

**City of Marine City
City Commission
September 19, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Marine City Commission was held on Thursday, September 19, 2019 in the Fire Hall, 200 South Parker Street, Marine City, Michigan, and was called to order by Mayor Vandebossche at 7:00 pm.

After a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Vandebossche.

Present: Mayor Dave Vandebossche; Commissioners Jacob Bryson, Elizabeth Hendrick, Wendy Kellehan, William Klaassen, Paul Merchant, Cheryl Vercammen; City Manager Elaine Leven, City Clerk Kristen Baxter

Also in Attendance: City Attorney Robert Davis

APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Vercammen stated that she would like Consent Agenda Items #A & B moved to #11 Items Removed to Consent Agenda for the purpose of discussion.

Mayor Vandebossche said that he would also like to move Item #C for discussion.

Motion by Commissioner Kellehan, seconded by Commissioner Klaassen, to approve the Agenda with the following amendments:

Move from: Consent Agenda - Items A, B, & C
Move to: Items Removed from Consent Agenda.

All Ayes. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laura Scaccia and Joseph Moran spoke on behalf of the Community & Economic Board and provided updates on several projects.

Pat McFarland, 316 Belle River, spoke in support of allowing the sale of recreational marijuana in Marine City.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Kellehan, seconded by Commissioner Bryson, to approve the City Commission Meeting Minutes of September 5, 2019. Ayes: Vandebossche, Bryson, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: Hendrick. Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Presented:

- A. Department Head Resignation – Susan Wilburn
- B. Department Head Resignation – Mary Ellen McDonald
- C. Special Event – Veteran Village USA
- D. Special Event – Mike Miller Merry Time 5k Run/Walk
- E. Special Event – Maritime Days Festival 2020 (Preliminary Approval)
- F. Special Event – Lighted Santa Parade
- G. Business License – Neiman’s Catering
- H. County of St. Clair – Countywide Trails Strategic Planning
- I. Dangerous Building Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes – November 7, 2012
- J. Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes – June 5, 2019
- K. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – June 10, 2019
- L. Departmental Reports
- M. MCAFA Run Report
- N. Preliminary Financial Statements

Motion by Commissioner Bryson, seconded by Commissioner Kellehan, to approve Items #D-N on the Consent Agenda. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandebossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

Disbursements

Motion by Commissioner Bryson, seconded by Commissioner Klaassen, to approve total disbursements, including payroll, in the amount of \$2,483,528.10. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandebossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Seawall Repair Bid

DPW Superintendent Itrich reported that the seawall located at the end of East St. Clair Street was examined by Ron's Marine and found to be in good structural shape. It was recommended that an extension be installed on the cap of the seawall to bring it up 12 inches and make it the same height as the seawall in Drake Park.

DPW Superintendent Itrich asked for the Board to waive competitive bidding and approve a bid from Ron's Marine to install an 84' x 12" extension of existing steel seawall capping at a price of \$5,984.00.

Motion by Commissioner Vercammen, seconded by Commissioner Bryson, to waive competitive bidding for the seawall cap. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandenbossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Vercammen, seconded by Commissioner Klaassen, to approve the seawall repair bid from Ron's Marine in the amount of \$5,984.00. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandenbossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Interview Room Upgrade

Chief Heaslip stated that he had done research on updating the Police Department's interview room system. He said that the current system had the ability to record and save interviews to aid in prosecution and comply with State laws and said the process was arduous and in need of updating due to its speed in downloading and the system no longer being supported.

Chief Heaslip said that with the recent addition of GETAC body cameras and in-car cameras, adding an interview room system would provide new cameras, microphones, cloud storage, and back office software. He said the system would also allow the department to seamlessly attach, download, and forward interviews to the Prosecutor.

He requested the Board waive competitive bidding for the upgrade, as well as approve the purchase of GETAC Interview Room System in the amount of \$6,240.97.

Mayor Vandenbossche inquired how much the annual renewal cost was for the system.

Chief Heaslip responded that it would cost \$180 for cloud storage.

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Bryson, to waive competitive bidding for the GETAC Interview Room System. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandenbossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Kellehan, to approve the purchase of a GETAC Interview Room System in the amount of \$6,240.97. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandenbossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Staff & Command School

Motion by Commissioner Kellehan, seconded by Commissioner Merchant, to approve Police Chief Heaslip to attend the Northwestern University Staff and Command School in the amount of \$4,250.00. **Roll Call Vote.** Ayes: Vandenbossche, Bryson, Hendrick, Kellehan, Klaassen, Merchant, Vercammen. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

Department Head Resignation Letter – Susan Wilburn

Commissioner Vercammen read a prepared response regarding the resignations of Building Official Wilburn and Finance Director/Treasurer Mary Ellen McDonald focusing on the perceived mistreatment of the City employees and reminding Commission that their role was to help with policy, and not to micromanage employees. She emphasized finding solutions to problems such as setting term limits of City Commissioners to (2) four-year terms and that requests for information should be in writing, with the approval of two or more City Commissioners to reduce the costs and time associated with multiple requests.

Commissioner Merchant supported Commissioner Vercammen's prepared response and stated that certain behaviors sounded like bullying or harassment. After reading Building Official Wilburn's resignation letter, he said although it was concise, it spoke volumes. Commissioner Merchant reiterated that Building Official Wilburn felt pressure to selectively enforce and the incidents needed to be looked into further and those involved needed to be held accountable for making a person give up their livelihood.

Commissioner Bryson supported Commissioner Vercammen and Merchant's position and said that City Commission should not be micromanaging department heads and City employees; they are there because we have trust in them to do their jobs.

Commissioner Kellehan commented that we have to allow and trust that staff is capable of doing their jobs and not micromanage them. She stated that Building Official Wilburn

was not allowed to do her job and that spoke volumes. She said she hoped that when we hire a new person or crew for the Building Department, that we give them the authority that they need to do their job.

Commissioner Hendrick responded and said that the issues she takes directly to the City Manager are issues that are brought to her from the people of the community. She stated that she never goes to Department Heads directly and said that we all have a job to do and asking for information is a big part of that job.

Commissioner Klaassen commented that he believed that the Building Official's letter was relating to past Commissioners. He said that we have a new Board now and that we should work together.

Mayor Vandenbossche responded and said he and the City Manager had to limit enforcement at times due to antiquated ordinances. He said some issues did arise from that selective enforcement and that to enforce equally, they had to be updated.

Motion by Commissioner Bryson, seconded by Commissioner Kellehan, to accept the resignation letter by Susan Wilburn. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Department Head Resignation Letter – Mary Ellen McDonald

Commissioner Vercammen asked City Manager Leven if the reason why Finance Director/Treasurer Mary Ellen McDonald was retiring early was due to being micromanaged.

City Manager Leven replied that she had had discussions with Mary Ellen who stated that it had been hard throughout the years due to difficult relationships with Board Members. She added that it certainly was one of the reasons that added to her desire to leave.

Motion by Commissioner Bryson, seconded by Commissioner Kellehan, to accept the resignation letter by Mary Ellen McDonald. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Special Event – Veteran Village USA

Mayor Vandenbossche stated that although he supported the cause, he was concerned about having kids standing at such a busy intersection collecting donations with no experience.

City Attorney Davis commented that the Board could approve the event, subject to location.

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Kellehan, to approve the Special Event from Veteran Village USA with the location amended from Chartier/M-29 intersection to the Broadway/Main Street intersection. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

In addition to the City Manager's Report provided in the agenda packet, City Manager Leven added the following:

- Sludge return pump up and running at WWTP
- Water Plant high service pump is installed and back in service
- Pads for columbariums poured at cemetery
- Property dispute not successful in court
- Met with Building Official who is contracted with East China & Algonac
- Spent time with Mary Ellen McDonald on learning payroll
- Met with representative from an account temp agency who works for St. Clair

COMMISSIONER PRIVILEGE/LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Merchant announced Comic Con on September 28th and said he and the Comic Con crew hoped that everyone was able to attend and enjoy the event.

Commissioner Klaassen, as the Planning Commission liaison, reported that the construction of a private garage was approved by the Planning Commission at their September 9, 2019 meeting.

Commissioner Kellehan commented that at the September 5th City Commission meeting, the Board made a decision to reduce the payout of sick time hours of City employees – a decision that has negatively impacted work place morale. She said she would like to see this on an upcoming agenda for more discussion and possible revision.

Commissioner Hendrick commented that the job of City Commissioner was not an easy one and said that people didn't understand what the job entailed and what their role was. She said she was here to question and research to get the City on the right track and said she learned the job from her mother, Rita Roehrig, who always asked questions and made sure that people of the community were looked after and protected. Commissioner Hendrick further said that you can't tie the hands of the Commission because you don't like how the question is asked. She said she will continue to do her job and look after the people who contact her.

Commissioner Bryson also asked that the Board take another look at the sick leave policy at a future meeting.

Mayor Vandebossche announced Comic Con on September 28th and Pumpkin Palooza Party on October 5th.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Kellehan, to adjourn at 8:37 pm. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Baxter
City Clerk