

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**April 6, 2023**

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St. Johns, MI – The City of St. Johns will not be moving its offices to the Rodney B. Wilson Center, following a vote by the City Commission at a Special Meeting on Tuesday, April 4, 2023.

“This was not an easy decision,” says St. Johns Vice Mayor Scott Dzurka. “But we want to be cautious with taxpayer resources and conscious of the costs that would have been involved in purchasing and renovating office space in the Wilson Center.”

In October 2022, the City of St. Johns announced the Commission’s approval of a purchase agreement with Dymaxion Development, who bought the historic building from St. Johns Public Schools. The purchase agreement included the Wilson Center’s gymnasium and auditorium, as well as an option for office space intended for City offices. Tuesday’s 3-2 vote will remove office space in the Wilson Center from further consideration, while leaving the gymnasium and auditorium on the table.

Based on existing occupancy costs associated with the current office space in the Clinton County Courthouse, the City has been considering an office relocation since 2021. Purchasing office space in the Wilson Center would have cost the City \$438,800, plus an estimated \$1,000,000 in renovations. Based on Tuesday’s vote, an actual renovation quote will not be pursued.

By removing the office space expenses from the Wilson Center project, Dzurka hopes other elements can move forward. “We know there is significant public interest in the Wilson Center’s gym and auditorium,” says Dzurka. “Our vote on the office space doesn’t stop the process for those parts of the project.”

The purchase cost for the gym and auditorium is \$550,000. The City is still negotiating condominium documents with Dymaxion and will review a quote for construction documents at the next City Commission meeting on April 24. Combined, these two sets of documents will paint a detailed financial picture of the costs associated with renovating and maintaining the gymnasium and auditorium.

Residents are encouraged to share their thoughts on the Wilson Center project by contacting the Commissioners and providing public comment at City Commission meetings. Contact information and meeting schedules are available at cityofstjohnsmi.com.

The City of St. Johns, Michigan is a historic community founded in 1856. Known as the Mint City due to its unique agricultural heritage, St. Johns honors its roots while also planting the seeds for thriving small businesses and industry hubs. The best of both worlds, the city offers a charming, small-town feel with an easy commute to downtown Lansing. St. Johns serves as the Clinton County seat and provides a full range of municipal services to about 8,000 residents. Learn more at cityofstjohnsmi.com.

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