

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE OF THE CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2014, IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 20025 MACK AVENUE, GROSSE POINTE WOODS, MICHIGAN.

PRESENT: Mayor Novitke
Council Members Bryant, Granger, Ketels, Koester, Shetler
ABSENT: McConaghy (arrived at 7:22 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: City Administrator Fincham
Director of Public Works Ahee
City Attorney Chip Berschback
Deputy City Clerk Gerhart

Mayor Novitke called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Motion by Shetler, seconded by Bryant, that Council Member McConaghy be excused from tonight's meeting.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: Bryant, Granger, Ketels, Koester, Novitke, Shetler
No: None
Absent: McConaghy

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

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: Bryant, Granger, Ketels, Koester, Novitke, Shetler
No: None
Absent: McConaghy

Council Member McConaghy arrived at 7:22 p.m.

The first item discussed was **2015 Fireworks**. The Mayor provided an overview of the 2014 fireworks and the problems that arose, as well as the comments of the Fireworks Committee. The Mayor said some consideration should be given to having the Fireworks over the Parcels Field, but with the field closed and no entertainment or food vendors. The City Administrator was in favor of imposing a curfew, but the Mayor did not believe that was a viable option as the result of staffing and space shortfalls. The cost of the fireworks is bore by the sponsors. Cost of the additional staffing is bore by the City and cancelling the event would save the City \$14,000. If the event was to be cancelled, St. John Hospital would be willing to sponsoring other community events. The Mayor then proceeded to gather opinions from the members of council. The opinions were as follows:

- Council Member Bryant feels that the Fireworks Committee had a majority of people who felt that cancelation was the best step moving forward. His position was that the City should cancel for a period of one to two years, in the hopes that the individuals responsible would be more mature. He stated that moving to Lake Front Park or the closure of Parcels Field would be a viable alternative following the closure.
- Council Member Granger does not feel that Lake Front Park is a viable option because it would require approval of St. Clair Shores, poses a higher cost for a fireworks display above the lake, and presents the logistical issue of parking and shuttling people to the park. She does not feel that we should continue the fireworks next year.
- Council Member McConaghy stated that safety is the only concern. He disagrees that it should be cancelled, but rather feels that it should be moved to Lake Front Park in conjunction with a City Picnic. He feels that the turnout would be similar to that of the Ford House and the property can handle the parking. He did not foresee an issue with the City of St. Clair Shores, and is a proponent of further exploring the feasibility of moving to Lake Front Park.
- Council Member Shetler believes that the fireworks should be moved to Lake Front Park, pending further review. However the move will require coordination with both the City of St. Clair Shores and the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Council Member Ketels agreed that it was no longer viable at Parcels Field, but does feel that a move to Lake Front Park in conjunction with a community event, such as a picnic, would create a better community event. Council Member Ketels would be in favor of scaling back the size of the fireworks display to reduce cost.
- The Mayor believes that the level of support from sponsors would decline if moved to Lake Front Park. If the alternatives would be to move to Lake Front Park or cancel, he would be in favor of cancelling.
- Council Member Koester is in favor of gathering more information on the viability of Lake Front Park and if not viable then cancel the event.

Public comment was then held.

- Dennis Hyduk, feels it is no longer a community event. The cost associated with the event is no longer worth the event. His opinion would be to move to Lake Front Park as a resident only event.
- Cindy Pangborn felt that the fireworks should be stopped at Parcels field, as the trouble has been mounting over the years. She supports looking into if Lake Front Park is feasible. She is concerned with the impact an incident would have upon the schools system's reputation.
- Dan Curis said move to Lake Front Park if possible, if not cancel.
- Jeanne Lizza was pleasantly surprised at the level of interest that the Council has taken in the matter. In favor of Lake Front Park if feasible, possibly reducing the sponsorship levels to further foster the number of sponsors.
- Diane Karabetsos was in favor of moving to Lake Front Park but allowing for guests.
- Margaret Potter is in favor of moving to Lake Front Park. She wondered if it would be unreasonable to have a charge for residents entering.
- George McMullen would be in favor of taking a year off to explore further options, and further involve the community in the event.

The committee directed the City Administrator to gather information regarding the feasibility of moving the event to Lake Front Park in time for the Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting November 10th. The City Administrator was directed to determine the permitting process with the City of St. Clair Shores. The City Administrator was also directed to look at a full range of fireworks from barges to small scale displays. Council Member McConaghy suggested speaking to the Ford House first as they hold the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Fireworks display. Council Member Granger wants to explore partnering with other local fireworks displays.

The Mayor declared a recess at 8:17 p.m., and reconvened at 8:23 p.m.

The next item discussed was **Memorial Trees in Boulevards**. The Mayor provided an overview on the history of Memorial Trees in boulevards. Council Member Bryant stated that Robert Starnes at 1109 Lochmoor Blvd had requested a tree in the Boulevard in memory of his late wife. He paid for a tree to be planted in the Boulevard without a marker and also paid for a second tree in Lake Front Park with a memorial marker. Council Member Bryant was in favor of installing a marker in front of the tree on Lochmoor, with the City to pay for the marker. Council Member Koester stated that the Tree Commission has no objection to the expansion of the Memorial Tree Program as the Park is overcrowding with memorial trees. Director Ahee provided a list of the trees that have been planted on the Boulevard. He would be against planting trees on the right-away, as they could pose a line of sight burden. The new proposed guidelines would allow for the planting on Lochmoor, Fairford, Sunningdale, and Morningside. Council Member Granger stated it should be in the policy that the City has the right to move a tree. She raised the concern of individuals parking on the boulevard to visit the memorials. The number of memorial trees is low and the majority of individuals seek to have the tree placed in the areas that are currently permissible.

Motion by Bryant, seconded by McConaghy, regarding Memorial Trees in Boulevards, that the Committee-of-the-Whole recommend to Council amending the Memorial Tree Policy to allow for the planting of memorial trees within Lochmoor, Fairford, Sunningdale, and Morningside, boulevards subject to the City of Grosse Pointe Woods approval and to state in the policy that the City reserves the right to move Memorial Trees.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes:	Bryant, Granger, Ketels, Koester, McConaghy, Novitke, Shetler
No:	None
Absent:	None

There was a consensus of the Committee to authorize the purchase of a memorial marker to be placed within the boulevard on Lochmoor, for the tree previously purchased by Mr. Starnes, at an approximate cost of \$80, and to authorize the Administration to contact Mr. Starnes regarding placement.

Motion by Granger, seconded by Shetler, to remove the previous item from the Committee-of-the-Whole agenda.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: Bryant, Granger, Ketels, Koester, McConaghy, Novitke, Shetler

No: None

Absent: None

Discussion was then held on **Employee Parking – Businesses**. Council Member Ketels provided an overview of the Mayor's Mack Avenue Business Study meeting in regards to employee parking. Director Ahee provided an overview of the current layout of parking meters in the City. He also outlined the amount of unrestricted parking in the community; there are 21 spots in Parcels, 6 in front of Peters, 7 in front of Christ the King, 7 on Lochmoor, 16 on Renaud, 2 Spots on South Ford Ct, 3 on North Ford Ct, 8 Across from City Hall on Mack, and 5 on Blossom Lane. Discussion was also held on the merit of purchasing the rate change equipment, rather than leasing. The Committee directed the City Administrator to determine the best lots and locations for employee parking, and to provide such information to the Committee-of-the-Whole in Mid-January.

The next item discussed was **Commission Expenditures**. The consensus was if the expenditure was within the Commissions budget and did not alter City Policy or create a new program, then the City Administrator to authorize expenditures. The City Administrator is allowed to approve Commission Expenditures in the amount of \$250 or less, assuming that they are budgeted expenditures, that do not alter City Policy or create a new program. The item is to remain on the Committee-of-the-Whole agenda for further review next year.

Under New Business:

- The Mayor discussed the request from the Hunt Club to postpone the payment due date for their taxes. The City Treasurer/Comptroller had previously stated that it is against the City Charter. Since the Hunt Club had not chosen to present the issue to the Council, no action will be taken.
- The number of animals permissible was discussed and it was determined to leave the ordinance as it is and have variance hearings as needed.
- The Mayor discussed the potential to have a trolley system running from old Eight Mile to Seven Mile, using the current City buses. The consensus of the Council was to direct the City Administrator to gather information regarding the feasibility of the concept. The goal would be to determine if it could be cost neutral, as well as a potential conflict between the trolley service and summer time park transportation. It was requested that the information be presented the first off meeting Monday in March 2015.
- Council Member Granger raised the issue of holiday parking. Discussion was held on discontinuing the practice of bagging the meters, or potentially shortening the practice. The consensus of the Council was to discontinue the practice.
- A request for an update on the cost of repairing Lake Front Park Pool will be presented to Council next month.
- Discussion was held on providing better ease of access to information regarding the rental of Cook Schoolhouse on the City's website.

Under Public Comment

- Margaret Potter raised concerns about the no parking signs on the residential side street.
- Margaret Potter also raised concerns with the purchase of bike racks; the Director of Public Services stated they have been delivered and will be installed in the future.

Motion by Bryant, seconded by Shetler, that the meeting of the Committee-of-the-Whole be adjourned at 9:52 p.m. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Gerhart
Deputy City Clerk