

**Regular Meeting of the Howell City Council**  
**Monday, April 24, 2017**  
**Howell City Council Chambers – Lower Level**  
**611 E. Grand River**  
**Howell, Michigan 48843**  
**517-546-3502**

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The regular meeting of the Howell City Council was called to order by Mayor Nick Proctor at 7:00 p.m.

Council Members Present: Robert Ellis, Jan Lobur, Scott Niblock, Steven Manor and Mayor Nick Proctor.

Council Members Absent: Jeff Hansen and Michael Mulvahill.

Also Present: City Manager Shea Charles, City Attorney Dennis Perkins, and Deputy City Clerk Deanna Robson.

Others in Attendance: Police Chief George Basar, Finance Director/Treasurer Catherine Stanislawski, Assessor Joey Lentine, DPS Director Erv Suida, WWTP Operations Manager Mike Spitler, DPW Operations Manager Mike Luce, IT Director Mike Pitera, Pat Convery, Julia Blair, Jeannette Ambrose, Paul Streng, John & Caron Davis, Lia Michaels and Gentjan Heqimi.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. APPROVED MINUTES**

A. MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Lobur , “To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council held April 10, 2017 as amended.” Member Manor noted that under item 8.C. the vote should be reflected as 6-0 instead of 7-0. MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

B. MOTION by Niblock, SUPPORT by Lobur, “To approve the minutes of the work session of the City Council held April 18, 2017.” MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**4. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS**

- Julia Blair, 615 E. Washington and VP of the PTO at Southeast Elementary, requested that the fees be waived at Thompson Lake for the pavilion rental on June 12, 2017. Mayor Proctor asked that the request be submitted in writing to City Council. MOTION by Manor, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To grant the request of Southeast Elementary to waive the pavilion rental fee for June 12, 2017 pending receipt of a written request and provided that the pavilion is available.” MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**5. REPORTS – COUNCIL MEMBERS SERVING ON COMMISSIONS**

- Member Lobur noted that the Planning Commission met on April 19<sup>th</sup> and discussed the Grand River traffic study; approved a site plan modification to add parking spaces at Burwick Farms; discussed the Redevelopment Ready Communities priority site list; and discussed the mural at Parking Lot #2 – grant for the artwork was provided by the Michigan Association of Realtors. Mayor Proctor welcomed Planning Commission Chairman Streng to the meeting.
- Member Manor updated Council regarding the SEMCOG meeting: the general assembly adopted the 2017-2018 budget; and they received a presentation by a team of demographers who informed the board that by the year 2045 there will be a large growth of people over the age of 60 in southeast Michigan, but not much growth in other age groups. He noted that the Howell City population is aging; the research provides insight as to the kinds of future services that may be needed; and the City may want to work on initiatives to attract seniors that have money to spend on housing and services in the City. SEMCOG elections resulted in Member Manor being re-elected as the representative for cities and villages in Livingston County, with Kris Tobbe from Brighton as the alternate.
- Mayor Proctor stated that the Howell Area Fire Authority met on April 19<sup>th</sup>; the budget has been approved by all municipalities except Oceola Twp. (expected to be approved at the next township meeting); there have been minor updates to the Cohoctah fire station and repairs to one vehicle; and fire authority staff has been involved in community outreach including replacement of CO2 detectors and smoke detectors, as well as participation in the Livingston County Home Show.

**6. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**7. APPROVED – CIVIC EVENT APPLICATIONS:**

A. Farmers Market, Sundays, May through October 2017. MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Niblock, “To approve the Civic Event application submitted by the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce for the Farmers Market, Sundays, May through October, 2017.” Pat Convery, Howell Chamber of Commerce President, stated that the Chamber is working with St. Joseph Mercy Hospital and the Livingston County Health Department so that people with prescriptions can receive healthy fresh foods; the program is starting with 100 people; the City of Howell Farmers Market is the first in the county to accept bridge cards; and free horse and wagon rides will be available for market visitors on the first Sunday. She thanked Council for their continued support. MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

B. Corpus Christi Procession, June 17, 2017. MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Manor, “To approve the Civic Event application submitted by St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church scheduled for June 17, 2017 incorporating staff comments and authorize amplified music under Section 652.06(c)(5) ending at 7:30 p.m.” City Manager Charles confirmed that staff has never received complaints regarding the music for the event. MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**8. DISCUSSED – GRAND RIVER TRAFFIC STUDY**

City Manager Shea Charles stated that the City authorized Hubbell, Roth & Clark (HRC) to conduct a traffic study for Grand River Avenue from Byron Road to National Street in order to research options for an enhanced pedestrian experience and traffic calming downtown. Any modifications to Grand River are subject to Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) approval, and the traffic study is an MDOT requirement. The study resulted in three different configurations: 1) three lanes on all of Grand River; 2) three lanes on all of Grand River and add a right hand turn lane at the main four; and 3) retain the current configuration at the Walnut/Grand River and Michigan/Grand River intersections and reconfigure the remaining blocks to three lanes. In areas constricted to three lanes, back-in angle parking would be added. Staff recommends Option #3 – a modified approach that would have little impact on the level of service, but adding a slight traffic delay that would still be well within MDOT standards.

Discussion followed regarding reliability of the traffic count volumes, as well as right and left hand turn wait times. City Manager Charles confirmed that under the proposed option, areas that currently have five traffic lanes will maintain those lanes, and the recommendation is to consolidate lanes at State and Center streets. Conversation continued regarding angled parking. City Manager Charles informed Council that Grand River Avenue is a state trunkline and the only type of angle parking that the State allows on a trunkline is back-in angle; he added that this type of parking will result in 40-50% more parking capacity. Discussion continued regarding semi truck traffic (estimated at 2% per hour) relative to entire traffic volume. Council inquired about restricting semi truck left turns from eastbound Grand River Avenue on to Michigan Avenue. City Manager Charles responded that the state does not allow local municipalities to ban semi truck traffic on state highways; however, the Village of Fowlerville has obtained local control of their north/south downtown routes. Member Niblock voiced his support to make the community more pedestrian friendly, but expressed concern about previous consultant recommendations that were implemented in the Piety Hill neighborhood resulting in traffic back-ups due to roads that were too narrow. He added that if the City proceeds with the recommendation, he would like barriers used to block the proposed changing lanes. Member Ellis and City Manager Charles confirmed.

City Manager Charles stated that if Council approves of the concept, staff will partner with the DDA and MDOT; the temporary project could potentially begin mid-June 2017 (after the end of the school year) and last until approximately mid-October 2017; tape would be used to mark the changes; and staff would monitor the project to ensure that it operates according to the model. If the implemented traffic study results in general acceptance, the next infrastructure upgrade would be a good time for a full implementation. Member Lobur expressed her support, but added that the public must be made aware of the project and all social media outlets should be utilized to communicate the implementation. City Manager Charles confirmed that the information would be well communicated and added that a

public meeting is required by MDOT. Mayor Proctor inquired about a crosswalk in front of the courthouse and City Manager Charles confirmed that as part of the implementation. Member Ellis asked if the plan could be implemented without angled parking. Gentjan Heqimi, HRC, responded that increased speeds may result without angled parking. Mayor Proctor asked if MDOT approval is required and City Manager Charles confirmed, adding that MDOT provided some information for the study. Mayor Proctor inquired about potential exposure to litigation due to traffic accidents, and City Manager Charles responded that there should be no increase in liability due to the City's thoroughness in completing all of the appropriate steps prior to any changes as well as staff's reliance on HRC to provide the markings. Lia Michaels, HRC, added that safety improvements have resulted in cities where these types of changes have been implemented. Member Manor voiced his support for the proposed changes, citing the improvements and noting that the most significant change would be parking. Planning Commission Chairman Paul Streng and Planning Commissioner Jeannette Ambrose expressed their support.

The consensus of Council was for staff to proceed with approaching MDOT about temporarily making changes to the Grand River cross section to implement the findings in the HRC Grand River Traffic Study report, including: temporary installation to involve striping new lanes and parking spaces (either with tape or paint) in the modified three lane configuration; installation of temporary, flexible barricades to direct traffic into the new lane design; and signage to alert the motoring public of the changes.

City Manager Charles stated that staff will initiate the temporary traffic change process with MDOT, reach out to government partners at the library, and present the plan to the DDA Board at their meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Howell Chamber President Pat Convery commented that back-in angle parking is really the first step in parallel parking.

9. **ADOPTED – ORDINANCE NO. 911, 2017 CODIFICATION**  
MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To adopt Ordinance No. 911, 2017 Codification.” MOTION CARRIED (5-0).
10. **ADOPTED – RESOLUTION NO. 17-12, BUDGET AMENDMENTS**  
MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Lobur, “To adopt Resolution No. 17-12, Budget Amendments.” MOTION CARRIED (5-0).
11. **SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARING, 2017/2018 BUDGET**  
MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Manor, “To set a public hearing to consider the 2017-2018 City of Howell Budget at 7:00 pm, Monday May 8, 2017 at Howell City Hall.” MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**12. APPROVED PAYMENT OF BILLS**

MOTION by Manor, SUPPORT by Ellis, "To approve the payment of bills ending April 24, 2017 in the amount of \$443,055.90 and payroll to cover the period ending April 29, 2017." Member Lobur questioned Home Depot and FAS Builders LLC; Mayor Proctor questioned Hubbell Roth & Clark. MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**13. BOARD/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS:**

Board of Zoning Appeals – Victoria Hertrich, term ending 04/30/2020. MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, "To reappoint Victoria Hertrich to Board of Zoning Appeals for a term ending April 30, 2020." MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**14. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Arbor Day ceremony - Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. at Howell Memorial Cemetery. Classes from Northwest and Voyager Elementary Schools will be participating. All are welcome to attend.
- DDA Applause Awards - Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 6 p.m. at Block Brewery.
- Budget Work Session currently scheduled for 6 p.m. on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Due to the anticipated absence of some key staff members, City Manager Charles asked if Council was comfortable with the budget as presented and would like to reschedule the meeting to a future date. Mayor Proctor suggested exploring alternate dates. MOTION by Manor, SUPPORT by Niblock, "To cancel the Budget Work Session scheduled for May 1, 2017 and reschedule for a date to be determined." MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

**15. OLD BUSINESS**

- Mayor Proctor stated that the DDA Applause Awards are scheduled for Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 6 p.m. at Block Brewery and Howell Schools State of the District Address will be held on Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at Parker Middle School.
- Mayor Proctor noted that a portion of the protective fence is missing at Parking Lot #2. DPS Director Suida responded that staff would have the fence fixed the following day.
- Mayor Proctor inquired about the resident concern regarding a willow tree in the Rolling Oaks neighborhood. City Manager Charles responded that he and DPS Director Suida will be meeting to assure residents that the utility lines are nowhere near the tree. City Attorney Perkins confirmed that reviewing the City ordinance is not necessary because the tree is on private property.

**16. NEW BUSINESS**

- MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Lobur, "To excuse Members Mulvahill and Hansen from the April 24, 2017 meeting (reasons stated)." MOTION CARRIED (5-0).
- Mayor Proctor noted his concern regarding the proliferation of donation boxes in the downtown area. City Manager Charles responded that removal of the donation bins is a condition of occupancy for the currently vacant gas station property on Grand River. He added that many communities are struggling with

this issue; one community attempted to ban donation bins resulting in a regulatory model that staff is currently monitoring.

- Mayor Proctor stated that he attended a recent fundraiser for the Community Theatre of Howell, noting that the organization is a 501c3 and encouraging people to support the theatre and attend its events.
- Member Niblock noted the recent article in the Livingston Daily Press & Argus regarding former DPW Superintendent Marcel Goch and commended staff for being proactive and staying on top of City needs.
- City Manager Charles stated that the Façade Grant Presentation is scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup> – details to follow.

**17. ADJOURN**

MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To adjourn the regular meeting of the City Council at 8:00 p.m.” MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

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Nick Proctor, Mayor

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Deanna Robson, Deputy City Clerk