

CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2022
IN CITY HALL

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, Henry Yanez, Barbara A. Ziarko.

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 stated he would like to continue to highlight all their boards and commissions and the good work they are doing. He introduced Community Relations Director Melanie Davis to talk about the commUNITY alliance.

Community Relations Director Melanie Davis stated she has had a great time working with the commUNITY alliance over the past year-and-a-half, adding they have been doing an incredible amount of work to make sure every resident in Sterling Heights feels welcome, accepted, and safe. She explained that their Chair, Stacy Bahri, was unable to attend this evening due to a prior commitment. She

invited Vice-Chair Ricardo Harris and Member-At-Large Cynthia Bjornson to speak.

She also introduced member Tatrika Graphenreed in the audience this evening.

Ricardo Harris, Vice-Chair of the commUNITY alliance, provided an update on the Strategic Plan they presented earlier this year. He talked about their current membership and their vision to build a culture within Sterling Heights that intentionally honors and celebrates all people, with the mission to create an inclusive environment that is intentional about celebrating acceptance of all people through education, exposure, and events. He outlined their three strategies, or pillars, which include education, inclusion, and leadership. He invited Ms. Bjornson to provide more detail on the first two pillars mentioned.

Cindy Bjornson, commUNITY alliance member-at-large, explained their first strategy is education, and she highlighted a few activities in which they have been involved. They have participated in Unity workshops, such as Macomb Diversity Summit, and they hope for commUNITY alliance to be able to host a presentation during that Summit. She explained that one of their members, Tim Doppel, oversees their social media calendar and posts, and he does an excellent job informing the community about the efforts of commUNITY alliance. She stated that the commUNITY alliance brought forth sixteen resolutions to City Council this year, and she outlined them. They were also involved in the Pride Flag-Raising ceremony and are looking forward to assisting with an upcoming Pride Night at the Ice Rink, and potentially working with Macomb Pride for next year's Pride Picnic. Ms. Bjornson explained they are working on an exciting venture with the

Sterling Heights Public Library as they bring the Human Library to the community in April. She stated that the Human Library is a library of people, where readers can “borrow human beings” as open books and have conversations, which is something they would normally not have access. She added the tagline of the Human Library is “Unjudge Someone.”

Ms. Bjornson outlined their second strategy, which is inclusion, and they are bringing a Disability Awareness Workshop (DAW) to Sterling Heights. These kits have ten hands-on activity stations, including learning differences, autism spectrum disorders, vision impairment, learning about Braille, gross-motor impairment, fine-motor impairment, adaptive equipment and a wheelchair course, speech impairment, and deaf and hard of hearing. They are planning to rent these kits from Rochester and hope to have a couple of these stations at the Cultural Exchange, as well as a workshop with all ten stations in late February or early March. This program was developed to teach the community how people who have a disability are affected daily by their challenges and differences.

Mr. Harris explained their third strategy is to focus on leadership, so they developed a checklist, which includes factors such as age, physical abilities, economic impact, religion, etc. He stated they understand all events will not cater to everyone, but they would like to be able to check as many of these checklist boxes as possible. He noted that they recently met with the Facilities Manager Jared Beaudoin and Parks and Recreation Director Kyle Langlois to get feedback from the checklist. He understands a lot of the departments struggle with funding,

so when they talk about the needs for parks, scholarship funds, and the needs of some of the other departments, they are discussing putting together a budget for the commUNITY alliance so they have some funding to be able to meet some of these needs. He cited the examples of scholarship money for hearing impaired, or possibly having sign language at some events, and although he admitted they cannot have sign language at all events, if they had money set aside for specific projects, they could possibly have an application process through the commUNITY alliance to approve the funds. He stated this concludes their presentation, and he offered to answer questions.

Mr. Vanderpool stressed it is gratifying to see the good work by the commUNITY alliance. He emphasized the City would not have the great reputation it enjoys throughout Michigan and across the country without their approximately 650 wonderful employees and their hundreds of amazing volunteers appointed by Mayor and City Council who run all their boards and commissions. He noted the City Council had asked during Strategic Planning last year that City Administration showcase all the good work the boards and commissions are doing throughout the year. He indicated they have been doing that, and he felt they will probably start the rotation again because as these boards and commissions complete projects, they are starting new work that the community should be aware of. He thanked Mr. Harris and Ms. Bjornson for their presentations, and he thanked the entire commUNITY alliance, including Ms. Davis and her entire Community

Relations team, for the work they do. Mr. Vanderpool stated that concludes his report this evening.

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for comments or questions by Council, but there were none. He thanked the commUNITY alliance for the work they are doing, stressing it is very important for the City to know where they need help, and that is what this group is doing.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Taylor stated this item is consideration of the Consent Agenda. He opened the floor for public comments.

- Ken Nelson – voiced opposition to Item 6-E a property purchase, funded from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA); concerned about Item 6-J to set a public hearing on November 15 on a project defeated by Planning Commission.
- Paul Smith – stated items being placed on Consent Agenda should be rubber-stamping routine business and not have controversial items; voiced objection to Item 6-J, scheduling a public hearing for a high-density housing and commercial development.
- Moira Smith – concerned about Item 6-E a property purchase and the expenditure of \$640,000 on a Consent Agenda without discussion; expressed objection to Item 6-J to set a public hearing, mostly a flood plain.

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

- A. To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 20, 2022.
- B. To approve payment of the bills as presented: General Fund - \$775,682.68, Water & Sewer Fund - \$3,971,001.36, Other Funds - \$5,466,078.93, Total Checks - \$10,212,762.97.
- C. **RESOLVED**, to purchase printed election materials and supplies from Printing Systems, Inc., 12005 Beech Daly Rd., Taylor, MI 48180 at the unit prices quoted for fiscal year 2022/2023 elections.
- D. **RESOLVED**, to:
 1. Approve the Professional Services Agreement between the City of Sterling Heights and Woolpert, Inc., 1 Easton Oval, Suite 310, Columbus,

- OH 43219, and Pictometry International Corp., 25 Methodist Hill Drive, Rochester, NY 14623 for Eagleview software licensing for a period of six years at a total cost of \$186,383.04; and
2. Authorize the City Manager to sign the Agreement and all related documentation on behalf of the City.
- E. **RESOLVED**, to:
1. Approve the Purchase Agreement between the City of Sterling Heights and Grillo Properties, LLC for the acquisition of a 10.198 acre parcel of vacant property commonly known as 43934 Van Dyke and authorize the City Manager to sign the agreement and all closing documents on behalf of the City; and
 2. Approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$640,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act Fund.
- F. **RESOLVED**, to accept the proposal by Gibraltar Construction Co., 2650 Van Horn Rd., Trenton, MI 48183, for labor and materials needed to effectuate relocation of a section of the Clinton River Trail at a total cost of \$32,292.94.
- G. **RESOLVED**, to accept the proposal by CMT Custom Clean, LLC, 17369 Grettel, Fraser, MI 48026, for contracted deep cleaning and debris removal services for a two-year period and authorize the City Manager to extend the terms and conditions of one additional year.
- H. **RESOLVED**, to:
1. Approve the renewal of software licenses with Kronos SaaS, Inc., for the UKG Workforce Ready timekeeping and payroll applications and UKG HR and Talent Acquisition applications for the period December 1, 2022, through November 30, 2023, at pricing available through OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing contract #18221 for a cumulative cost of \$59,829.12;
 2. Approve the renewal of software licenses with Kronos, Incorporated for the TeleStaff scheduling applications for the period November 11, 22 through November 10, 2023, at pricing available through OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing contract #18221 for a cumulative cost of \$29,924.67; and
 3. Authorize the City Manager to sign the documentation required as a result of these approvals on behalf of the City.
- I. **RESOLVED**, to purchase one (1) 2023 Ford T-250 Transit Cargo Van from Gorno Ford, 21111 Allen Road, Woodhaven, MI 48183, at a cost of \$44,470.
- J. **RESOLVED**, to set the public hearing on Tuesday, November 15th, 2022, at 7:00 p.m., regarding the application by Waad Nadhir, for and on behalf of BOSC Realty Advisors, LLC, for a Planned Unit Development on approximately ten acres situated on the south side of Hall Road, west side of Sterritt Street, PPUD22-0003.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

7. **CONSIDERATION**

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider an appointment to the City of Sterling Heights Beautification Commission. He opened the floor for public comment, but no one spoke.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Sheryl Burns to the Beautification Commission 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.

Councilwoman Schmidt stated Ms. Burns lives in her neighborhood, and she walks her dog daily while carrying a very large garbage bag to pick up trash along Moravian, inside the park, and around the neighborhood. She felt Ms. Burns will be a fantastic addition to this board.

Councilman Radtke pointed out that Ms. Burns is a Master Gardener, and he looks forward to adding her to the committee.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

8. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS**

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for public comments, but no one spoke.

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

Mr. Vanderpool commented on the Riverland property that the City is acquiring under the Consent Agenda. He noted that, in the past, a lot of property acquisition has been included on a Consent Agenda. He noted there is not a dollar threshold for Consent, but it is dictated by rules and procedures of City Council. He assured it has all the same backup that would be included on regular agenda items, so anyone can look at the Consent Agenda and view all the entire backup. He

explained they have spent three or four years developing the Master Plan for redevelopment of the North Van Dyke District, noting the area is looking “tired,” and without some attention, although it is not blighted now, it could be headed in that direction without some good planning and changing the course of that area for a more prosperous future. He explained there are a lot of projects going on in the area to improve it, and the Chaldean Community Foundation project will be transformative, injecting hundreds of people into the district. He added the businesses along that corridor are excited about it because these are people who will be supporting those businesses, resulting in an economic impact. He suggested that anyone interested in the North Van Dyke Redevelopment Plan can go to the City’s website to see the material they have on it, including the Master Plan. He assured they are also happy to meet with residents who want to learn more about it and talk about some of the ideas they have been discussing in public forums with a lot of community engagement.

Councilwoman Ziarko stated they discuss many good things at the Council meetings that they can do in the City, but she cautioned if they do not own the property, they cannot control it. She expressed concern about those casting negativity on it or implying that something is not done properly. She felt it is unnecessary for people to do this and instill fear in others.

Councilman Radtke understands they are going to spend ARPA funds on the purchase of land so they can make a public park as part of their Master Plan, and he emphasized this is “not being done in the dark” because they have had

numerous public meetings where this was discussed. He pointed out that North Van Dyke is currently basically comprised of auto body shops, a couple of marijuana facilities in the nearby City of Utica, empty shopping centers, and vacant land. He stressed the reason they have the Master Plan is to breathe life back into this area that has fallen into rougher times. He expressed opposition to Mr. Smith's earlier comments, and emphasized he is proud to vote in favor of this park, which he felt will be a jewel on the river.

Councilman Radtke talked about beehives and the fact that the current ordinance bans them. He hoped that, without objection, they could ask the City to amend the ordinance to allow one beehive per house. He stated he is a gardener and feels that bees are good to have. He would hate to have to force some people in the community who already have beehives to get rid of them.

Mayor Taylor did not feel this needs to be studied for a long time, but he suggested that possibly an ordinance or proposed change could be brought back in about a month to consider relaxing the restrictions on beehives or beekeeping.

Mr. Vanderpool assured they are happy to research whatever City Council would like, and if they would like a report back as to what some of the best practices are in this area, they are happy to do so. He felt arbitrarily deciding a count this evening may not be the most prudent course, but they are happy to provide good information to them so they can make a good decision on this. He replied they would like sixty days, but they will do whatever Council directs them to do.

Mayor Taylor questioned whether the second meeting in December would be good.

There were no objections to this request.

Councilman Radtke wished everyone a great trip to Muskegon for the Michigan Municipal League (MML) conference. He stated he is looking forward to learning more about the Pattern Book Home project that Councilwoman Ziarko mentioned, and that this may be a help to those who are having trouble finding housing.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski wished her colleagues well at the MML conference, although she will not be going. She stated she welcomes any comments or calls and feedback on some of the upcoming projects or items they discussed this evening. She responded to the comments on beekeeping, noting they keep bees on the property where she works in Clarkston, and they have some honey from two small hives, so they are a great benefit to the community. She thanked Councilman Radtke for bringing it up.

Mayor Taylor noted there are a few residents who feel the Consent Agenda is only for items like the purchase of paper clips. He clarified they do not buy paper clips but rather let the administration handle those types of purchases. He clarified that they could individually discuss every item on the Consent Agendas, but the meetings would be very lengthy. He pointed out the reason the items are on the Consent Agenda is because they are routine matters that have already been budgeted, things that occur in the normal course of business for a city, or things

they know they need and most likely have been discussed. He stressed if anyone, either a Council member or a member of the public, sees anything on the Consent Agenda and gives them a heads-up, they are able to remove it off the Consent Agenda and move it to another item for further discussion, which they do quite regularly. He acknowledged that some of their items are very expensive, but it does not make them any less routine. He pointed out that Mr. Smith served on this City Council for two years, and during his two years, he estimated that Mr. Smith voted on about \$50 million of consent agenda items on the Consent Agenda. He added that those items were not pulled off that agenda and it would have been his right to pull them off for more discussion. He emphasized having these items on the Consent Agenda results in more efficient meetings, and anyone from the public has a right to speak on these items. If they request a City Council member pull it, they will almost always do that for more discussion.

10. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

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

Mr. Kaszubski stated there are no items for tonight.

13. **ADJOURN**

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

The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

MELANIE D. RYSKA, City Clerk