

MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 16, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Colleen Brown called the regular Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Montrose City Offices located at 139 S. Saginaw Street, Montrose, MI.

ROLL CALL: Present Council Members were Mayor Colleen Brown, Robert Arnold, Mark Richard, Ryan Heslop, Aaron Burch, and Andrea Martin. Also present were City Manager Neil Rankin, City Clerk Tina Rush, City Engineer Geric Rose, City Attorney Otis Stout and 3 citizens. Member Tom Bigelow was recorded as absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: Mayor Colleen Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH:

1. *THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2021, MONTROSE PORCH PROJECT ARTISTS:* Mayor Brown recommended presenting the plaques next month in order to allow time to gather addresses to mail out notices and print plaques for each of the artists.

2. *CHOOSE A CITIZEN OF THE MONTH FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER:* Mayor Brown recommended Jo Ellyn & Dennis Graham. Brown noted that they purchased equipment from 50's Pizza who recently shut down and plan to re-open soon saving 11 jobs.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold to nominate Jo Ellyn & Dennis Graham. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: *SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT WASHINGTON STREET.* Mayor Brown opened the public hearing at 7:04 p.m. Representative Eva Vandefifer spoke on behalf of the Montrose Methodist Church claiming that it would be a hardship to the church. There were no other questions and/or comments. Mayor Brown closed the public hearing at 7:06 p.m. and brought the regular meeting back to order.

PRESENTATIONS: NONE

REPORTS

1. *FIRE & POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORTS: Report on file at city office.*

2. *BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES:* Heslop asked if this report includes GBL and Rankin replied yes, there are currently 3 businesses who have still not complied. Mayor Brown noticed that there are \$225 charges for licenses when council voted to waive late fees due to communication. Rankin said he would speak to Leoni and have him show the credit on next month's invoice. Arnold commented that the museum informed him that they had not yet received their refund of the waived late fees. Mayor Brown said to have them get with Rankin. *Report on file at city office.*

3. *HYDRO-CORP INSPECTION SERVICES: On file at city office.*

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4. *RENTAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS*: Currently scheduling appointments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

MATTERS OF COUNCIL ACTION:

1. *APPROVAL OF THE 08/19/21 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES*:

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold to approve the minutes. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

2. *APPROVAL OF TREASURER REPORT & CHECK REGISTER*: Prior to the roll call, Richard asked if there was anything out of the ordinary and Rankin replied no.

- **MOTION** by Arnold **SECOND** by Burch that we pay our bills. Roll Call Vote: Martin – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Burch – Aye, Richard – Aye, Heslop – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

3. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION RESOLUTION FOR WASHINGTON STREET SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT*: Rankin conveyed that the city's charter does not spell out a formula for the process of a special assessment district, so he spoke to previous interim city manager Andrew Bisaha and Durand DPW Director for guidance. If council decides to move forward with the Washington Street Project, then the option is to create a special assessment district. This project is unique for several reasons;

- High traffic count as it serves as an entrance for the gas station/hair salon and laundromat.
- Heavy vehicles, 80,000lbs fuel trucks.
- Only 3 properties can be assessed.
- All properties have Washington St. as corner lot.
- Preliminary cost show \$85.66 per frontage foot.
- ARPA would cover the water/sewer portion.
- City would cover engineer costs, split mobilization costs between water and streets and cover half of item #26 as part of it is the approach to the alley.
- Special assessment would range from \$2300 per year/10 years for the Methodist Church to \$785 for 126 Washington.

Levying a special assessment on this project will allow the city to complete more projects sooner. Mayor Brown expressed concerns with the city's high portion of the assessment and discussion ensued. Rankin re-iterated that it's ultimately council's decision. AARP funds are also being utilized for this project.

- **MOTION** by Burch **SECOND** by Martin that we create a Washington Street Special Assessment District. Roll Call Vote: Richard – Aye, Martin – Aye, Heslop – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Burch – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

4. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION WASHINGTON STREET RECONSTRUCTION/BIDS*: Rankin reported that the city received seven bids for the reconstruction of Washington Street. Bids ranged from \$202,365 to a low bid of \$135,213. This was \$24,587 less than the engineer estimate. The low

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bid was from DCC Construction out of Davison. Attached are the bid tabulations and engineer's recommendations (Geric will be attending and can answer any questions). Included in your packet is the bid tabulation.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Burch to accept the DCC Construction bid in the amount of one hundred thirty-five thousand, two-hundred thirteen dollars and fifty cents, (\$135,213.50). Roll Call Vote: Heslop – Aye, Burch – Aye, Martin – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Richard – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

5. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION RFP FOR SALT SHED CONSTRUCTION*: Rankin conveyed those bids were due today, however, the city did not receive any bids.

- **MOTION** by Burch **SECOND** by Richard to extend the RFP by one month. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

6. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION RELEAF TREE PLANTING AGREEMENT*: Rankin said that Releaf of Michigan will match our funding of \$2,500 to plant tree with an addition of \$2,000. They partner with Spectrum Health Systems but encourage the community to get involved. Attached is the tree agreement in which they request the city to make sure to water and maintain the tree for the first three years. The next step is to find a planting location and would request council to get the word out to those that wish to have a tree planted in their right of way. The grant will cover the costs of a gator bag to water the trees weekly (80 gallons) during the Spring and Summer months. I anticipate planting a few trees at Blueberry Park. I am putting in a request for tree this week and anticipating us to get approximately 15 trees. The date for planting will be October 8th.

- **MOTION** by Burch **SECOND** by Arnold to approve the Releaf Tree Plant Agreement. Roll Call Vote: Heslop – Aye, Martin – Aye, Burch – Aye, Richard – Aye, Arnold – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

7. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACH ARRANGEMENTS AND TRANSACTIONS*: As you may know, our city staff is constantly engaged in training and is learning many aspects of our jobs as well as changing regulations. Our treasurer was going through and noticed the city did not have an adopted policy for PA 738 of 2002. This resolution/policy specifies who can conduct ACH transactions and with what vendors the city can conduct without approval of council. This is both vendors that are paid on a regular basis and agencies and organizations that pay us.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Burch to authorize the automated clearing house, (ACH). Roll Call Vote: Burch – Aye, Heslop – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Martin – Aye, Richard – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

8. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION PAINTING CONTRACT FOR DPW GARAGE*: Attached is the contract for the painting of the DPW Garage. Council accepted the bid last month, but not an actual contract. Otis reviewed it last week as I had sent it to the contractor to move the process forward with the favorable weather and it requires council approval. Richard asked Rankin

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and Stout if issues the city attorney questioned in the legal opinion were addressed and was the contract sufficient to move forward. Both Rankin and Stout replied yes.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Burch to accept the accept the painting contract for the DPW garage. Roll Call Vote: Arnold – Aye, Richard – Aye, Martin – Aye, Heslop – Aye, Burch – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

9. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION RESOLUTION FOR MEDC REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITY:

Rankin said he’s looking to bring as many tools to help redevelop the Montrose Downtown I believe MEDC can offer some support. The essential program is ideal as it is slightly less involved. I have completed all the classes offered by MEDC and my first opinion when this program was unveiled in 2013 was that it seemed to be quite complicated especially for smaller communities that lack the resources. The essential program I believe fits better and for a community like Montrose that has limited industrial and commercial development works well. I have reached out to the MEDC coordinator to see if a time can be scheduled for training.

- **MOTION** by Arnold **SECOND** by Burch that we adopt the resolution for MEDC, (Redevelopment Ready Community). Roll Call Vote: Richard – Aye, Burch – Aye, Heslop – Aye, Martin – Aye, Arnold – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

10. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION BEECHTREE PILOT PROGRAM: Stout reported that Rankin approached him asking for legal assistance against Christopher Cato, property owner of the Beech Trail Apartments located at 301 & 307 Coke Drive. Mr. Cato is refusing to supply financial documentation to the City in order for the City’s Treasurer to calculate payment of fees in lieu of taxes for the 2020 PILOT Program. How much they collect in rent and utilities helps calculate what the cost is to the city, but Mr. Cato is refusing to provide the documentation and is in the process of selling those apartments.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Burch that the manager and city attorney have the authority to pursue legal action to get the utility information in order to get the payment for the Pilot Program. Roll Call Vote: Heslop – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Martin – Aye, Richard – Aye, Burch – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

11. SET HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT HOURS:

- **MOTION** by Arnold **SECOND** by Burch to set the Halloween Trick or Treat hours from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

12. APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL COUNCIL MEMBER TOM BIGELOW’S ABSENCE AT THE AUGUST 19, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING:

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold to excuse Tom Bigelow’s absence. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

13. APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL COUNCIL MEMBER TOM BIGELOW’S ABSENCE AT THE AUGUST 19, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING:

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- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold to accept Aaron Burch's absence at the August 19th meeting. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

REPORTS FROM BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD: NONE

ELECTION COMMISSION: NONE

GENESEE COUNTY SMALL CITIES & VILLAGES ASSOCIATION: Mayor Brown announced that the City of Montrose will be hosting the next meeting September 1st, virtually starting at 6:30 p.m. Speaker will be Chuck Donaldson, Representative from MEDC Michigan Economic Development Communities.

GENESEE COUNTY WATER AND WASTE SERVICE'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE: NONE

GENESEE COUNTY METROPOLITAN ALLIANCE: Richard reported that they spoke on round-abouts and making changes to the TIP funding which will affect the roads.

PLANNING BOARD: NONE

911 CONSORTIUM: NONE

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS: NONE

REPORTS FROM CITY MANAGER AND CITY ATTORNEY:

CITY MANAGER: GOOD NEWS ..THE 2020 CENSUS REPORTS GROWTH IN MONTROSE!!!

After several decades of shrinking population, Montrose saw over a 5% growth in the last decade. Montrose was the only city in Genesee Co. to see this trend. Homes in the city have been selling fast. Yes, that new home on Park Street is already sold. Homes prices are averaging over \$1000 per square foot and yes there have been some quarter million- dollar sales this year. Rankin also mentioned that there have been 83 sales within the community in the past 2 years.

Habitat build on 200 E. Maple has started and I am working with them on the second build at 183 Oak Street. They will be pouring concrete next week at 200 E. Maple and will be ramping up construction.

Only seven business have not been inspected/reinspected. I sent out notices to schedule and water shutoffs will happen this week. Four scheduled this week. I want to make sure if the city has to go to court over this it very clear that notice was provided multiple times as one

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business owner that has not completed the inspections is notorious for taking the city to court.

GIS mapping has been going quite well. Nathan Richard has been adding shutoff valves and marking them with blue paint. This will allow our DPW in the dead of winter with 4 feet of snow to know where to dig to shut off water if a line freezes and start to flood a home saving time and effort.

The new transmitter/receiver has been installed and is working much better. Reads great than 3 days old was around 30-50. This narrowed down list will make it easier to address the ones that don't work.

CITY ATTORNEY: NONE

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS: Arnold asked the status of the letter addressed to Consumer's regarding the decrepit utility pole. Rankin said he emailed Consumer's. Arnold & Mayor Brown asked that a form letter be generated so that Mayor, School Superintendent and the library may sign this letter. Richard thanked Rankin for the NEP Grant, his neighbor took advantage of the program and is very impressed.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COUNCIL: *On file at city office.*

ADJOURNMENT:

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Burch to adjourn the meeting. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Mayor Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Prepared by City Clerk, Tina Rush