESOLVED, to adopt the resolution establishing a schedule of City Council Workshops for the purpose of reviewing and acting upon the fiscal year 2019/20 proposed budget and to direct the City Clerk to provide the appropriate notice as required by Michigan’s Open Meetings Act.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

7. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS
   • Mr. Joe Judnick – potholes on Merrill; construction start date for Merrill Road project; Edison pole on Merrill, south of 19-1/2 Mile, requested it be removed.
   • An unidentified resident – concerned about his sidewalk repair bill of $694 with few payment options.
   • Mr. Charles Jefferson – recognized City’s support for STEM suggested something similar for the trades; condition of 19 Mile, between Clinton River and Schoenherr, and Utica Road, between Hayes and Schoenherr; marijuana legalization.
   • Mr. Joe Adone – congratulated City on high ranking in residential properties; proud to be a citizen of this community; steer clear of negativity.
   • Mr. Jerry Sieja – appreciated help he received from Meghan Ahearn in City Manager’s office; thanked City for their support of Upton House; positive asset of ice rink; commended Parks & Rec staff for all they do; art on police building; resident input and understanding of how art is chosen for community.

8. REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION AND CITY COUNCIL
   Mayor Taylor requested Mr. Vanderpool address the resident’s concern about Merrill Road and to provide the concerned resident with an explanation of the sidewalk program.
Mr. Vanderpool replied that, regarding Merrill Road, they do not have a definitive time line other than sometime this summer. They have to bid that project out and work in the construction schedule. He assured the plan is to get it done this summer, and as soon as they have more details, he will be happy to provide that to the residents and City Council. With respect to the Edison pole, he assured they will work with DTE to get that removed quickly. He explained they have a Sidewalk Special Assessment Program that has been a longstanding program for decades in the community. Sidewalks that fall into disrepair are unfortunately the homeowner’s responsibility. The repairs are handled through a Special Assessment. He would like to talk with the resident who spoke to get his name and phone number, and they can determine what type of payment option they may be able to work out for him. He informed they send out a number of notifications before the program begins, and residents have the chance to replace the sidewalk on their own, using their own contractor or by doing the work themselves as long as it is according to the City’s specifications. He assured he will share that information with the resident who spoke.

Councilwoman Schmidt noted Mr. Jefferson raised concern about the exact road she pointed out to Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski during the presentation, and she does not feel Utica Road, from Hayes to Schoenherr, can last another summer. She is aware it is a County road, but she felt they need input to
getting that road expedited. She requested Mr. Vanderpool look into seeing how they can push that project ahead.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski attended the Sterling Winter Skate event, and stated it was a lot of fun. She commended the City and the Council, both past and present, for making sure residents have the best quality of life. She noted she has lived in the same house near Dodge Park for almost thirty years, adding it is a great place to live.

Councilman Radtke stated he also attended the Sterling Winter Skate and agreed with the sentiments expressed by Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski. He was impressed with the amount of people that attended and he thanked the police and firefighters who took time out of their busy schedules to interact with the community. He congratulated Mr. Kyle Langlois, Director of Parks and Recreation, for receiving a Leadership Award from the Michigan Parks Association for all of his hard work, noting he was honored yesterday at City Hall. He felt the residents need to know about the great directors and employees they have in Sterling Heights who go above and beyond to bring a wonderful experience to them. He requested Mr. Vanderpool provide an update regarding the recent pipe break in the Upton House.

Mr. Vanderpool confirmed they had a watermain break in the Upton House, which periodically happen in older homes. He explained the break was such that it did not cause much water damage, but because the furnace system was running over the couple days before it was detected, there was a lot of
moisture that occurred throughout the home. There is some cleanup, and they anticipate having to make an insurance claim for this loss, but as far as a loss of historical items or improvements of a historical significance, they fared very well, so this will be a routine clean-up and replacement of some flooring. He assured they have the insurance coverage and will be proceeding accordingly to make the improvements.

Councilman Radtke asked if they can get more information out to the residents as to how the Arts Commission works and how they select the art work, especially if they are going to expand the mural program. He would love input from the residents as to what they would like to see.

Mr. Vanderpool stated he would be happy to provide that information for the community. He explained the mural which will be going on the Police Department is fantastic and there was a recent press release on it. He advised that mural is being done in concert with the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) and they made a $15,000 grant available to the City to complete the mural. The City’s art program is taking off and its valuation far exceeds what they have paid for the art to date, and it gets a lot of attention, mostly positive, resulting in people talking about the art pieces. The Arts Commission plays a great role, and he agreed they need to do a better job of publicizing their good work.

Councilwoman Koski referred to the resident’s question about Items G and I on the Consent Agenda, and she inquired as to whether they can get more explanation on those two items. She also asked whether the traffic light at 19
Mile Road and Merrill will be able to be replaced at the same time the road improvements take place.

Mr. Vanderpool stated he will have to check to see if the signal for the 19 Mile/Merrill intersection is scheduled with the road project, but he assured he will look into it and report back. He referred to Consent Agenda Items G and I. He informed that Item I pertains to replacing two roof systems, one at Fire Station #1, which is the original roof approaching thirty years old. This is not one of the Fire Stations that was rehabilitated about ten years ago, and this building has not been refurbished at all. The other roof is for the salt barn, and he noted this roof is also approaching thirty years old and needs to be replaced. Mr. Vanderpool explained that Item G addressed the replacement of the City’s phone system, which is now over twenty years old. He stressed that has far exceeded the life of a phone system, so it is necessary the phone system is upgraded and replaced.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**  
There was no unfinished business.

12. **NEW BUSINESS**  
There was no new business.

13. **CLOSED SESSION**  
Mr. Kaszubski stated there are no items for Closed Session this evening.

14. **ADJOURN**  
Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, to adjourn the meeting.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.
MELANIE D. RYSKA, City Clerk