



City of Marquette, MI

300 West Baraga Ave
Marquette, Michigan 49855

Meeting Minutes City Commission

Monday, June 12, 2023

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Present: Davis, Hanley, Larson, Ottaway, Smith, Stonehouse

Absent: Mayer

Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Michael Larson moved to Approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse and Carried Unanimously.

Commissioner Jenna Smith moved to excuse Mayor Mayer from tonight's meeting due to work reasons, seconded by Commissioner Jerney Ottaway and Carried Unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Davis said there are two upcoming master planning workshops, scheduled for Wednesday night and Thursday morning. She also said that the City is very much looking forward to Art Week.

Boards and Committees

1. Reappointment(s)

Christopher Jason, Harbor Advisory Committee, for a term ending 06-01-26

Commissioner Jerney Ottaway moved to Approve the reappointment as listed, seconded by Commissioner Jennifer Smith and Carried Unanimously.

Public Comments - Comments may not exceed three minutes per person. Please state your name and physical address when making public comments.

Matthew Songer talked about the plans for Food Fest and City Fest, which are partnering this year in order to share materials and staging. He said he is available if the Commission has any questions.

Valerie Olson shared her concerns regarding water fluoridation and shared recent data on the topic.

Doug Vanerka talked about concerns with water fluoridation and said he would like an independent firm to do a study on whether fluoridation is a good idea.

Brandon Frisk, from Kuuma Sauna, LLC, spoke about his plans for a lakeside sauna in Marquette.

Barb Owdziej voiced concerns about the sauna proposal, including worries about swimming and water safety in that area, as well as possible threats to the beach grass. Rick Newman spoke about the need to get to the truth on certain topics and compared fluoridation with historical cigarette use.

Brian Miller shared his concerns about water fluoridation.

Bob Belmore said he was concerned with the amount of fluoride and chlorine added to the drinking water and said he and his wife are drinking bottled water currently.

Margaret Brumm said the group that is raising fluoridation concerns is referencing data that has not been officially approved or released and should not be used to determine public policy. She said she is also opposed to the sauna plan discussed earlier.

Dorothy Vanerka spoke against water fluoridation, and said she is speaking on behalf of those that can't speak for themselves on this issue.

Presentation(s)

2. Marquette Area Wastewater Treatment Advisory Board, by Leonard Bodenus

Marquette Township Superintendent of Public Works Leonard Bodenus offered an update on behalf of the Wastewater Treatment Advisory Board. He spoke about the purpose and current activities of the board, and provided updates on current projects, including the solids handling improvement project.

Commissioner Smith thanked him for the presentation about the treatment of local wastewater, and said she wished the people that commented tonight about the fluoridation of City water would have stayed for this presentation. She said she would only consider changing the City's stance on municipal water fluoridation if the CDC or State of Michigan came out with a strong stance against it. Until then, she said, she would not speak about the topic again.

Other commissioners praised the presentation and the work done by the staff of the wastewater treatment facility.

3. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Fred Stonehouse moved to Approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Jessica Hanley.

Mayor Pro Tem Sally Davis noted that the sauna item (Item 3.e) was the first read of a lease agreement and would need commission approval at a subsequent meeting. She asked staff to respond to some of the concerns raised during public comment.

Community Services Director Jon Swenson said staff has researched the plan, but that they will do some additional leg work prior to the next meeting. He said he would look to touch base with the Superior Watershed Partnership and Mayor Pro Tem Davis noted that this proposal will be reviewed this week by the City's Harbor Advisory Committee.

The Commission then voted on the motion, which carried unanimously.

- 3.a. Approve the minutes of the May 30, 2023 regular Commission meeting
- 3.b. Approve the total bills payable in the amount of \$729,847.92
- 3.c. Community Foundation of Marquette County - Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement
- 3.d. International Food Fest - Special Event Permit
- 3.e. Kuuma Sauna, LLC - Concessionaire Lease
- 3.f. Presque Isle Marina - Construction Services
- 3.g. Schedule Public Hearing - Preliminary Planned Unit Development Plan for 480 River Park Circle
- 3.h. Softchoice Microsoft 365
- 3.i. U.P. City Fest- Special Event Permit

New Business

4. 2020 Post-Census Group Quarters Review

Commissioner Michael Larson moved to Authorize the City Manager, or her designee, to file the 2020 Post Census Group Quarters Review, seconded by Commissioner Jerney Ottaway and Carried Unanimously.

Public Comments - Comments may not exceed three minutes per person. Please state your name and physical address when making public comments.

Barb Owdziej asked a follow-up question about NMU's involvement in the census discussion and she commented about water fluoridation.

Margaret Brumm shared her opinions on the benefits of water fluoridation and talked about the difficulty of governing based on the data being provided in these discussions.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Smith had no comments.

Commissioner Stonehouse said that he will take no action on water fluoridation unless he sees clear guidance from the State of Michigan or CDC.

Commissioner Hanley had no comments.

Commissioner Larson said he is looking forward to the e-sports competition planned during City Fest.

Commissioner Ottaway echoed the comments about e-sports. He said off-leash dogs are becoming more common, as are dogs on the beach, and he asked people to please follow the rules, which are in place for a reason. He said that throttled electric bikes have become more common on the City multi-use path, and electric bike speed seems to be increasing; he said he would like to see this addressed somehow. Regarding water fluoridation, he said the documentation being provided in public comment is unofficial

and unreleased. He said the City's practice and policy should be guided by the experts in the field.

Mayor Pro Tem Sally Davis had no comments but asked staff to address the concerns about electric bike speeds.

Comments from the City Manager

Assistant City Manager Sean Hobbins said staff is continuing to look at the electric bike issue. Currently, he said, only Level 1 bikes (no throttle and a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour) are allowed on the city path. He praised the wastewater treatment plant crew and the sewer crew, which he said are huge assets to the City. He talked about the upcoming master planning sessions, about the City Manager office hours and about the upcoming Art Week in the City of Marquette.

Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Davis adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Cody O. Mayer, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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