

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

Regular Meeting Held May 16, 2022

Mayor Favale the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at the East Grand Rapids Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Commissioners Arendshorst, Hamrick, Pachla, Schulz and Mayor Favale

Absent: Commissioners Schwartz and Wessely

Also Present: City Manager Charles; Deputy City Manager LaFave; City Attorney Huff; City Clerk Brower; Parks & Recreation Director Melville; Finance Director Seath; Public Safety Director Herald

2022-82. The agenda was approved as published.

2022-83. Mike Karolle, 1320 Woodshire, opposed the splash pad and other changes to Manhattan Park.

Laurel Abraham, 1108 Lakeside, asked more time be taken to make sure residents know what's going on. Requested an environmental impact study for the new trails and a full budget for ongoing operation and maintenance of the splash pad.

Mike Lewis, 361 Manhattan, opposed messing up Manhattan Park by adding a splash pad with the related noise, parking and speeding problems. Asked commissioners to protect the neighborhood.

Bob Mann, 671 Manhattan, was concerned about potential injuries to children from the trails, splash pad and congestion along the road.

Brenda Pratt, 3039 Manhattan Lane, opposed trails because of the environmental damage to trees and nests. Spoke against the noise and trash associated with splash pads.

James Detamore, 451 Cambridge, stated trails will harm the natural area and be unsafe to walkers. Asked for an environmental study and a risk assessment for lawsuits to be presented to the citizens.

Linda Kristensen, 2958 Reeds Lake Blvd, stated she felt the decisions had already been made and commission is only going through the motions to ask residents what they want for the park. She felt there would be many accidents on the trails and with increased traffic on the streets. Stated the city needs to do more work to collect information and listen to resident concerns.

Charlotte McElravy, 451 Cambridge, suggested some type of pass for residents to use the park and amenities as she didn't want her tax dollars spent on operating a park for people outside the area.

Mary Kay Schumar, 322 Manhattan, supported upgrading the park amenities and cleaning up the trails, but was adamantly opposed to a splash pad due to the costs involved and the increases in traffic and noise that will make an already congested area worse.

Phil Skaggs, 2615 Hall, invited residents and commissioners to the Kent County Commission's upcoming discussions on how to spend \$128 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding. The county plans to spend the funds on projects to improve community health, infrastructure and county facilities.

Sara Buck, 308 Manhattan, cited survey results from the recreation master plan showing that only 27% of residents taking the survey wanted a water park and that more people wanted to maintain and upgrade the existing amenities. She stated that only 11 residents asked for a splash pad. A splash pad should not be prioritized over the objections of residents who have to live in this area when so few people asked for it. Asked that existing speeding and parking problems be addressed as requested by constituents. Felt the commissioners were putting their personal wants ahead of resident objections.

Christina Martin, 2861 Pioneer Club, asked that donated property adjacent to Manhattan Park be kept as greenspace as intended when her family donated the land.

Jennifer Clary, 337 Manhattan, stated no one has listened to residents in the three years that they have been expressing opposition to these projects and the commission is moving forward with the projects as though decisions have already been made without really listening.

Margaret O'Byrne, 2721 Reeds Lake Blvd, wanted a detailed project budget for construction of the splash pad and a 5-10 year forecast of operating and maintenance costs, including where the operating funds will come from once bond funds for construction are gone.

Benjamin Lam, 345 Manhattan, does not support the splash pad, but wants to see improvements to drainage and the play structures.

Julie Murray, 509 Manhattan, sees many dangerous pedestrian and vehicle problems outside the park each day and feels bringing more people to the park will make it worse. Felt trails would also damage the environment.

James Karhos, 655 Manhattan, did not feel that multi-use trails would be safe and would increase the city's liability exposure. Supported fixing the current amenities but did not want additional things added to the park.

2022-84. Commissioner Schulz wished the water polo team good luck in their upcoming matches.

Commissioner Pachla thanked those in attendance who spoke about the plans for Manhattan Park. He pledged several meetings about each of the components of the proposed projects.

Commissioner Arendshorst agreed that no final decisions have been made and that all viewpoints would be considered.

Commissioner Hamrick reminded everyone of the upcoming playground planning sessions at 6:30 pm on May 17 at Lakeside Elementary, May 19 at Wealthy Elementary, and May 24 at Breton Downs Elementary.

City Manager Charles announced the Touch-A-Truck event to celebrate National Public Works Week would be held Thursday, May 19 from 10:30 am until noon. He also noted construction season is underway with many local streets being upgraded or maintained.

2022-85. Public Safety Director Herald reviewed the Public Safety Department's quarterly report for the period ending March 31, 2022 and answered questions from the city commission.

2022-86. Contract for addition of a sidewalk on the south side of Robinson Road near Aquinas College.

Deputy City Manager LaFave outlined the proposal add 545' of sidewalk and crosswalk on Robinson Road between Briarwood and Plymouth to facilitate pedestrian traffic and crossings to the Aquinas College area. Because Blodgett Hospital employees utilize offsite parking at Aquinas, the hospital has agreed to pay the costs of the pedestrian crossing beacon and the 20% of sidewalk costs usually assessed to property owners.

2022-086-A. Arendshorst-Pachla. To approve a contract addendum with Groundhavg Excavating of Lowell in the amount of \$33,050 plus 20% contingencies for the construction of a five-foot wide sidewalk on the south side of Robinson Road between Briarwood and Plymouth, and to approve the installation of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon pedestrian crossing device.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Hamrick, Pachla, Schulz and Favale – 5

Nays: -0-

2022-87. Proposed water and sewer rates for FY 2022-23.

City Manager Charles stated staff recommends the proposed increases to cover increased costs to operate the water and sewer systems.

2022-087-A. Schulz-Arendshorst. That a resolution adopting water and sewer rates effective July 1, 2022 be adopted as attached in Exhibit "A."

Yeas: Arendshorst, Hamrick, Pachla, Schulz and Favale – 5
Nays: -0-

2022-88. Pachla-Hamrick. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2022-088-A. Minutes of the regular City Commission meeting held May 2, 2022.

2022-088-B. Receipt of five email communications on various topics.

2022-088-C. Payroll disbursements of \$257,335.38; county and school disbursements of \$-0-, and total remaining disbursements of \$369,318.98.

2022-088-D. The appointment of City Manager Charles to the Kent County Emergency Medical Services Consortium.

2022-088-E. A Social Media Policy for the City's interactions on social media as attached in Exhibit "B."

2022-088-F. Fee schedule effective July 1, 2022 as attached in Exhibit "C."

2022-088-G. Resolution adopting budget amendments for the quarter ending March 31, 2022 as attached in Exhibit "D."

2022-088-H. Quarterly financial statements for the period ending March 31, 2022.

2022-088-I. Joint Facilities Committee budget for FY 2022-23.

2022-88-J. Authorization to bid vehicle and equipment replacements and purchases for FY 2022-23 for budgeted amounts.

2022-88-K. Authorization for utility system parts and supply purchases up to budget approved amounts.

2022-88-L. Purchase of storage area network equipment in the amount of \$20,512.14 from CDWG and consulting and installation services from i3 Business Solutions in the amount of \$4,500.00.

2022-88-M. Minutes of the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held January 13, 2022.

2022-88-N. Minutes of the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held February 2, 2022.

2022-88-O. Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting held January 13, 2022.

2022-88-P. Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting held March 8, 2022.

2022-88-Q. Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting held March 14, 2022.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Hamrick, Pachla, Schulz and Favale – 5
Nays: -0-

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until June 6, 2022.

Karen K. Brower, City Clerk