

**CITY OF LIVONIA – CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF STUDY MEETING HELD MARCH 31, 2025**

Meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m. by Council President McCullough. Present: Carrie Budzinski, Lynda Scheel, Scott Morgan, Rob Donovic, Vice President Martha Ptashnik, and President Brandon McCullough. Absent: Laura Toy.

Elected and appointed officials present: Carter Fisher, City Attorney; Todd Zilincik, City Engineer; Mayor Maureen Miller Brosnan; and Lori L. Miller, City Clerk.

Councilmember Budzinski led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

During Audience Communication, Steve King, 33950 Coventry, acknowledged Bob, who spoke at the Regular Meeting earlier, regarding skylights at the Bennett Library. Mr. King stated there are fixes to the situation and felt it was embarrassing to host events at the Library with water dripping. Mr. King also indicated he did not feel the comments made by Chief Goralski in a recent editorial piece were correct and stated the building for Police Headquarters should be fixed, rather than starting all new. Mr. King felt it was disingenuous and misleading to the public.

Barbara Glover, 33288 Myrna Court, stated she attended Councilmember Budzinski's last Coffee Hour and was concerned about the delay in fixing the bathrooms at the Bennett Library (Agenda Item #4). President McCullough asked Ms. Glover to wait until the Agenda Item came up and Council will take public comment then.

Ralph Brown, 15642 Golfview, stated he was in favor of keeping all services available at the Bennett Library and stated he is in full support of the Library. Mr. Brown stated there are many programs, concerts, movies, computers, and the ability to borrow tools, which are all important programs and great for the community.

Christopher Martin, Livonia resident, spoke about the skylights at the Library. He felt it should have been fixed quite some time ago and needs to be handled. Mr. Martin stated after watching the last Committee meeting, he would vote no on any proposed millage and would encourage everyone he knows to vote "no" as well. Mr. Martin stated the repairs at the Library should be handled and the atrium is beautiful and was not in favor of a new roof being put on the building.

Lynn Mills, resident on Plymouth Road, stated the Bennett Library is only 37 years old and feels it looks old and outdated. Ms. Mills stated she visited the Plymouth Library which was added on to and was functional with displays that looked beautiful, not boring. She believed the building should be saved and not torn down. Ms. Mills stated she was in support of a public safety millage but would not support "frill" such as bike/walking paths, parks, etc. if those were included in the proposed millage.

Laura Jannika, resident, spoke about a Library she visited in Flint which has 79,000 residents. She stated they have an updated library, which was built in 1958. The building was gutted in

2000 and is now a state of the art library with 95,000 sq. feet. She stated her disbelief Livonia could not compete with Flint.

Councilmember Morgan stated he felt the need to address the comments made earlier by Steve King. Morgan stated he worked for 25 years in Police Headquarters and knew personally how the building was deplorable and should be replaced, citing an example of an incident where ceiling tiles filled with water and dumped on him and ruined all computers in his work area as well as destroying the materials he was working on. Morgan stated a new Police Headquarter has been needed for quite some time!

NEW BUSINESS

1. REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE: Department of Public Works, re: for the emergency repair of Vactor truck number 342, from budgeted funds.

Ryan Ferrell, Assistant Director of DPW, presented the request to the Council. Mr. Ferrell indicated this is a special piece of equipment with a limited number of vendors in the area who can repair same. Mr. Ferrell stated there was a malfunction causing the boom not to retract, the vehicle being a 2022 vehicle. The repairs were completed, and the truck is now back in service. Tonight's request is to authorize payment for completion of the work and repair, from budgeted funds.

DIRECTION:

APPROVING

CONSENT

2. REQUEST FOR WAIVE THE FORMAL BIDDING PROCESS AND AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE OF ONE (1) SEWER LINE RAPID ASSESSMENT TOOL (SL-RAT): Department of Public Works, re: to be used by the Sewer Department; from budgeted funds.

Ryan Ferrell, Assistant Director of DPW, presented the item to the Council. Mr. Ferrell stated the Sewer Department was allowed to demo this piece of equipment and found it to be incredibly useful and saved a considerable amount of time. Over a short period of use, the Sewer Department was able to look at more than 8,000 sewer lines each day, followed by their camera to make sure the scores were accurate. For these reasons, DPW would like to invest in this equipment to better view sewer lines throughout the community to provide preventative maintenance.

Kathy Shea, 18369 University Park Drive, inquired why the formal bidding process for this item was being waived and stated she did not understand based on how it is worded. Ms. Shea stated she felt bidding processes being ignored brought up some red flags and wanted to understand this item better.

Mr. Ferrell indicated this item was not sent out to bid as the vendor is a sole source, no one else has this type of equipment to offer.

DIRECTION:

APPROVING

CONSENT

3. REQUEST TO APPROVE A TWO-YEAR CONTRACT EXTENSION WITH D'ANGELO BROTHERS, INC.: Department of Public Works, re: to perform water main taps and service connections along with emergency water and sewer repairs at various locations throughout the city in an amount not to exceed \$375,000.00 annually, from budgeted funds. (CR 198-22)

Ryan Ferrell, Assistant Director of DPW, presented this request to the Council. Mr. Ferrell indicated they have an extensive rapport with the vendor, D'Angelo Brothers, Inc., who has performed the repair of main taps and service connections, as well as emergency repairs as needed, and would like to extend the contract with this vendor. Mr. Ferrell indicated D'Angelo Brothers is willing to extend the contract prices as approved in 2022 through the end of 2027, which will be significant cost savings for Livonia. Mr. Ferrell indicated their experience with this vendor is outstanding and funds have been budgeted for this service.

DIRECTION:

APPROVING

CONSENT

4. AWARD OF BID: Engineering Division, re: Robert and Janet Bennett Civic Center Library – ADA Bathroom Construction, from budgeted funds.

Todd Zilincik, City Engineer, provided a brief description about the bid submitted for the ADA bathroom construction at the Bennett Civic Center Library. Mr. Zilincik stated they went out to bid, however, the bid package exceeded expectations for the project. Mr. Zilincik stated they went back out to bid, and the contractor was still over budget and understood the Mayor may have different use for the funds available.

Mayor Brosnan stated this item was sent out to bid and the City intended to use CDBG funds for the bathroom construction. However, given the recent developments and the progress made regarding the Civic Center and a design to include a combined City Hall/Library, it does not make sense to use the CDBG funds for a building that will only be around for two more years. As a solution, the Mayor indicated the Council was provided with a letter dated March 28th wherein the Administration is recommending that CDBG funds be used to put back into Mac Towers. The Housing Commission has a much-needed use for the funds, which is to remove carpeting from all 82 apartments at Mac Towers and replace with laminate flooring. Mayor Brosnan indicated that the residents in this low-income facility deserve to have floors that allow them to adequately traverse, given the increasing number of walkers and wheelchair users at Mac Towers and would also bring the building up to current standards.

The Mayor indicated in June, 2025, the City would have the opportunity to reassess next year's CDBG funds to see if they should be used for the bathroom renovations at Bennett Civic Center Library and no funding would be lost.

Barbara Glover, 33288 Myrna Court, stated in 1990 or 1991, the U.S. adopted what is known as the ADA law. This building is not accessible for handicapped residents, and neither is the Bennett Civic Library. She expressed she felt this was an urgent problem and should be handled as it is turning away people who are handicapped and they are not able to use the Library. Ms. Glover felt it was discriminatory as the City buildings are not ADA accessible and it limits residents' participation in governmental meetings.

Laura Jannika addressed the Council to inquire why two (2) years was said by the Mayor in relation to the Bennett Library. Ms. Jannika read a Social media post from a Livonia resident who is in a wheelchair. This resident stated it feels like a constant fight with the City and being disabled does not mean they are seniors, and not all seniors are disabled. Ms. Jannika stated these buildings are excluding residents from obtaining useful City information and the only building that is compliant is the DPW Admin building and there is one handicap accessible bathroom at the Rec Center.

Ralph Brown, 15642 Golfview Street, stated he felt the restrooms at the Library should be fixed and although the Mayor's idea for renovating the apartments at Mac Towers was a good idea, Council needed to look at the good of the public and weigh out the priorities.

Christopher Martin stated he was prescribed a wheelchair years ago and although he did not use it, he did use a cane in case his legs grew tired and felt this was appalling. He stated to delay this over some carpeting at Mac Towers was embarrassing and a poor decision. Mr. Martin encouraged the Council not to drag their feet on this project and should be adhered to under the law.

DIRECTION:	REFER TO CAPITAL OUTLAY & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE	CONSENT
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5. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE LIVONIA CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED: Department of Law, re: to amend Sections 110, 120 and 220 of Title 6 (Animals), Chapter 01, pet licensing policies.

Carter Fisher, City Attorney, presented this item to the Council. Mr. Fisher indicated because the Clerk's Office conducted a thorough review of processes and forms, it was discovered the current City Ordinance states a pet must have a valid rabies certificate that expires "no less than 30 days before the license". The Law Department reviewed the Ordinance further and the Law Department met with members of the Clerk's Office, Animal Control, and DPW. During this meeting, all departments involved agreed the language was too restrictive and should be updated quickly.

Mr. Fisher indicated the proposal also involves clean up language as far as six (6) pets total being permissible, a combination of up to (3) dogs and (3) cats, which is what the Animal Control Section already believed was the case. Mr. Fisher concluded

the final item involved the removal of “duplicate tags” and instead use the phrase “replacement” tags, as the City does not issue duplicate” tags.

DIRECTION: FIRST READ - PROPOSED ORDINANCE REGULAR

6. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE LIVONIA CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED: Department of Law, re: to Title 3, Chapter 4 (Financial Ordinance), in order to establish a Chief Financial Officer position and designate the reporting responsibilities under said CFO.

Mayor Brosnan presented the item to Council. The Mayor indicated this is part of a comprehensive reorganization of the Finance Department. The first phase is to establish a Chief Financial Officer position as the head of the Finance Department. This is a broader, higher view of the Finance Department, not simply doing Accounting functions but functioning to guide the City in more in-depth budgeting, multi-year budgeting, and investments to move forward.

Debbie Lichtenberg, Finance Director, provided a detailed perspective on the reorganization and restructuring of the Finance Department. Ms. Lichtenberg stated the newly created position will oversee the multi-facets of the Finance Department, removing them from the daily Accounting functions. She reiterated this is only phase one, and the remaining components are under separate Agenda items. The purpose is to give a broader view to leading the City forward with advanced budgeting needs and multi-year budgeting, but to focus on how the City can run more efficiently and save money to invest in the future.

Councilmember Donovic requested the Administration provide the graphic previously provided to them, which showed clearly the various positions in Finance and what was being moved around, prior to the next Regular meeting.

DIRECTION: FIRST READ - PROPOSED ORDINANCE REGULAR

7. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE LIVONIA CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED: Department of Law, re: to Title 2, Chapter 23 (Department of Information Systems), in order to designate the City's Chief Financial Officer as the direct manager of the Director of Information Systems.

Mayor Brosnan presented the item to Council. The Mayor indicated this is the second part of the Finance Department restructuring. Previously, an Ordinance was brought to the Council to shift the position of the Department of Information Systems from the Finance Department and put it under the Mayor's direction. However, upon review of the need to drive efficiency, a great majority of which is done through technology and computer systems, it makes sense to have the IS Department fall under the direction and guidance of the Finance Department. This move will also create a structure of

support the IS Department will need moving forward, and it aligns with the new reorganization to have IS fall under the Finance Department. The Mayor stated the Director of IS will report directly to the new position of Chief Financial Officer.

Steve King, 33950 Coventry, stated he was confused as to whether this was creating a new position or not. Mr. King stated it sounded like there was a position budgeted for, that was not filled, and now the Administration is looking to appoint a position and use those same budgeted funds.

Mayor Brosnan clarified the position was an appointed position and the new position is also appointed.

DIRECTION: FIRST READ - PROPOSED ORDINANCE REGULAR

8. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE LIVONIA CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED: Department of Law, re: to Title 2, by repealing Chapter 25 (Capital Improvement Ordinance) in its entirety.

Councilmember Donovic stated this is the final phase of the restructuring of the Finance Department and the request is to repeal what had previously been approved by Council, known as the Capital Improvement Ordinance. The Administration came to the Council a while ago to create a position of Capital Improvement Director. It was the belief that this Director position would closely monitor all City resources and plan for future needs. However, given the proposed changes and movement in the Finance Department, the Administration feels this position should not be filled at this level but rather be a Capital Improvement Manager within the Finance Department. The newly created position within Finance would not be a new department head or director and would report directly to the newly created Chief Financial Officer position.

Mayor Brosnan thanked the Council for sitting down with the Administration to understand and learn what this means for the City. This is a forward-facing future, to be able to do multi-year budgets, to embrace the priority-based budgeting talked about last year, and to be well on the way to addressing the capital needs that have been missed over the years for the City. It is complex and complicated, but indicated she felt the City will come out far ahead this time.

DIRECTION: FIRST READ - PROPOSED ORDINANCE REGULAR

AUDIENCE COMMUNICATION

Eileen McDonnell, 36099 Brookview, stated she did not understand the direction taken for Agenda Item #4 tonight and the referral to a Committee, and whether it would be voted on the Consent Agenda at the next meeting. Ms. McDonnell indicated she felt this should be addressed rather quickly.

Steve King, 33950 Coventry, stated he has worked in construction and is familiar with rehabbing old buildings. Mr. King stated fixing things is far cheaper than replacing an entire building and it is always cheaper to renovate than remove. Mr. King stated the changes in the Finance Department seem to be out of touch with what is going on in the world, as many governmental employees are losing their jobs with the implementation of DOGE, the upcoming tariffs, and the entire economy. Mr. King encouraged the Council to consider these factors when embarking on the large-scale project under consideration.

ADJOURNED

9:17 PM

For April 14, 2025 Regular Meeting