

CITY OF WYOMING, MICHIGAN
Minutes of the City Council Work Session
Monday, December 13, 2021

PRESENT: Councilmembers Bolt, DeKryger (5:34 p.m.), Fitzgerald, Postler and Vanderwood

ABSENT: Councilmember Postema and Mayor Poll

STAFF: Hofert, Holt, Koster, McCarter, Rynbrandt, Shaffer, Smith, and Vandenberg

1. Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem Bolt called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Student Recognition

None.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

None.

4. Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

Shaffer provided a brief explanation of the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program available through Kent County Community Action. The \$1.7 million received by KCCA can be used to assist qualified applicants with payment of utility bills when they are in jeopardy of being disconnected. Shaffer explained that in order for Wyoming customers to be eligible, the City must have an agreement on file with KCCA. Shaffer further described how the program would be administered to assist customers.

Holt noted there is no cost to the city to participate in this program and this is being shared with Council for informational purposes. Staff will execute the agreement.

DeKryger joined the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Council supports staff's continued efforts on this item.

5. City-wide Rebranding Campaign

McCarter shared with Council the process used to review the bids submitted for the city-wide rebranding campaign. McCarter explained the combined bid from CivicBrand & Place+Main is being recommended for award of this contract.

Ryan Short, CivicBrand CEO, joined the meeting via Zoom and spoke about the company's experience working with municipalities and briefly described the approach the company takes in a rebranding effort. He also shared how CivicBrand will partner with Lansing-based Place+Main to fulfill the needs of Wyoming's rebranding effort.

Council supports moving this item to the next regular meeting.

6. Police and Fire Hiring Costs

Holt explained his desire to have Chief Koster discuss some of the costs related to hiring the additional police and fire personnel recently authorized by the City Council, noting these costs go beyond payroll.

Koster began with an explanation of the hiring planned in the Fire Department, noting seven new fire fighters will join the organization in February of 2022. Uniforms, safety gear and equipment are estimated to cost approximately \$80,000. A budget amendment addressing these costs will be presented at the December 20 meeting.

Koster also explained the department received notice that it has been selected to receive a Community Oriented Policing Services grant from the Department of Justice. These funds, totaling \$750,000 over three years, can be used to hire 6 additional police officers. Once the grant is accepted, certain grant-imposed timelines begin, including the hiring of new officers within 12 months.

Koster identified some of the additional costs the organization will need to address in order to support these new officers, including vehicles, uniforms, equipment and office furniture. Koster also spoke about departmental attrition and the grant requirement to maintain staffing levels for four years from the time the grant is accepted.

Council supports moving these items to the next regular meeting.

7. MIDC Update

Smith explained the purpose of the MIDC in conjunction with local courts in serving indigent individuals and providing competent criminal defense attorneys. Smith explained that due to requirements of the grant and concerns identified by the four cities and MIDC staff, an authority was formed to address administration of this program. This arrangement has also been questioned by MIDC staff, who suggested hiring an attorney/administrator instead.

Smith noted under this new approach, Wyoming will act as the fiduciary and employ a full-time administrator who would serve the four cities and three courts, handling all administration of this program. This approach relieves all entities and existing staff of the responsibilities of administering this program and it addresses the concerns identified by the MIDC. The board concept created under the authority will remain in place, though the original authority will be dissolved, and a new agreement will be presented.

Smith explained the resolutions and other documents that will be presented and noted the other community's plans for consideration of these items. An administrator has been identified and an employment agreement for that individual will also be presented.

Council supports moving these items to the next regular meeting.

8. City Center

Hofert provided a brief update on continued development of the city center project. Hofert noted this is informational only and no Council action is needed at this time. Significant groundwork has been done over the years which has helped expedite this project to date, but there are several time sensitive requests needed in order to continue advancement of this project. Staff can perform some of these tasks; others may require the hiring of consultants.

Staff intends to work with the Downtown Development Authority to request funding of a feasibility study. The DDA has the ability to access tax-increment revenue to pay for professional fees, including the hiring of a consultant to perform a study such as this.

Council supports staff's continued efforts on this initiative.

9. Board and Commission Reappointments

VandenBerg shared the proposed reappointments for the Board of Review and the Greater Wyoming Community Resource Alliance, as well as some external boards. Three resolutions of appreciation will also be presented to some members who will be stepping down.

Council supports moving these items to the next regular meeting.

VandenBerg also shared concern with the membership of the DDA, noting two additional resignations have been received. Given the development of the city center project, it is vitally important to have a functional board. An application was received today for the DDA, but given the timing of receipt, it was not included in tonight's packet. The applicant currently serves on another city board. VandenBerg is seeking council support in presenting this appointment next week if the Mayor supports appointment of the candidate.

Council supports moving this item to the next regular meeting contingent on the Mayor approving the candidate.

10. Parks and Recreation Annual Report

Rynbrandt recognized staff member Corey Stamps, noting his efforts in compiling this year's annual report.

Rynbrandt reviewed programs and services offered through parks and recreation, highlighting several unique and creative offerings throughout the pandemic. Rynbrandt also reviewed the investments made throughout the city's park system, as well as the collaborations with area school districts and other social service partners.

The Parks and Recreation Annual Report is available for review on the city's website.

11. Any Other Matters

Holt asked Smith to explain the PACE Program and discuss a request for a PACE project.

Smith explained the PACE Program, noting it provides funds to support clean energy improvements. The City adopted the PACE Program in May 2017, anticipating Metro Hospital

might apply for these funds to make some improvements. The PACE program can be used for commercial and industrial entities and does not attribute any costs to the city. The Reserve Flats has inquired about this funding and would qualify as a commercial entity. Due to the preliminary nature of this request, Smith is unsure whether this item will appear on the agenda next week. Council can direct any questions about this item to Smith.

12. Acknowledgement of Visitors/Public Comment (3-minute limit per person)

None.

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Kelli A. VandenBerg, City Clerk