



Meeting Minutes City Commission

Monday, January 10, 2022
6:00 PM
Commission Chambers

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Present: Bonsall, Davis, Hanley, Hill, Mayer, Smith, Stonehouse

Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Fred Stonehouse moved to Approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Sally Davis and Carried Unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Smith noted that, due to the uptick in Covid cases locally, she is asking anyone entering Commission Chambers to please wear a mask. She noted that the remote meeting provisions of the Michigan Open Meetings Act expired at the end of 2021 and that the Commission would no longer have the option to meet remotely, even due to Commissioner illness.

Boards and Committees

1. Appointment

Nathan Williams, Planning Commission, for an unexpired term ending 02-15-24

Commissioner Jenn Hill moved to Approve the appointment as listed, seconded by Commissioner Jessica Hanley and Carried Unanimously.

2. Reappointment

Scott Krah, Marquette County Transit Authority, for a term ending 12-31-24

Mayor Pro Tem Cody Mayer moved to Approve the reappointment as listed, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse and Carried Unanimously.

Public Comments - Comments may not exceed three minutes per person. Please state your name and physical address when making public comments.

Margaret Brumm said she would like it if the Commissioners could share their City-related goals for the coming year, and said that sometimes the year's most impactful actions or projects weren't even thought of in January.

Presentation(s)

3. Board of Review, by Steve Lawry

City Board of Review Chair Steve Lawry offered an update on the board's recent activities. Mr. Lawry noted that the Board of Review had only two members and said he feels that limited membership doesn't offer enough variation of opinion and experience to provide residents the due process they are owed. He discussed statistics related to Board of Review cases and official challenges to board decisions.

Commissioner Bonsall noted that the board sees many requests for veterans' exemptions, and asked why the poverty exemption isn't utilized more often. Mr. Lawry stated that the criteria for the poverty exemption is quite strict and takes into account the total incomes of all residents on the property, as well as the value of other assets.

Commissioner Hill asked questions about certain terminology used in the reported valuation data, and staff said they would ask the assessor's office to follow-up with clarification.

4. Consent Agenda - Roll Call Vote

Commissioner Jessica Hanley moved to Approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cody Mayer and Carried Unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

4.a. Approve the minutes of the December 20, 2021 regular Commission meeting

4.b. Approve the total bills payable in the amount of \$1,132,289.23

4.c. Noquemanon Trails Network - Grooming Permit

4.d. Noquemanon Trails Network - NMU Trail Grooming Permit

4.e. State Right-of-Way Permits - Roll Call Vote

New Business

5. City Commission Rules of Procedure #2003-01

Commissioner Fred Stonehouse moved to Approve the proposed City Commission Rules of Procedure, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cody Mayer and Carried Unanimously.

Public Comments - Comments may not exceed three minutes per person. Please state your name and physical address when making public comments.

There was no public comment at this point.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Davis said there is a lot on the Commission's agenda and that her goal for the year is simply to delve deeply into the issues and to make the best decisions

possible.

Commissioner Hanley said she is always aware that her decisions impact all residents of the City and she wants to be able to stand behind each decision she makes. She also said she wants to focus this year on advocating for residents to fill the vacant positions on the City's boards and committees.

Mayor Pro Tem Mayer noted that he received his Covid-19 booster shot recently. He said that as he looks ahead to the rest of 2022, he wants to be sure he works to govern in a manner that is healthy and productive for democracy.

Commissioner Hill thanked the City crews that are working outdoors today to repair and maintain City infrastructure in the sub-zero weather. Regarding the coming year, she said she was hoping to engage fully in the City Master Plan process and thinks the task of filling City board rosters is very important.

Commissioner Stonehouse said the Commission has a full plate in 2022 with several critical items, including economic development, affordable housing, recycling, Covid-related concerns and climate change. He said the Commission can only move toward the City's goals by working together effectively.

Commissioner Bonsall thanked Steve Lawry for the Board of Review presentation and thanked him for his efforts. He said he liked Commissioner Hanley's point about focusing on filling board and committee rosters. He told residents to be aware that a misprint on some recent utility bills indicated an incorrect due date - all are due on Jan. 19. He said yesterday was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day and he thanked all local law enforcement, who play a critical role in our community. In discussing goals for 2022, Commissioner Bonsall said residents expect to be able to trust commissioners, they expect the Commission to ensure basic services remain operational and they expect the Commission to move toward addressing the bigger issues, like housing affordability and the preservation of public lakeshore. He said he aims to focus on those three categories.

Mayor Smith wished residents a happy 2022 and noted that she had recently been appointed to the Northern Michigan University Presidential Search Advisory Committee. She said that a goal of hers for the coming year will be to find ways to increase City revenues, adding that many of the things mentioned just now by other commissioners would ultimately hinge on additional revenues.

Comments from the City Manager

Assistant City Manager Sean Hobbins thanked the public works staff for their efforts to deal with the recent large snow events, as well as their ability to maintain a high quality of work during this week's bitter cold. He then gave the floor to **Police Chief Blake Rieboldt**, who acknowledged Captain Mike Laurila. He said Capt. Laurila will be retiring at the end of the week after more than 26 years with the City Police Department, and he thanked him and wished him and his family the best.

Adjournment

Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Jennifer A. Smith, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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