

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE OF THE CITY OF
GROSSE POINTE WOODS HELD REMOTELY (ZOOM) ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021.

PRESENT: Mayor Novitke
Council Members Bryant, Gafa, Granger, Koester, McConaghy
(Southfield, MI)
ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: City Administrator Smith
City Attorney Anderson
Treasurer/Comptroller Murphy
City Clerk Hathaway
City Engineer Lockwood
Director of Public Services Schulte
Deputy City Clerk/Facilitator Antolin

The Facilitator's Statement was read.

Mayor Novitke called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Motion by Bryant, seconded by Gafa, that all items on tonight's agenda be received, placed on file, and taken in order of appearance.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: Bryant, Gafa, Granger, Koester, McConaghy, Novitke
No: None
Absent: None

The first item discussed was regarding the **Council vacancy**. The Chair stated the purpose of this discussion was to decide how to move forward to fill the City Council vacancy created by the passing of George McMullen. The City Attorney stated that in accordance with Section 5.2 of the Charter, City Council shall declare a vacancy by Resolution and may establish a procedure to fill the vacancy.

Discussion included declaring the Council vacancy by resolution, sending out notices to receive resumes by a deadline (30 days), setting interviews, and making an appointment to fill the vacancy. The vehicles in which to send notices would include the Grosse Pointe News, Grosse Pointe Times, and the Happenings with the intent to notice three or four times. There was also a suggestion that the League of Women Voters may assist to conduct interviews and the use of rank choice voting to narrow down the candidates.

There was a consensus of the Committee that the City Attorney prepare a Resolution declaring a vacancy on the City Council for the February 22, 2021, Council meeting and to include candidates submitting their resumes to the City Clerk within 30 days. The Committee will review the applications and the vacancy is to again be discussed at a future Committee-of-the-Whole meeting.

The next item discussed was pertaining to **draft charter amendment language**. The City Attorney provided an overview of her letter dated February 2, 2021, with attachments outlining draft language for a charter amendment to bring the authority of the Treasurer and Clerk under the supervision of the City Administrator. After language is approved by Council, it will go to the Attorney General's office for approval. She suggested this could move forward in one of two ways:

- Option 1: Charter would provide for Council to adopt an ordinance and the ordinance delegate to the City Administrator supervisory authority over certain administrative offices. The benefit is that if revisions are needed in the future it can be done by ordinance rather than a charter amendment. Voters make the decision for a charter amendment.
- Option 2: Make language revisions in the charter itself eliminating the Clerk and Treasurer from reporting to City Council and allow them to be under the City Administrator's supervision.

The City Attorney suggested the Committee consider the amount of Council involvement. Council may confirm any appointments for the City Administrator's positions and be involved in the removal of those positions. Neighboring charters provide a variety of ways to do this.

Discussion ensued regarding if the charter is amended to provide for an ordinance to be adopted by Council. The City Attorney confirmed that whatever Council is in place, it could change this by adopting an ordinance. A charter amendment could pass at the polls and it would be up to Council to adopt a new ordinance.

The Mayor stated language should also be included to explain the changes, the voters need to know how it is going to change. In other words, it will be the pleasure of the Council having the power to appoint and discharge and placed these positions under the City Administrator with those powers. On Page 4 under f, he believed it needs to be tightened up, even though he would be voting against it. He stated it is confusing if Council does not adopt the ordinance. On page 6, he stated the same concerns as expressed on Page 4.

The City Attorney confirmed an unbiased, impartial fact sheet will be prepared explaining what happens.

The Mayor asked the Committee to confirm if all are in favor of Proposal 1 with the exception of himself. Council Member Koester stated he is not a proponent of making these changes because it is not going to help the City. The Mayor stated not hearing anyone else say no, the City Attorney was asked to prepare wording for Option 1 for the Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting on March 8, 2021. The City Attorney confirmed her direction was to create language keeping it as simple as possible to include keeping Council as the authority to appoint and remove while having the City Administrator supervise day to day operations.

Next, **Infrastructure Inventory** was discussed. The Director of Public Services provided an overview of his memo dated February 3, 2021, with attachments including

Proposed 2021 Construction Projects. He proposed five major projects for the upcoming fiscal year budget totaling \$4,613,000.00:

1. Road construction: Allard (Chester to west city limit) - \$890,000.00;
2. Watermain: Vernier (north and south sides from west city limit to Mack Avenue) - \$1.3 million;
3. Bag Barn Equipment Port at Department of Public Works - \$100,000.00;
4. Lake Front Park Kayak Launch - \$53,000.00;
5. Lake Front Park New Arched Fixed Pedestrian Bridge with stairs - \$250,000.00.

The City Engineer provided an overview of the Proposed 2021 Construction costs as discussed with the Treasurer/Comptroller. The Treasurer/Comptroller stated as of June 30, 2022, there will be approximately \$389,000.00 in local roads fund balance. At fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, there will be approximately \$3.8 million in the general fund, or 28% of the total budget. If \$266,000.00 is transferred out of general fund to cover costs, that will leave approximately 24% in the general fund for the \$15 million budget. Questions and answers ensued. The Director of Public Services explained that the proposed placement for the kayak launch is the most cost effective location due to placement of the existing floating dock, and that the cost versus revenue loss from the well will be absorbed in approximately two and a half years. There was a consensus of the Committee to keep the kayak project in the budget at approximately \$53,000.00 and to complete the project before the end of the year.

The City Engineer then provided **construction project updates**. The Director of Public Services provided updates to the Committee on the following projects:

1. DPW Water/Sewer Barn;
2. Oxford Rd;
3. Lake Front Park Bridge Replacement;
4. 2020/21 Water Main Replacement;
5. Generator at City Hall;
6. 2020 Pavement;
7. Sewer Rehabilitation;
8. Sewer Rehabilitation/Open Cut;
9. EPA Risk and Resilience Study.

Hearing no objections, the following item was discussed under New Business:

- Chene-Trombley Park Master Plan. Following discussion, there was a consensus of the Committee to authorize the City Administrator to sign the proposal with Stucky Vitale Architects to prepare a master plan at a cost of \$3,500.00 as indicated in the Director of Public Services memo dated January 19, 2021.

The following individuals were heard under Public Comment:

- Amanda York, Recreation Commission;
- Lisa Fuller, Grosse Pointe Woods Foundation.

Motion by Bryant, seconded by Koester, that the meeting of the Committee-of-the-Whole be adjourned at 8:39 p.m. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Kay Hathaway
City Clerk

Robert E. Novitke
Mayor