

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY COMMISSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2023 – 7:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Denison at 7:00 P.M.

II. Recognition

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Sean Denison, Mayor Pro Temp Mark Weedon, Commissioner Patrick Swem, Commissioner Dan Vigansky, Commissioner Larry Money

Absent: None.

City Staff: City Manager, Benjamin Eldridge; City Clerk, Kalla Langston; Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; Director of Public Services, Mike Baker; Director of Public Safety, Tim Ganus; Chief of Police, Harvey Burnett

V. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Swem supported by Money to approve the agenda as presented.

Vigansky motions to amend the consent agenda and move plan commission appointments to New Business, Swem supports.

Swem supports the amended agenda, Money supports.

Yea: Weedon, Vigansky, Money, Swem, Denison

Nay: None.

Motion to approve the amended agenda carries.

VI. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

Matt Pleasant – I was notified shortly, and it went to my spam email, about a meeting last week that I wasn't able to make for approval to be on the planning commission. I will say my peace now on why I want to be on it, that mainly being that I live downtown and own property in Buchanan. I have children that go to school here. If you have a need to fill, as you indicated at the meeting, I was at for the rezoning of the house next door to me 208 Days Ave, I feel I could help you fulfill that need. Thank you.

VII. Consent Agenda *(can be approved all in one motion, for general housekeeping items)*

A. Minutes

1) Consider approving the regular meeting minutes from October 9, 2023.

B. Appointments

1) B.A.R.B Appointments- Consider approving Jacob Brown (City) and Emily Koziel (Township) to B.A.R.B.

~~2) Plan Commission- Consider approving Peter Lysy for a partial term ending June 2025 and Jacob Brown term ending June 2026.~~

3) Buchanan Tree Friends- Consider approving Cala Moeller to join the Buchanan Tree Friends.

C. Expenditures

1) Consider approving the General Expenditures for October 23, 2023, in the amount of \$264,970.90.

Motion made by Vigansky supported by Swem to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

VIII. Scheduled Matters from the Floor (if any)

IX. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

A. Clerk Report- City Clerk, Kalla Langston

1) Presentation of Early Voting Agreement between the City of Buchanan and the County of Berrien.

Langston presented to the Commission what has taken place so far with the early voting agreements. With the recommendation to sign the early voting agreement with the county.

2) Consider Resolution 2023.10/28- A resolution authorizing the city clerk to enter into an early voting agreement with Berrien County.

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Weedon to approve resolution 2023.10/28, authorizing the city clerk to enter into an early voting agreement with Berrien County. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

B. Community Development Report - Community Development Director, Rich Murphy

1) Consider Resolution 2023.10/29- a resolution to sell city owner property at 123 Days Ave. Buchanan, MI 49107 to Lise Gustavsen. The City Commission unanimously approved the purchase of 123 Days Ave. to Lise Gustavsen on September 25, 2023.

The resolution presented is a formality for city manager, Benjamin Eldridge to sign the real estate transactions on behalf of the city of Buchanan for the sale of 123 Days Ave to Lise Gustavsen. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

X. Unfinished Business

A. Second Reading and Consideration of Ordinance 2023.10/437- amendment to the zoning ordinance official map of the City of Buchanan.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023.10/437

AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE OFFICIAL MAP

CITY OF BUCHANAN, COUNTY OF BERRIEN, STATE OF MICHIGAN

An Ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Buchanan and the Official Zoning Map.

THE CITY OF BUCHANAN ORDINANCES:

Section 1. The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Buchanan, being Ordinance No. 154, Section 302 as amended, and its Official Map, is hereby amended as follows:

The property commonly known as 208 Days Ave. and legally described as:

58-1500-0043-00-9

“LOT 6 BLK B A C DAYS ADD TO CITY OF BUCHANAN EXC COM AT NW COR OF LOT 6 TH E 51.2' TH SW TO A PT 28.5' E OF SW COR TH W 28.5' TH N 66' TO BEG”

Now zoned R-1A is to be rezoned to C-3 Central Business District.

Section 2. The Zoning Administrator is hereby directed to amend the Official Zoning Map of the City of Buchanan to reflect the above change and to duly note on said Official Zoning Map said change pursuant to this Ordinance.

Section 3. This Ordinance shall become effective 15 days after adoption and published in accordance with the Charter of the City of Buchanan.

Motion made by Money, supported by Weedon to approve Ordinance 2023.10/437, as presented.

Ayes: Denison, Weedon, Money

Nays: Vigansky

Abstain: Swem (Business Interest)

Motion carries 3-1

XI. New Business

A. Planning Commission- Consider approving Peter Lysy for a partial term ending June 2025 and Jacob Brown term ending June 2026.

Motion made by Swem to approve Peter Lysy for a partial term ending June 2025 and Jacob Brown term ending June 2026 to the Planning Commission, supported by Weedon.

Vigansky requested to amend motion to include Alan Robandt.

Yea: Weedon, Money, Swem, Denison

Nay: Vigansky

Motion carries 4-1.

Vigansky motions that we appointment Alan Robandt to the Planning Commission.

Still have an opening; they can fill three spots and there are four candidates. We've been two candidates shy of a full Planning Commission for 2.5 years.

Hearing no support, the motion dies.

XII. Communications *(informational only, formal board action is not necessary for these items, unless so desired)*

A. Buchanan Riverfront Master Plan Public Workshop on October 24, 2023, at 5:00 PM

There will be a public meeting here at city hall, we invite all members of the public to give your opinion on enhancement of public access along the St. Joseph River. Prior to that meeting there will be a neighborhood meeting with the north side neighborhood group on the same topic. The project was managed by Abonmarche, funded by AEP. No money came from the city. All the ideas will be captured, brought back to the steering committee, refined, and then there will be another public meeting.

XIII. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

Monroe, 118 Schirmer Parkway – There is something Commissioner Vigansky said that I feel we all need to hear. There is a boy's club in Buchanan and I do feel that we often vote in our volunteers that are willing to work for free based on whether we like them as human beings or not and that should not be how we do business. We should be voting them based on what they bring to the table and for their qualifications. And being that I can't mention anything from the agenda, I will just leave it at that. I will ask for one more thing, I will ask for your prayers from the entire room for my family that's in Israel. They are in dire need of prayer. Two weeks ago, my best friend lost his two children and right now my family is right in the middle of it all, so I ask you to consider them in your prayers. Thank you.

Norma Ferris, 304 N Oak – I talked to a young lady yesterday regarding Channel 17. Has that been looked at as far as maintenance? It's not coming in clear.

Langston replies that it unfortunately doesn't work. We fixed it, we spent months on it, Mrs. Norma actually helped us get comcast in here and sat with them all day and it still doesn't work.

Mrs. Ferris says she will get back on it.

XIV. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

Just for informational purposes, a small committee has been formed to work on bringing the 1863 pumper that's currently stored at MSU back to Buchanan. This is not an official city committee but I'm sure at some point we will be asking the City Commission for support in the form of a letter. The committee is made up of representatives from the library, friends of Oak Ridge Cemetery, Fire Department, and myself. If you have any questions or want to know how you can get involved please contact Peter Lysy.

B. Commissioner Comments

Weedon: none.

Swem: Just wanted to echo Rich's comments that I hope anyone who has the opportunity to attend tomorrow night shows up and gives their feedback. Matt, I think the best thing for you to do is stop into the next Planning Commission meeting so you can get that date. Kalla I think showing up in front of them is the best case to get on our agenda for recommendation.

Vigansky: I apologize that you have to get on another committee, we have been trying to get that fire truck for a long time. We gave it away and then they are Indian giving on it and we have no place to put and no money to spend on it. State of MI said they weren't gonna give it back, just another long-term dream Ben, and I apologize for the time you're going to have to spend on it. I am very upset that I come down here to a zoning commission meeting and they conducted themselves the way they do, this is not anything with personalities that's why I didn't mention any names. The fact that they did it with no comments, I talked to all four candidates, and I know two of them quite well and it's difficult to not vote for Peter. I met Jake because he's on BARB now, I think he's going to be a strong attribute. I reached out and I talked to Matt over the weekend, but Matt had an email screw up, Jake showed up late when the meeting was already over. But the point being that Jake was put on the commission and we need northside representatives so that was a given, but he need to be here. We had three empty spots and the Commission failed to fill all three after 2.5 years of having two empty spots. I put blame on the director for that. Thank you very much.

Money: Thank you to this commission for everything they do I know eve been working hard on different things. I got a question for Mike though, is there going to be any change in policies for how we get leave to the curbsides or still placing leaves on the tree lawns?

Mike: It's against the MS4 Permit to put them in the streets. I will not reprimand anybody for putting them in the street when it's time, but it does make the drains plug up and it takes a lot of time to get them off the curb. We are no longer picking up bags, branches and brush we done the first week of October.

Weedon: Just for the public too as well as myself, where is that at the landfill?

Mike: If you drive in there and talk to them they will tell you just follow everyone else I believe is going up on hill right now with their garbage and you'll go around the edge and there will be a big pile of bags they turn over and compost. It's a free dump, they don't charge you anything to dump your leaves and brush. It just has to be covered.

Money: Also, the cemetery got new markers for the sections and the crew did put those out. Our Cemetery Board purchased them and put them out, it looks really nice. With the old firetruck coming

into town, we did know years ago that it got pushed out of their historical department and shoved under some bleachers. I know we may not have a place right now, but we can surely find a place.

C. Mayor Comments

I would like to say how nice it is to see Chief Burnett out here tonight, it's been a while. Glad to see you. Secondly, the five of us are up here to make decisions based on our professional experiences. Occasionally we are asked to appoint people to a board based on recommendations from other boards. I have no qualm saying that if I feel someone isn't going to be a good team member or isn't going to make a board function well then I don't have to appoint anyone. If you don't like that then you can run for office and you can make the decisions.

City Manager Comments: If I could just for informational purposes, I don't know if you know Pat Fellows who is a lieutenant in our Fire Department. We got a message yesterday that he went into cardiac arrest and respiratory arrest and was transferred to St. Joe ICU. The update we just got is that he had an angiogram yesterday to check for blockages and check his heart muscle. The doctor said there are no blockages, and his heart looks amazing so it could be electrical. The next couple of days are going to be important so keep him and his family in your prayers.

Motion made by Denison, supported by Money to adjourn at 8:00 pm. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

XV. Adjourned

Kalla Langston, City Clerk

Mayor Sean Denison