



**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY COMMISSION**  
**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 08, 2021 – 7:00 PM**  
**CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI**

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**MINUTES- AMENDED**

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Denison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Roll Call**

PRESENT: Mayor Sean Denison, Mayor Pro Tem Mark Weedon, Commissioner Cameron Downey, Commissioner Larry Money, Commissioner Patrick Swem

ABSENT: None

STAFF: City Manager, Heather Grace; Community Development Director, Richard Murphy; City Clerk, Kalla Langston; City Treasurer, Stephanie Powers; Director of Public Services, Mike Baker; Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police, Tim Ganus.

**III. Approve Agenda**

***Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, Seconded by Commissioner Money to approve the agenda as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.***

**IV. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only**

None

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

A. Approve Meeting Minutes- October 25, 2021, Regular Meeting

B. Approve Expenditures for November 9, 2021. Expenditures to be submitted separately, once finalized.

C. Accept Staff Activity Reports

D. Approve Closed Session Minutes- October 25, 2021

***Motion made by Commissioner Money, Seconded by Commissioner Downey to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.***

**VI. Scheduled Matters from the Floor** *(if any)*

A. Auditor Contract

Kenley from Plante Moran gave the commissioners a brief update on the status of the audit and why the city needs to utilize another auditor. Since Plante Morane has been working with the city during audit, transition, significant turnover rate, accounting system conversion, former bank leaving town and Powers coming in with books that haven't been up to date, Plante Moran needs to remain independent. Which means they can't audit records that they have created. Either Plante Moran had to walk away and not aid the city or dig in and help get things ready for audit, then step away and have someone else do the audit this year. They have pledged their support to help the city get caught up by the end of January to get it done in time.

B. Michael and Roy Walpol- are requesting permission to install a mural on the wall of 303 Carrol St.

Murphy introduced Michael and Roy Walpol. Murphy has met with them several times over the past few months with their micro business construction at 303 Carol St. and they shared a mural concept. Public art is something we want to implement in Buchanan.

The concept is from artist Clinton Worthington. He is working with J.J Weinstein, an artist who is works with NFTs. NFT is a digital art form. The mural will be turned into an NFT along with a music video that will hopefully be produced by Snoop Dog, October London, and two local artists Ideal and Walter West. You can connect any type of audio with the digital format. They want to do a timelapse of the mural painting being done and incorporate the song with it then release it as an NFT. The mural will be on the end wall of the building which is about 17 ft by 60ft. The murals main vantage point would be off Red Bud.

Commissioner Swem asked Murphy about how it would play into city's ordinances, Murphy investigated this, and the mural is exempt from ordinance except in central business district. Murphy believes this area is a prime candidate for a mural. When they bring in the backstory of the national connections it becomes a compelling story for the City of Buchanan.

Walpol also offered that no matter what the decision today they wanted to offer \$5,000 donation to future murals to contribute to the city.

Mayor Denison thanked the Walpol Brothers but wants to send the right message when you come into town because of the location of where the mural would be.

Mayor asked for further explanation of the mural.

The mural is based off their logo for their business which is- Lifted. Diamonds are part of their logo as well the swirls are the artist.

***Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, Seconded by Commissioner Swem to approve the mural at 303 Carrol St.***

***Roll call vote: Yay; Commissioner Money, Commissioner Swem, Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, Commissioner Downey***

***Nay; Mayor Denison***

## **VII. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards**

### **A. Crossing Guard Agreement & Crossing Guard Hourly Wage Agreement**

City Manager Heather Grace asked the Commission to grant her permission to sign the agreement on behalf of the city.

***Commissioner Downey motioned, Seconded by Commissioner Money, to authorize City Manager Heather Grace to sign the crossing guard agreement; roll call vote carried unanimously.***

### **B. Treasure Report**

Treasurer Stephanie Powers has been very busy with Plante Moran, getting caught up and ready for the audit. Powers was not able to prepare her usual report, instead the commission was given the bank statements through October.

Powers asked for consideration of approving Honor purchasing cards limits for City employees and that City Manager Heather Grace has authority to sign on behalf of the City.

#### **Cards Requested and Limits:**

\$2,500.00 Guy Lewis

\$2,500.00 Ashley Regal  
\$2,000.00 Britni Wall  
\$2,000.00 Jill Mondschein  
\$2,000.00 Marcia Johnson  
\$5,000.00 Kalla Langston

Powers also updated the commission to let them know the first half of the ARPA funds will be deposited in the City's account, in the amount of \$223,101.00, which is half of what was predicted the city would receive and will be deposited on November 9, 2021.

Commissioner Downey asked if it was common practice to give all the city employees a card, City Manager Grace was unsure of what they have done in the past.

Commissioner Swem thought it was uncommon for everyone to have a card.

Mayor Pro Tem Weedon asked if there was any authorization process to this, Grace said she would implement a purchase order process.

***Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, seconded by Commissioner Money to approve the cards requested and the spending limits supplied with City Manager Heather Grace authorized to sign, roll call vote carried unanimously.***

C. Public Services Department Report from Director Mike Baker

Scott Riley from SELGE reported to the commission they are not available to get 3<sup>rd</sup> St. on the schedule this fall. Riley secured the pipe for 3<sup>rd</sup> St. since supplies are hard to get. Core & Maine has the pipe, and they want to get paid for it since it is sitting in their lot from when they ordered it back in September.

City Manager Grace says the recommendation is to maintain full control of the pipe because supplies are in such short supply. If the City can purchase it ourselves and have it physically under our control, we can keep them from giving it to another municipality.

Commissioner Swem asked about the plan for the road.

Baker is concerned about opening the road. He does not know what the road looks like under the ground. In his opinion he would leave it closed until they can fix it. It's going to be hard to plow in the inter but in Baker's opinion, it's dangerous.

Riley and Baker both say supply is unpredictable.

Unfortunately, it was bad timing with this project between the EGLE permit and the State level changes.

Concerns about the storage and a secured area for the pipe. Challenge is to find a secured area for the pipe.

***Motion made by Commissioner Swem, seconded by Commissioner Money to purchase the pipe for \$21,594.72, roll call carried by unanimously.***

Commissioner Swem would like to see a more strategized plan for 3<sup>rd</sup> street.

Presentation on DPW building from Amelia and Gary from the Barton Group with Buddy and Brian from Bergmann joining virtually.

Buddy walked through the packet that was provided to the commissioners.

First, they looked over the site option comparison. They came down as a group that the 606 site would be their recommendation, 606 site was present and approved from the board.

Through a verbal conversation they generate this program for the site and building and just through those conversations they came up with a vocabulary and square footage of about 19,000 sq. ft. Had a lot of discussion with Mike and had him put together a list of inventory equipment that he would house in the building. They realized they need to take a deeper look into how and where the inventory needs to be housed. They analyzed the building footprint; the original RFP floor plan did not house all the equipment needed.

Option 7A has 2 buildings with cold storage at 6,200 sq. ft. and storage and support being 17,676 sq. ft.

With a building expansion to the West, North and South.

With a budgeting process, budget is not a perfect science, but they tried to budget very conservatively. With option 7A coming in with a budget around \$5.8 million.

Option 7B is 1 building with total of 23,675 sq. ft. this still allows expansion from the north and the south. With option 7B coming in with a budget just under \$5 million.

The biggest thing between the 2 options really has to do with excavation and site work which is a big unknown at this point.

Baker's process has been spending city money wisely and investing in the long term. None of this has been bid out or taken to market. The process they recommended is getting a construction manager on board very quickly to vet it a little bit more.

When you have the construction manager take it to market you would get your real numbers.

There are some serious delays right now, metal buildings are about 36 weeks out.

Mayor asked Baker about the wood boiler. Baker explained that Niles City uses a wood boiler to heat their 25,000-sq. ft. building. It heats the building efficiently by bringing in wood through the city. Over the past 9 years they have saved over \$500,000 in heating costs. It can be efficient for this new building and keep costs down.

Grace talked about the financial aspects associated with this type of facility. ~~The team is not looking for approval for the building. They are looking to put it out for bid and then at that point have the firm financial figures that we want. This is more preliminary directional guidance on which type and size building the Commission wants to go with.~~

Swem is hung up on the city spending 4.9 million dollars on DPW building, he's having a hard time saying yes to that. We have a list of other projects as well, Swem commends them on keeping it thin.

Money concerned about equipment in the DPW building and if they don't make the improvements the city takes the chance of the equipment becoming damaged. Money agrees with Swem.

Denison- if not us who? If not now when?

Swem struggling with approving any dollars because he doesn't know how the city's going to pay for it. He knows there is a financing plan, but he doesn't know how that impacts everything else that needs to get paid.

City Manager Grace thinks it's important to keep in mind that we were not looking to get approval for this to be set in stone that we were going to build this building. We were just looking to put it out for bid. And then we will get the bid prices and have the firm financial figures that we want. This is more preliminary directional guidance on which type and size building the Commission wants to go with.

Swem feels we were sending contractors down a rabbit hole on something we probably can't afford or at least we don't know how we were going to make a decision on how we were going to pay for it. He feels he can't move forward on it until the number is thinner or we have an idea on how the city pays for it.

Mayor Denison would like to keep the process moving to find the concrete numbers, since there is much concern about the cost. Since the city has been talking about this building for the past few years, he would hate to see it stall. He's not ignoring the cost but just looking at the layout of the buildings.

***Motion made by Pro Tem Mayor Weedon, support by Commissioner Money to move forward with the single building layout option 7B at 23,675 sq. ft.***

***Roll call vote; Yay- Pro Tem Mayor Weedon, Commissioner Downey, Commissioner Money, Mayor Denison. Nay: Commissioner Swem.***

Rental consideration: Baker has looked at C&S Machine and its roughly 10,000 sq. ft. of open space, asking \$6,000 a month to rent would like a year's lease.

Mac, Bill, and Theresa have offered their building it's 100 by 200, finished with cement floor, heat, electric, bathroom office space for \$15,000 a month on a month-to-month basis.

Looking into different options for renting. Wanted to keep the commission updated on this consideration.

C. Chair of the Buchanan Tree Friends, Richard Martin providing an update.

Martin talked about the Re-Leaf non-profit company. Planted 48 trees in 1 day. What was planted was Tulip Trees, Black Gum Trees, Linden, Hackberries, River Birch, Lilac, Oaks, Sycamores, Ginkgo and Serviceberry trees. Martin gave a big thank you to everyone that helped.

**VIII. Unfinished Business**

**IX. New Business**

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

A. Michigan Gas Utilities

Natural gas pipeline safety information brochure.

B. Invitation to tour building 324.

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

*Jeff Griffin- asked the commission if they thought about getting generators for city hall and police department. Concerned about the street signs, there not very nice. Would like to see the Code enforcement out, send out a letter and clean up the streets.*

*Kenley from Plante Moran just wanted to remind ARPA funds, supply chain issues everywhere cost is not going to go down. He commends the commission for approving the purchasing the pipe.*

*Norma Ferris- She hears complaints all the time, asking for more communication. Worried about 3<sup>rd</sup> street and Dial a Ride.*

## **XI. Executive Comments**

### **A. City Manager Comments**

We do have time to see how were going to spend the ARPA funding. The infrastructure bill that passed is exciting and eager to explore it.

### **B. Commissioner Comments**

Mayor Pro Tem Weedon- No comment

Commissioner Swem- No comment

Commissioner Downey- No comment

Commissioner Money- Thanks everyone for being here. Hopefully you can understand the situations that this commission is having to face, keeping a positive attitude, and not bashing the commission for the things that must be done by the city. November 11<sup>th</sup>, is veteran's day the American Legion holding a guest speaker at 5 p.m.

### **C. Mayor Comments**

Mayor is hoping that the city can partially open 3<sup>rd</sup> street to get access to those homes. We keep getting handed these things and they're tough decisions, not going to be easy to move forward with them but were lucky. I think we need to look at the bright side and these tough decisions will get made. We will figure it out

## **XI. Adjourn**

Motion made by Commissioner Money, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon to adjourn roll call vote carried unanimously. Meeting Adjourned at 8: 45 p.m.

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Kalla Langston, City Clerk

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Mayor Sean Denison