CITY OF LIVONIA – CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF STUDY MEETING HELD JANUARY 6, 2025

Meeting was called to order at 8:20 p.m. by Council President McCullough. Present: Carrie Budzinski, *Lynda Scheel**, Scott Morgan, Laura Toy, Rob Donovic, Vice President Martha Ptashnik, and President McCullough. Absent: None. (**Lynda Scheel was appointed to fill vacant Council position at the 256th Special Meeting held immediately preceding the Study Meeting of January 6, 2025.*)

Elected and appointed officials present: Carter Fisher, City Attorney; Lori L. Miller, City Clerk; Mark Taormina, Planning and Economic Development Director; and Todd Zilincik, City Engineer.

Councilmember Budzinski led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Donovic welcomed newly appointed Councilmember Lynda Scheel.

Councilmember Scheel thanked Council for their support.

During Audience Communication, Cindy Fleming inquired about a recent Parks & Rec Commission meeting and stated she attempted to follow the link for input but was unsuccessful. Ms. Fleming inquired if Council could have the Parks & Rec Commission ask for resident input as she felt there has been a breach of trust and that distrust is growing throughout the community.

Laura Jannika, 29635 Munger, stated she was not able to see the plans being discussed at the Parks & Rec Commission meeting and felt the Commissioners were unaware of the proposed plans and stated parks are used by many throughout the community for various things and agreed with Ms. Fleming that resident input would be of great value to the community.

President McCullough stated Agenda Items 7, 8 and 9 would be removed from tonight's Agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

1. REQUEST FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL ON A PROPOSED LOT SPLIT: Department of Assessment, re: the property located South of Eight Mile Road and East of Merriman Road, in the Northwest, 1/4 Section 2, 19902 Merriman Court (Petition 2024-11-LS-15). To waive the required fifty (50) feet wide dedicated public right-of-way to a thirty (30) feet wide right of way for vehicular access to proposed parcels "A" and "B".

   Mark Taormina, Planning and Economic Development Director, presented the proposed lot split to Council.

   The Petitioner was present to answer any questions of Council. The Petitioner indicated he bought this property with the intent to develop two (2) new residential homes. He estimated the value of the homes at between $500,000-$550,000. He stated he resides at the property just west of the proposed lot split and felt a 50' wide right-of-way for vehicular access was burdensome and proposed to reduce it to 30'.

Todd Zilincik, City Engineer, responded to Council questions regarding the public right-of-way being 50' wide and stated the various safety reasons for the requirement.

Following discussion by Council, it was agreed that the Council and Petitioner may reach a compromise of 40' feet as the dedicated public right-of way.

DIRECTION: APPROVING REGULAR

2. WAIVER PETITION: Planning Commission, re: Petition 2024-10-02-16, submitted by Livonia Gas Mart, requesting waiver use approval of all plans in connection with a proposal to redevelop and expand the existing gas station, including removing the service bays, expanding the building to provide additional retail space and restaurant, and relocate and increase the number of fuel pumps and parking, at 31301 Plymouth Road, located on the southeast corner of Plymouth and Merriman Roads in the Northwest ¼ of Section 35.

Mark Taormina, Planning and Economic Development Director, presented the waiver use petition to Council. Mr. Taormina went over the proposed renovations of the site and the removal of the north driveway on Merriman Road, as well as the additions to the south and east sides of the driveway. Mr. Taormina indicated the restaurant would have a separate entrance and the convenience store would occupy roughly 2/3 of the floor space.

The architect/designer was present on behalf of the owner, Dr. Fetty, to answer questions of Council.

Following discussion by Council, and because the Petitioner (owner) was not present to provide further detail about what type of food the restaurant would be selling, it was determined the Committee of the Whole would be the best course of action to find out more detail about the restaurant and to see if some of the parking spaces could be reduced, bike racks could be added, a landscaping architect can be employed as recommended by the Planning Commission, and if the turn ratio at the canopy near Plymouth Road would remain the same or could be adjusted.

DIRECTION: COW CONSENT

3. VACATING PETITION: Planning Commission, re: Petition 2024-10-03-02 submitted by Andrea and Benjamin Edwards, to determine whether or not to vacate portions of an existing storm drainage easement at 18586 Comstock Avenue, located on the

southeast corner of Comstock Avenue and Jay Avenue in the Northwest ¼ of Section 8.

Mark Taormina, Planning and Economic Development Director, presented the vacating petition to Council. Mr. Taormina stated the easement runs the width of the property and the petitioner is seeking to vacate the South 40’ of the easement to construct a 200 square foot shed. Mr. Taormina stated there is a 6’ x 6’ wide private easement on the property for other public utilities which would not be affected. Mr. Taormina stated this has been reviewed by the Engineering Department which has no objections.

Mr. Benjamin Edwards was present to answer any questions of Council.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

4. SITE PLAN PETITION: Planning Commission, re: Petition 2024-10-08-08 submitted by Soha Kadry, requesting approval of all plans to renovate the commercial building and covert into a multi-tenant retail center at 17230 Farmington Road, located on the east side of Farmington Road between Six Mile and Curtis Roads in the Southwest ¼ of Section 10.

Mark Taormina, Planning and Economic Development Director, presented the site plan petition to Council. Mr. Taormina explained this petition involves converting a former bank into a multi-tenant retail building and the site is on the east side of Farmington Road, just north of Abbey Flooring and Design Center. Mr. Taormina stated the plan includes removal of the drive-thru operation at the rear of the building, adding new demising walls to create four (4) separate leasable suites and will include renovation of the exterior by adding windows and doors, painting the exterior, and adding an EIS parapet on the top portion of the building. The four (4) suites would range in size from 688 to just under 1600 square feet.

The petitioner and her architect were present to answer questions of Council.

Councilmember Toy asked if this was her first business in Livonia, welcomed her to the community and thanked her for cleaning up this property which has sat vacant for many years.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

5. REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT TO ELECTIONSOURCE: Office of the City Clerk, re: for preparation of test ballots and testing of all election equipment by approved State vendor for the State Primary election held November 5, 2024, from budgeted funds.

Lori L. Miller, City Clerk, presented an invoice to Council for payment. Ms. Miller indicated the invoice was for the preparation of ballot test decks and testing of all election equipment prior to the Presidential election in November. Ms. Miller stated this is a sole source vendor, ElectionSource, who is authorized by the State, Wayne County, and Dominion Equipment to test the election equipment.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

6. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS: Livonia Public Library, re: cash and gifts from various contributors to be used for the purposes as designated by donors.

Kristen Edson, Library Director, presented this matter to Council to accept cash and gifts donated to the Library. Ms. Edson stated the generous donations are to put to good use by the Library throughout the year to off-set many programs used by the public.

Ms. Edson highlighted some of the exciting things the Friends of the Library due throughout the year, including multiple programs for children, teens and adults, specifically the Summer Reading Program, supplements the Library’s budget to purchase physical materials used at the libraries, provide scholarship funding to library employees who are working on their education, and maintain the fish tank on a monthly basis, which is entertaining for the children who visit the Library

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

7. REQUEST TO APPROVE HOURLY RATE INCREASE: Department of Civil Service, re: the Highschool Co-Op, College Co-Op, and Seasonal Clerk classifications, due to the new minimum wage rates.

REMOVED FROM AGENDA

8. REQUEST TO APPROVE HOURLY RATE INCREASE: Department of Civil Service, re: the Student Substitute Librarian classification.

REMOVED FROM AGENDA

9. REQUEST TO APPROVE MODIFICATIONS TO CLASSIFICATIONS AND WAGE INCREASES: Civil Service Department, re: to approve wage rate adjustments and classification adjustments for part-time Parks and Recreation employees.

REMOVED FROM AGENDA

10. REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ADVANCE FUNDS FROM THE NEWBURGH AND SILVER VILLAGE UNEXPENDED FUND BALANCE TO THE NEWBURGH VILLAGE TWO OPERATING FUND: Housing Commission, re: the Newburgh Village Expansion Project site preparation and clearance, in a combined amount of $500,000, to be repaid through the issuance of bonds.

Jim Inglis, Director of Housing, presented the item to Council. Mr. Inglis indicated Livonia owns approximately 9.5 acres adjacent to the existing Newburgh Village facility. The land was required many, many years ago and it has always been the intent of the Housing Commission to expand affordable housing for seniors. This request is to help fund the kick-off of this development.

Mr. Inglis stated the Housing Commission plans to break ground on the second phase of the development at Newburgh Village. No name has yet been assigned; however, it will not be Newburgh Village Two. That name is just to place the funding for the interim. Mr. Inglis stated both have a very healthy unexpended fund balance and the Housing Commission is looking to advance $500,000 to do some pre-development activities which include things such as site clearance, signage, fencing, and hiring an architect.

Mr. Inglis explained the three (3) senior communities in Livonia are self-funded and no monies are used from the General Fund. To get this project started and to retain an architect to help get the design process moving forward, the request is to advance funds from the unexpended fund balances of Newburgh Village and Silver Village. Mr. Inglis stated the next Agenda item will address how the Housing Division will go out to get bonds to repay the advancement of funds requested in this matter.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

11. REQUEST TO APPROVE NOTICE OF INTENT RESOLUTION TO ISSUE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS NOT TO EXCEED $10,000,000 AND DECLARING INTENT TO REIMBURSE: Housing Commission, re: the acquisition, construction, furnishing and equipping the affordable housing community at Newburgh Village.

Jim Inglis, Director of Housing, explained the Housing Commission will need to obtain bond monies to repay the advancement of funds in the previous request. Mr. Inglis indicated he has been working with the guidance and assistance of both the Finance Director and Miller Canfield, our bond counsel. Mr. Inglis stated the request before them involves two resolutions, the first is to authorize the Housing Commission to move forward with the issuance of a resolution to support this project. The Housing Commission approved, and its resolution is included in Exhibit A, which is a notice to taxpayers of the intent to issue bonds for general obligations. The notice is required to notify residents for a 45-day period the intent to borrow up to, but not to exceed, $10 million.

Mr. Inglis stated following the 45 day notice period, the Housing Commission can then proceed with obtaining the bonds necessary. Mr. Inglis stated this process will be handled by the City's bond counsel, Miller Canfield, and he has been working in partnership with the Finance Director to ensure the process is seamless.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

12. AWARD OF BID: Department of Parks and Recreation, re: the replacement of the Newburg Church roof at Greenmead Historical Park, from budgeted funds.

Ted Davis, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, presented the item to Council. Mr. Davis stated the roof materials will be in kind and the RFP for this matter was carefully constructed to ensure the materials would last. Mr. Davis stated the roof replacement is well needed and there are sufficient funds in the budget for the project.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

13. AWARD OF BID: Department of Parks and Recreation, re: an accessible playground addition at the Jack E. Kirksey Recreation Center, from budgeted funds.

Ted Davis, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, presented the item to Council. Mr. Davis outlined the highlights of this new playground addition, including how it exceeds ADA recommendations. Mr. Davis stated the new playground will be a great asset at the Recreation Center, it will include benching and perimeter fencing to secure the area a little better. Mr. Davis stated the project was previously approved using Wayne County grant funds.

Cindy Fleming, Livonia resident, spoke about the ADA compliance with the elevation of the designed playground would entail. Mr. Davis responded that the playground will be ADA compliant in materials used for surfacing, but it will also contain a transfer station at the height of individual steps and locations. It will also have more turfing in this area to help make it very safe for all to enjoy.

Vice President Ptashnik added that the design of this playground is not only hitting the ADA minimums, but actually going beyond with our accessibility which is going to allow us for more innovation and flexibility when one considers this project, so she thanked Mr. Davis for that as well.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

14. AWARD OF BID: Department of Parks and Recreation, re: Rotary Park Tennis Court Resurfacing, from budgeted funds.

Ted Davis, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, presented the item to Council. Mr. Davis indicated the usual lifespan of a tennis court is 5-7 years and it has been far more years for the courts at Rotary Park. Mr. Davis stated the improvements will be greatly appreciated by those who use the courts and there are sufficient funds in the budget for the project.

Councilmember Budzinski inquired if Mr. Davis could provide an update on the pavilion at Rotary Park. Mr. Davis indicated it has been a long back and forth process with the insurance carrier, which was finally settled in late November. The City has awarded architectural services to Hubbell, Roth & Clark for the design. A kick-off meeting was held on November 20th, with a walk through of the site involved. Both sides had some homework to complete. Mr. Davis indicated he was hopeful the design might be completed sometime before the end of March. Mr. Davis stated they would then go out to bid and perhaps be back before Council for approval in approximately May. Mr. Davis concluded he hoped to have a Fall reopening of Pavilion 1 and 2 at Rotary Park.

DIRECTION: APPROVING CONSENT

AUDIENCE COMMUNICATION

None.

ADJOURNED

10:15 PM

For January 15, 2025 Regular Meeting