

City Council Regular Meeting
Madison Heights, Michigan
November 27, 2023

A City Council Regular Meeting was held on Monday, November 27, 2023 at 7:30 PM at City Hall - Council Chambers, 300 W. 13 Mile Rd.

PRESENT

Mayor Roslyn Grafstein
Councilman Sean Fleming
Councilman Bill Mier
Councilor Emily Rohrbach
Councilman David Soltis
Councilor Quinn Wright

ABSENT

Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bliss

OTHERS PRESENT

City Manager Melissa Marsh
City Attorney Larry Sherman
Deputy City Clerk Phommady A. Boucher

Mayor Grafstein gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

CM-23-302. Excuse Councilmember.

Motion made by Councilman Mier, Seconded by Councilor Wright, to excuse Mayor Pro Tem Bliss from tonight's meeting.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss
Motion carried.

CM-23-303. Addition to the Agenda.

Motion by Councilman Fleming, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach, to add to the agenda:
Presentation, Consumers Energy Foundation \$250,000 Prosperity Grant Award.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss
Motion carried.

CM-23-304. Appointment of Acting City Clerk.

Motion made by Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilor Wright, to appoint Deputy City Clerk Phommady A. Boucher as the Acting City Clerk for tonight's City Council meeting.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

CM-23-305. Financial Audit Presentation by Plante Moran.

Martin Olejnik and Keith Szymanski representing the City's Auditing firm, Plante Moran, presented for Council their review of the City's financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. Mr. Olejnik also reviewed Plante Moran's letter to the City Council.

Councilor Rohrbach congratulated Finance Director/Treasurer Kunath and the Finance Department on the audit.

City Manager Marsh commented that the Public Safety expenditure increased from \$17.6 million to \$20.7 million because the City invested \$3 million into the Police and Fire Pension increasing it from 40% to 60% funded.

Mayor Grafstein thanked City Manager Marsh, Finance Director/Treasurer Kunath and the Finance Department for a job well done.

Motion made by Councilor Wright, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach, to receive and file the Financial Audit by Plante Moran.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

CM-23-306. Consumers Energy \$250,000 Prosperity Grant Award.

Lauren Royston, Community Affairs Manager, stated Consumers Energy Foundation's Prosperity Awards supports non-profit organizations and municipalities that are committed to improving the welfare of whole communities. The Prosperity Awards are one third of three \$500,000 signature grant allocations totaling \$1.5 million in 2023. The plan award winners were announced in April and the people award winners were announced in July. Consumers Energy Foundation accepted letters of intent for projects supporting neighborhood revitalization and arts and culture initiatives across Michigan. The City of Madison Heights was chosen from more than 100 applicants and is one of two 2023 prosperity award winners. The grant funding will support the Rock the Heights project to construct the state-of-the-art Amphitheater in Civic Center Park. It will serve as an inclusive community hub where people of all ages and abilities can gather in an outdoor setting. The other grant award winner was the Cheboygan Area Arts Council. The grant funding will

support improvements to the Cheboygan Opera House to ensure the facility is accessible for attendees and performers of all physical abilities. These awards serve an important part in helping make wonderful ideas come to light, strengthening the community, and supporting redevelopment and revitalization of arts and culture. On behalf of Consumers Energy Foundation, Ms. Royston is pleased to present the City of Madison Heights with the \$250,000 Prosperity Award.

Mayor Grafstein stated that she is thrilled to accept the Prosperity Award on behalf of the city and recognized the Arts Board for applying for the grant. She thanked Michael Covert and the Arts Board for everything they've done in bringing art and culture to the city.

Jennifer Nagle, Arts Board member, thanked everyone in Madison Heights and neighboring cities who have come to all the Arts Board events. She acknowledged everyone that enriched the community by submitting artwork displayed at the City Hall and Library. Covid has taught us it's not okay to just survive and that art helps us truly be alive.

CM-23-307. Public Hearing and Resolution Reprogramming Community Development Block Grant Funds.

A public hearing was held at 8:00 p.m. to hear comments pertaining to the Resolution Reprogramming Community Development Block Grant Funds. Seeing no public wishing to speak, Mayor Grafstein closed the public hearing at 8:01 p.m.

City Manager Marsh explained that the program funding is from prior years and in the past, we have used CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Funds to pay for part of Code Enforcement. When our Code Enforcement Officer retired, his replacement was hired at a different wage and benefits level, so we haven't spent the full allocation through CDBG since 2020. Oakland County met with Community and Economic Development (CED) Director Tucker and explained that they have a spending ratio of 1.5% of Madison Heights funds so they've given us until April of 2024 to spend the money faster. We ask you to reprogram those extra funds we had in Code Enforcement for minor home repairs. The applicants for the minor home repair have already been identified through the City's Minor Home Repair Program.

Motion made by Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilor Wright, to approve the Resolution authorizing Community Economic and Development Department to prepare and submit a request to Oakland County to reprogram \$50,000 from the Code Enforcement program for year 2020 to the minor home repair account; and further that the City of Madison Heights, as the applicant, authorizes the filing of program of funds with Oakland County.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

CM-23-308. Public Hearing and Resolution Authorizing Community Development Block Grant Program Year 2024 Application.

A public hearing was held at 8:03 p.m. to hear comments pertaining to the Resolution Authorizing Community Development Block Grant Program Year 2024 Application. Seeing no public wishing to speak, Mayor Grafstein closed the public hearing at 8:04 p.m.

Councilman Fleming stated that seniors are being helped by the lawn cutting service, Code Enforcement can help fight blight and other code enforcement actions in our downtown area, and sidewalks contains the pedestrian amenities for the streetscape and make it more of a walkable downtown area.

Motion made by Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilor Wright, to approve funding of Program Year 2024 as follows: Senior Lawn Cutting Service at \$20,603; Code Enforcement at \$50,000; and Sidewalks at \$66,756 for an anticipated allocation of \$137,359.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Madison Heights resident Deb Van Slyke spoke about the impact I-75 road construction had on the Brettonwoods Subdivision. The project did not put up the proper walls as before, the residents don't have the environmental quality, and they are asking City Council for their support.

Michigan State Representative Mike McFall gave an update on the Public Safety and Violence Prevention Fund. It is additional funding coming to the cities, it will be based on the percentage of violence and other qualifications, and Madison Heights is on the list to receive funds. He wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Madison Heights resident Martha Covert stated that she is excited about the Amphitheater coming to Civic Center Park. She thanked Melissa, Adam, and the Arts Board for taking the city to a new level.

CM-23-309. Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Councilor Wright, Seconded by Councilman Soltis, to approve the Consent Agenda as read.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

CM-23-310. Removal of Former Active Adult Center Streetlighting.

Motion made by Councilor Wright, Seconded by Councilman Soltis, to approve the agreement with DTE for removal of existing streetlighting in the amount of \$18,599.31, and authorize the City Manager to sign on behalf of the City.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

CM-23-311. City Council Special Meeting Minutes of November 8, 2023.

Motion made by Councilor Wright, Seconded by Councilman Soltis, to approve the City Council Special Meeting Minutes of November 8, 2023, as printed.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

CM-23-312. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2023.

Motion made by Councilor Wright, Seconded by Councilman Soltis, to approve the City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2023 (Rescheduled from 11-13-23) with the following correction: OTHERS PRESENT: add City Attorney Larry Sherman and remove Assistant City Attorney Jeffrey Sherman.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Bliss

Motion carried.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Mier hoped everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and is enjoying this lovely cold weather.

Councilor Wright stated that he did visit the Brettonwoods Subdivision and found the noise was incredibly loud. He asked City staff to reach out to the State of Michigan because the City of Troy had similar issues and their residents were able to get the State to take action.

City Attorney L. Sherman hoped everyone had a nice Thanksgiving and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

City Manager Marsh thanked the Department of Public Services (DPS) and Recreation for a great Tree Lighting Ceremony. She stated that she appreciates the Finance/Treasury Department for the audit presentation.

Deputy City Clerk Boucher had no comments this evening.

Councilor Rohrbach also visited the Brettonwoods Subdivision and concurred with Councilor Wright's suggestion for City staff to advocate for the residents. The Human Relations and Equity Commission (HREC) is meeting tomorrow, and she will bring this matter up for discussion. Councilor Rohrbach wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. For those who are struggling during the holidays, please reach out to the many resources we have available. Councilor Rohrbach thanked all the volunteers, DPS, and Recreation for a beautiful Tree Lighting Ceremony. She recognized Mr. and Mrs. Garvey, who are the band directors from the Lamphere School District, for the concert tonight and for bringing music to our children and the community. The HREC is working on a community cookbook; Councilor Rohrbach encourages everyone to participate and celebrate their families' cultures and history. Stay tuned for more information.

Councilman Fleming spoke about the Police budget that includes new officers hired this year; as a Council Representative on the Crime Commission, they have given more incentives to officers than from other departments to join our Police Department. The Fire Department purchased a new ladder and EMS trucks last year. The Police Department updated their vehicle fleet. Fire Station 1 and Fire Station 2 have had renovations to their buildings. We need to make sure our first responders are paid well, and they have the best equipment. The Historical Commission is doing a clean up tomorrow at the Heritage Rooms in the basement of the City Hall. They are looking for volunteers to help move furniture and bring in new ideas. Councilman Fleming talked about the noise near Brettonwoods Subdivision. He will email the MDOT Project Manager regarding the I-75 road construction and possibly set up a town hall meeting for residents to voice their complaints. Councilman Flemming commented that the Lamphere School District band was good, and the Tree Lighting Ceremony was great.

Councilman Soltis thanked the residents for coming to the Tree Lighting Ceremony. He appreciates Santa Claus and the Lamphere Marching Band for a fantastic night. Councilman Soltis invited everyone to register for the Grinch's Candy Cane Hunt at the Public Library next month. He agreed that there are noise and cars speeding concerns at Brettonwoods Subdivision. Councilman Soltis thanked Michigan State Representative Mike McFall for attending out council meeting.

Mayor Grafstein will have City Administration follow up on the concerns at Brettonwoods Subdivision. She thanked everyone who came to the Tree Lighting Ceremony including the board members, volunteers, and Lamphere Marching Band. Earlier tonight, the City Council had a first time ever volunteer awards ceremony recognizing volunteers in the city. Mayor Grafstein expressed her gratitude for the Consumers Energy Foundation's Prosperity Awards and to have an Amphitheater built in our Civic Center Park. There will be a ribbon cutting held in warmer weather and possibly before the Memorial Day Parade in May. She hopes everyone had a good Thanksgiving and is getting into the Holiday Spirit. Remember at this time of year, there are people who get the holiday blues and please keep them in mind. She expressed her appreciation to Finance/ Treasury Director Linda Kunath for all her hard work. She recognized the Arts Board for a successful event with the Arts Gala. December 11th is the next Regular Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business, Mayor Grafstein adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Roslyn Grafstein, Mayor

Phommady A. Boucher, Deputy City Clerk