



City of Marquette, MI

300 West Baraga Ave
Marquette, Michigan 49855

**Meeting Minutes
City Commission**

Monday, June 26, 2023

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

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

Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Pro Tem Sally Davis moved to Approve the agenda with the removal of item 5.e, seconded by Commissioner Jerney Ottaway and Carried Unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Mayer had no announcements.

Boards and Committees

1. Appointment(s)

Stephen Swentik, Local Officers Compensation Commission for an unexpired term ending 08-01-29

Commissioner Jessica Hanley moved to Approve the appointment as listed, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse and Carried Unanimously.

2. Reappointment(s)

Michael Potts, Harbor Advisory Committee, for a term ending 06-01-26

Dennis Honch, Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority, for a term ending 07-01-26

Commissioner Jessica Hanley moved to Approve the reappointments as listed, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse 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 said she opposes the sauna in the location proposed. She said this is a good idea, but the proposed location is not good and she is concerned the location would not be safe.

Nancy Uschold said she agrees the sauna is a good idea being proposed in a bad location. She said the river current there is an issue.

Brandon Frisk presented a packet of petition signatures in support of his sauna proposal. He said he has worked with City staff to review possible locations, and this was the recommended location.

Margaret Brumm said she agrees that the proposed location for the sauna is inappropriate. She shared information about Professor Leslie Putman's research, and she talked about plans for an off-leash dog safety training session, facilitated by UPAWS.

Leslie Williams (Putman) spoke about her research on polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), specifically PFOS. She said she has received a state permit, and is ready to begin growing hemp, which she said preliminary data shows can remove PFOS from the soil. She said she plans to introduce the plants to water and sludge contaminated with PFOS to gauge the impact the plants have on the contamination.

Presentation(s)

3. Local Development Finance Authority, by Chair Leslie Hartman

Joe Thiel, CEO of the Innovate Marquette SmartZone, provided a presentation on the organization, offering insight on quarterly metrics like attraction efforts, outreach and new ventures started, among others.

Commissioner Davis said she appreciates the metrics provided. She said Commissioners often get questions about the tax dollars that are utilized by the SmartZone and would like to see outcomes presented in a way that allows the Commission to explain the investment.

Commissioner Smith said she was impressed with the metrics shared tonight, but asked those present to explain for the public what the Local Development Finance Authority is, and how it integrates with the SmartZone and the City.

Follow-up discussion focused on future areas of focus for the SmartZone.

4. State of Michigan Marquette Veterans Home

Anne Zerbe, Executive Director for Michigan Veteran Homes, provided a summary of the plan to build a new veterans home in Marquette. She said the funding for the project has been fully secured through the combination of a state budget allocation and federal grant funds. She said the state must determine where the new home will be built, and would like to decide quickly.

She said they need a conceptual design by August and would like to start construction next summer. She said one of the possible sites is currently owned by the City of Marquette, and said the state wants to secure within 45 days a letter of intent to move forward with the project.

Commissioner Smith said the City Commission is in an odd spot. Since the city is in negotiations regarding the property in question, the Commission is unable to discuss this project as openly as they may want to.

Commissioner Stonehouse said that he hopes a new home would have a public memorial included in the design.

5. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Jennifer Smith moved to Approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Fred Stonehouse and Carried Unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

- 5.a.** Approve the minutes of the June 12, 2023 regular Commission meeting
- 5.b.** Approve the total bills payable in the amount of \$ 993,858.06
- 5.c.** Camp UPeninsulin Non-Profit Status - Roll Call Vote
- 5.d.** DLP Marquette General Hospital - Utility Easements Approval
- 5.e.** GEI Change Order - Tourist Park SHPO Review
- 5.f.** Northern Michigan University - Agreement for Use of Lakeview - Ice Contract
- 5.g.** Sales of Surplus Equipment
- 5.h.** SpinwayMQT Lease Agreement Addendum

Unfinished Business

6. Kuuma Sauna, LLC - Concessionaire Lease

Commissioner Jessica Hanley moved to Approve the lease agreement with Kuuma Sauna, LLC, and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign it, seconded by Commissioner Jennifer Smith.

Commissioners Hanley said staff have put a lot of work into this item and she is comfortable with this as a trial use and a trial location. Commissioner Smith said this is being proposed alongside a public beach, and she doesn't think there is any risk to health or safety beyond that existing at other beaches.

The discussion ensued among commissioners and staff touched on the history of the signage at this location, the safety of the area as a swimming location and the liability of the City in water safety issues.

The Commission then voted on the motion, which failed on a 3-4 vote. Mayor Pro Tem Davis voted no, along with Commissioners Stonehouse, Ottaway and Larson.

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Margaret Brumm congratulated the City Commission on navigating a difficult topic

tonight. She said Professor Leslie Putman is proceeding with her work with hemp. She says the work is exciting and could lead to important things. She says there are people that want to support these research efforts and help to get a certified lab established, but that she would like the City to set up a financial account for them to deposit donations into.

Brandon Frisk thanked the Commission for their discussion tonight. He said Kuuma Sauna will go back to the drawing board and work with the City on alternate locations. He said they appreciate the passion and that they also want the community to be safe.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Stonehouse said he is excited about the new veterans home, and he reminded people to avoid shooting off fireworks near the veterans home.

Commissioner Hanley said she is excited about the Fourth of July and said the ore dock laser show is neat. She reminded people that the fireworks will be held on the third of July this year and said that is a good move for several reasons.

Commissioner Larson said that although the details still need to be worked out, the veterans home could be a great thing. He said the summer is here and highlighted art week, as well as the new social district.

Commissioner Ottaway thanked Kuuma Sauna for their professionalism and said everyone wants the same thing - a safe place for the group to trial their business. He congratulated Commissioner Hanley on her recent albatross at Greywalls.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis thanked the representatives for the presentation about the new veterans home. She also thanked professor Putman for her work and said she is happy someone like her is in Marquette.

Commissioner Smith said she hopes Kuuma can find an appropriate place for their sauna. She spoke about art week, the social district and the new Wednesday evening Farmers Market, which takes place on Washington Street. She said the first market was great, and she thanked public works and the DDA for their advance work, as well as the police, who were present, positive and friendly. She reminded people that Cityfest and Food Fest will take place during the first few days of July.

Mayor Mayer Thanked the representatives for the veterans home presentation and said he hopes to find a way to keep the home in Marquette. He also said he hopes to see Kuuma back in a different location, and he wished his wife a happy birthday.

Comments from the City Manager

City Manager Karen Kovacs said there are some administrative questions to be answered and considered before the City agrees to create any sort of account for deposits of funds as requested by Margaret Brumm. She Congratulated the Arts and Culture staff for the work on Art Week.

Adjournment

Mayor Mayer adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Cody O. Mayer, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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