

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

**Regular Meeting Held March 15, 2021**

Mayor Favale called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at the East Grand Rapids Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. She announced the meeting was also being held electronically as allowed by the recent amendment to the Michigan Open Meetings Act in response to the COVID-19 crisis. She invited any citizen attending by computer or phone to ask questions or offer comments during the public comment times.

Present in Person: Commissioners Hamrick and Mayor Favale

Present Virtually: Commissioners Arendshorst, Hecksel, Pachla and Walters

Absent: Commissioner Duncan

Also Present: City Attorney Huff; City Manager Charles; Deputy City Manager LaFave; City Clerk Brower; Interim Parks & Recreation Director Fasbender; Finance Director Seath; Zoning Administrator Gianotti

2021-47. The agenda was approved as published.

2021-48. No public comment was received.

2021-49. City Manager Charles reminded everyone the April 5 City Commission meeting had been moved to March 29. He announced a meeting to discuss the potential multi-use trails at Manhattan Park would be held March 30 at 6 pm at the Manhattan Park Pavilion; all residents are invited to attend. Mr. Charles also noted the Open Meetings Act provision allowing virtual meetings expires at the end of March. He will keep the commission informed on extensions or other options.

2021-50. Final Reading of an ordinance to amend Article I of Chapter 83 of Title VIII of the City Code pertaining to general fence requirements.

Deputy City Manager LaFave reviewed the changes proposed by the Infrastructure Committee to better define certain terms, measurements and maintenance provisions. He noted illustrations had been prepared to assist staff and residents in understanding the requirements, including a new drawing for through-lot situations that was revised after the agenda materials were published.

2021-050-A. Pachla-Arendshorst. That an ordinance to amend Article I of Chapter 83 of Title VIII of the City Code pertaining to general fence requirements, including the new drawing, be adopted as attached in Exhibit "A."

Mayor Favale opened the meeting for public comment. No other public comment was received. Mayor Favale closed the public comment.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 6

Nays: -0-

2021-51. Public Safety Department 2020 Annual Report.

Public Safety Director Herald thanked the community for supporting the officers and department during a very challenging year that saw the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest and many political divisions. He listed several departmental accomplishments and reviewed the statistics for personal and property crimes in 2020 and compared to prior years. Mr. Herald noted the COVID-19 pandemic had affected crime rates across the country as people's routines were changed by stay-at-home orders and reduced recreational opportunities.

- 2021-52. Public Safety Department 2020 Annual Analysis & Review of Use of Force and Pursuits.

Public Safety Director Herald reviewed the annual use of force report and the investigation results from each incident. The commission discussed at length one of the incidents where the driver did not pull over immediately and the officer drew his weapon when approaching the car after it finally stopped. Commissioners Walters and Arendshorst expressed concern about the level of the response given there was no overt indication of violence. Commissioner Arendshorst suggested revising policies to minimize the instances where officers are drawing their weapons. Chief Herald explained that officers face unknown situations anytime they engage with the public and procedures are standardized across police agencies. He noted that only 9 of the 3,754 calls for service in 2020 used any type of force, which was 0.24%, and that each incident is reviewed afterwards for possible alternatives and additional training opportunities.

- 2021-53. Resolution authorizing the refinancing of bonds issued for the Community Center.

City Manager Charles explained the plan to take advantage of the current low interest rates to save taxpayers money on the bond payments for the community center. The bonds were issued in 2004 and then refinanced in 2012, but the rates have dropped again making it advantageous to consider this again.

- 2021-053-A. Hamrick-Pachla. That a resolution authorizing the refinancing of bonds issued for the Community Center be adopted as attached in Exhibit "B."

Yeas: Arendshorst, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 6  
Nays: -0-

- 2021-54. Pachla-Walters. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2021-054-A. Minutes of the regular meeting held March 1, 2021.

2021-054-B. Payroll disbursements of \$230,432.17; county and school disbursements of 107,317.05, and total remaining disbursements of \$316,336.68.

2021-054-C. Establishment of June 7, 2021 as the date to hold public hearings for the budget and for delinquent accounts and to hold a special meeting to adopt the budget on this date.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 6  
Nays: -0-

- 2021-55. Mayor Favale reopened the meeting for public comment. No public comment was received.

- 2021-56. City staff presented the FY 2021-22 Goals & Objectives report to the city commission.

City Manager Charles reported he planned to streamline the budget process and documents, update the strategic plan over the next two years, and continue communication efforts. After input from the commission, he noted he would like to add researching a separate zoning board of appeals and holding some type of community conversation on diversity.

Finance Director Seath noted staff training, a wage study and changing to a comprehensive audited financial report format were some of the goals of the Finance Department.

Interim Parks & Recreation Director Fasbender outlined several potential changes to the Manhattan Recreation Area as well as possible updates to the plans for Waterfront Park. Some commissioners expressed interest in discussing accelerated funding for playground improvements.

Deputy City Manager LaFave reviewed plans to present the draft Mobility Plan, continue the Redevelopment Ready Certification, explore possible zoning ordinance changes and continue infrastructure improvements. The commission asked Mr. LaFave to explore a residential composting program and ways to improve the overall garbage collection system through designated collection days or the city providing trash service.

Public Safety Director Herald explained his plans to expand de-escalation and use of force training as well as county-wide crisis intervention training to help officers deal with mental illness.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until March 29, 2021.

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Karen K. Brower, City Clerk

Attachments:   A – Ordinance Amendment to Chapter 83 concerning fence requirements  
                  B – Resolution authorizing the refinancing of the community center bonds

Attachments listed above are available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk.