

City Council Regular Meeting  
Madison Heights, Michigan  
October 23, 2023

A City Council Regular Meeting was held on Monday, October 23, 2023 at 7:35 PM at City Hall - Council Chambers, 300 W. 13 Mile Rd.

**PRESENT**

Mayor Roslyn Grafstein  
Councilwoman Toya Aaron  
Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bliss  
Councilman Sean Fleming  
Councilor Emily Rohrbach  
Councilman David Soltis  
Councilor Quinn Wright

**ALSO PRESENT**

City Manager Melissa Marsh  
Assistant City Attorney Tim Burns  
City Clerk/Deputy City Manager Cheryl Rottmann

The invocation was led by Councilman Soltis and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

**CM-23-265. Postpone – Ordinance No. 2196 and Ordinance No. 2197.**

Motion to postpone Ordinance No. 2196, Second Reading and Ordinance No. 2197, Second Reading, on or before the November 13, 2023 City Council meeting.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Seconded by Councilwoman Aaron.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis

Voting Nay: Councilor Wright

Motion carried.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**CM-23-266. Resolution Condemning Hamas' Intentional Attack on Civilians.**

City Attorney Jeffrey Sherman was present to read the resolution. He prefaced his reading of the resolution by expressing his condolences to Oakland County Commissioner McGillivray on the passing of his wife. City Attorney Sherman then proceeded to present the *Resolution Condemning Hamas' Intentionally Killing Civilians, Raping Women, and Hostage Taking* for Council's consideration.

Motion to adopt the Resolution Condemning Hamas for Intentionally Killing Civilians, Raping Women, and Hostage Taking, as follows:

**MADISON HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION  
CONDEMNING HAMAS FOR INTENTIONALLY KILLING CIVILIANS,  
RAPING WOMEN, AND HOSTAGE TAKING**

WHEREAS, Hamas has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Australia, Japan, and other countries; and,

WHEREAS, Hamas overthrew the Palestinian Authority in a violent coup d'état, in 2007, in order to take control of the Gaza Strip; and,

WHEREAS, Hamas seeks an Islamic Palestinian state over the combined territory of Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and rejects a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli Conflict; and,

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023, Hamas carried out an unprecedented, heinous, and barbaric attack on the State of Israel; and,

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists invaded Israel, by land, sea, and air, and intentionally slaughtered over 1,400 Israeli civilians, including 30 American citizens, 260 young people attending a music festival, raped women and children, murdered families in their homes, including infants and the elderly, set people and homes on fire, beheaded children, and took at least 199 men, women, and children (including 20 American citizens) as hostages; and,

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023, and continuing through the date of this Resolution, Hamas has indiscriminately fired thousands of rockets toward Israeli cities, causing Israeli civilians to seek cover in bomb shelters; and,

WHEREAS, the foregoing attacks resulted in the largest number of Jews killed in a single day since the Holocaust; and,

WHEREAS, even though evidence of the atrocities has been presented and widely disseminated, in the form of videos, photographs, news reports from reporters on the ground, testimony from survivors, and announcements by U.S. government officials, among other sources, some people deny the authenticity of this evidence or justify these acts of terrorism; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes and categorically states that the intentional targeting and killing of civilians, the raping of women and children, and the taking of civilian hostages, is never justified and is never to be celebrated under any circumstances, including the promotion of political aims and goals; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council further recognizes and categorically acknowledges that Hamas does not represent all Palestinians and that many Palestinians, and other people in the Arab world, have condemned this terrorist attack, called for the release of the hostages, and seek peace with Israel; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council stands with Israel and supports its right to defend itself from acts of war and terrorism in conformity with international law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Madison Heights City Council condemns Hamas' intentional attack on civilians; sends our condolences to the families of those murdered; conveys our wishes for a full and speedy recovery to those wounded; demands the release of the hostages; denounces anyone who celebrates atrocities perpetrated on civilians, including innocent children; rejects anyone who denies the authenticity of the evidence of these crimes, or anyone who justifies these acts of terrorism; implores Egypt and other countries to open its borders to allow foreign nationals (including Palestinian-Americans) to leave Gaza and to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilians fleeing the fighting as Israel works to heal its wounded and to search and free the hostages; condemns anti-Semitism and Islamophobia; and supports Israel's right to defend itself from acts of war and terrorism in conformity with international law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED copies of this Resolution shall be forwarded to President, Joseph R. Biden, U.S. Senator, Debbie Stabenow, U.S. Senator, Gary Peters, U.S. Representative, Haley Stevens, Michigan Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, Attorney General, Dana Nessel, Secretary of State, Jocelyn Benson, State Senator, Stephanie Chang, State Representative Mike McFall, State Representative, Tom Kuhn, Oakland County Chief Executive, David Coulter, and Oakland County Commissioner Gary McGillivray.

Motion made by Councilman Fleming, Seconded by Councilwoman Aaron.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor  
Wright

Motion carried.

## **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

Richard Taylor, resident, stated that no person should hold office if they give comfort to the enemy according to the Constitution. He stated that members of the Council and employees are violating this section by not showing up to a meeting that he called.

The following people spoke in favor of the Resolution Condemning Hamas:

Rabbi Tolwin, Oak Park

Vita Palazzolo, Resident

Daniel Buxbaum, Jewish Community Relations Council of Metropolitan Detroit

The following people spoke in opposition to additional marihuana licenses:

Resident (no name or address given)

David Leider, President of Holistic Industries (Liberty)

Vita Palazzolo, Resident

Doug MacLean, Resident

Diane Ferrari, Resident

The following submitted written opposition to additional marihuana licenses:

Janice Nikitin

Jaqueline Sullivan

Kevin Traucchi, 28306 Brush Street, requested an extension on completing his fence. He stated that the City or L Images should repair the fence at their cost. He stated the Animal Hospital has lights shining into his yard all night and the lights are only 10 feet from his property. He would like the animal hospital closed and lights changed. He stated that L Images was supposed to re-asphalt the alley and they should repair the fences and the City should do the snow plowing from now on.

Vita Palazzolo thanked Mayor Grafstein and Councilwoman Aaron with helping obtain housing assistance and additional resources for Lisa.

Doug Maclean asked how many complaints were received and tickets issued for the intersection of Park Court and Farnum to have the City erect 3 stop signs.

## **CONSENT AGENDA:**

### **CM-23-267. Consent Agenda.**

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as read.

Mayor Pro Tem Bliss stated there are some great events honoring Jennifer Ramirez in the City. He also spoke of the Arts Board Gala that will also be honoring Jennifer Ramirez and all the great artwork she has brought to the City. Tickets are available for purchase for this great time. He stated that Merri Busch has done an outstanding job on the Parks and Rec Board as well as many other boards she has served.

Councilwoman Aaron stated that she was sad to see Merri Busch leave Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; she has always been one with great ideas and her advice is always welcome.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor  
Wright

Motion carried.

### **CM-23-268. International Artists' Day Proclamation - Honoring Jennifer Ramirez.**

Motion to adopt the International Artists' Day Proclamation Honoring Jennifer Ramirez.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor  
Wright

Motion carried.

**CM-23-269. City Manager - Interlocal Agreement with Oakland County for Information Technology Services.**

Motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement with Oakland County for Information Technology Services and authorize the City Manager to sign on behalf of the City.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Motion carried.

**CM-23-270. Merri Busch – Resignation from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.**

Motion to accept Merri Busch's resignation from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and declare the seat vacant.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Motion carried.

**CM-23-271. Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of October 9, 2023.**

Motion to approve the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of October 9, 2023, as printed.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Motion carried.

**CM-23-272. Director of Public Services - DPS Pavement Repair.**

Motion to award the contract for the DPS Pavement Repairs to DiLisio Contracting of Clinton Township, Michigan, in a project amount of \$310,000.64. Funding is budgeted and available.

Motion by Councilor Wright, Seconded by Councilor Rohrbach.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Councilwoman Aaron, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss,  
Councilman Fleming, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright

Motion carried.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Councilwoman Aaron expressed her condolences to the McGillvray family. Thank you to City Attorney Jeffrey Sherman for the wonderful proclamation this evening. She stated that she stands with Israel and the only way we can get through it, is to stay strong. She stated that she has worked in healthcare her entire life and while she is not a member of the union, many family members are. She stands with UAW, BCBS and the casino workers. We have to stand up for what we believe. These are families that may need our support and if you can, help someone you know that is standing up for their rights. Congratulations to the MHCC for their \$10,000 grant from Meijers; they are looking to use it with the Youth Wellness Council. When Ms. Heisler came to the Women's Club, she said that after surveying students on who they would go to in a crisis, 58% said they would go to a friend rather than trained staff. We need to do a better job in letting students know they have resources and help. She read an email from the mother of the hit and run victim who is sixteen years old and stated that there is a meal train to support the family if you'd like to contribute. More information can be found on the Friends of Madison Heights Facebook page; keep their family lifted in prayer. This is Red Ribbon Week from October 23-31<sup>st</sup> celebrating the importance of living a drug free life. Please vote on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Pro Tem Bliss echoed the condolences for Diane McGillvray and her family. She radiated kindness and love and was a stalwart supporter of her husband. This is a big loss to the City of Madison Heights. He requested a condolence resolution for the family. He stated that he would like to see resolution on I-75 expansion and cost of road repairs due to detours through the City and need for increased funding. He suggested a traffic task force and wants to make sure we can learn from these horrible accidents. He stated that tonight we had an ITAC meeting to discuss cyber security and we need something for traffic as well. He stated that he is so thankful and excited for the Rock the Heights bandshell grant from the Consumer Energy Foundation and he thanked City Manager Marsh for working for this. Hopefully the bandshell will be in place by the Festival in the Park. He appreciates the City seeing the value in arts and makes me proud to be a resident and a member of Council. If you want to help bring more art to the city, please support the gala.

Councilor Wright offered his condolences to the McGillvray family, stating losing someone is never easy. He thanked City Attorney Jeffrey Sherman for the resolution presentation; a better job couldn't be done. He asked that the resolution be posted on the website. He too stands with Israel and thanked him for sharing. Congratulations to the MHCC on their grant, it will be great to see how it is used. As for traffic safety, it comes down to paying attention to what we are doing while we are driving. We can pass all the laws we want to, but we need to pay attention. At the end of the day, we have to be more aware of our surroundings. He congratulated Jennifer Ramirez on all her contributions to the community, noting she is a kind person. He stands with UAW and BCBS workers. If you want to support these workers, they are taking contributions, or you can bring food to the picket line. Keep them in your mind. Please remember to be kind.

City Attorney Burns stated that he has known the McGillivray family for several years and he along with the Shermans express their heartfelt condolences to the family. The staff is working with the resident on the problem that he previously spoke about during public comments. He stated that pertaining to comments on marihuana problems in the City, the City has taken steps to help stop the illegal grow operations and legal action has been taken. If you are doing things legal, there is no problem, if you aren't we are taking this very seriously and acting.

City Manager Marsh echoed the comments on the McGillvary family. Diane, Gary and her children are all excellent examples of public servants and they have truly made a difference in Madison Heights. Every time she makes her cookies, she will think kindly of her. This week the City is hosting International Artist Day events honoring Jennifer Rameriz include an afternoon of coloring and an evening reception. Please come.

City Clerk Rottmann expressed her condolences to the McGillvray family. She stated that early voting begins this Saturday, October 28th and continues until Sunday, October 5th, at the Royal Oak Senior Community Center located at 3500 Marais Avenue. The hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, except Thursday, November 2nd, when the hours will be 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. If you'd rather vote absentee, you can contact the Clerk's office for an application or all voting locations will be open on Election Day, Tuesday, November 7th from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Councilor Rohrbach echoed comments on the passing of Diane McGillvary. She was one of the very first people she visited when going door to door and she was so kind - that is who she was. The Trail of Treats, Friends of Library Book Sale, announcement of the band shell – all are so exciting. It is great to see people doing great things and their hard work coming to fruition. Thank you to those dedicated volunteers. She stated that she is not in favor of adding additional licenses and she believes our residents do not want it either. She appreciates all those that have expressed their opinion on the matter. She commented that she has spent some time crying this past week because there is so much suffering in the world. It is heartbreaking to see all these children suffering. This weekend, someone she considered a friend, who I worked with, a colleague, Samantha Woll, was brutally murdered. She stated that Samantha was a light and a prominent member of the Jewish community. She was a bridge builder. She pulled people together and worked hard to remove suffering, championed people and worked to remove obstacles to people being able to access freedom and liberty. She would want us to continue her journey. Councilor Rohrbach quoted another author in her honor, “Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief, do justly now, love mercy now, walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.”

Councilman Fleming expressed his condolence to the McGillvray family. Their family is going through a lot right now, including the health of Gary, and they need some prayers. He stated that he supports unions and is a member of the Communication Workers of America. He noted that strike pay is not enough to support your family and pay your bills. The union fights have an effect on all workers. If you can help out your union neighbors, please do so. He appreciated the resolution in support of Israel. He stated he attended the vigil a week ago and you see the pictures of the victims, and it is very bad. I really hope and pray that we can come to a time of peace in the region. He stated that he is looking forward to the bandshell and the programming that we can have in the future. He stated that he really appreciated everyone today and it is nice to be nice.

Councilman Soltis gave a shout out to the fantastic job the police and fire do for the City. Jeffrey Sherman, you outdid yourself tonight, and we appreciate everything you put into the resolution,

Mayor Grafstein expressed her condolences to the McGillvary family. She stated that Diane was known as a great baker and her heart goes out to the whole family. She thanked Vita for coming with her last week to the breakfast addressing homelessness and poverty and for doing the work to help a neighbor. Please come out Wednesday to celebrate Jennifer Ramirez. She thanked Merri Busch for her service on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Distracted driving is dangerous, please watch what you are doing and pay attention. Congratulations to the Arts Board

and City Manager Marsh for the bandshell grant. Thank you, Mr. Sherman, for this resolution, you did a wonderful job. Thank you for Chairing the Council meeting Councilman Soltis. She stated that she attended the vigil last week and it was so nice to see so many non-Jewish supporters. Councilor Rohrbach thank you for sharing the quote. It is horrible to see such violence and suffering. She stated that there are not that many Jewish people in the world, and we need people to stand with us. She stated that surrounding communities need to take a stand as well. The next City Council meeting is November 13<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Having no further business, Mayor Grafstein adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

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Roslyn Grafstein, Mayor

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Cheryl E. Rottmann, City Clerk