

CITY OF ST. JOHNS

CITY COMMISSION MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

The regular meeting of the St. Johns City Commission was called to order by Mayor Hufnagel 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, Tammy Kirschenbauer, Brad Gurski

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Bob Craig

STAFF PRESENT: Dave Kudwa, City Manager; Mindy J. Seavey, City Clerk; Kristina Kinde, Treasurer; Steven Martin, Director of Public Services; Anne Seuryneck, Attorney

Mayor Hufnagel asked if any of the commissioners wished to discuss any of the items on the consent agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that the consent agenda be approved as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

a. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that the minutes of the August 22, 2022 regular meeting; August 22, 2022 special meeting; and August 22, 2022 special meeting closed session be approved as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

b. Approval of Warrants

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that warrants be approved as presented in the amount of \$1,148,156.04.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

c. Set Halloween Trick-or-Treat Hours

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that the city commission set the Halloween trick-or-treat hours for Monday, October 31, 2022 between the hours of 6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. with the beginning and ending of the candy-gathering period to be signaled by the fire whistle.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

d. MML Property & Liability Insurance Renewal

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that the city commission approve the annual renewal with the Michigan Municipal League Property and Liability Insurance Pool in the amount of \$136,081.00.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

e. Cintas Uniform Contract

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that the city commission approve the Cintas contract and authorize the mayor and clerk to sign.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

AGENDA

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

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

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 August 22, 2022
 - Special meeting of August 22, 2022
 - Closed session of special meeting of August 22, 2022
 - b. Approval of Warrants
 - In the amount of \$1,148,156.04
 - c. Set Halloween Trick-or-Treat Hours
 - Staff recommends the city commission set the Halloween trick-or-treat hours for Monday, October 31, 2022 between the hours of 6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. with the beginning and ending of the candy-gathering period to be signaled by the fire whistle.
 - d. MML Property & Liability Insurance Renewal
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the annual renewal with the Michigan Municipal League Property and Liability Insurance Pool in the amount of \$136,081.00.
 - e. Cintas Uniform Contract
 - Staff recommends the city commission approve the Cintas contract and authorize the mayor and clerk to sign.
4. Approval of Agenda:

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

C. PERSONS WISHING TO PRESENT TESTIMONY:

1. Public comment - agenda & non-agenda items
2. Jessica Austin – Code Enforcement Update

D. COMMUNICATIONS:

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Resolution #22-2022 - Resolution To Adopt An Ordinance To Amend Section 30.09 (of Title III, Chapter 30) of the Code of Ordinances to Amend Rules for Addressing the Commission (Ordinance #671)

F. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Dymaxion – Purchase Agreement
2. Street Program 2023-2028
3. Commissioner Comments

G. ADJOURNMENT:

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PERSONS WISHING TO PRESENT TESTIMONY

1. Public Comment

Mayor Hufnagel asked if there were any public comments.

Curtis Fedewa was present regarding the RBW project. He said he didn't have any objections to the rezoning. He doesn't mind residential use, but he was not aware of the street modification (one-way street). He said it sounds like the city is contemplating leasing space in RBW. He asked why they left the original building on main street. Was a street study ever done on those streets? Is the city planning on paying for part of the street modification?

Mayor Hufnagel acknowledged we have a 3-minute time limit.

Mark Miser was present. He was concerned also about the one-way street issue and parking issue.

Lori French-Zelenka was present. She was concerned about the memory care center in the neighborhood since they have a lot of kids in the neighborhood now.

Bill Tennant was present. He said he sees so many positive things with this agreement: a lot more visibility a lot more identity with moving into Wilson Center; real focus of the city's presence with offices, gym and auditorium.

Jim Schmidt was present. He said he doesn't have a problem with the RBW building, but he does have a problem with the memory care building in middle of a residential neighborhood.

William Brown, 207 E. McConnell, was present. He said he agrees with most of these people here. He said it is nice with RBW; the parking lot plans are not good.

2. Jessica Austin – Code Enforcement Update

Jessica Austin was present to discuss code enforcement. She said the Oakland Street residence has finally been sold and they are starting renovations on it and the \$900 fines did get paid; the Floral Street address that was giving us trouble has also sold; the Giles

Street property was vacant for quite some time and the violations were cleaned up and the property was sold; another property is up for sale right now; Cars R Us was also a property that had junk, inoperable vehicles and they cleaned up inoperable vehicles and removed things from the grass; the two weeks after Mint Festival were busy with lots of couches, furniture and boxes in the right-of-way; a few mowing issues since we have had rain; and a couple of problems with businesses. In the fall, she said she plans to go on foot and look for abandoned vehicles. She said she receive a couple of phone calls today. She said someone that owns a lot of rental properties felt he was being harassed.

Commissioner Ruestman said great job, thank you. She said to make a note of any sidewalks that have growth or low hanging branches.

Commissioner Kirschenbauer said you have done a wonderful job; the town looks great. She said you are enforcing rules that have always been there. She said she really appreciated all the work she has put into it.

Commissioner Gurski said thank you.

Mayor Hufnagel said we appreciate that.

City Manager Kudwa said she does all the code enforcement and we couldn't be happier with the work she is doing. She is intentional with it; she works with people setting a schedule and some goals. We appreciate how she approaches people.

Ms. Austin said she is not out there to fine people. She said if they will work with her and if they need time, she will give it.

Mayor Hufnagel said he appreciates Jessica is on the job. He said this is a long time coming and he is glad we re-thought the complaint driven approach to being proactive. He said great job.

COMMUNICATIONS

OLD BUSINESS

1. Resolution #22-2022 - Resolution To Adopt An Ordinance To Amend Section 30.09 (of Title III, Chapter 30) of the Code of Ordinances to Amend Rules for Addressing the Commission (Ordinance #671)

City Manager Kudwa said this would remove the rules from the ordinance. He said this is a resolution to adopt Ordinance #671. We will work on the rules; the ordinance won't go in effect until 20 days.

There was a discussion of the ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Dymaxion – Purchase Agreement

City Manager Kudwa said we have the purchase agreement for your consideration tonight. Scott Hogan from Foster Swift is on the Zoom meeting. He said we appreciate the Dymaxion team stepping into this with us. He said it is a public/private partnership. We are excited about the possibility of the city buying the auditorium and the gym and possibly buying space for city offices. We are contemplating a community room and a commercial kitchen. This is a really unique opportunity for us and it is a historic building in our city center. We don't want to see the building demoed. He discussed the rendering with new windows, new entrance, new parking, clean-up of the front of the building, and green space. He said not all of the space would be city owned. He said there is a picture of what it looks like today and it is really exciting as we move forward and what it is going to do for that block. We are thinking about lighting at intersections that is similar to the downtown. He said once we swing a hammer, Dymaxion can't go for a Brownfield or other types of funding. He said the condo docs are governing documents for how the building will be used. We will put \$200,000 into escrow and move into the next phase and go through condo documents together. He said once the city commission has approved, we will put the remaining purchase price of the gym and auditorium into escrow. Dymaxion could then get started on lead and asbestos abatement. We won't close on the building until the environmental abatement is complete (it may take up to 1 year). Once that is complete, we will move forward on closing on the city office space. This allows us time to decide what this space will look like. We are looking for other creative ways to use this space. It is difficult to structure a purchase agreement that does all of that.

Mayor Hufnagel said Commissioner Craig has been involved with the finance committee and had conversations with the city manager today.

City Manager Kudwa said section 10a. item #3 didn't show up on your copy. It should be \$200,000.

Motion by Commissioner Kirschenbauer seconded by Commissioner Ruestman that the city commission move forward on the purchase agreement with Dymaxion.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

2. Street Program 2023-2028

City Manager Kudwa said Jeremy is our project manager for our street program and he appreciates what Jeremy does. He said over the last 9 years we have spent \$6.5 million on 23 miles of streets. We are spending public dollars that haven't seen improvements in 40 or 50 years (Vauconsant, Giles and Emmons). We want to pivot to sidewalks and continue on streets. We are getting a lot more data on what our streets do. Our streets look the same and perform differently. Our next phase is more aggressive on base improvements. We will be addressing more corridors such as the downtown area. There will be just under 8 miles of street improvements. DPW Supervisor Ritter has been working with the engineering consultants and going through the city and reviewing sidewalk. He said the red area is the worst. We will also do sidewalks that are associated with the streets and focus on sidewalk connections.

Commissioner Kirschenbauer asked with the blue area there are sidewalks there? She asked if they would take a look at prioritizing.

City Manager Kudwa said yes.

Commissioner Ruestman said to target around schools or paths to schools.

City Manager Kudwa said he had a good conversation with Mark Palmer about this. They are looking at a grant from Sickles through the tennis court area and connect to the middle school.

Mayor Hufnagel said because the sidewalks are new, he talked with the city manager about the city commission having a special meeting to provide guidance on priorities. If revenue is generated through the millage, is that the sole source? Could property owners participate in this?

Commissioner Ruestman said what about a public education piece on that too.

Commissioner Gurski asked if we have verified that the funds can be used on sidewalks.

City Manager Kudwa said yes.

There was a consensus that the city commission was comfortable with the plan.

3. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Gurski said they have not had an ambulance meeting yet this month. He said we approved the purchase agreement tonight and he can see that having a great future in the city. He said he thinks we need to take another look at the parking arrangements around there. He is not sure the one-way traffic will flow the way we think it is going to flow. Maybe there is different access than utilizing the streets.

Commissioner Kirschenbauer said there have been a lot of trees and limbs removed in the city and Consumers energy has done a great job. She said it is all for the best and it will help during storms.

Mayor Hufnagel discussed the issue of housing in the city. Staff has looked at a housing assessment. He said he would like to have another special meeting and look at our housing stock and what the needs are. He said he thinks we have some gaps and it would be nice to collectively have that conversation. He said if that could be scheduled prior to the end of the year.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Ruestman seconded by Commissioner Kirschenbauer that the meeting be adjourned.

YEA: Hufnagel, Ruestman, Kirschenbauer, Gurski

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.