

CITY OF ST. JOHNS

CITY COMMISSION MINUTES

MARCH 11, 2024

The special meeting of the St. Johns City Commission and St. Johns School Board 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.

CITY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Eric Hufnagel, Jean Ruestman, Brad Gurski, Scott Dzurka, Chris Hyzer
CITY COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Chad Gamble, City Manager; Mindy J. Seavey, City Clerk; Kristina Kinde, City Treasurer; David Kirk, Police Chief; Bill Schafer, Parks & Recreation Director

Agenda

Mayor Dzurka asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.

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

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Hyzer that the city commission approve the special joint city commission & planning commission meeting minutes from February 26, 2024 and regular city commission minutes from February 26, 2024.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Public Comments

School Board President Jackson asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

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A. Update on the School Millage

Superintendent Berthiaume discussed the upcoming bond:

- May 7th election.
- 0 mill increase.
- School safety/security.
- Early childhood center.
- Athletics/fine arts.
- Rural elementary buildings.
- Playgrounds.
- Classroom sizes.
- District steering committee.

There was a discussion of:

- The need of mechanics for alternate fuel vehicles.

B. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program Overview and Discussion

Superintendent Berthiaume discussed:

- The grant.
- Working together.
- Over \$1 million would be available.
- Lighting & sidewalks.
- Radius of students.
- Parent survey.
- 4–5-year grant project.

City Manager Gamble discussed:

- The excerpt of the city's GIS layer of sidewalks.
- This will fund up to \$300,000 per parcel (school building).
- This is a long process.
- Dr. Berthiaume has been through this process previously.

There was a discussion of:

- The map & missing sidewalks.
- Education/crossing guards.
- Sickles Street.
- This has been on the city's radar for a number of years.
- Possibly overlaying street lights onto the map.

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- Includes a 2-mile perimeter of each school.

C. Wilson Community Center Construction Update and Use/Programming Discussion

City Manager Gamble discussed:

- This is the city's first official community center.
- Partners.
- Development scope.
- Dymaxion.
- Unit #1 space.
- Community room.
- Capital expenditure.
- Timeline.
- Website information.
- How a Brownfield would have affected the taxing entities.
- Use of gym/auditorium.
- Partnership opportunities.
- Co-op interns.

D. Fantasy Forest 2.0 Update

City Manager Gamble discussed:

- City received a Spark Grant of \$694,000.
- City is putting in \$75,000.
- Community Fund is putting in \$75,000.
- Community Fund's fundraising efforts.
- Open house was held on January 24th.
- A playground designer is on-board.
- Master plan at the April meeting.
- Project must be bid and awarded by the end of the year.
- Survey results.

E. General Discussion on Ideas and Opportunities for Great Collaboration Between the Board and Commission (Programming, Marketing, Publication, Internships)

There was a discussion of:

- Excitement about the Safe Routes to School.
- Collaboration.
- Crossing guards at the Townsend Road area.

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- Schools are pivotal in growing a community.
- Appreciative of interns.
- Knowledge of civic engagement for students.
- Grants that could overlap with the school district.
- Partnership.
- Plan for formal meetings.
- Shared priorities.

Adjournment

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

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.