

Regular Meeting of the Howell City Council
Monday, March 12, 2018
Howell City Council Chambers – Lower Level
611 E. Grand River
Howell, Michigan 48843
517-546-3502

1. CALL TO ORDER

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, Steven Manor, Michael Mulvahill, Andrew Yost and Mayor Nick Proctor.

Council Member Absent: Scott Niblock

Also Present: City Manager Shea Charles, City Attorney Dennis Perkins and City Clerk Jane Cartwright.

Others in Attendance: Police Chief George Basar, DPS Director Erv Suida, Finance Director/Treasurer Catherine Stanislawski, Community Development Director Tim Schmitt, IT Director Mike Pitera, DPW Operations Manager Mike Luce, Assessor Joey Lentine, Recreation Director Tim Church, John & Caron Davis, J. Pearce, Alex Smith, Steve & Jeannette Ambrose, Holly Ward-Lamb, Joyce Fisher, Brian Gillette, Joel & Janelle Beutler, Jacob Currie, A. Currie.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVED MINUTES

MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Lobur, “To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council held February 26, 2018.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

4. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS

- Holly Ward-Lamb, New Director at the Howell Carnegie District Library, introduced herself.

5. REPORTS – COUNCIL MEMBERS SERVING ON COMMISSIONS

- Mayor Proctor reported on the DDA meeting held February 28, 2018. Invitations will be going out for Applause Awards scheduled for April 26, 2018; a ribbon cutting will be held on March 14, 2018 for the new business Birch & Elm; Mark’s Mid-Town Coney has secured building permits to rebuild the restaurant; and a work session was held to review the 2018/2019 proposed budget.

6. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

- Cub Scout Pack 3363, Request to Waive Park Fees for Fishing Derby. MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Yost, “To waive the park and Rotary Pavilion rental fees for May 19, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., as requested by Cub Scout Pack 3363 for the fishing derby.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

7. MML PRESENTATION – SAVE MI CITY

Mayor Proctor stated the City was considering a revenue enhancement for 2018/2019 budget along with several other communities, including the City of Brighton, and introduced Tony Minghine, Deputy Executive Director & COO of the Michigan Municipal League. Mr. Minghine opened his presentation by stating that fundamentally, Michigan’s Municipal Finance System doesn’t work and is affecting the ability of Cities to create the kind of community people want to live and work in. Key facts of the current system funding local government include:

- Constitutional amendments limiting tax growth (Proposal A & the Headlee Amendment) do not track with the economy; there is very limited upward mobility. Local government has no authority to fix these limitations.
- State priorities over the last 20 years show a disinvestment in the local level of government.
- 10 years of revenue tracking across the country rank Michigan 50th in the nation, the only state showing downward revenue (-8%) which is reflective of the broken system.
- State Revenue Sharing has decreased 50%, an estimated loss of \$8.1 billion across the State; this equates to a loss of \$3,510,924 for the City of Howell over 10 years.
- State revenues are up 29% from 2002 – 2012; local government revenues are down 56%. State payroll is up 24%; payroll for Cities overall is down 14.6%.
- The only way to grow is to build something new which is difficult for Cities with limited vacant land, however the demand for services hasn’t changed.
- 48% of the public feel that taxes should go up with a strong economy however the Headlee Amendment rolls the millage rate down and City’s are unable to recover.

The potential solutions MML is working on include fixing the property tax system to provide true growth, addressing the unfunded OPEB obligations, providing investment tools instead of using the cut only strategy, create solutions for building/maintaining infrastructure, and investing in local communities. Detailed reports on this issue are available at www.saveMIcity.org

Discussion followed on MML’s impact at the State level, the Governor’s preliminary plan for excess revenues to Michigan Cities through the state budget, the effect of term limits, and the path forward for generating revenue to avoid the decline and cuts to services. Janelle Beutler, 541 Indian Oaks, questioned the revenue increase under consideration by the City.

8. APPROVED – CIVIC EVENT APPLICATION, MEMORIAL DAY PARADE, MAY 28, 2018

MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To approve the Civic Event application submitted by the American Legion Post 141 for the Memorial Day Parade scheduled for May 28, 2018.” Brian Gillette, American Legion Post 141 Adjutant, thanked the City for supporting the Memorial Day Parade. MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

9. APPROVED – RESOLUTION 18-05, VACATE UNDEVELOPED PORTION OF ROSELANE DRIVE AND LAKE AVENUE

MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To adopt Resolution No. 18-05, a Resolution to vacate a portion of the undeveloped portion of Roselane Drive and Lake Avenue between North National Street and Audrey Avenue.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

10. INTRODUCED – ORDINANCE NO. 913, 2017/2018 ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

Member Manor introduced Ordinance No. 913, a City initiated ordinance to update the Zoning Ordinance. Member Lobur stated the Planning Commission spent an extensive amount of time reviewing the changes. Community Development Director Schmitt explained the proposed amendments provide some clean up to individual sections of the zoning code related to technical errors, correct identified problems (for instance add the definition of a kennel) and add modern type uses as recommended for Redevelopment Ready Communities. City Manager Charles encouraged Council members to contact staff with additional questions or concerns. Adoption of the zoning ordinance update will be scheduled for the April 9, 2018 City Council meeting.

11. INTRODUCED – ORDINANCE NO. 914, CONSUMERS ENERGY FRANCHISE

Member Ellis introduced Ordinance No. 914, Consumers Energy 30 Year Franchise. Kathryn Burkholder, Community Affairs Manager for Consumers Energy, stated Franchise Agreements are required by the Michigan Public Service Commission and outline regulations on traffic flow and written notice when working within the right of way, extension of service and uniform rates. The franchise is non-exclusive, revocable at the will of the City Council and replaces the 1988 franchise agreement. Pursuant to the City Charter, the franchise can only be approved in ordinance format 30 days after submission and requires a public hearing. MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Manor, “To schedule a public hearing for April 23, 2018 to consider the renewal of the 30 year Franchise with Consumers Energy.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

12. APPROVED – BENNETT CENTER LEASE

MOTION by Manor, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To approve the Agreement to Lease City of Howell Bennett Center Building with the Howell Area Recreation Authority effective July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2023.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

13. APPROVED – RESCHEDULE MARCH 26, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING

Due to spring break and the anticipated lack of a quorum, City Manager Charles suggested the rescheduling of the March 26, 2018 regular meeting. MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Yost, “To reschedule the March 26, 2018 regular City Council meeting to March 19, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0). Member Lobur stated she could not attend the March 19, 2018 meeting.

14. APPROVED - PAYMENT OF BILLS

MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To approve the payment of bills ending March 12, 2018 in the amount of \$759,704.50 and payroll to cover the period ending March 17, 2018.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

15. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

- Assessing Position Update. Due to the limited response on recruitment efforts to hire a new Assessor, staff has prepared an RFP for Assessing Services as a potential option. Since Assessor Lentine has agreed to stay on through July, staff has some time to pursue all options however noted their preference to hire a full time employee. Attorney Perkins also commented on the advantages of a full time Assessor. Council stated their support to proceed with the RFP as an alternative to providing Assessing services however cautioned on exceeding the cost range for the position. The City will not to bound to accept any proposal.
- The Police Department survived the MSP Lein Audit noting the good work by the department and IT Director.
- Pursuant to PA 202 of 2017, Protecting Local Government Retirement and Benefits Act, requiring additional reporting on Pension Liability, the City will have to apply for a waiver showing corrections made to address the underfunded system. The application for waiver will be scheduled for the March 19, 2018 meeting.
- A meeting with Panhandle Eastern to discuss development of the Highland Howell property is scheduled for tomorrow. Staff will provide an update at the May 19, 2018 meeting.

16. OLD BUSINESS

- Mayor Proctor stated DPW is doing a great job keeping the roads clear.
- Member Manor reported on the memorial for Morrie Coles. A plaque was designed to place at the boat launch and will cost \$826. Donations in the amount of \$710 have been received to date. The City has agreed to administer the process.
- Mayor Proctor questioned the status of Page Field lighting.

17. NEW BUSINESS

- MOTION by Ellis, SUPPORT by Mulvahill, “To excuse Member Niblock from the March 12, 2018 meeting, reason stated.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).
- Member Lobur announced April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and the kick off ceremony for “Plant a Pinwheel” is scheduled for April 4, 2018 at the Opera House. Pinwheels will be on display at City Hall to acknowledge the importance of preventing child abuse.

18. ADJOURN

MOTION by Lobur, SUPPORT by Ellis, “To adjourn the regular meeting of the City Council at 8:19 p.m.” MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

Nick Proctor, Mayor

Jane Cartwright, City Clerk