

REGULAR COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

CITY OF FLAT ROCK, MICHIGAN

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013

The regular meeting of the Flat Rock City Council convened at the Municipal building on the above date at 7:30 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS:

PRESENT: Mayor Dropiewski, Council members Martin, Borden, Wilkins, Wrobel, Gagne and Moore

ALSO PRESENT: DPS Director Hammond, Police Chief Rossow, Fire Chief/Building Director Vack, Treasurer Rozga, Attorney Grunow and Clerk Armstrong

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Resolution 02-19-01

Motion by Gagne
Supported by Borden

RESOLVED, to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of February 4, 2013

Motion carried unanimously

4. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Sue Farrar of the Beautification Commission announced the dates for the 2013 City Wide Garage Sale. The sale will take place on May 18th and 19th from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Permits are \$5.00 and can be obtained in the Clerk's office. Saint Vincent DePaul trucks will be at City Hall for residents to donate any goods.

Resident Charlene Smith spoke regarding the demolition of the Coleman Building. She presented reports to Mayor and City Council from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. She suggested the reports reflect that the building is ok to demolish. Mayor Dropiewski noted that the city is waiting for the final report from the state and once that is received the city will be able to apply for the grant to demolish the building.

5. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Police Chief Neil Rossow announced a fundraiser for retired K9 Officer Rocco hosted by Chris Mitchell and the Community Center. The event will take place on March 1st from 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm at the Community Center. Mayor Dropiewski gave credit to Councilwoman Moore and Recreation Director Pawlukiewicz for the idea of the event. The Mayor noted Rocco has an outstanding service record with the city.

Fire Chief Bill Vack announced the city advertised for the position of part-time building inspector/ordinance officer. He announced the written test for fulltime firefighter will take place on March 2, 2013. Chief Vack announced Congressman Dingell stopped by the Flat Rock Fire

Department to announce an \$114,000 Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant to help the department with operations and safety. The grant covered 95% of the portable radios for the fire vehicles which only cost the city approximately \$6,000. The total cost of the grant was \$114,000. He also announced they will receive 20 portable radios for the department. Chief Vack was very pleased with this grant and the visit from Congressman Dingell and everything he has done for the city.

City Clerk Meaghan Armstrong announced a Medicare scam where seniors are being contacted by phone regarding a preferred Medicare Care. There is no such thing as a preferred Medicare care and residents were cautioned not to give out any personal information.

6. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Councilwoman Felicia Moore asked Chief Vack if contractors at foreclosed homes are working, what types of credentials are required. The concern is that residents are not sure if they are valid contractors. Chief Vack responded that permits are required and the police department can always be contacted if unsure of a situation.

Councilman Paul Gagne reminded residents that the Big Boy fundraiser for the library is 2-20-2013. He announced the books have been distributed for purchase and that will help with fundraising. Councilman Gagne has been asked by residents when the library will close, he reminded residents that the library will not close and the city has no plans to close the library.

Councilman Ken Wrobel asked Bruce Hammond if Brown Street will be extended through Vreeland Road. He suggested that we put a traffic sign up at Vreeland and Telegraph with hours that you can/can't turn on red.

Councilman Gary Borden announced a special country music event on June 28th and 29th at Huroc Park. This will help raise money for the Flat Rock Schools and the Flat Rock Community Foundation. He announced fireworks will also take place for the community. He asked the Council to support him on hosting this event at Huroc Park. Councilwoman Moore had a few concerns regarding vacation schedules leading into the Fourth of July; she asked if he had any commitments from volunteers, Councilman Borden responded he has three teachers available. She also had concern that there would be conflicts with other communities hosting events. Councilman Borden said they checked and no other communities are hosting events that week. She also asked if this event is in conjunction with the ball field activity and movie in the park or if this event will replace those events. Mayor Dropiewski noted the movie in a park was a DDA sponsored event. Councilman Wrobel asked how much this event will cost and where the funds will come from. Gary responded that it will be similar to the Riverfest with volunteers and sponsors. He noted money is not taken from any city departments and it will come from fundraising, donations and the foundation. He said this is good for our community to move forward. Councilman Gagne noted that Mr. Borden started the first festival a couple years ago and asked for his support, Gagne said they had a terrific festival and had a great turnout. He anticipates this event will be a great turn out and noted Borden has done a tremendous job. Borden thanked his committee and the city for their help and support. Councilman Borden thanked Flat Rock Metal for their donation to purchase books and shelves for the library fundraiser. He also thanked the Flat Rock Community Foundation for everything they do for the city.

Request for the use of Huroc Park on June 28th and 29th for a country music festival (the park will be used on June 28th for set up purposes) Event will take place on June 29th

Resolution 02-19-02

Motion by Borden
Supported by Gagne

Resolved, to approve the use of Huroc Park on June 28th and 29th for a country music festival

Motion carried 5-2
With Wilkins and Wrobel voting no

Councilwoman Wilkins announced the rabies vaccination clinic on Saturday, April 20, 2013 from 9:00 am – noon. The vaccinations will be administered by Dr. Oliver. Councilwoman Wilkins thanked the Mayor for a beautiful marriage ceremony for her son, Brian and wife Kiah. Councilwoman Moore asked if the city offers a mobile vet, Councilwoman Wilkins responded that it is Dr. Herman who provides that service. Moore also asked the types of vaccinations and location of the clinic and if you have to be a Flat Rock resident. Councilwoman Wilkins also announced city animal license will be available for purchase with proof of rabies vaccine.

7. MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

Mayor Jonathan Dropiewski congratulated Fire Chief Bill Vack on obtaining the Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant. He also congratulated Councilwoman Wilkins as her son was newly married.

Mayor Dropiewski opened the State of the City Address announcing he will be speaking of the accomplishments of 2012 and what is expected in 2013.

The Mayor announced the city now has tax peace with Ford Motor Company. He thanked the Council for their support during the difficult negotiations. Ford Motor Company decided to not only stay in Flat Rock but also invest approximately a half-billion dollars in the plant. Ford is producing the new fusions and a 2nd shift will be added to the plant which will create approximately 1200 new jobs.

Speaking with the City and County Assessor, the Mayor announced home values have begun to stabilize. He said managing a budget with a continual decrease because of the values has been changing throughout the years. Homeowners should start to see their home values increase because of the stabilization.

Mayor Dropiewski noted a new Clerk and Treasurer appointed in 2012; he said he is pleased with the two employees who filled these positions. He noted according to the census Flat Rock has 9,878 residents. He said we are the largest city around that doesn't have a fulltime Mayor, Administrator or City Manager. He noted this puts a premium on the department heads and their duties. The Mayor thanked the department heads for the job they do daily.

The Mayor highlighted some wonderful events in 2012. He said how successful Riverfest is; he noted it is a premier event in Flat Rock. He thanked the volunteers and the Chairman Gary Borden for their efforts. Another event was the Christmas tree lighting. This was the first lighting in 15 years and he said it added a lot to the holiday season and hopes to continue it going forward.

Mayor Dropiewski acknowledged the past and present Mayor and Council on working together, making difficult financial decisions, to get out ahead of the curve. He noted we are now seeing the benefits of those financial decisions and will recover faster than other communities in similar situations.

The Mayor spoke about 2013 and what is happening now. He said we are transitioning from survival mode to growth mode. He is proud we are able to maintain police and fire services at the levels they are at. We have hired one officer and waiting to negotiate contracts to hire more. The

city is in labor negotiations with the police and fire unions and looking to settle the contracts soon. He spoke about how we have great city services and we need to find creative and affordable ways to reward the employees for providing the great services for both short and long term financial situation. The Mayor noted he is looking into how we can change future employee benefits to be more in line with what is affordable so we are not left we crushing situations as other cities are in.

Mayor Dropiewski announced his goal to replace all outdated technology. The city replaced all of the outdated computer hardware throughout the city. With this new equipment we will be able to upgrade to other software. He noted a proposal will be presented to Council within the next couple meetings to upgrade the BS&A software within various departments. Along with the new software will be new capabilities. One thing the Mayor would like to change is that we don't accept online payments for tax and utility bills. He would like to offer citizens the option of a more modern online payment system. Another upgrade with the new software is the ability for citizens to report problems and request services online and employees will be able to track and respond the requests. Noted, you can also report a compliment or good services as well. The city website has been redesigned and staff was trained on how to maintain and edit the website. He noted over the coming weeks you will see the refresh of the content of the webpages and department heads are able to add more content to the pages. The city will soon be launching a Facebook page and the Mayor along with a couple other employees will begin tweeting on twitter. We will be able to communicate relevant events and communications like many other cities around us. These are critical new means of communication to get information out to our residents. Mayor Dropiewski announced he would like to replace the city marquee to a more modern and flexible design that can show more than one message at a time. It was in the budget to be replaced in 2003 and he is hopeful it will be replaced this year. It is a critical communication tool to notify the residents of what is happening in the city.

The Mayor would like to strengthen the Flat Rock Library. He noted it is a jewel of the community used by hundreds of community members on a yearly basis. He appreciates the work Councilman Gagne and the library board is doing to make hard decisions that make sure it has continued success and future growth. The Mayor's goal is to help the library succeed and feels we are well on the path to make the library a healthy community assists that it should be.

Mayor Dropiewski announced a goal to increase corporation and work with the schools. He is always looking for ways for the Schools and City to work together. He said we are all in this together. He would like the art departments to create permanent art displays to hang throughout City Hall. He noted how talented the kids are and their work should be displayed. Mayor Dropiewski asked the elementary school to help him by having a student to come to the Council meetings along with their family to lead the pledge of allegiance. The Mayor would like to start "for a day program" where students could spend a day in and around the city, with an employee. He hopes to do this once a semester. He would also like to establish a summer internship program at City Hall. He would like to give our young people exposure to office and professional environment. He would like to give a productive opportunity to kids who are not getting them now which can really change a person's life and lead to a job elsewhere.

Mayor Dropiewski said the hardest challenge over the last three years is balancing what we have to do and what we want to do. Because of the budget reductions we had to cut capital spending. He noted we must begin to address our infrastructure. We had major repairs on our water and sewer infrastructure last year. He asked the DPS Director to bring forward proposals on full assessments on water and sewer infrastructure. We need to identify where we have issues and can't wait any longer. We also need to get back to preventive maintenance. He has asked the DPS director to bring forward joint and crack sealing of roads. He doesn't anticipate major road repair this year. He would also like to see the sidewalk program reinstated to make the sidewalks safer. The Mayor talked about the ice rink/fountain. DPS was able to make it into an ice rink this winter. He said we are looking to turn the fountain into a splash pad for summer use. He has started to solicit donations and seek grants for the splash pad. He announced the bike path will be completed in 2013 and the bid came in under budget. This is a recreational option and will also have a great impact in our business and downtown area.

Mayor Dropiewski talked about economic development in the city. Flat Rock has seen a number of new businesses open this year. Those businesses are Family Dollar, Bootleg BBQ, Style U Boutique and I Thee Wed amongst others. The investment that Ford has made in the plant has made us a target for economic development. We have applied for and been accepted in the Michigan Main Street Program which will give us access to a number of core training sessions and resources to plan for a more vibrant city and downtown. This will bring together different groups such as city government, DDA, businesses, etc. He noted how we have wonderful assets such as the Huroc River.

The Mayor addressed the number one question from residents which is when will we have a grocery store? One of the things he's done since becoming Mayor is improved economic development and reaching out to businesses and not waiting for the business to come to us. He announced Meijer has approached the city and will go through the process of approval to open a store in Flat Rock. He wanted to caution residents that just because they go through the process with the city, the Meijer family will make the final decision. He noted if Meijer comes to Flat Rock, filling our vacant buildings will be much easier. It will also benefit our current businesses.

Mayor Dropiewski thanked everyone for their support the past couple years. He reminded residents that we are slowly coming out of tough times but not completely out yet. He is concerned with the issue with personal property tax and what will be the outcome. He noted we must be cautious with decision making and spending. Mayor Dropiewski closed his State of the City Address with noting he is very excited about the future of Flat Rock and proud to be the Mayor.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Item 8-A. Allocation of 2013 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Resolution 02-19-03

Motion by Wrobel
Supported by Dropiewski

Resolved, to approve the allocation of the 2013 CDBG funds

Motion carried unanimously

9. NEW BUSINESS:

Item 9-A Subrecipient agreement for Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG)

Resolution 02-19-04

Motion by Wrobel
Supported by Martin

RESOLVED, to approve the subrecipient agreement for CDGB

Motion carried unanimously

Item 9-B Arthritis Foundation program co-sponsorship agreement

Resolution 02-19-05

Motion by Martin

Supported by Gagne

RESOLVED, to approve the Arthritis Foundation program co-sponsorship agreement

Motion carried unanimously

Item 9-C Collateral Access Agreement for Flat Rock Tower Site

Resolution 02-19-06

Motion by Gagne

Supported by Martin

RESOLVED, to approve the Collateral Access Agreement for Flat Rock Tower Site

Motion carried unanimously

Item 9-D Approval of Bike Path contract from the Michigan Department of Transportation

Resolution 02-19-07

Motion by Gagne

Supported by Wrobel

RESOLVED, to approve the bike path contract from the Michigan department of transportation

Motion carried 6-1

With Wilkins voting no

CLOSED SESSION

Item A - Convene into closed session to confer with City Attorney regarding written legal opinion as to rescission of real estate purchase

Resolution 02-19-08

Motion by Martin

Supported by Moore

RESOLVED, to convene into closed session to confer with City Attorney regarding written legal opinion as to rescission of real estate purchase

Roll call vote - Motion carried unanimously

Resolution 02-19-09

Motion by Martin

Supported by Borden

RESOLVED, to reconvene into the regular City Council meeting

Motion carried unanimously

Resolution 02-19-10

Motion by Martin
Supported by Borden

Resolved, to concur with the recommendation of the City Attorney regarding written legal opinion as to rescission of real estate purchase

Motion carried unanimously

10. CORRESPONDENCE:
NONE

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Resolution 02-19-11

Motion by Wrobel
Supported by Martin

RESOLVED, to adjourn the regular City Council meeting of February 19, 2013 at 9:30 P.M.

All voting yes; motion carried unanimously.

JONATHAN DROPIEWSKI, MAYOR

DATE: _____
Approved

MEAGHAN K. ARMSTRONG, CITY CLERK