

CITY OF ST. JOHNS
CITY COMMISSION MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 11, 2025

The special meeting of the St. Johns City Commission was called to order by Mayor Dzurka at 5:34 p.m. at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 East State Street, 2nd Floor, Suite #2200, St. Johns, Michigan.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

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

Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner DeLiso that the city commission approve the consent agenda as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

a. Lease Agreement Regarding Rental of ty Owned Land for Farming

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner DeLiso that the city commission approve the Lease Agreement Regarding Rental of City Owned Land for Farming with J.A. Smith Farm, LLC, for a 5 year term, commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2029.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

b. Senior Citizen Park Design

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner DeLiso that the city commission approve the Wade Trim Proposal/Contract of \$3,400 and authorizes the Mayor to sign the contract.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

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NAY: None
Motion carried.

Agenda

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

There were none.

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

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Welcome, Meeting Overview

City Manager Gamble discussed the process; past discussions regarding an authority, 425 agreement and utility services agreement; and this should help us understand how to best represent the city's interest and partner with Bingham Township.

Presentation Regarding Governance and Intermunicipal Contract Agreement

Andy Campbell, Bendzinski & Company was present. He discussed: his background; and trying to find the right solution for both units to get everything they want and concede as little as they can.

He discussed:

- Intergovernmental Agreements
 - Offer flexibility and are suitable for short-term solutions.
 - It can last from six months to 30 years and cover various issues.
 - Communities often prefer intergovernmental agreements for short-term needs.
- Authorities are a long-term solution and should not be used for short-term fixes.
 - Authorities are meant to solve long-term needs for two or more governmental units.
 - Operational authorities now have full budgets, staff, and control of assets.
- Establishing an authority involves losing some control but gaining benefits in return.

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- Authorities are more common when more than two governmental units are involved.
 - Control over assets is a critical aspect of establishing an authority.
 - The authority should have full control over the operations, maintenance, and capital improvement plans for the assets they manage to avoid conflicts and delays.
 - Establishing a new authority requires careful consideration of control over assets and potential political changes that could affect governance.
 - Political turnover can affect the authority's decisions and alignment with city or township goals.
 - Clear communication and defined roles are essential for the authority board and employees to ensure alignment with community objectives.
 - The focus should be on who controls the assets rather than who owns them legally.
 - Capacity allowances should be established to ensure communities can control their own growth and development within an authority framework.
 - Establishing an authority can be beneficial for long-term solutions but requires clear responsibilities and acceptance of reduced local control.
 - Decisions on billing and rate structures should consider control and responsibility for asset maintenance.
 - Intergovernmental agreements offer flexibility for addressing various issues, depending on the desired level of regional cooperation.
 - Intergovernmental agreements can be flexible and solve both short-term and long-term issues.
 - The creation of a new authority involves careful consideration of capital reserves, bonding rights, and control over assets. Clear agreements and articles of incorporation are essential to manage these aspects effectively.
 - Capacity allowances are crucial for retaining control over development and avoiding overbuilding.
 - Capacity improvements are typically paid for by the development, which then receives the capacity increase.

There was discussion and questions regarding authorities and intergovernmental agreements.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Next Steps
 - Negotiate a short-term deal with the township by the end of 2025.

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- Draft and present the first version of the intergovernmental agreement for review.

City Manager Gamble said he would reach out to Attorney Homier and Supervisor Silm and start draft 1a. of the intergovernmental agreement. He discussed possibly presenting it in advance of the next joint meeting.

Mayor Dzurka said we might need to adopt it at our respective meetings and not a joint meeting.

Public Comments

Mayor Dzurka asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

Mayor Dzurka discussed the planning commission meeting on Wednesday night and the Clinton County property that is located on Townsend Road.

Adjournment

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

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.