

CITY OF ST. JOHNS

CITY COMMISSION MINUTES

JANUARY 22, 2024

The regular meeting of the St. Johns City Commission was called to order by Mayor Dzurka at 6:00 p.m. at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 East State Street, 2nd Floor, Suite #2200, St. Johns, Michigan.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Eric Hufnagel, Jean Ruestman, Brad Gurski, Scott Dzurka, Chris Hyzer

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Chad Gamble, City Manager; Kristina Kinde, City Treasurer; Mindy J. Seavey, City Clerk; Justin Smith, Director of Public Services; Anne Seuryneck, City Attorney

Mayor Dzurka asked if any of the commissioners or persons present wished to discuss any of the items on the consent agenda.

Commissioner Hyzer asked to move item e. off the consent agenda. It was moved to item #14 under New Business.

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the consent agenda be approved as amended.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

a. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the minutes of the December 11, 2023 regular meeting and closed sessions be approved as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

b. Receipt of Warrants

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that warrants be approved as presented in the amount of \$3,480,460.57.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None
Motion carried.

c. Merit Bonus – Ken Goldman

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the merit bonus for Ken Goldman.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

d. Main Park - Electric Upgrades

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the 2023/24 Main Park Electric upgrades and use Speer Electric for phases #1, #2 and #3 phases and use the 2023-24 (\$75,000) budgeted dollars for the project.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

f. Standby Generator Planned Maintenance Agreement

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the three-year planned maintenance contract with Hamilton Electric and authorize the Mayor to sign the contract on the City's behalf.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

g. Department of Public Works Building Concept Design

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the proposal and contract from Wolverine Engineering for conceptual design plans for the new DPW Facility in the amount of \$10,000 and that the mayor to be authorize to sign the contract on behalf of the City.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

h. DDA/PSD Director Contract Approval

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the calendar year employment contract for Heather Hanover for the position of DDA/PSD Director and authorize the mayor to sign the contract.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

i. Spicer Group - Asset Management/Distribution System Inventory Phase II

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the Phase II proposal from Spicer Group to continue the AMP/CDSMI 3 Phase completion process in the amount of \$97,900. The proposal was reviewed by our attorney and deemed acceptable for the Mayor to sign.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

j. Baker Tilly – Water/Sewer Rate Study

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve the engagement letter with Baker Tilly for a two-year water/sewer rate study for a total of \$13,500, allowing Baker Tilly to be a sole source vendor for this study and authorizing the City Manager to sign the engagement letter.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

k. Replacement of two doors on the west entrance of the Depot

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve Rotary Glass LLC. quote of \$10,866.56 for the replacement of the two west entrance doors to the depot.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

l. Mid-Year Budget Adjustments

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission approve all mid-year budget adjustments attached.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

m. Finance Advisory Committee City Resident Member Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission appoint Rich Koenigsnecht to the Finance Advisory Committee as the City resident member.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

AGENDA

Mayor Dzurka asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. He added as number #15 - DNR Infrastructure Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant Acceptance.

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Ruestman that the city commission approve the agenda as amended.

AGENDA

A. OPENING:

1. Invocation
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consent Agenda

The staff proposes the following items for the Consent Agenda. If any Commissioner wishes to discuss any of these items, it should be placed on the regular agenda. The remaining items and recommendations may be approved en masse:

- a. Approval of Minutes
 - Regular meeting of December 11, 2023
 - Closed sessions of December 11, 2023
- b. Receipt of Warrants
 - In the amount of \$3,480,460.57
- c. Merit Bonus – Ken Goldman
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the merit bonus for Ken Goldman.
- d. Main Park - Electric upgrades
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the 2023/24 Main Park Electric upgrades and use Speer Electric for phases #1, #2 and #3 phases and use the 2023-24 (\$75,000) budgeted dollars for the project.
- e. ~~Clinton Avenue Downtown Lights – Pole Upgrades to Blocks 200 & 300~~

~~-Staff recommends the city commission approve the 2024 Clinton Ave. Downtown Street light pole upgrades to the 200 & 300 blocks and award the project to JC Electric LLC in the amount of \$41,719.00.~~

- f. Standby Generator Planned Maintenance Agreement
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the three-year planned maintenance contract with Hamilton Electric and authorize the Mayor to sign the contract on the City's behalf.
- g. Department of Public Works Building Concept Design
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the proposal and contract from Wolverine Engineering for conceptual design plans for the new DPW Facility in the amount of \$10,000 and that the mayor to be authorize to sign the contract on behalf of the City.
- h. DDA/PSD Director Contract Approval
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the calendar year employment contract for Heather Hanover for the position of DDA/PSD Director and authorize the mayor to sign the contract.
- i. Spicer Group - Asset Management/Distribution System Inventory Phase II
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the Phase II proposal from Spicer Group to continue the AMP/CDSMI 3 Phase completion process in the amount of \$97,900. The proposal was reviewed by our attorney and deemed acceptable for the Mayor to sign.
- j. Baker Tilly – Water/Sewer Rate Study
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the engagement letter with Baker Tilly for a two-year water/sewer rate study for a total of \$13,500, allowing Baker Tilly to be a sole source vendor for this study and authorizing the City Manager to sign the engagement letter.
- k. Replacement of two doors on the west entrance of the Depot
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve Rotary Glass LLC. quote of \$10,866.56 for the replacement of the two west entrance doors to the depot.
- l. Mid-Year Budget Adjustments
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve all mid-year budget adjustments attached.
- m. Finance Advisory Committee City Resident Member Recommendation
 - Staff recommends the city commission appoint Rich Koenigs knecht to the Finance Advisory Committee as the City resident member.

4. Approval of Agenda:

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

C. PERSONS WISHING TO PRESENT TESTIMONY:

- 1. Public comment - agenda & non-agenda items
- 2. Audit Presentation – Jordan Smith, Maner Costerisan

D. COMMUNICATIONS:

E. OLD BUSINESS:

F. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution #1-2024 Adopting Guidelines For Poverty Exemptions to be Implemented by the Board of Review
2. Resolution #2-2024 a Resolution to Adopt Alternate Start Dates for March, 2024; July, 2024; and December, 2024 Board of Review
3. Resolution #3-2024 a Resolution to Adopt Taxpayers & Non-Resident Taxpayers to Protest in Writing by Letter or Email for Board of Review
4. Consideration of Approval of the Clinton Area Ambulance Service Budget and Capital Expenditures for 24/25
5. Consideration of Resolution #4-2024 to Authorize Clinton Area Ambulance Service Authority to Purchase and Finance Ambulance
6. Resolution #5-2024 - Resolution to Introduce an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 71 of the Code of Ordinances Regarding Parking Violations
7. 2021 Scott Road Connector Trail Grant
8. 2021 Main City Park Improvement Grant
9. Quarterly Budget Report
10. Annual Reports Requested by City Commission
11. Discussion and Receipt of City Manager 6-Month Report and List of Accomplishments
12. Consideration of the Establishment of St. Johns Social District
13. Consideration of Property Option of Gibbs St. Parcels
14. Clinton Avenue Downtown Lights - Pole Upgrades to Blocks 200 & 300 (*moved from Consent Agenda*)
15. DNR Infrastructure Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant Acceptance (*added to agenda*)
16. City Manager Comments
17. Commissioner Comments

G. ADJOURNMENT:

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PERSONS WISHING TO PRESENT TESTIMONY

1. Public Comment

Mayor Dzurka asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

2. Audit Presentation – Jordan Smith, Maner Costerisan

Jordan Smith, Maner Costerisan, was present. He thanked the city staff. He discussed: page 11 – opinion letter, clean, unmodified opinion; management and auditor’s responsibilities; General Fund – fund balance \$2,685,705, 44%; last year was 59%; GFOA recommends 17% fund balance; page 30 – revenues increased 4%; admin charges increased 4%; expenditures increased 21%, vast majority of the increase was the fire pumper truck; the packet of graphs provided; page 113 – control issue, and testing of items.

There was a discussion of:

- The recommended fund balance for water/sewer.
- \$300,000 in the General Fund in Wilson Center expenditures that will be reimbursed by the bond.
- Unrestricted fund balance.
 - The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and rate increases.
 - Try to cash fund as many improvements as we can.
- Fund Balance percentage; having too much in fund balance.
 - Depends on future plans and the CIP; the city is very healthy at 44%.
- Pension liability
 - As of June 30th, page 75, 58% funded; deferral of about 6 months; almost all is the net investment loss.

City Manager Gamble commended Treasurer Kinde and her hard work preparing for this audit. He said 2023 was a very interesting year and placed a lot of weight on Kristina’s shoulders. He also congratulated her on the great audit we received.

Mayor Dzurka discussed the CAFR award that was included in the audit.

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Hyzer that the city commission receive the audit as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution #1-2024 Adopting Guidelines For Poverty Exemptions to be Implemented by the Board of Review

Assessor Hardaker was present. She said they need to be updated annually for the Board of Review and this is following the changes for 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Ruestman seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission adopt Resolution #1-2024 Adopting Guidelines For Poverty Exemptions to be Implemented by the Board of Review.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

2. Resolution #2-2024 a Resolution to Adopt Alternate Start Dates for March, 2024; July, 2024; and December, 2024 Board of Review

Assessor Hardaker said this keeps the city in compliance and helps board members in case of emergencies and helps with their schedules.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission adopt Resolution #2-2024 a Resolution to Adopt Alternate Start Dates for March, 2024; July, 2024; and December, 2024 Board of Review.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. Resolution #3-2024 a Resolution to Adopt Taxpayers & Non-Resident Taxpayers to Protest in Writing by Letter or Email for Board of Review

Assessor Hardaker said it gives more property owners a chance to appeal. She said she also reaches out to people that submit a letter so she can explain the assessment to them.

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission adopt Resolution #3-2024 a Resolution to Adopt Taxpayers & Non-Resident Taxpayers to Protest in Writing by Letter or Email for Board of Review.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. Consideration of Approval of the Clinton Area Ambulance Service Budget and Capital Expenditures for 24/25

Commissioner Gurski said Director Weber is also here to answer questions. He discussed 2024/25 and the proposed per capita increased to \$15; they increased their rates quite significantly and will continue to do so, they haven't yet seen those impacts; the waiting time for equipment/trucks; they are looking to bring on a total of 5 rigs and they continue to grow; they should hit the 4,000-run mark this year; and they hope to continue to expand their service area.

City Manager Gamble said he has heard nothing but great information about the ambulance service. He said the projected increase is an 83% rate increase over the next 5 years.

Lynn Weber, Ambulance Director, was present. He discussed: Medicare/Medicaid collection rate; run cost; and CMS is doing an audit of ambulance services.

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Hyzer that the city commission adopt the budget and capital expenditures for 2024/25 as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

5. Consideration of Resolution #4-2024 to Authorize Clinton Area Ambulance Service Authority to Purchase and Finance Ambulance

Commissioner Gurski said this is a resolution to incur the debt associated with the purchase. He said they are borrowing \$100,000 from a local lender, Journey Federal Credit Union, and they gave them a great rate. They need approval of the local bodies. He said the budget supports it and their long-term plan is to cash flow these. He said they are getting closer to that and are paying half down.

Motion by Commissioner Ruestman seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission adopt Resolution #4-2024 to Authorize Clinton Area Ambulance Service Authority to Purchase and Finance Ambulance.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

6. Resolution #5-2024 - Resolution to Introduce an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 71 of the Code of Ordinances Regarding Parking Violations

Chief Kirk discussed the proposed changes to Chapter 71.

Commissioner Hyzer said it should say 65A District Court.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Hyzer that the city commission adopt Resolution #5-2024 - Resolution to Introduce an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 71 of the Code of Ordinances Regarding Parking Violations.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

7. 2021 Scott Road Connector Trail Grant

Recreation Director Schafer discussed the vendor contract for the 2021 Scott Road Connector Trail. He said we need to have the project completed by the end of July. He said it was competitively bid and we shouldn't have to use as much of the ARPA dollars as we were anticipating.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Ruestman that the city commission award the Scott Road Multi-Use Connector Trail project to Youngstrom Contracting, Inc. for \$275,500 and to authorize the Mayor to execute the contract documents on behalf of the City.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

8. 2021 Main City Park Improvement Grant

Recreation Director Schafer said this is 2021 DNR grant for the volleyball court, sidewalks, viewing area and parking areas and it was also competitively bid.

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Hyzer that the city commission approve the contract with Youngstrom Contracting, Inc in the amount of \$87,000.00 and authorize the City Mayor to sign.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

9. Quarterly Budget Report

Treasurer Kinde said provided the year to date and amended budget as of 12/31/2023. She said it included the budget adjustments that were just approved. She discussed: rental inspection fees – just beginning phase 2; sick leave is at 100% - due to pay out in

December of each year; community development – rental inspection/code enforcement and marketing, slightly over budget; YTD \$480,000 expense – is the Wilson Center, will be reimbursed through the bonds; in total for the General Fund – a lot of adjustments are related to prior year roll forward, will have to post revenue adjustment manually; and there were a few items approved by the city commission to use fund balance.

There was a discussion of:

- Federal grant money in General Fund revenue.
 - Treasurer Kinde said she will have to look into it and get back with you.

Mayor Dzurka said he appreciated the explanations.

10. Annual Reports Requested by City Commission

City Manager Gamble discussed the three year-end reports. He said with the leaf collection program the memo discusses our approach this year, we were about a week behind, and discussed the Cognito form for requests. He commended Supervisor Ritter and his team.

There was a discussion of:

- Being more specific on what areas we are at.
- The timing of leaf pick-up and the overlapping holidays.
- The number of employees that worked on this program.
- The number of hours.
- The loader was more efficient than when we had the leaf vacuum.
- Communication and code enforcement regarding leaves being blown out into the street.

City Manager Gamble discussed the rental inspection report of 2023. He said it was very successful. He had a year-end meeting with city team members involved in the program; the revised inspection checklist; percentages of violations; life safety issues; sending a legal notice to non-responders from the first year.

There was a discussion of:

- Reaching back out to non-responders to make sure it is not a secondary home.
 - We have had a lot that reached out and we make notes in the system. Some that had a 50% PRE and should have had 100%.
 - Also, those that have not paid their inspection fee.
 - The revised checklist and the landlords' perspective.

- A group of landlords that collaborated with Ken and Chad and the planning commission had a subcommittee. The landlords were amenable to some changes.
- Ken Skunda worked hard to work with landlords that were trying and was a great representative in working with landlords and those that are not providing great housing stock.
- The planning commission knew we would make adjustments along the way.
- A complaint we received about a woman who didn't have any heat and our tools for those situations.
- Complaint driven vs. staff initiated.

City Manager Gamble discussed the code enforcement program. He said Jessica has been doing it full-time since April. He discussed the effort she has made to address issues and the graph of the top 5 violations.

Mayor Dzurka thanked staff for the report. He said he appreciated the BS&A report was broken down by address. Kudos to the team.

11. Discussion and Receipt of City Manager 6-Month Report and List of Accomplishments

Mayor Dzurka said he and Commissioner Hufnagel had a chance to sit down with Chad. He said they thought this document would be helpful to have on record in terms of the great work Chad has been doing.

City Manager Gamble discussed: he is very excited to be part of great team; they are the best people I have worked with: dedication and teamwork, friendly, supportive and collaborative environment; some of the best customer service relations; encourage laughter to keep things light; try to be supportive. He said he was pleased with what the team has been able to do and would be happy to answer any questions.

Mayor Dzurka said this is a great list. He said they also talked about looking at an annual review. He said it gives us a chance to highlight the successes of the city. This report was helpful to us. He said he appreciated the comments of commissioners and executive staff and will share the summary report with the commission. He said they were very positive comments and people are very pleased with your work.

12. Consideration of the Establishment of St. Johns Social District

City Manager Gamble said this issue has been discussed for about six months. He said there was a lot of discussion within the DDA and a subcommittee was formed. He said Commissioner Hyzer was assigned to that. He said it was great work by Director Hanover.

PSD/DDA Director Hanover said social districts came about because of COVID restrictions. She said it encourages placemaking. She discussed they have been talking about this for a year; surveyed people downtown; other cities; misconception that it encourages drinking; guidelines are very stringent; don't know if it's going to work or be worthwhile; the city would establish the district; the facility would have to get a license and inspection; and in the first year, the board would put the cost of the license/inspections/cups into the DDA budget.

City Manager Gamble discussed: the map with proposed boundary; 11 am – 10 pm Tuesday - Saturday; could be modified with a special event permit; special logos with participating establishments; and the approach from a trial basis.

There was a discussion of:

- The willingness of the businesses to try.
- Trying to grow the downtown.
- Designated consumption area
 - Whole area, including the pavilion area.
- Beverages in city parking lots.
- Current common areas are inclusive of the right-of-way.
- Road closures for special events.
- If you get a drink from one establishment you can't take it to another establishment that sells alcohol.

Attorney Seurnyck said it would need an ordinance amendment. She discussed putting a draft ordinance together for the February city commission meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Ruestman that the city commission direct the city manager to work with the city attorney to get suggestions brought up implemented into this and brought back to ordinance.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

13. Consideration of Property Option of Gibbs St. Parcels

City Manager Gamble said this initially came up with regards to consideration of another development. He said the development has not been able to achieve \$40 million of capital funding right now. He discussed the consideration of acreage over on Gibbs Street and said there is a diagram in your packet summarizing the acreage. He said there has been much discussion of the addition of industrial property within the city. Pleased to work with Matt from REMAX, who is here. He said this area is included in the city's joint master plan area. He said it would be a \$10,000 option for the purposes of acquiring all the property or the two parcels within the city. He said the current price as it stands right now is \$17,000 per acre if lots 1 & 2 are exercised; \$15,000 per acre if all 3 lots.

There was a discussion of:

- The industrial park – we are almost out of space.
- The cost of developing this property.
- It might not be the right time.
- This might bottle us in industrially.
- It does not have an area for additional housing stock.
- Residential is not consistent with the agreement.
- Land use planning conversations with Bingham Township.
- It is consistent with joint master plan.
- Concerns about the dollar amount.
- Economic development.
- Relationship with the township.
- This is not a firm negotiated price.
- The option period.
- Right of first refusal.
- No major road.
- The location.

City Manager Gamble said he has gotten to know Supervisor Silm well; we want to move forward positively; and he met with him and wanted to make sure he was comfortable to the city's consideration; hopeful of an agreement that would be mutually beneficial.

Matt from ReMax was present. He said they would be willing to consider a right of first refusal. He said the nice part of an option agreement is that it locks in the price. He said it is your option, not the seller's option and they are locked in at that number. He said you could renegotiate at that point. He said a right of first refusal could accelerate your timeline.

Attorney Seurnyck discussed a re-negotiation.

Motion by Commissioner Ruestman seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission enter the agreement and accept the option as listed in the agreement

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman,

NAY: Gurski, Hyzer, Dzurka

Motion failed.

There was a discussion of:

- If the township would allow us to “425” the 32 acres that are now in the township.
 - A memorandum of understanding.
- Working towards a collaborative agreement for mutual benefit.
- Accelerating discussions with the township.
- Currently, there are bi-weekly meetings with the township that are being led by LEAP.
- The city/township subcommittee meeting.
- There is a large piece of land across from M-21 that has been for sale for a while.

14. Clinton Avenue Downtown Lights – Pole Upgrades to Blocks 200 & 300

Commissioner Hyzer said we need to start looking at the TIF plan for DDA and capturing money. He said he knows the revenue is not all there yet, but they are starting to move in the general direction. He said the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) has \$482,000 in projects for the downtown district. He said he would like to see some of that money come from the DDA and not all from the general fund as we move forward. He said the DDA is going to need to be more supportive of capital improvements downtown.

Heather Hanover, PSD/DDA Director discussed the funding for the DDA. She said the lights were not put in correctly and that amount would be their whole budget. She said parking lots have been talked about for years and streetlights are kind of a city issue. She said they are looking at planters, new trashcans, and benches. She said they are trying to look for grants.

City Manager Gamble said this is completion of all fixtures in the first three blocks. He said much of the electrical system problems are due to the manner the original lighting fixtures were installed.

There was a discussion of:

- The lights were originally installed in the early 2000’s.
- Streetlighting is talked about in their TIF
- DDA money can be spent in special ways that you can’t with tax dollars.

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission approve the Clinton Avenue downtown lights.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

15. DNR Infrastructure Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant Acceptance

City Manager Gamble said this is a 50/50 grant match for 2,000 feet of fire hose. Originally, we didn't think the city could apply for it, but they accepted the grant. He said it has to be done before the first of February.

Motion by Commissioner Ruestman seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission accept the DNR Infrastructure Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant and to authorize the Mayor to sign the related project agreement. .

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

14. City Manager Comments

City Manager Gamble discussed:

- MSU Practicum Update
- Magnibeam Update
 - Plan to invite them to present status and plans at the February Meeting.
- Brief update and plans for presentation next month on status on 2024 Street Millage Project and requested direction.
- Rail Car Update – Plan to meet with Clinton County Arts Council
- Update on budget process – Strategic Meeting rescheduling for February 5th
- Fantasy Forest Update – Meeting this Wednesday at Agro-Liquid.
- Provide key dates as a reminder.
 - MML Cap Con Reminder for commission sign up
- State Tax Commission – Certificate of Achievement – perfect score on 2023 PA 660 Assessment Audit Review
- Meeting with Congresswoman Slotkin – February 12 from noon to 12:45 (Any others available to attend?)
- MML Winter Institute for Municipal Executives – thank you.
- Safe Routes to School - follow up from meeting on 1/12/24.
- We have 4 elections this year. We have an opportunity to bring on someone part-time who has election experience.

15. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Ruestman thanked Chad for all that he's doing. She said it is a breath of fresh air to have so much going on. She said with the rental inspection, she appreciated what that is doing. She said it blows her mind about smoke detectors and that is why we have this program.

Commissioner Gurski echoed those comments. He said outstanding job to Chad. He said the ambulance board met last week and they are still looking to hire an assistant director. Also, an adjoining township is going to join the board.

Commissioner Hufnagel congratulated Kristina and the staff involved in the audit. He said it says a lot about your work as treasurer. He congratulated Mindy on getting part-time help for elections. He congratulated Chad on his six months of work and how well things are going in such a short period of time. He thanked them for having annual reports for us. He said for Heather to keep doing a great job. Thanks to all of you commissioners for great dialog.

Commissioner Hyzer congratulated Kristina on the audit. He discussed the preparation it takes for them to be in here for a week. To Justin and staff, the last couple of weeks has been pretty taxing on the guys and letting us be able to move around town. Appreciation to Ken and getting his license. He discussed those guys that put the time in and pass the test and get licensed.

Mayor Dzurka seconded everyone's comments. Kudos to the team and each of you. He thanked the team including Anne. He discussed the challenging Zoning Board of Appeals meeting last week. It was a very complex situation and the board voted unanimously. He said he thinks it is going to trigger additional work for the planning commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the meeting be adjourned.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.