



City of Marquette, MI

300 West Baraga Ave
Marquette, Michigan 49855

Meeting Minutes City Commission

Monday, October 28, 2024
6:00 PM
Commission Chambers

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

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

Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Jennifer Smith moved to Approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Paul Schloegel and Carried Unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Davis stated that early voting is ongoing in the City of Marquette, and will continue from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., each day through Sunday, Nov. 3.

Boards and Committees

1. Appointment(s)

Christopher Durley to the Downtown Development Authority for an unexpired term ending 01-01-26

Commissioner Jerney Ottaway moved to Approve the appointment as listed, seconded by Commissioner Michael Larson and Carried Unanimously.

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

Cori Noordyk praised outgoing city commissioner Jenna Smith.
Jenn Hill also spoke about Jenna Smith, and thanked her for her service to the City.
Barb Owdziej said the Citizen's Academy was very worthwhile and thanked the City for offering the educational opportunity. She urged people to apply for future sessions.
Jay Gage spoke about Jenna Smith, and offered a certificate of appreciation from U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow.
Aubrey Moore read a letter from U.S. Senator Gary Peters in honor of Jenna Smith.

Presentation(s)

2. Marquette Housing Commission, by Chair Jackie Stark

Marquette Housing Commission Chair Jackie Stark updated the City Commission relative to the board's activities from the previous year, highlighting successes and changes from the prior year, as well as plans for the organization moving forward.

3. Rural Leadership Fellow Recognition- Anne McIlhagga

Deputy City Manager Sean Hobbins spoke briefly, recognizing Anne McIlhagga, who has served as NMU's Rural Leadership Fellow at the City. During her time in the role, Anne helped with public outreach for the City's Community Master Plan and associated sessions. She also organized the City's first Citizens Academy, which ran for eight weeks and aimed at educating citizens on municipal functions.

After being presented with a certificate of appreciation, Anne thanked Sean and other staff members for welcoming her to the City, and she thanked the participants of the Citizens Academy.

4. Citizen's Academy Graduation

Mayor Sally Davis presented certificates to the graduates of the first Citizens Academy. She provided an overview of the sessions, which heard from the City Manager and Attorney and the Police and Fire Departments; they toured the Municipal Service Center, wastewater treatment plant; and they heard from Community Services, the City Clerk and the Finance Department.

She then read the names of the graduating members, who stood as a group for photos.

Public Hearing(s)

5. The Chipp Workforce Housing Brownfield Plan- Roll Call Vote

Commissioner Schloegel said he will be abstaining from the vote due to a prior business relationship and the possibility of future financial gain from the project.

Nancy O'Hare-Zika spoke about the project, and said she represented the owners of several of the other buildings in the office park. She voiced concern about the possibility that the proposed development could lead to an increase in interactions between pedestrians and traffic in a congested shared parking area, and she spoke about the challenge of handling snow removal in a large shared lot that was used for both commercial and residential purposes.

Sheryl Feldman said she would be opposed to a long-term tax abatement for this project.

Commissioners and staff discussed the details of the proposed tax-increment financing district, and about the benefits of utilizing this new state mechanism, allowing for TIF capture to be redirected toward subsidizing housing costs. Mayor Sally Davis spoke about aspects of the proposal that she liked, and she said she thinks it will be approved tonight, but she said she wanted to voice some concerns that she has heard related to taxes. She spoke about limitations on tax base due to public use of property in the city, as well as due to some existing TIF

districts and payment-in-lieu-of-taxes agreements, and on how various members of the community are impacted.

Commissioner Jennifer Smith moved to Approve the resolution authorizing the brownfield plan for The Chipp housing development, and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Hanley.

The motion carried 4-2. Mayor Davis and Commissioner Ottaway voted no, while Commissioner Schloegel abstained.

6. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Jennifer Smith moved to Approve the Consent Agenda as written, seconded by Commissioner Paul Schloegel and Carried Unanimously.

6.a. Approve the minutes of the October 15, 2024 Commission work session

6.b. Approve the minutes of the October 15, 2024 regular Commission meeting

6.c. Approve the total bills payable in the amount of \$4,979,660.73

6.d. AWH Change Order - Presque Isle Bandshell Design

6.e. Marquette Area Public Schools - Ice Contract

6.f. Master Agreement to Purchase Services (In-Home Services)

6.g. Michigan Arts and Culture Council - Grant Award

6.h. Release of Kids Cove Maintenance Funds

6.i. Tourist Park Playground - Contract Increase

6.j. Utilization of State Bid for Annual Salt Purchase

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Sheryl Feldman talked about the pressure of rising costs and tax burden.

Sean Hobbins spoke about the leadership of Commissioner Jenna Smith, who is leaving the Commission after tonight's meeting.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Schloegel said Halloween is approaching, and he warned residents to be vigilant for kids trick-or-treating. He thanked Jenna Smith for her leadership over the years, and highlighted stories of her years on the Commission.

Commissioner Smith spoke about her history with this board, and read a list of lessons learned over the years.

Commissioner Larson thanked the election workers who were on-hand at the Peter White Public Library for early voting, which he said was smooth and efficient.

Commissioner Mayer thanked Jenna Smith for her years of service on the commission, and spoke about her skill and passion.

Commissioner Ottaway spoke about the difference between a tax abatement and a TIF district. He talked about the power of a group of commissioners all working together. He talked about his and Jenna Smith's shared history on the City Commission.

Mayor Pro Tem Hanley thanked Commissioner Smith, noted her solid advice to not respond via Facebook, but to contact constituents directly.

Mayor Davis said she is not one for long goodbyes, but noted how well Commissioner Smith served as mayor, especially during the COVID pandemic.

Comments from the City Manager

City Manager Karen Kovacs explained the brownfield program being discussed tonight.

Adjournment

Mayor Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m..

Sally Davis, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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