

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023**

Mayor Beagle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A moment of silence was given for the victims of the Michigan State University tragedy that occurred on February 13, 2023.

Present:

Mayor: P. Beagle
Deputy Mayor: T. Rzeznik
Councilmembers: P. Behrmann
K. Gottschall
T. Gronlund-Fox(Exc)
P. Sharpe
R. Smiley

AGENDA CHANGES: (None)

MINUTES:

CM-02-10-23: Moved and seconded by Councilmembers Sharpe and Behrmann to approve the Regular City Council meeting minutes of January 24, 2023.

Vote:

Motion Carried

CORRESPONDENCE: (None)

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no comments made at this time.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS:

1.) Fire Monthly Report - December 2022

There were no comments or questions regarding this report.

2.) Police Monthly Report – December 2022

There were no comments or questions regarding this report.

CONSENT AGENDA:

CM-02-11-23: Motion and seconded made by Deputy Mayor Rzeznik and Councilmember Smiley to approve the Consent Agenda as presented which included:

- 1.) Approval to receive and file:
 - a.) Library Board Minutes –November 28, 2022
 - b.) Planning Commission Minutes – January 16, 2023
- 2.) Recommendation to set February 28, 2023 as the date for two Public Hearings to consider an application for the establishment of an Industrial Development District for 49070, 49103 and 49106 Alpha Court and an

Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption Certificate submission by People Driven Technologies, Inc. in Accordance with Public Act 198 of 1974, as Amended.

Vote:

Motion Carried

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1.) Consideration of the Charter Amendment Committee Recommendations to Direct City Administration to Develop Language for Proposed Charter Amendments for the 2023 Election Cycle as Determined During the Course of the City Council Discussion

CM-02-12-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Gottschall and Smiley to direct City Administration to develop language for proposed Charter Amendments for the 2023 Election Cycle as determined during the course of the City Council discussion.

Councilmember Gottschall noted that four potential Charter Amendments were brought forth on behalf of the Charter Amendment Review Committee. The amendments were the result of Council and Committee discussions, plus the priority lists presented by some members of Council. It was the Committee's desire to have the following amendments placed on the November 7, 2023 ballot.

He said the first amendment was to amend the pronoun usage throughout the City Charter to be more inclusive. He explained there were two parts to the next amendment but they both fell under Section 4:11 E. of the City Charter. Amendment part one was to address the term length of appointees to Council and eliminate the November post-election gap, and make their term coincide with the January 1st transition date of the other elected Council seats. Part two of Section 4:11 E. was to formalize the process for appointing individuals to Council through the use of an open application and interview process. The final proposed amendment was to amend to Section 6:11 B. to allow fee-basis payments in limited instances, such as when external parties handle the role of an officer position (e.g., city attorney, city assessor). He noted that future amendments such as the millage cap that could be put on any ballot in 2024.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik asked for clarification as to how many elections would be held in 2024. Ms. Buck said there would be three; the Presidential Primary in February, the Primary Election in August and the Presidential Election in November. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik stated that educating the voters that the millage cap was vital to ensure them it was not an increase in taxes.

Councilmember Behrmann asked how they came to these four particular amendments. Councilmember Gottschall indicated the Committee reviewed the priority lists they received and tallied the repetitive amendment requests. Additionally, they prioritized the housekeeping items like 6:11 B. Councilmember Behrmann did not support all of the potential amendments. He suggested they divide part one and part two of Section 4:11 E. so they could be voted on separately.

Councilmember Gottschall presumed all the amendments would be voted on individually in order to accurately direct staff to draft the proper ballot language. He said in the two-part amendment of 4:11 E., if only one amendment passed, the staff would be directed not to include whichever part did not pass.

Councilmember Behrmann indicated his support for the amendment to the pronouns throughout the Charter and the amendment to 6:11 B.; however, he did not support either amendments to Section 4:11 E.

Councilmember Smiley said the Charter Amendment Committee reviewed minutes from the previous discussions and came up with this list. He felt confident this list was an accurate representation of what the Council considered a priority. He admitted that he wasn't sure what the process would be if they were to formalize the appointments to Council through an application and interview process. He understood there wasn't definitive wording within the City Charter currently on how they handled Council vacancies, but he'd like to know how they planned to formalize the process.

Councilmember Sharpe supported all of the potential amendments brought forth, but presumed the action tonight was to direct staff to spend money on developing ballot language. He figured Council would get another opportunity to see the amendments before they were placed on the ballot. He thought they could decide at that time if they didn't approve of the amendments.

Councilmember Smiley did not want to send any of these amendments to the attorney if the Council wasn't in agreement.

Mayor Beagle agreed with Councilmember Smiley. He would rather the attorney receive an accurate representation of what the majority of Council wanted. He supported all the amendments with the exception of formalizing the process to fill a Council vacancy. He did not see a reason to amend a process that wasn't broken. He couldn't recall a bad Mayoral appointee to Council, because as far as he knew all the appointees had been upstanding candidates.

Councilmember Behrmann stated they could find themselves in a predicament by inserting a formalized process within the Charter should they need to fill a vacancy quickly. He suggested a formalized process be placed in the Council Rules and Procedures rather than the City Charter.

Councilmember Gottschall clarified that the Charter did not indicate that the Mayor appointed a person to Council. He specified the Charter indicated a Council vacancy shall be filled within sixty days by a majority vote of Council. He questioned Councilmember Behrmann's hesitation about approving the amendment to eliminate the November post-election gap. Additionally, he could not understand the rush to fill a vacancy as Councilmember Behrmann indicated. He figured an open application and interview process would give transparency to the City and voters. He reminded them that the said appointee did not campaign; therefore, the voters did not have the opportunity to speak with them. He explained the Committee figured placing such items within the Charter instead of in the Council Rules and Procedures would eliminate the problem of remembering to adopt them

every change of the dais. He explained that the Council Rules and Procedures haven't been adopted by a Council in a very long time and he felt strongly this had to be addressed, whether they amended the Charter or updated/adopted a new Council Rules and Procedures.

Deputy Mayor Rzeknik agreed that the post-election vacancy on Council needed to be placed on the ballot. He thought the procedure in which appointees fill Council vacancies could be reviewed and once decided be incorporated within the Council Rules and Procedures.

Councilmember Behrmann explained his position on the matter came from his direct relation to the circumstance. He was appointed to Council at the first meeting in November to fill the seat for the remaining two months because that made more sense than having somebody remain in the position that didn't have any intention of running for Council.

Councilmember Sharpe said if they didn't amend the second Section 4:11 E., they could run the risk of having a split Council decision on the Mayoral appointee. He thought a more transparent and open vetting process allowed for the opportunity to have Council become more unified in that situation.

Councilmember Behrmann was aware a split Council scenario happened in the past, but understood that Council agreed on an appointee relatively quickly, staying within the 60-day parameter of the Charter.

Councilmember Gottschall said the thought process to amending the vacancy gap was the continuity to conduct business. He explained how items they'd been dealing with for a while may come up as New Business in the last four meetings of the year, and the experienced person sitting on the dais would get to make the decision rather than someone new trying to get up to speed. It also made things more streamlined/cleaner to have the appointment go until everyone else's seat changed.

Deputy Mayor Rzeknik believed the continuity of business was an important part of why they needed to amend Section 4:11 E. and eliminate the post-election gap.

Councilmember Sharpe wondered if they get a legal opinion and determine the ballot language before the decision was made to amend the vacancy process. Perhaps, once they had the amendment language in front of them, it would be easier to decide if it should become an amendment or a procedural change.

Councilmember Gottschall understood there may be a split decision on amending part two of Section 4:11 E., the appointee process, and suggested they come back to that when they had a full Council present.

CM-02-13-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Gottschall and Behrmann to direct City administration to draft ballot language to amend the pronoun usage within the City Charter to utilize more inclusive language rather than the sole masculine pronouns currently being used.

Vote:

Motion Carried

CM-02-14-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Gottschall and Smiley to direct City administration to draft ballot language amending Section 4.11 E. of the City Charter to address the term length of appointees to Council by eliminating the November post-election gap and instead make the duration of their appointment term coincide with the January 1 transition date of the other elected Council seats.

Vote:

Motion Carried

CM-02-15-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmember Gottschall and Deputy Mayor Rzeznik to direct City administration to draft ballot language to amend Section 6.11 B. of the City Charter to allow for fee basis payments in limited instances such as when external parties handle the role of a Charter Officer position (e.g. City Attorney and City Assessor).

Vote:

Motion Carried

CM-02-16-23: Motion made by Councilmember Behrmann to deny tabling proposed amendment part-two of Section 4.11 E of the City Charter, to formalize the process for appointing individuals to Council through the use of an open application and interview process.

There was no second, the motion died.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1.) Recommendation to Approve the Contract with Trivium Racing, Inc. for Timing Services Associated with the Downtown Development Authority's Wixom Derby Day Event to be Held on May 6, 2023 with Costs Charged to Derby Day Account #248-729-956.008 and Authorize the Mayor and Clerk to Sign the Contract on Behalf of the City**

CM-02-17-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Gottschall and Smiley to approve the contract with Trivium Racing, Inc. for timing services associated with the Downtown Development Authority's Wixom Derby Day Event to be held on May 6, 2023 with costs charged to Derby Day Account #248-729-956.008 and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign the contract on behalf of the City.

Ms. Cloutier said the DDA used Trivium Racing, Inc. previously. She explained that this contract was similar to the past contracts with the exception of the date and price increase of \$100.

Mayor Beagle noted that they've used Trivium Racing, Inc. over the last five years and believed they've always done a great job.

Vote:

Motion Carried

2.) Recommendation to Approve the Agreement for Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Distribution Between Oakland County and the City of Wixom for \$200,000, Funds to be Received in County Grants Account #411-000-581.010, and Authorize the Mayor to Sign the Contract on Behalf of the City

CM-02-14-23: Motion and seconded made by Deputy Mayor Rzeznik and Councilmember Behrmann to approve the Agreement for Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Distribution between Oakland County and the City of Wixom for \$200,000, funds to be received in County Grants Account #411-000-581.010, and authorize the Mayor to sign the Contract on behalf of the City.

Ms. Magee explained that the Oakland County Board of Commissioners authorized the use of American Rescue Plan Act funding for local government infrastructure grants. The purpose of this grant was to match funding with local governments to assist with improvements to their Senior Centers. She said the grant they received was for \$200,000 and they planned to match the funding from the Community Center Facility Capital Plan.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik thanked the staff for applying for this grant and thanked former County Commissioner Weipert for bringing this opportunity to their attention.

Vote:

Motion Carried

3.) Recommendation to Approve the Purchase Agreement for 121 N. Wixom Road, Parcel Identification Number 96-17-31-477-009, from the Edna P. Raupp Trust for \$323,000 Plus Closing Costs for the Purpose of Future Development Opportunities and Authorize the Mayor to Sign the Agreement

CM-02-15-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Gottschall and Smiley to approve the Purchase Agreement for 121 N. Wixom Road, Parcel Identification Number 96-17-31-477-009, from the Edna P. Raupp Trust for \$323,000 plus closing costs for the purpose of future development opportunities and authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement.

Mr. Benson said that City Administration had requested City Council meet in Closed Session in late fall to discuss potential property acquisitions, 121 N. Wixom Road, as well as another property that will be discussed shortly. At that time, we had initial conversations with the property owners of their interest in selling. The City could potentially acquire more property to go along with the five or six other parcels that we already own along that section of N. Wixom Road, just north of Pontiac Trail. At that time, we had mentioned what their asking prices were. We took that feedback to see whether the Council was interested in a larger project, as well as what costs the Council would be more interested in. We took that back and over the last few months have been negotiating and looking at existing lease

agreements for this freestanding structure. We were able to come to this agreement that was before the Council tonight. He said there was an existing tenant, AFP Sound, within 121 N. Wixom Road. This agreement would call for 150 days to vacate the premise for that tenant with 30 days-notice from the City. They are currently on a month-to-month lease. We felt 30 days was an appropriate amount of time to help them relocate, as well as for the City to evaluate the larger plan for all of these properties. We are in no rush to take those next steps. He added that there were a variety of contingencies within this purchase agreement, one of which being we have the right to complete an environmental assessment and any other due diligence prior to closing. We do anticipate having a phase 1 environmental assessment and may go to phase 2 if necessary. We do not think there is significant contamination. He said we recommended this Agreement and with Section 12.1 of the City Charter, approval of this purchase agreement will require approval of five or more members of the City Council.

Councilmember Gottschall commented that Mr. Benson had said 150 days at a minimum and the report said up to 150 days from the 30-day notice. He clarified that from when we give the notice, they have 150 days. It was not at least 150 days. Mr. Benson confirmed that they would have up to 150 days from closing. They could leave early. If we were to come up on that 150 days and they were still there, they would get the 30-day notice at 120 days to remind them. He said that he has had conversations with that tenant so they are familiar with this agreement. We haven't worked out a new location; that would be the next step on our side, assuming this was approved. Councilmember Gottschall asked if it was our intention to give them their 30-day notice the day after closing or the day of closing. Mr. Benson said that we could. We will be in contact with them. The feeling was the formal 30-day notice would come at day 120, with the understanding that they are looking for a new location. If they have not found that, we would remind them. That would be the formal notice that they have 30 more days before we begin eviction proceedings. They may be amenable to staying a little longer. We might not be in any rush for them to leave sooner. This agreement gives us flexibility but also locks in a minimum amount of time that those tenants would have to figure out their next steps. Councilmember Gottschall wanted to make sure everyone was on the same page with that because he didn't want to be in a case where we wait for day 120 and give them a 30-day notice and they think they now have 150 days. It wasn't like we would be shovel-ready in a few months. We will be landlords for a bit. He asked if we had to update the insurance with our provider since we are purchasing a few more properties. Mr. Benson said that we have not engaged that conversation yet. We likely would after we get the first agreement signed. He thought we had some level of coverage in our existing policy. Councilmember Gottschall wanted to make sure, since we are becoming landlords, that we do our landlord duties, like making sure we have structure insurance. If a lightbulb goes out and they call their landlord, DPW should know that they have to run over there and change a lightbulb for them. Hopefully we won't get bothered with that kind of stuff.

Mr. Brown clarified that the intent on page five A was to basically allow for 180 days. After 150 days, we can give notice and they will have 30 days from that notice to vacate the property.

Councilmember Behrmann thanked the City Administration for getting the Council proposals on both of these pieces of property. He was excited to see both of these moving forward.

Councilmember Sharpe said that when he first read the packet, he was interpreting the second bullet point as it reads, "The City completing due diligence at our own cost prior to closing, including environmental assessments." He was thinking we would buy it as is and we will do whatever we want afterward, but that was not what he heard. We are going to have an inspection. He had to think there were a couple things wrong with those buildings. He asked who would decide whether we still buy them or not. Mr. Benson said that for 121 N. Wixom Road, we have already done an internal inspection with our Building Department staff. The environmental assessment really was more of a protection against unforeseen things. As an example, a phase 1 environmental assessment would do the research to find out that there was a gas tank underground and now we are liable for this large Brownfield that we didn't know existed. It was covering the things under the ground that we can't see. They would also look at the structure to determine if there was asbestos in the ceiling and how that would be handled. Councilmember Sharpe said that there was an opportunity after the inspection and the environmental assessments, if there were problems, to renegotiate the amount, have them remediate, or we remediate, or backout. He asked who would make the decision of whether we back out or not. Mayor Beagle said that would be up to Administration. Mr. Brown agreed.

Councilmember Gottschall explained that the parties to the agreement would be the ones that did it. Council was directing the Mayor and City Clerk to sign it on the Council's behalf. It should be something that the Council discuss in Closed Session since it was real property. The intent was not to keep those structures up. If we are going to convey this to a developer, that was part of the marketing. They want to make sure that we have conveyed something that wasn't going to have a ton of clean-up that needs to be done.

Councilmember Sharpe said that we have to keep one of them for a while because we have renters. Councilmember Gottschall said that once everything was vacated, he didn't think the game plan was to leave those the way they were. To him, the due diligence was more environmental studies rather than the structure.

Deputy Mayor Rzeknik clarified that if phase 1 was conducted and phase 2 core sampling finds, for example, some herbicide, the BEA that gets filed at the State protects us in the future for that particular substance.

Councilmember Sharpe commented that maybe it has no value if it was really bad. If it was really bad, we would go back and negotiate.

Vote:

Motion Carried

4.) Recommendation to Approve a Purchase Agreement for 117 and 119 N. Wixom Road, Parcel Identification Number 96-17-31-477-006, from North Wixom Properties, LLC for \$200,000, plus all Closing Costs for the Purpose of Future Development Opportunities, and Authorize the Mayor to Sign the Agreement

CM-02-16-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmember Gottschall and Deputy Mayor Rzeznik to approve the Purchase Agreement for 117 and 119 N. Wixom Road, Parcel Identification Number 96-17-31-477-006, from North Wixom Properties, LLC for \$200,000 plus all closing costs for the purpose of future development opportunities, and authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement.

Mr. Benson indicated that this was a similar arrangement to New Business #3, but different price and different size property. These two addresses (117 and 119 N. Wixom Road) are technically one piece of property with two separate addresses. This was a little more complicated of a tenant situation. In this case, each tenant has an official lease with different end dates. The commercial lease for 119 N. Wixom Road was set to expire April 30, 2023. There shouldn't be any additional concerns with that. We do have the option to allow that tenant to continue on a month-to-month basis while we figure things out. We are not obligated to renew that lease. For 117 N. Wixom Road, which was the house behind the commercial structure, it was already noted that lease runs until January 31, 2024. We have not had the opportunity to engage directly with the residential tenants yet. Part of the negotiating process was that we would be authorized to contact the tenants after the Purchase Agreement was signed and while we were in the due diligence period. We do anticipate negotiating an early termination or some kind of agreeable situation. He noted that we would also be doing an environmental assessment of this property, as well.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik commented that the Land Acquisition fund that was established by Councils much prior to this Council, allows the City to acquire these properties for development and the betterment of our City. These are great uses of this fund.

Vote:

Motion Carried

5.) Recommendation to Approve the Proposal for Design and Marketing Services for the Renton Redevelopment Area from Carlisle Wortman Associates of Ann Arbor, Michigan and Approve the Associated Downtown Development Authority Budget Amendment

CM-02-17-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmember Behrmann and Deputy Mayor Rzeznik to approve the proposal for Design and Marketing Services

for the Renton Redevelopment Area from Carlisle Wortman Associates of Ann Arbor, Michigan and approve the associated Downtown Development Authority budget amendment.

Mr. Benson stated that with those land purchases approved, now we can get into the purpose of these land acquisitions. There was an interest in the City taking on a more active role in facilitating downtown development. We have had vacant properties that have sat in private hands for a while and we have not been successful in convincing them to work with those. As a part of the Airline Trail development process that took place last year, we acquired some properties. We already own some others and assuming these Purchase Agreements go through, we will now own the entire section from Pontiac Trail along North Wixom Road up to the school property, including a half acre in front of the school property. To help us put this all together, we are trying to find a developer to work with us to market this property. City Management and the Downtown Development Authority have been evaluating processes for putting that out there. It could be as simple as hiring a real estate agent to market the acreage. Or we could take an even more proactive approach and do some pre-plan and pre-development work with our various Boards and Commissions to put a vision of what we would like to see on site, as well as running market data to help make the case for what the community would like to see in this area. We are looking at a developable area of a little shy of three acres in our Village Center Area. That can go quite a ways and really be an impactable project. He said that City Management, along with DDA staff, got a couple different proposals for the design and marketing services. Two of them were from firms that have worked with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as part of their services for Redevelopment Ready Certified Communities. The third was from our own Planning Consultant, Carlisle Wortman Associates, who also offers a similar version of this service as outlined in the proposal that was included in the packet. City Management evaluated the proposals and took them to the DDA's Economic Vitality Committee to help determine which recommendation to pursue. Part of the reason we chose to go through the DDA was City Council had expressed a hope and expectation of partnership for redeveloping these properties. This expenditure would be an allowable use under the current DDA plan, and given that this would impact them the most, we thought this would be a great opportunity to bring everyone together. The DDA's Economic Vitality Committee met, reviewed the three proposals, and ultimately recommended to the full DDA Board to proceed with Carlisle Wortman Associates' proposal. Their estimate was not to exceed \$15,000 for these services over four or five months. The steps that they proposed were also outlined in their proposal. When we took that to the DDA Board, we also recommended allocating an additional \$5,000 for any additional services that may be needed during the packaging process. For example, we may need our engineers to do surveying work or we may need to purchase certain types of marketing opportunities. The DDA also approved a budget amendment to pay for this project. It was not originally budgeted for them, although they had the money available. They recommended to move \$20,000 from their Business Development Grant line to the Special Studies and Services line to cover the cost of this service.

At this time, Mr. Benson introduced Mr. Richard Carlisle from Carlisle Wortman Associates who would be serving as the Project Lead. He was a wealth of information and experience on this topic.

Mr. Carlisle indicated that he was extremely pleased to be working with Wixom as our Planning Consultants. He said this was not new territory for him because he has done work for Wixom in the past. There were a couple different ways to sell property. The City could hire a realtor and simply sell it the conventional way. We could hope to get the price that we wanted and then we would accept what was being proposed there if it was within the confines of the Zoning Ordinance. Or, the City could create a vision for what we would like to see developed. Based on participation by the Council, DDA, and Planning Commission, we could market the property to developers who share that vision. Ultimately, he would develop a document for the City as a marketing piece or advertising piece. It would not be just of the site, but of the community as a whole. This would go to a list of developers that would develop over time, who have had experience in Wixom or we know has experience with projects like this that come out of a vision. We would try to find a development company that would be the best match to meet the City's vision for that piece of property. When you are doing strategic property acquisition like this, Mr. Carlisle thought the latter approach was the better way because he knew that selling property at a price was important, but what should be most important was how the property develops and how it contributes to the City's overall objectives. The City may gain far more out of that than a mere sales price. He said this was how he advised communities that were looking at strategic acquisition and attempting to assemble properties. He mentioned that they have some really great talent in his company. They have three-dimensional imaging which would give the Council a fairly good picture of what the development could be and what the alternatives could be. Then they would try to sell it to a good viable development company. They would work with the City Attorney's Office to develop Purchase Agreements, so there would be some additional expense beyond theirs. Ultimately, the idea behind this was to allow the City to do the driving of how the property develops.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik said he was in favor of this process. Looking at the Seaver Farm development as an example was a great example of a true vision propelling this forward rather than just listing it. We have seen a number of our properties, even with some of our private owners, that have stalled for five, ten, twenty, twenty-five years without a vision. He said he was in favor of this.

Councilmember Gottschall stated that in looking through the plan, there was a comment about working with the Planning Commission and possibly discussing it with City Council. He said he doesn't like adding more meetings, but suggested having a Joint Meeting to brainstorm in the same room. He would like a more formal opportunity to get input on what we would like. He thought before we put out Requests for Proposals, we need to work with either our attorney or a real

estate specialized attorney to figure out the way that developers were essentially getting the rights to develop the property. If they don't meet the deadline that everyone has agreed upon, that property is City property again with all the improvements that have been made. That way, we can avoid any issues because nothing like that claw back was put into it. When we give out industrial incentives, we have claw backs if they don't meet job requirements. We very much need to do the same with this where if we don't have nice buildings up by a certain date, they are done and we are moving onto the next person. He didn't know how the attorney would work that out, but he thought that was important to put into the rules for the RFQ. That way, developers know that it was not going to be a buy and hold and we will get to it when we get to it situation. We are looking for buildings up very quickly.

Vote:

Motion Carried

6.) Wage and Salary Committee Recommendation to Increase the City Manager's Annual Salary to \$123,600 Retroactive to July 1, 2022 and Increase the City Clerk's Annual Salary to \$83,430 Retroactive to July 1, 2022

CM-02-18-23: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Smiley and Behrmann to increase the City Manager's annual salary to \$123,600 retroactive to July 1, 2022 and increase the City Clerk's annual salary to \$83,430 retroactive to July 1, 2022.

Mayor Beagle indicated that the Wage and Salary Committee met on January 24th to consider these proposed pay raises. These were within the Wage and Salary Committee policy guidelines and it was consistent with the previously negotiated collective bargaining agreements. The new wages fall within the guidelines of the salary restrictions.

Councilmember Sharpe supported the 3% annual increase for the City Manager and the City Clerk based on their outstanding performance that we discussed over the last year. His concern was the retroactive aspect of it. In this case, he said he would support it, but he was hoping that in 2023 and 2024, we can do better in getting them closer to the effective date. He indicated that he spoke to one of the members of the Wage and Salary Committee and she was opposed to retroactive pay, but recognized that everybody got one. He was not sure why we couldn't get them aligned to the rest of the staff. He hoped we could improve going forward.

Vote:

Motion Carried

CALL TO THE PUBLIC: (None)

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:

Mr. Brown stated the DPW staff received thank you letters from the Lakes Area Youth Assistance for their help with a needy child from the Walled Lake Schools for the Christmas holiday. There were also letters from residents who were happy with

the great job the people who clear our roads did with the snow removal recently. He also provided an update on the Maple Road mill and overlay (requests for proposals are due on March 1, 2023), as well as the RCOC mill and overlay project on Grand River (beginning this summer). Mr. Brown indicated that as evident of the recent recruiting successes, the Fire Department Consultants & Personnel Account was overbudget as a result of pre-employment screening expenses, which was actually a good thing. He thanked newly appointed Fire Chief Geistler for his efforts regarding this.

Mayor Beagle indicated that the Budget Study Session that will be held at 6:00 pm on February 28th will be regarding the Fire Department.

Mr. Benson said that the Planning Commission approved and recommended revisions to the Village Center Area ordinance and zoning map. There has been a lot of work and effort between all of our Boards, Commissions and Downtown Development Authority as it related to downtown projects. They all seem to be coming together in a way where we will be able to put out a vision that will be attractive. He believed we were making great strides.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilmember Smiley offered his condolences to the family of Mary Stasser. She recently resigned from the Cemetery Board after serving for many years. He also shared his condolences to the family of Councilmember Gottschall on the passing of his grandmother, Barbara Boyle. He congratulated Caroline Shave, our Public Safety Records Manager, who recently retired from our Police Department. In years past, he has had Caroline described to him as one of those people who does much more than her job title or description. He heard that she was fantastic. She did it all and she did it all very well. He was guessing those were big shoes to fill. He also congratulated our new Fire Chief Brad Geistler.

Councilmember Sharpe gave his condolences to Councilmember Gottschall on the passing of his grandmother, Barbara Boyle, who was a long-time City of Wixom volunteer. He congratulated new Fire Chief Brad Geistler. He knew the Fire Department was in good hands. We've been seeing a lot of really good communications and progress on something very important to Council, and that was improving the staffing and continuity of our Fire Department coverage. One thing he neglected to mention at the last meeting, he went to a Historical Society presentation on January 16th and he wanted to thank Nancy Dingeldey and her team for that particular program on Route 66. He was impressed by the passion that they have. There were about 60 people at the program. He knew they really publicized it. He didn't know what to expect and he was very pleased with that type of program. He encouraged everyone to do something with the Historical Society or any of the other activities that we have. Lastly, the minutes of the DDA mention the liquor license for El Camino. He asked if he knew how long that would take. He felt sorry for them. Mr. Benson replied that we are not out of the usual length of timeframe. It was his understanding that the MLCC takes their sweet time. He said that they have been in contact with the City for clarifying some information and they are doing background checks. It was proceeding and he thought they would be up and running well before the concerts in the park.

Councilmember Gottschall shared his congratulations with our new Fire Chief. The changes since he started, even on an interim basis, have been nice to see. He could tell the staff was more energized, there was a higher morale, we have 24-hour coverage now which was something we have been discussing for years and he was able to get it done in a few months. He wished Chief Geistler good luck as he continued to build on the foundation that has started to take shape. He shared that he got a postcard from Novi today looking for firefighters. It was nice that we have loaded the roster and they are spending thousands mailing to everybody trying to get people. He shared his thanks on behalf of his family for everyone who shared their condolences, thoughts and stories about his grandmother. She was part of the Board of Review for a number of years and known around City Hall because his grandfather was the City Inspector for over 40 years. It was nice to hear stories of everyone's interactions with her and everyone saying how nice and well-liked she was. He also thanked the City for the donation to the Scholarship and Memorial of his cousin, Bailey Broderick, in lieu of flowers. Today would have been Bailey's 21st birthday.

Councilmember Behrmann shared in the comments that were already made regarding the condolences. He also congratulated our new Fire Chief. It was really exciting to see how many of the members of the Fire Department came out to his swearing in. He didn't know we had that many members on the Fire Department, period. It was a full hallway to watch him get sworn in. Obviously, they were behind the Fire Chief, which means he must be doing something right already. He had the pleasure of taking three of his girls to the Daddy Daughter Dance last Thursday night. It was a wonderful event. All three of them had an awesome time. He thanked Ms. Magee and her staff for that event again. They all enjoyed it and it was really well put together.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik offered his condolences to the Gottschall family. He has had many interactions with Barbara and Bernie over the years. She will be greatly missed. Seeing the young smiling faces of a lot of the new recruits yesterday was really of note to him. He had to introduce himself to many of them because they weren't familiar. The recruiting efforts have been great. The promotion was well-deserved. He said the Council was easy on Chief Geistler tonight because he has only been on the job for a day. Also, he attended the public input sessions on the Road Commission of Oakland County for the Grand River rebuild. He thought it was terribly short-sighted on their behalf for not including that second left-hand turn lane. He didn't know if anyone had shopped at Meijer recently and tried to leave there. There was quite a long line and three or four lights later you may make it onto North Wixom Road. When you look at the same intersection at Beck Road and Grand River, it probably has half the volume and they have the two lanes. He made those comments known at that public input session but he knew they wouldn't be doing it in this construction cycle.

Mayor Beagle shared his condolences to the Gottschall family on the loss of his grandmother. He congratulated Chief Geistler. He said he enjoyed the smiles on the older guys faces yesterday, not just the young guys. It was nice to see smiles on the firefighters' faces finally. He thought that had a lot to do with Chief Geistler's leadership. He was looking forward to working more with him in the future.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Catherine Buck
City Clerk

Approved 2-28-2023
