

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE OF THE CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS HELD ON MONDAY, JULY 10, 2023, IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS/COURTROOM OF THE ROBERT E. NOVITKE MUNICIPAL CENTER, 20025 MACK PLAZA DR., GROSSE POINTE WOODS, MICHIGAN.

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Bryant  
Council Members: Brown, Gafa, Granger, Koester, McConaghy, Vaughn  
ABSENT: None

Also Present: City Administrator Schulte  
Treasurer/Comptroller Murphy  
City Attorney Walling  
City Clerk Antolin  
Assistant City Administrator Como  
City Planner Smith

**Motion** by Brown, seconded by Vaughn, that all items on tonight's agenda be received, placed on file, and taken in order of appearance.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: Brown, Bryant, Gafa, Granger, Koester, McConaghy, Vaughn  
No: None  
Absent: None

The first item addressed was regarding **Social Districts in Grosse Pointe Woods**. City Administrator Schulte introduced City Planner, Brigitte Smith, from McKenna to discuss having social districts in the city and the requirements to do so.

City Planner Smith provided an overview for two proposed social districts along Mack Avenue, which are as follows:

1. Northern Social District:
  - a. Commercial properties from AH Peters Funeral Home on the west and Big Boy on the east to the northern border of the city at Vernier Road;
  - b. Chene-Trombley Park;
  - c. Three crosswalks on Mack at Anita Road, Ridgemont to Hampton Road, and Brys Drive.

2. City Hall Social District:

- a. Six blocks of commercial businesses on the west side of Mack Avenue from Broadstone Street north to Oxford Road;
- b. Two blocks of commercial businesses on the east side of Mack Avenue from Cook Road North to Torrey Road;
- c. Ghesquiere Park;
- d. Two crosswalks across Mack Avenue at Torrey Road and Cook Road.

City Planner Smith stated that qualified businesses would have the ability to serve alcohol to patrons in a labeled cup who in turn would be able to take the cup off their premise and into areas designated within the boundaries of the social districts, other participating businesses within the district, and common areas. Common areas are automatically approved spaces within the proposed districts, which are the sidewalks along Mack Avenue and the side streets within the boundaries, designated green spaces and crosswalks.

For businesses to participate they are required to have a Class C Liquor License and must apply to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC). If approved, for a fee a special license will be issued and appropriate labeled cups and signage will be required.

City Planner Smith answered questions from the Committee regarding the following:

- Eligibility of qualified businesses if near school;
- Use of public right of ways;
- Possible approval on a contingency basis to allow the city to revisit after one year trial;
- Other than signage, if any additional costs to the city;
- Feedback from local businesses.

Discussion ensued regarding other cities implementing social districts. Mayor Bryant stated he spoke to with some of the local businesses and all were supportive of the idea. In addition, Administration spoke with community leaders from a few of the surrounding communities who have social districts and they stated they have been successful. The following communities with social districts vary in how they implement their policies, for example:

- Grosse Pointe City and Grosse Pointe Park – very limited area/once a month;
- Webberville designates the entire village as a social district;
- Royal Oak blocks off streets during weekends/ re-occurring districts;
- Days/Hours of Operation and restrictions vary in different communities contingent upon their zoning ordinances.

There were also concerns regarding implementation of social districts such as:

- Trash/garbage pickup;
- Chene-Trombley and Ghesquiere Parks being family oriented;
- Deter people from walking, running and biking along Mack Avenue during social district hours;
- Public intoxication;

- Additional costs to the city.

Participants will be held accountable for their actions. The social districts are not to condone public intoxication, as violators will be prosecuted at the full extent of the law.

Council stated that the proposed social districts is a great concept, but more information is needed prior to proceeding.

There was a consensus of the Committee to refer the social districts proposal to the Planning Commission and to possibly have a joint meeting with the Mack Avenue Business Association as well for their recommendations.

The next item discussed was regarding **Corrective Action Plan for Pension and Supplemental Annuity.**

Treasurer/Comptroller Murphy provided an overview stating that the Pension Plan and Supplemental Annuity is under 60% funded. As of June 30, 2023, the city is funded at 54.85%. In addition, the Actuarial Determined Contributions ratios to our Governmental Fund Revenues is greater than 10%. A notification was received from the State of Michigan stating that Grosse Pointe Woods is in a Corrective Action Plan status.

An Actuarial Experience Study was approved on June 1, 2023, by the Pension Board with two major assumption changes:

1. Decrease Amortization period from 25 years to 20 years closed amortization for a period of 5 years, and after, the plan will remain at a 15-year open amortization period.
2. Decrease the assumed rate of investment return from 7.5% to 7.4% with an intent to lower it .1% a year for the next 5 years reducing it to 7%.

Currently, according to the state of Michigan, an assumed rate of return at 6.85% is ideal for most communities.

Treasurer/Comptroller Murphy requested approval of the Corrective Action Plan for the Pension Plan and Supplemental Annuity.

She also recommended City Council to consider approving a budget transfer of \$300,000.00 from the General Fund to the Retirement System in FY 2023-2024 and a budget amendment for \$300,000.00 to increase Pension contribution for the 2023/2024 Budget year from General Fund – Prior Year Reserves Account #101-967-995.731.

**Motion** by McConaghy, seconded by Gafa, that the **Committee-of-the-Whole recommends approval of City Council to ratify the Corrective Action Plan** as soon as possible.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: Brown, Bryant, Gafa, Granger, Koester, McConaghy, Vaughn  
No: None  
Absent: None

Councilmember McConaghy requested to schedule a Special Finance Committee meeting within the next 30 days, to consider contributing more funds to the Pension Plan, if available.

Councilmember Vaughn suggested that City Council should meet with the Pension Board to further discuss pension contributions for future budget meetings.

Under New Business, no one wished to be heard.

Under Public Comment, the following individual was heard:

- Margaret Potter, 1834 Allard – Social Districts concerns
- Kimberly Moin, 1956 Allard – Front Yard Garden Boxes

Motion by Granger, seconded by Koester, that the meeting of the Committee-of-the-Whole be adjourned at 8:16 p.m. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul P. Antolin  
City Clerk

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Arthur W. Bryant  
Mayor