



# City Council Special Meeting Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 12, 2022, at 7:30 PM  
27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

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1. **Call to Order** by Mayor Pro Tem at 7:32 pm

2. **Roll Call**

Present: Mayor Pro Tem Bruce Kantor

Council members: Councilmember Jennings, Councilmember Kenez, Councilmember Miller

Also Present: City Administrator, Susan Montenegro, City Attorney, Scott Baker, Community and, City Clerk, Kelda London

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Councilmember Jennings moved to excuse Mayor Garrett, motion seconded by Councilmember Miller.

Yes: Jennings, Kenez, Miller, Kantor

No: None

Motion carried

4. **Approval of Agenda**

Councilmember Miller moved to approve the agenda, motion seconded by Councilmember Kenez.

Yes: Kenez, Miller, Kantor, Jennings

No: None

Motion carried.

5. **Public Comments for Items on the Agenda** (Speakers are limited to 3 minutes)

Debbie Dunn – Why was the full-price offer of \$150,000 for the House in the Woods property not accepted? And how do you move forward from here?

## 6. Action Requests - For Consideration / Approval

### A. 24" Storm Sewer Repair – Wiltshire

City Administrator Montenegro explained that there is a 24" storm sewer on Wiltshire between Santa Barbara and Bloomfield that requires repair. It's a 15' deep line so it will have to be dug up and redone which will also mean the street will need to be repaired as well. There may be funds left from the MEDC grant to cover some of the cost.

Motion by Councilmember Jennings to approve the additional expense for the 24" sewer repair on Wiltshire by DBM the company that is currently contracted to do the sewer lining project. Utilizing the remaining \$50,000 from the MDEC grant to cover a portion of the expense if applicable not to exceed \$134,177.50. Motion seconded by Councilmember Kenez.

Mayor Pro Tem Kantor did point out that DBM did go through the competitive bidding process.

Yes: Miller, Jennings, Kantor, Kenez

No: None

Motion carried.

### B. House in the Woods Offer

There are currently several offers on the House in the Woods property; the first offer is for \$120,000 cash, proof of funds has been provided and the buyer intends to build 2 houses. Offer number 2 is for \$150,000 cash proof of funds provided the buyer intends to build 4-6 houses. Offer number 3 is \$155,000 cash proof of funds provided the buyer backs up to the property on Morningside which backs up to the property and intends to create a nature preserve and not develop it. All parties are aware that any accepted offer will be subject to review by the City Attorney.

Administrator Montenegro further explained that Council needs to be mindful that the charter requires them to take the offer that is most advantageous to the entire community. Although the offer for \$155,000 is more money upfront the plan is to not develop the property will not bring in the most revenue long term.

Motion by Councilmember Miller to accept the \$155,000 offer, motion seconded by Councilmember Kenez.

Councilmember Miller answered the previous question about why she voted it down. "I've been a realtor for 18 years and a mortgage loan officer for 9 years and just because someone offers the listed price does not mean that the seller is obliged to take it. And I didn't believe that we received adequate documentation regarding proof of funds." Council did receive a petition from the homeowner in the circle except for one who is in support of keeping the green space intact.

Mayor Pro Tem Kantor stated he is not in favor of this offer because Council acts as fiduciary for the city and section 12.1 of the charter states that when divesting land, the offer that is

most advantageous to the city should be the offer considered. Further stating green space is good for the city, this is not the most advantageous offer of the three to the city, given that the tax revenue the city would gain from an undeveloped property is relatively insignificant in comparison to a developed property. It seems shortsighted to get the \$5,000 now versus the tax revenue that would be gained per year into perpetuity.

Councilmember Jennings stated he is also opposed to the \$155,000 offer, due to the loss of the tax revenue.

Councilmember Kenez commented that a resident has offered the highest bid and you can't put a price on greenspace.

Yes: Kenez, Miller

No: Jennings, Kantor

Motion denied.

Mayor Pro Tem moved to approve the full price offer \$150,000 offer and instruct the City Attorney to execute all documents needed to complete the sale, motion seconded by Councilmember Jennings.

Mayor Pro Tem Kantor stated this offer is in the best interest of the city, it the advantageous as it provides the city with significant tax revenue. Whereas the \$155,000 offer although \$5,000 more, one year of taxes will outpace the \$5,000. And will provide revenue to provide services for all the city residents.

Councilmember Miller reiterated her position that there is no guarantee that any houses will be built on the property. There will be taxes paid on the property by the new owner so it will not be a complete loss.

Yes: Kantor, Jennings

No: Kenez, Miller

Motion denied.

Administrator Montenegro asked Real Estate Agent Ruud, because you have done your duty to bring in a full price offer, and it was not accepted, is the city liable to pay commission at 6% of \$155,000? Attorney Baker answered that is at Mr. Ruud's discretion if he chooses to ask for that it is the city's responsibility to fulfill the contract.

## **7. Public Comment**

Lauren Beras – Presented Council with 12 signed affidavits from all of the meeting on August 10, 2022, meeting held at her home.

Kathy Mayfield – House in the Woods offers

Debbie Hoatlin-Dunn – Hopes that the House in the Woods decision benefits the entire city

8. **Mayor and Council Comments**

Councilmember Miller announced the Town Hall meetings for the Southfield Public Schools Bond Proposal will be on September 27th, October 11, and October 25<sup>th</sup>.

9. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 8:20