
MINUTES**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sean Denison at 7:00 P.M.

II. Recognition**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Denison led in the pledge of allegiance.

IV. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Sean Denison, Mayor Pro Tem Mark Weedon, Commissioner Dan Vigansky, Commissioner Larry Money

Absent: Commissioner Patrick Swem

City Staff: Interim City Manager, Tim Lynch; City Treasurer, Deborah Perez; City Clerk, Kalla Langston; Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; Assistant Community Development Director, Ashley Regal; Director of Public Services, Mike Baker; Director of Public Safety, Tim Ganus; Chief of Police Harvey Burnett

V. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Denison, supported by Weedon to amend the agenda to add 1) Kathryn Park under Section X. Unfinished Business. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Denison to approve the amended agenda. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

VI. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)***VII. Consent Agenda** *(can be approved all in one motion, for general housekeeping items)***A. Minutes**

1) Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 22, 2023.

2) Consider approving Closed Session Minutes from May 22, 2023.

B. Expenses

1) Consider approving the expenses for June 12th, 2023 in the amount of \$226,389.47

C. Re-Appointment

1) Consider reappointing Deborah Miner as a trustee for the Buchanan District Library, for a 4-year term.

D. Excuse

1) Excuse Commissioner Patrick Swem's absence from tonight's regular meeting, June 12, 2023.

E. Street Closure-

1) Thrill on the Hill Street Closure for Front St. from July 10th-July 17th.

2) *Thrill on the Hill Street Closure for Dewey St. from July 13th- July 16th.*

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Weedon to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

VIII. Scheduled Matters from the Floor *(if any)*

A. Buchanan District Library Director Meg Paulette Perez-update on the library building campaign.

Paulette-Perez presented to the Commission recent highlights that have happened at the library. Including eliminated late fines, started a library of things which is a collection of 213 “things” such as musical instruments, tools, outdoor equipment and more. As well as launched a tutoring program, created One Book/ One Buchanan as well as started a Seed Library. Paulette-Perez also touched on the library building campaign, that includes a Community Room and a Hometown Hub. Encourage residents to use the library and being an advocate for libraries.

B. Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Services (SMCAS), Brian Scribner- Discussion if the City of Buchanan will pursue a special assessment.

Scribner updated the Commission on different funding grants that SMCAS is pursuing. The discussion if the city will pursue a special assessment. The city has budgeted \$75,000.00 out of the General fund for the next fiscal year to cover the assessment. Since the city and other municipalities elected to only pursue a special assessment. Langston touched on parcel and population. SMCAS is no longer providing the materials to the municipality. The conscious is teaming up with other municipalities, to figure out a way to fund this in the long term. Since there is no tax frame by population the municipalities went with a special assessment on per parcel. The City Commission’s consciousness was to fund SMCAS out of the general fund this year, and work with the municipalities on coming up with solutions for the Special Assessment coming in the 2024 fiscal year. Scribner also noted that the state is working on funding for ambulance services.

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Money to approve paying the SMCAS payment out of the general fund. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

IX. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

A. Community Development Report - Director Rich Murphy & Assistant Director Ashley Regal

1) *Consider Approving the 2023 Marihuana Medical and Adult Use Grow and Process Permit Renewals for Boones Labs at 107 E. Alexander St.*

Motion made Money, supported by Weedon to approve the 2023 marihuana medical and adult use grow and process permit renewals for Boones Labs at 107 E. Alexander St. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

2) *Consider Approving the 2023 Microbusiness Permit Renewals for Walpole Limites Craft Market at 303 Carroll St.*

Motion made by Money, supported by Weedon to approve the 2023 microbusiness permit renewals for Walpole Limites Craft Market at 303 Carroll St. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

3) *Consider Resolution 2023.06/17, a resolution of support for local match for the MDOT TAP Grant for the McCoy Creek's Trail Extension Project.*

Jerry Flenar spoke on behalf of Friends of the McCoy Creek Trail. Their fundraising efforts have been very successful and they’ve been encouraged to continue to apply. They’ve funded the

extension as far as River St. Joe and are working on expanding it farther, with \$1.2-2 million currently applied for. They would like the commission to pass the resolution to allow them to continue asking for these grants.

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Money to approve 2023.06/17, as presented. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

4) Updated Draft of Ross-Sanders RFP with Historic Preservation Easement and Concept Parcel.

Murphy has received the survey for the property and has a concept parcel that all parties are in agreement with. The RFP is ready to be published on Wednesday with bid openings on July 10th. There will need to be a review committee to review bids, with Murphy requesting Denison, Swem, Peter Lysy, and himself to serve on that committee.

Discussion about a baseline price for purchase included in the RFP. The RFP requires applicants to show a ready cash reserve of at least \$400,000 to finance the work required.

5) Grants Update.

The city has already received over \$1.1 million in grant funding in the last year and a half, with over \$4 million in pending grant applications. Murphy has been very aggressive on the grants.

6) Munchie Monday Update.

Ashely Regal presented an update on Munchie Mondays, which has been a bigger success than anticipated, with each Monday drawing around 1000 visitors. One of their goals was to engage the cannabis industry in Buchanan, and Regal reports that they've been extremely involved in promoting the event through deals, promotions, and their newsletters. Regal and the City will explore options to provide electricity, potentially by utilizing the library parking lot.

B. Interim City Manager, Tim Lynch -

1) DPW Construction Update

Delivery will begin tomorrow. Pending additional tests and analysis, building should start in August. There will be a groundbreaking planning meeting June 21st at 10am.

2) USDA/Downtown Infrastructure/ Well & Water Plant Update

The design and engineering is nearing completion, and the updated cost information. The original project cost was around \$20.2 million, the updated cost is \$32 million. The interim City Manager and the commission will review the project.

C. Assessing Department

1) Consider Approving Resolution 2023.06/18, a Resolution for Poverty Exemption Guidelines.

Motion made by Money, supported by Vigansky to approve 2023.06/18, as presented. Roll call vote carries unanimously. (See attachment A)

2) Consider Approving Policy and Procedure for Assessor Inquiries and Meetings.

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Money to approve Policy and Procedure for Assessor Inquiries and Meetings. Roll call vote carries unanimously. (See attachment B)

3) Consider Approving the updated Policy for Public Inspection and Copying of Assessing Records.

Motion made by Weedon, supported by Vigansky to approve the updated policy for public inspection and copying of assessing records. Roll call vote carries unanimously. (See attachment C)

X. Unfinished Business

A. Kathryn Park

Denison had some additional questions after reviewing the quote. The quote requires preparing the ground for safety prior to installation. There was discussion over the best approach. Baker would not like the equipment to sit in the park longer than a week.

XI. New Business

A. Ordinance 2023.06/436: *Consider the first reading of Ordinance 2023.06/436. An ordinance to amend the Buchanan City code of ordinances to provide for prohibition and abatement of nuisances and to repeal and replace ordinance sections 38-26, 38-29 subsection 3, and sections 38-47, 38-54, 38-55, Article III, and parts thereof in conflict herewith.*

Director of Public Safety Tim Ganus presented the ordinance (see attachment D). The Police Department has hired a full-time code enforcement officer. The commission would like to ensure code enforcement is a top priority.

XII. Communications *(informational only, formal board action is not necessary for these items, unless so desired)*

None.

XIII. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

Jerry Flenar – The Trail will utilize Berrien County prisoners with a guard for trail maintenance.

Frieda Hughes – Would like clarity on whether old equipment from Kathryn Park would be moved to Victory Park and is strongly against this proposal. The neighborhood deserves new equipment.

XIV. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

Life Action is considering expansion that would put them on City sewer. Lynch would like to consider the entire area. Work on Thrill on the Hill is progressing smoothly.

B. Commissioner Comments

Vigansky – Thinks moving the old equipment from Kathryn Park elsewhere is a good idea, if Victory Park isn't interested, another park will be.

Money – Thanked Baker and the DPW for their hard work as well as Nick Bailey and the cemetery crew. Thanked Meg for her work at the Library, City Staff for their hard work, and the commission. Shared an issue from the Common that was brought to his attention, Baker is aware.

C. Mayor Comments

Would like Lynch to draft a policy on who can contact the city attorney. He'd prefer it to be the City Manager and the Mayor. He'd like to congratulate the Roti Roti Art Center on another successful Empty Bowls fundraiser. He shared an autographed guitar from the Van Dyke Review's concert kickoff at the Summer Concert Series. He also asked that parents keep an eye on their children during events. Also commended the DPW and Cemetery crew for their maintenance of the Trail but lamented graffiti, again petitioned parents to hold their children accountable.

XV. Adjourn

Motion made by Weedon, supported by Money to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 P.M. Voice vote carries unanimously.

Kalla Langston, City Clerk

Mayor Sean Denison