

MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-SIXTH
SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 6, 2025

On January 6, 2025, the above meeting was held at the City Hall, 33000 Civic Center Drive, Livonia, Michigan. All procedures within the Livonia Charter were fulfilled, and was called to order by President McCullough at 7:00 p.m. Councilmember Budzinski led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll was called with the following result: Carrie Budzinski, Scott Morgan, Laura Toy, Rob Donovic, Martha Ptashnik, and Brandon McCullough. Absent: None.

Elected and appointed officials present: Lori L. Miller, City Clerk and Carter Fisher, City Attorney.

There was no Audience Communication at the beginning of the meeting.

President McCullough reported out on the Committee of the Whole meeting held December 16, 2024. President McCullough stated the purpose of the Special Meeting was for Council to fill the vacant Council position due to Jim Jolly's resignation in December, 2024. President McCullough indicated 25 candidates submitted Letters of Interest and spoke for three (3) minutes each at the meeting held in Dember and thanked all who submitted their interest and participated. (CR 394-15)

Vice President Ptashik also thanked all those who expressed an interest in filling the vacant Council position. She indicated she either met with or talked on the phone with each candidate and stated it was a tough decision to be made, but that is what the Council was elected to do as the Council appointment decision rests with Council.

On a motion by Councilmember Morgan, supported by Councilmember Donovic, it was:

#01-25 RESOLVED, that upon the motion by Councilmember Scott Morgan, seconded by Councilmember Rob Donovic, at the Special Meeting held January 6, 2025, the Council does hereby appoint Lynda Scheel to the Office of Councilmember of the Livonia City Council to fill the unexpired term of James J. Jolly, which term expires December 31, 2025, such appointment to be effective upon taking the Oath of Office as required in Chapter X, Section 2 of the City Charter, to be administered by the City Clerk.

During Audience Communication for this item, Peter Dale, 9812 Cranston, expressed his frustration that the decision was predetermined two months ago and was a “done deal”. Mr. Dale stated residents were not on board with Ms. Scheel and stated Council’s decision tonight would not be forgotten by residents.

Kate Shishkovsky, 16941 Shrewsbury, expressed concern for why Council would select a repeat candidate rather than one from the numerous candidates who applied. Ms. Shishkovsky felt one of the new 30 people who applied should have been considered rather than electing and appointing the same people repeatedly. She expressed she knew there was a learning curve, but given the application process, there were others ready for the challenge and encouraged Council to not vote for the motion before them.

Margaret Earle, 31545 Pembroke, stated she took the time to review the very detailed resumes of the 25 applicants and stated many had great experience that would benefit them as a member of Council. Ms. Earle encouraged those interested in serving as a Councilmember continue to attend and participate in Council meetings to get the experience they will need and wished whoever was appointed well.

Deb Christiansen, Livonia resident, inquired if Councilmembers had taken the opportunity to review the very well-written letter posted in Friday Musings which encouraged a vote against the motion on the floor. She encouraged Council to vote against the motion on the floor and stated it was time for new candidates to be involved in local government rather than individuals who have been around forever. Ms. Christiansen stated for Livonia to be more progressive attractive to young families, it should have a representative Council that is both young and vibrant. Ms. Christiansen stated she also felt this set up the appointed individual to have an unfair advantage in the November campaign and encouraged Council to consider another candidate for the vacancy.

A roll call vote was taken on the foregoing resolution with the following result:

AYES: Budzinski, Morgan, Donovic and Ptashnik.

NAYS: Toy and McCullough.

The President declared the resolution adopted.

During Audience Communication, Greg Ralko, 36116 Fairway, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz Gas Station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. Mr. Ralko indicated he has submitted several inquiries via phone and email and has received no response from Council. Mr. Ralko encouraged Council to send this subject matter to the Committee of the Whole for careful consideration. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Willard Lindley, 20218 Edgewood, presented a five-minute presentation as a Homeowners' Association representative, in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Claudette Lindley, 20218 Edgewood, completed the five-minute presentation prepared by Mr. Lindley in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Nancy Phillpot, 20545 Golf Ridge Circle, spoke on behalf of one of the Homeowners' Association in the area, in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

David Hall, 37300 W. Eight Mile Road, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Patty Riggio, 37204 Bretton Drive, President of Willow Woods HOA, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Kate Shishkovsky, 16941 Shrewsbury, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Denny Behrendsen, 20012 Wayne Road, President of the Deer Creek Homeowners Association, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning petition submitted by Skilken Gold to be addressed at the Regular Council meeting of January 15, 2025, regarding a proposed Sheetz gas station at the Southeast corner of Eight Mile Road and Newburgh Road. Mr. Behrendsen encouraged Council to send this subject matter to the Committee of the Whole for careful consideration. (Petition 2024-08-01-04)

Cindy Fleming, Livonia resident, on behalf of Save Alfred Noble Library, stated she remembered previous Councilmember Jolly stating there was a breach of trust between residents and Council regarding items pertaining to that property and wanted to remind Council that breach of trust was continuing. Ms. Fleming stated she has observed City officials talking about housing being developed on that property in public. Ms. Fleming stated this type of behavior further hurts the trust between

residents and City officials and feels that land should be preserved for the benefit of the community and not for the benefit of developers or City officials.

Kathleen McIntyre, 14455 Fairway, raised a point of clarification that an Agenda item can be removed from the Council Agenda as was mentioned earlier during Audience Communication by another resident.

On a motion by Councilmember Toy, seconded by Councilmember Morgan, and unanimously adopted, this 256th Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Livonia was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Lori L. Miller, City Clerk