

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY COMMISSION**  
**MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2022 – 7:00 PM**  
**CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI**

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**MINUTES**

*THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BUCHANAN, in compliance with Michigan’s Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a regular meeting of the Buchanan City Commission to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.*

*\* Requests to be added to the agenda as a “Scheduled Matter from the Floor” should be submitted in writing to the City Clerk at least 5 business days prior to the scheduled meeting during which the speaker wishes to appear, and the approval of such requests remain within the discretion of the Mayor. If denied, the speaker may nonetheless speak during the “non-agenda items only” public comments section of the agenda.*

*\* Those who are unable to appear during a meeting but who still wish to share public comment may submit such comments in written form to the City Clerk at least 4 hours in advance of the meeting.*

*\* Individuals with disabilities may request necessary reasonable accommodations by submitting requests to the City Clerk, preferably at least 24 hours in advance.*

*\* Written requests and comments may be submitted to the City Clerk either in person or via mail to Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, or via email to [clerk@cityofbuchanan.com](mailto:clerk@cityofbuchanan.com)*

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Denison called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

**II. Recognition**

None

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Denison led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. Roll Call**

Mayor Sean Denison, Commissioner Cameron Downey, Commissioner Larry Money, Commissioner Patrick Swem, Mayor Pro Tem Mark Weedon arrived at 7:29 PM (due to conflict of schedule)

City Staff: City Manager, Heather Grace; Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; City Clerk, Kalla Langston; City Treasurer, Deborah Perez; Director of Public Services, Mike Baker; Wastewater Superintendent, Bill Housand; Operator in Charge, Scott Desenberg; Acting Chief Harvey Burnett; Director of Public Safety Tim Ganus.

**V. Approve Agenda**

Motion made by Downey, seconded by Swem to amend the agenda to remove both items ‘New Business’ and also to update the Consent Agenda at Section C. so that the total amount of expenditures being approved is \$157,365.67. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Motion made by Downey, seconded by Money to approve the amended agenda. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

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

Dan Vigansky- Concerned about the \$5,000 spending limit for City Manager. Not in support of SMACS raised prices.

Monroe Lemay- \$5,000 limit for City Manager is fine. In support of SMACS, they are involved in the community very much.

**VII. Consent Agenda (can be approved all in one motion, for general housekeeping items)**

- A. Consider approving minutes from May 21, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes.
- B. Consider approving minutes from May 23, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes. (Minutes were amended)
- C. Consider approving expenditures for June 13th, 2022, in the amount of \$157,365.67

*Motion made by Downey, seconded by Money to approve the updated Consent Agenda as provided. Roll call: Yes Money, Swem, Denison, Downey. Absent: Weedon.*

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

- A. *Lyla Grace Nonprofit Special Liquor License Request*- A representative of the Lyla Grace nonprofit will present a request to the City Commission seeking permission to apply for a Special Liquor License to host a beer garden at The Common and/or in the City-owned grassy area near Pears Mill during a July 3, 2022 concert. If the Commission approves, a vote is needed to authorize the Police Chief to sign the special liquor license application [*\*NOTE- Even if approved by the City Commission, the event also requires approval from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission*].

Rick Paniagua gave a presentation to the Commission about the non-profit that he has helped create with Tony Houser and Monroe Lemay. Their mission is to provide funding to the community where funding is not being allocated. This event will be a free event with a suggested donation. The event will have local businesses and bands, this is not a cannabis event. The goal is to raise enough money to put sport court (basketball or pickleball) into one of the city's parks. The beer garden will not be held at the common.

Money asked for them to talk to the local church near there and about double fencing being up.

*Motion made by Money, seconded by Swem to approve the Lyla Grace event, as presented, and authorize the Acting Chief of Police to sign the special liquor license application. Roll call vote Yes; Swem, Denison, Downey, Money. Absent: Weedon.*

- B. *SMCAS Ambulance Board*- SMCAS (Southwest Michigan Community Ambulance Service) Director Brian Scribner will present to the Commission regarding an upcoming request for SMCAS funding approvals needed to continue the current provision of ambulance service within the City.

Brian Scribner was unable to be attend due to being held up at Niles City, in his place was Josh Kay Operations Manager at SMCAS. SMCAS is up for renewal and this year they are asking for an increase. SMCAS is not in poor financial condition, they have gone 25 years without in an increase in their assessment. It's been \$25.00 per year per parcel, the only thing that has changes was last year they included abandoned parcels when it was wasn't before. The reason why they are asking for the increase is because the industry is in crisis right now, specifically staffing shortage across the country with EMS and Paramedics. SMACS is only able to pay \$12.56 an hour for employees coming straight from school and internship. The wage comparisons for other ambulance services SMCAS is far behind and that is the main reason for the increase. They also have an aging fleet and fuel costs as well as competition for candidates across the state.

They are asking for a tiered ask with a 5 dollar increase every year for 5 years, capping at \$50.00.

Swem asked about the funding mechanism with other ambulance services as well as the difference between special assessments and milage proposal.

Swem brought up points about neighboring communities with owning multiple parcels. Wanting to make sure we make the right choice for the citizens of Buchanan with it being a heavy increase.

*Motion made by Swem, seconded by Money to table this matter until the next meeting providing the breakdown on cost. Roll call vote carried unanimously.*

**IX. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards**

**A. Buchanan Tree Friends-**

*1) Richard Martin & Brian Murphy will present information about the tree inventory and management plan sponsored by the DNR, the City of Buchanan & the Masons.*

Murphy & Martin presented the tree inventory that was compiled. This tree inventory website will help them maintain the trees and how many needed to plant as well as create diversity among the trees. The tree inventory also helps mitigate risk from trees falling that may cause risk to homes or persons. The inventory has identified 60 trees that need removal or maintenance. Opening the line of communication with the DPW crew and creating a plan for the maintenance and planting of the trees. As well as creating a bigger volunteer base. Martin was able to show the commission how the website worked that showed the inventory and the importance of keeping it updated. The website is [Buchananmi.treekeepersoftware.com](http://Buchananmi.treekeepersoftware.com).

**B. Community Development Director Report- Rich Murphy**

*1) Consideration for Olympian Hannah Roberts Mural Project and Funding Request for \$5,000.00*

Murphy is asking for a public art project in honor of Olympian Hannah Roberts. Murphy is seeking \$5,000.00. Murphy has received pledges for the project as well as a location on the Honor Credit Union wall. Murphy has been in discussion with Hannah and her family, and they do love the idea. With lots of moving parts Murphy has secured an artist for the mural. He is asking for the commission's support in this project.

Downey asked what the total cost would be for the project, Murphy has lined up an estimated \$15,000 for the project.

*Motion made Swem, seconded by Downey to approve the Hannah Roberts Mural Project and its \$5,000 Funding Request. Roll call vote carried unanimously.*

*2) Consider Facade Grant for the Buchanan Senior Center at 810 Rynerson St.*

Murphy brought the Buchanan Senior Center Façade Grant to the Commission. When Murphy brought the programs forward to the Commission, he did leave a discretionary in certain circumstances that would provide community benefit. The program is considered more for the Downtown/Commercial driving business development downtown. However, the applicant brought it forward to Murphy thinking it would be appropriate for discussion with the Commission.

The tool was created to use for economic growth, Swem asked the Director of the Senior Center (Adam) why he thinks that it fits that program.

Adam stated that the building is a commercial building, and they provide regular patrons services everyday that essential to their physical, social, and mental health. It is also available for community events. This addition on will help provide more services to the community.

Downey asking for clarification on where the addition is being added. The addition is in the East Side of the Building.

Downey asked Murphy what the purpose of the Façade Grant is for.

The primary purpose is to promote historical preservation and continued use and maintenance of commercial and mixed-use buildings in the central building district. It is intended to help property

owners and commercial tenants to rehabilitate and restore the visible exterior of existing structures in ways that match the pleasing aesthetics of our historically significant downtown.

Murphy had anticipated projects like we have tonight, and he wanted to be able to differ to the will of the Commission that they may or may not want to move forward on. There is that discretionary clause because we foresaw discussions like this.

Denison said it does put them in a difficult place, Denison stating he loves the senior center and love the services they provide. But not the idea of the Incentive Program for downtown being used to help rehabilitate the old buildings that are outdated and rundown. The building should meet all the criteria or authorized by the Commission.

Discussion between the Senior Center Members and Commission about the qualifications of the program.

Denison believes that this does not fall under the façade grant vision, that maybe a donation to the senior center would be the better route to go.

Weedon had reservations about setting a precedent that anyone can come to the table. Thank you for what you do for the Senior Center, this is difficult.

*No motion was made.*

#### City Treasurer Report

*1) Introduction of Deborah Perez, newly appointed City Treasurer.*

Grace introduced and welcomed Deborah Perez to the City of Buchanan Team.

*2) Consider adding Deborah Perez as an authorized user and signatory to all City of Buchanan banking accounts (Huntington, Honor Credit Union, and United Federal Credit Union).*

*Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Swem to add Deborah Perez as an authorized user and signatory to all City of Buchanan banking accounts.*

*3) Fund Balance Report*

Grace briefed the Fund balance report to the Commission.

#### D. Wastewater Department Update

*1) Wastewater Superintendent, Bill Housand will give an update on the Wastewater department*

Housand gave a review of the year at the new plant.

*2) Wastewater Treatment Plant Open House to be held August 1, 2022, from 9 AM- 11 AM , to coincide with a Joint Water/Sewer Board meeting, which will also be held earlier that same morning at the Treatment Plant.*

#### E. Water Department Report-

*1) Operator in Charge, Scott Desenberg will give an update on the Water Department.*

Desenberg gave a review of the water department in the last year.

*2) Consider an updated Water/Sewer Tap Fee rate schedule, if approved the rate schedule will go into effect immediately.*

*Motion made by Swem, seconded, by Downey to approve the Water/Sewer Tap Fee rate schedule, as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.*

*3) Wellhead Protection Committee- consider approving members to Wellhead Protection Area Committee.*

*Motion made by Money, seconded by Weedon to appoint the members to the Wellhead Protection Committee as presented. Roll call vote carries unanimously.*

F. Buchanan Building Authority, Clerk Kalla Langston

*1) Consider authorizing approval for The Buchanan Building Authority to approve resolution 2022.05/002, a resolution to authorize the issuance of building authority bonds. [\*NOTE- This item may end up being recommended to be tabled, depending upon whether we hear back from Andy Campbell in time].*

*Motion made by Swem, seconded by Weedon to approve the Buchanan Building Authority to approve resolution 2022.05/002 as presented. Roll call vote carries unanimously.*

**X. Unfinished Business**

A. Reconsideration of Ordinance 2022.03/430- IMPC Adoption Ordinance, Property Maintenance Code. - Reconsider a New First Reading of Ordinance 2022.03/430 [previous review of First Reading did not have all of the 'blanks' filled in yet].

*Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Downey to approve the First Reading of Ordinance # 2022.03/430, International Property Maintenance Code adoption, as presented. Roll call vote carries unanimously.*

B. Discussion of the recently passed 2022-2023 Budget and scheduling budget amendment work sessions, if desired. -The recently passed FY 2022-2023 Budget is available on the City website at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/y6uh6tyy>

Special meeting will be held to discuss budget amendments for June 15 at 3:00 PM.

C. Contract Authorizations- Consider authorizing the City Manager to sign the following pending contracts, following the recent review of said contracts by the City Attorneys: (a) Bergmann [architects for the DPW building], (b) AVB [construction managers for the DPW building, and (c) Prein & Newhoff [engineers for the 2023/2024 redesign & reconstruct of Front Street/infrastructure projects].

*Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Swem to authorize the City Manager to sign contracts with Bergmann, AVB, and Prein & Newhoff, as per the recommendations of the City Attorneys. Roll call vote carried unanimously.*

**XI. New Business- Removed from Agenda item A. & B.**

~~A. Moose Parking Lot for Thrill on the Hill Consider options related to the City potentially utilizing The Moose's parking lot during the Thrill on the Hill.~~

~~B. Closed Session RE Real Property [\*NOTE This matter might be recommended to be tabled, depending upon availability of information by time of meeting].~~

~~(a) Enter Closed Session Consider entering Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268 Sec. 8 (1)(d) to consider the potential purchase or lease of real property.~~

~~(a) Reenter Open Session Consider reentering Open Session.~~

~~(C) Action Based on Closed Session Consider authorizing action based on Closed Session discussions.~~

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

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

Norma Ferris had concerns about priorities and has filed a grievance against Comcast for Channel 17. Board member from Senior Center thanked commission for holding to their guns tonight.

**XIV. Executive Comments**

**A. City Manager Comments**

Thanked the public for braving the storm this evening. We addressed some tough issues. The downtown business owners will be receiving a communication for the Police Department informing them about the recent parking fee changes. Also wanted to thank Norma about her efforts with Comcast, we did get a different rep at city hall, they did not fix it, but they are trying.

**B. Commissioner Comments**

Weedon; Welcomed Deborah Perez

Swem; Welcomed Deborah Perez. We are seeing rate increases industry wide, just talked about this at the landfill. Would like that to be investigated. Second item was to ask who our number 2 in charge of the Main Street Program once Ashley is on leave. Asking about the scheduling of the DPW crew. Had some interesting discussion with Plante Moran to help getting some commissioner committees established. Incredible impressed with the Tree Friends committee and proud to see the willingness for them to work with the city.

Downey; Welcomed Deborah Perez.

Money; Welcomed Deborah Perez. Big thanks to Baker and the DPW crew for all the work they did with the Memorial Day parade. Cemetery and streets were cleaned and looked great. Agreement with Swem about the Tree Friends Committee, truly appreciate all the work they have done. As well as the Senior Center, I hope they understand we as a group must do sometimes.

**C. Mayor Comments**

Welcome aboard to Deborah Perez. One thing that was brought up was complaints about trash downtown. Baker was able to answer with having someone do a trash run early Saturday morning.

Denison apologized to his fellow Commissioners for letting the meeting get out of hand. He likes the fact that we have back and forth, but let it get out of hand tonight. Thanks to everyone coming out tonight.

**XV. Adjourn**

Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Downey to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 P.M. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

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Kalla Langston, City Clerk

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Mayor Sean Denison