



City of Marquette, MI
300 West Baraga Ave
Marquette, Michigan 49855
Meeting Minutes
City Commission

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 25, 2022

Special Meeting

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Present: Bonsall, Davis, Hanley, Hill, Mayer, Smith, Stonehouse

Approval of the Agenda

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

Announcements

Mayor Smith had no announcements.

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

Margaret Brumm said if there is a decision to make, she would prefer to see money allocated to the maintenance of Lakeview Arena, rather than to the SmartZone, via the Local Development Financing Authority. She also said that she would suggest the City increase the littering fines.

1. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Evan Bonsall moved to Approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cody Mayer and Carried Unanimously.

1.a. Approve the minutes of the August 8, 2022 regular Commission meeting.

New Business

2. Budget Overview

City Manager Karen Kovacs, City Chief Financial Officer Mary Schlicht and Assistant City Manager Sean Hobbins introduced today's budget discussion, which will be broken up into topic areas. City Manager Kovacs said the day, which will include a lunch break, will focus at times on the City's General Fund, Debt Service Accounts, Internal Service Funds, Capital Outlay, the City's Component Units, Special Revenue Funds and Enterprise Funds.

The City Manager then led a discussion of several components of the City's proposed budget. Commissioners asked several clarifying questions - holding discussion with staff - throughout the morning's presentation.

At 11:35 a.m., Commissioner Jess Hanley moved to recess the meeting for one hour. This motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cody Mayer and carried unanimously.

At 12:35 p.m., Mayor Smith called the meeting to order, and the presentation continued. During the afternoon session, Commissioners asked questions of the directors of various component units, including the Downtown Development Authority and the Peter White Public Library. Commissioners and staff also discussed road maintenance plans and schedules and discussed both Lakeview Arena and the Local Development Finance Authority. Several Commissioners questioned whether the City was getting an appropriate amount of value from its investment into the LDFA.

LDFA board member Bruce Heikkala was in the audience and responded to Commission questions, stating that when he joined the LDFA board, he had many of the same questions he is hearing from Commissioners today. He suggested that SmartZone CEO Joe Thiel should sit down with City representatives to provide information. He said he understands there must be a cost-benefit analysis and that he would love to sit down and discuss.

Commissioner Jess Hanley then moved to direct staff to conduct an analysis of the LDFA and the body's current agreement with the City. This motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cody Mayer and carried unanimously.

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

Margaret Brumm said this was a very productive meeting. She said that the City should talk to the Michigan Tech SmartZone to get information on the LDFA-SmartZone process.

Bruce Heikkala said the Commission is in a tough spot in this budget process. He also said that when discussing fees, it's important to remember that hockey is a very expensive sport.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Hanley wished Mayor Pro Tem Mayer a happy birthday.

Commissioner Hill thanked staff and Commissioners for this meeting, and noted that recycling carts would be delivered to residents soon.

Commissioner Stonehouse said this was a great presentation and meeting. He compared the Lakeview Arena budgeting issues with previous issues with making the City's marina accounts solvent. He said the solution is often to increase user fees to a point where the system becomes sustainable, as the marinas now appear to be.

Mayor Smith said this was a fantastic budget presentation, with great participation. She said she would love to find a way to provide staff raises, as staff attraction and retention is vital.

Comments from the City Manager

City Manager Karen Kovacs thanked Commissioners and staff for spending their day engaged in this discussion.

Adjournment

Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Jennifer A. Smith, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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