



**Meeting Minutes
City Commission**

**Monday, February 27, 2023
6:00 PM
Commission Chambers**

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Present: Davis, Hanley, Larson, Mayer, Ottaway, Stonehouse

Absent: Smith

Mayor Pro Tem Sally Davis moved to excuse Commissioner Jenna Smith due to illness, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse and Carried Unanimously.

Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Jermey Ottaway moved to Approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Michael Larson and Carried Unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Mayer had no announcements.

Boards and Committees

1. Appointment(s)

Cary Gottlieb, Planning Commission for an unexpired term ending 02-15-2024

Steven Lawry, Planning Commission for an unexpired term ending 02-15-2026

Justin Vasseau, Board of Review for an unexpired term ending 02-01-2024

Commissioner Jermey Ottaway moved to Approve the appointments as listed, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse and Carried Unanimously.

2. Reappointment(s)

Sarah Bixby, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for a term ending 01-29-2026

Joseph Tuccini, Marquette Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for a term ending 02-01-2026

Commissioner Jessica Hanley moved to Approve the reappointments 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.

Caden Reed spoke about 601 S. Lakeshore Boulevard, and said the City should consider other options at that site besides a hotel or credit union, referencing the City's current planning documents.

Orville Dishno thanked the City Commission for considering doing something with the City's surplus property in an attempt to generate additional tax revenue. He said that he understood the City Commission's recent decision to increase property taxes, but that he strongly supported an attempt to increase tax revenues by building the tax base.

3. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Jerney Ottaway moved to Approve the Consent Agenda as listed, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sally Davis and Carried Unanimously.

3.a. Approve the minutes of the February 13, 2023 regular Commission meeting

3.b. Approve the total bills payable in the amount of \$732,539.00

3.c. Flat HRA Plan Document

3.d. Ordinance 719 - Business Licensing

3.e. Superior Watershed Partnership – Lease Agreement

New Business

4. MiNextCities Grant Agreement

Commissioner Stonehouse moved to authorize the City Manager to sign and execute the grant agreement and authorize all expenditures provided for under Attachment B of the grant agreement. This motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Davis and Commissioners offered input praising the project.

Assistant City Manager Sean Hobbins then offered a presentation, providing an overview of the project.

Following the presentation, the Commission voted on the motion, which carried unanimously.

Commissioner Fred Stonehouse moved to Authorize Motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sally Davis and Carried Unanimously.

5. Manager and Attorney Compensation

Commissioner Fred Stonehouse moved to Approve the subcommittee's recommendation to provide the City Manager and City Attorney with a one-time payment equivalent to 0.5% of their base salaries. Also: increase both salaries by 2%, retroactive to October 1, 2022; direct the City Attorney to amend both contracts to reflect the new salaries; extend each of their contracts to September 30, 2025; and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign the amended contracts, seconded by Commissioner Jerney Ottaway and Carried Unanimously.

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Florence Namiotka said she lives on Bluff Street and that the hospital does emergency generator testing monthly and it's very loud. She said this is disruptive for the entire neighborhood and asked for some guidance on what steps she should take to move toward a solution.

Matt Luttenberger asked questions about City tax rates and how they differ between commercial and residential properties.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Stonehouse talked about the issues of being a landlocked community wherein a large percentage of the property is in a nontaxable status. He praised the City's public works, as well as staff efforts on the MiNextCities project approved tonight.

Commissioner Hanley said there is a need to build tax base in the City. She also said she missed the last meeting, and would prefer to see this particular process slowed down, and handled through a brief RFP process. She said she rode in a City snowplow recently and talked about the difficulties posed by cars parked around town and she urged residents to move their cars prior to nightfall when there is a significant snowfall.

Commissioner Larson congratulated Steve Lawry on his appointment to the Planning Commission, where he has served in the past, and said he will be a great asset. He praised the MiNextCities project.

Commissioner Ottaway said the City Master Plan open house was great. He also said the DDA is scheduling two meetings to discuss a downtown social district.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis expressed appreciation for the comments about the future of the Lakeshore Boulevard property and said those two comments represent the real issue: there are two real sides to this debate. The Mayor Pro Tem said she is concerned about the generator noise and hopes something can be done.

Mayor Mayer praised the recent City Master Plan Open House.

Comments from the City Manager

City Manager Karen Kovacs shared some of the history of the discussion about the hospital's generator testing and said this would be a point of discussion in the future. In response to a previous public comment, she also shared information about the state's property tax structure.

Adjournment

Mayor Mayer adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Cody O. Mayer, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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