

CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2021
IN COMMUNITY CENTER

1. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. Mayor Taylor led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Melanie D. Ryska, City Clerk, gave the Invocation.
3. Council Members present at roll call: Deanna Koski, Michael V. Radtke Jr., Maria G. Schmidt, Liz Sierawski, Michael C. Taylor, Henry Yanez, Barbara A. Ziarko.

Also Present: Mark Vanderpool, City Manager; Marc D. Kaszubski, City Attorney; Melanie D. Ryska, City Clerk; Carol Sobosky, Recording Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Mayor Taylor announced that tonight's meeting is being held in accordance with both state and federal guidelines. The Department of Health and Human Services has revised its face mask requirements to be consistent with the CDC guidelines for vaccinated people; therefore, those who are vaccinated do not need to wear a mask at this meeting. Those not fully vaccinated, as well as anyone moving about, are requested to leave their masks on.

5. **REPORT FROM CITY MANAGER**

Mr. Vanderpool informed that "Take-Out Tuesdays" started today at Dodge Park, and will be held every Tuesday through August 31 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. There will be a rotation of two to three food trucks on site with food options to go. He noted

there were quite a few people lined up at the food trucks to partake in this new event added this summer. He informed that Summer Thursdays will start this Thursday as part of the City's "Break-Free Blast" series of events, with Music in the Park starting this Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Dodge Park Amphitheater, featuring the Prolifics. The Farmers Market also starts this Thursday as well from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., and Patios 'n' Pints, held at the Upton House, starts at 5 p.m. He advised there are no limitations on crowd size. He reminded that the Splash Pad opened today, and he urged anyone interested to view the City's website for hours of operation. Mr. Vanderpool talked about lawn watering, especially now that the dry, warm weather has arrived. He reminded everyone that, in an effort to reduce water rate increases in their peak hours, they encourage individuals to voluntarily comply with their outdoor water usage restrictions through Labor Day. He explained residents are asked to voluntarily limit outdoor water use to odd/ even days based on the last number of their address. Those with addresses ending in an odd number are to water on odd days, and those with addresses ending in an even number are to water on even days. To the extent possible, for those with automated sprinkler systems, individuals are asked to water between the hours of 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. He added the hours to avoid are between 5 a.m. and 9 a.m., and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. He stressed if they could keep their peak day demand down, they can possibly lower rates for everyone, and that is region-wide for everyone who is part of the Great Lakes Water Authority.

Mr. Vanderpool talked about water rates and the restructuring processes beginning this year. Through a brief PowerPoint presentation, he showed the restructuring of the water rates approved by City Council, adding that thousands will benefit from this new rate structure by way of savings. They are moving to an Average Winter Consumption for sewer charges, so irrigation in the summer months will not determine the sewer charges, but those charges will be based on the average winter consumption. That will result in a significant savings for many individuals and eliminates the need for those who wanted a second meter. It encourages outdoor watering to keep yards looking nice, although he reminded that residents should still be cognizant of the voluntary restrictions on odd/ even watering days. This new structuring will apply to all residential customers and also improves the costs for low users, which will benefit 4,000 to 5,000 people in this category. It will help the "snowbirds" who leave in the winters for warmer climates, because they will not have to pay the minimum usage when they are away. He advised the new water meters that will be installed throughout the community over the next year-and-a-half will allow them to introduce "dynamic pricing", so water usage during non-peak periods, including not only lawn watering but all water usage, will decrease water charges. This will apply to everyone in the community and is a feature they have not been able to implement in the past, but the new rate structure and technology will make it possible once all of the new meters are installed. The installation of the new meters will also allow individuals to monitor their water usage as often as they want by way of their cell phone,

tablet, or computer. They will be moving to monthly billing rather than quarterly billing, and customers will have the option to pay their bills online, and also signing up for electronic billing and budget billing. He addressed concerns he has heard about rates going up beyond the rate of inflation, double-digit rates, etc. He showed a slide depicting rate increases over the last fourteen years, noting the average increase for water and sewer rates has been about four percent. He noted that, while it is above the cost-of-living index, it is below the actual "real" rate because water consumption has decreased significantly in that fourteen-year period of time. He showed the City's water and sewer rates in comparison to other communities, and he pointed out that Sterling Heights is still the lowest at an average \$64 per month when compared to the eleven other communities in Macomb County, and one of the lowest when compared to other large communities regionwide. He added that residents throughout the country are paying an average of \$104 per month for water and sewer bills, so Sterling Heights are paying considerably lower rates than what is occurring throughout the country. He noted there is another item on the agenda tonight regarding water and sewer rates, and he recommended that if anyone has any questions on water and sewer rates, they can call 446-CITY. He reminded that most residents will see significant decreases in their irrigation bills this summer because the sewer rates are no longer tied to outdoor irrigation.

Mr. Vanderpool stated that concludes his report this evening.

Mayor Taylor announced that former Sterling Heights City Council member Nancy Ulrich passed away on May 24 following a lengthy illness. He stated she was elected to serve on City Council in the 1970's, serving until 1983, and in 1980, she was instrumental in forming the first Memorial Day Parade in Sterling Heights, along with a committee of four Sterling Heights residents. He outlined some of former Councilwoman Ulrich's achievements, and stated today they remember and thank her for her contributions to this community. He stated their heart goes out her family, and a brief moment of silence was observed.

6. **ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION**

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider introduction of an ordinance amending Article III, Divisions 1, 11, and 12 of Chapter 2 of the City Code of Ordinances to establish compensation for boards and commissions by means of the annual appropriations ordinance. He invited Assistant City Attorney Donald P. DeNault, Jr. to give a presentation.

Assistant City Attorney Donald P. DeNault, Jr., explained they recently cleaned up some antiquated language about how they pay their members on boards and commissions. He stated the current Chapter 2 of the City Code outlines eight boards and their current rates of pay, and the most recent of those was established in 1999. They have not been updated for a long time, but it has been done through this year's budget process, so there is no reason for these itemizations to be in Chapter 2 any longer. There are two other spots in Chapter 2 that they are revising, addressing the Board of Ordinance Appeals and Code Appeals, and they will state

that “any compensation levels deemed appropriate by Council will be established by Council each year in its annual appropriations ordinance during the budget season.” He offered to answer questions.

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for public comment.

- Ken Nelson – concerned that this places the control in the hands of the appropriations budget rather than the control of the people; questioned the new rates since budget has already been approved.

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to introduce the ordinance amending Article III, Divisions 1, 11, and 12 of Chapter 2 of the City Code of Ordinances to establish compensation for boards and commissions by means of the annual appropriations ordinance.

Councilman Yanez felt they have had many discussions on the need to make sure they are attracting the best talent to their boards and commissions, and he felt they have come up with a good plan.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Taylor stated this item is consideration of the Consent Agenda. He opened the floor for public comments.

- Ken Nelson – commented on Item D; requested clarification on procedure for purchasing under next fiscal year budget; commented on Item F; questioned why it is not being installed at Station 1; commented on Item I, need to notify everyone in those precincts; commented on Item K, concerned not all citizens are in agreement.
- Jean Hunton – commented on Item K; provided a brief background on the history of this day and why the color orange was selected; stressed they are advocating common sense gun legislation and an end to gun violence; requested if the halo on M-59 is lit up orange on that day.
- Pamela Leidline – stated she previously spoke before City Council; her daughter was a victim of gun violence in 2012 by being struck by a stray

bullet in Lansing, Michigan; could not understand who would be opposed to gun violence; stressed they need to do something about it.

- Jon Matthews – commented on Item K; expressed sorrow for those who lost loved ones through gun violence; thanked Council for recognizing this date; echoed Mr. Nelson’s comments about Item I; recommended social media posting on change of polling locations; commented on Item C; questioned whether purchase of cleaning supplies is included; questioned whether this gaming center would be appropriate for competitions.

Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- A. To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 18, 2021.
- B. To approve payment of the bills as presented: General Fund - \$1,116,692.13, Water & Sewer Fund - \$49,273.60, Other Funds - \$3,209,033.21, Total Checks - \$4,374,998.94.
- C. **RESOLVED**, to purchase eSports furniture and accessories from Office Express, 1280 E. Big Beaver, Troy, MI 48083, at pricing available through an OMNIA Partners cooperative purchasing contract, #R142208 at a cumulative cost of \$17,830.26.
- D. **RESOLVED**, to waive the competitive bidding requirement in accordance with City Code §2-217(A)(9)(a) and purchase six (6) 2021 Dodge Charger Police Pursuit AWD vehicles and three (3) 2021 Dodge Durango Police Pursuit AWD vehicles from Jim Riehl’s Friendly CDJR of Lapeer, 1515 S. Lapeer Road, Lapeer, MI 48446, at a cumulative cost of \$269,847.
- E. **RESOLVED**, to purchase the 2022 Ford F-250 crew cab 4x4 pick-up truck, with front snow plow package, from Signature Ford – Lincoln, 1960 E. Main St., Owosso, Michigan 48867, at pricing available through a Macomb County vehicle purchasing program contract, #21-18, in the cumulative amount of \$41,883.
- F. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for a fire training burn building and training course to Draeger, Inc., 3135 Quarry Rd., Telford, PA 18969, in the amount of \$90,739, and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents required in conjunction with this approval.
- G. **RESOLVED**, to:
 1. Waive the competitive bidding requirement in accordance with City Code §2-217(A)(9)() and purchase soft copper pipe from Michigan Pipe & Valve, 3604 Page Ave., Jackson, MI 49203, at the quoted unit pricing; and
 2. To award the bid for the following water service parts to Ferguson Waterworks, 24425 Schoenherr Rd., Warren, MI 48089, for a one-year period at the unit prices bid:

Repair Clamps – CI
Repair Clamps – AC
Service Saddles
Curbs – No Lead
Corps – No Lead
Stop Boxes
Other: All

- H. **RESOLVED**, to approve the Independent Contractor Agreement between the City of Sterling Heights and Wayne C. Rockensuess, d/b/a Diamond Sports Officials Association, for umpire assignor services and authorize the City Manager to sign the Agreement on behalf of the City.
- I. **RESOLVED**, to approve the temporary relocation of polling places for precincts 21, 25, 30/31, and 36/39 for the August 3, 2021 City Primary Election, as recommended by the City Clerk.
- J. **RESOLVED**, to accept a proposal by Ochs, Inc. for life, accidental death and dismemberment, and long-term disability insurances for the period July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024 at the following monthly rates:

Employee Life Insurance	\$0.13 per \$1,000 of coverage
Retiree Life Insurance:	\$0.80 per \$1,000 of coverage
Employee AD&D Insurance:	\$0.02 per \$1,000 of coverage
Employee Long-Term Disability Insurance	\$0.22 per \$100 of covered payroll

- K. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating June 4th, 2021 as National Gun Violence Awareness Day in the City of Sterling Heights and to encourage the wearing of orange on this day to honor and support those impacted by gun violence.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Mayor Taylor stated there are a number of people wearing orange who requested a photo with the City Council, so a photo was taken.

8. **CONSIDERATION**

- A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider approval of a memorandum of understanding between the City of Sterling Heights and MAPE Supervisory Employees Union. He invited Mr. Vanderpool to give a presentation.

Mr. Vanderpool stated they have one more item with regard to their water rates and processes, and that includes the creation of this position. He explained that historically, utility services billing and customer relations have been job functions within the Treasury Division and the Budget and Finance Department. The City's water utilities are transitioning from quarterly to monthly billing for residential customers and implementing a new rate structure and new meters. City Administration is creating a new job classification entitled "Utility Services Manager" to oversee the new Utility Services Division within the Finance and Budget Department. The new job classification will be integral to ensuring that the new Utility Services Division is following critical performance objectives by providing continued level of high-quality and responsive customer service, and looking for ways to continually improve the customer service, seamless implementation of the new water rate structure; successful implementation of the monthly water billing; implementation of paperless water billing, budget billing, and water bill autopay with the help of Community Relations; overseeing changes to the water billing system resulting in the water meter replacement project. He explained the Utility Manager Services position is funded in the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget, and in order to create the utility services manager classification, the City was required to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with the MAPE Supervisory Employees Union, which has been approved by that bargaining unit. He explained with all of the changes that are going on to the benefit of water and

sewer customers, City Administration is respectfully recommending Mayor and Council approval of the Memorandum of Understanding presented this evening.

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for public comments.

- Jon Matthews – stated it is always good to get a Memo of Understanding between the labor organization and the administrative body, especially with this last year being so difficult.

Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the memorandum of understanding between the City of Sterling Heights and MAPE Supervisory Employees Union creating the Utility Services Manager job classification and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign it on behalf of the City.

Councilwoman Schmidt clarified that this position was already put into the 2021/2022 budget, so it is a budgeted position. She felt it is important to have someone take on all of these duties because it will be an extensive program being instituted, so they will need the right person in place. She is in full support and appreciated the union and Administration working together to get this done.

Councilwoman Ziarko agreed and appreciated Mr. Matthew's comment about getting management and labor unions to work together for the common good. She added they actually had the easy part to approve. She thanked everyone involved for getting this work done.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

B. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider appointments to City of Sterling Heights Boards and Commissions. He opened the floor for comments from the audience.

- Ken Nelson – felt the power of appointment should be from all seven council members, not only the pick of the mayor; cited the Elected Officials

Compensation Commission; raised issue of having multiple people on quasi-judicial boards.

Mayor Taylor inquired as to whether it is a state law that requires the City to appoint one member to the Planning Commission who also sits on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Kaszubski replied that is correct, and explained it is because those boards are so tightly intertwined. They like to have one member serve on both boards to act as a liaison.

Mayor Taylor stated they have always had one Planning Commission member serve on the Board of Appeals, but it has only been one, and he requested whether that is correct.

Mr. Kaszubski replied affirmatively.

Councilwoman Ziarko pointed out that some of these appointments that fall under the mayor's power of appointment are specified as such under state statutes. She recalled a group took that authority away from former Mayor Richard Notte, and Council voted to put it back. She believed there are three or four commissions that are mayoral appointments by state statute.

Mr. Kaszubski replied affirmatively, adding that he believes the LDFA is one. The statute requires that the mayor will appoint the Brownfields commission, and he added he would have to look up the others.

Mayor Taylor stated there are two batches tonight: one where the two-step process of nominations was started at the last City Council Meeting, so those will be taken first.

Planning Commission

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Geoffrey Gariepy, Pashko Ujkic, and John Meyers III to the Planning Commission to terms ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Councilman Radtke stated two people were appointed to the Planning Commission. Mr. Ujkic is their liaison and chair of the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Gariepy is currently chair of the Planning Commission. He felt that Mr. Myers has served a different role, but he will be a great addition to the Planning Commission.

Mayor Taylor stated Mr. Ujkic is a business owner in Sterling Heights. He is both a commercial property owner and residential property owner in Sterling Heights. He operates multiple businesses in this city and is an immigrant who came to the United States and has worked hard in the real estate industry. He has a deep understanding of the real estate industry, as well as planning and zoning issues, so he felt Mr. Ujkic will be a natural fit on this Commission.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Board of Ordinance Appeals I

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Robert Ervin and Julie Hoff-Windhorst to the Board of Ordinance Appeals I to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski stated both appointees have done well, and she felt they are both good candidates again.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Board of Ordinance Appeals II

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Radtke, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Michael Stickney and Steven Ujkic to the Board of Ordinance Appeals II to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski commented these two gentlemen are very good at what they do, and she would like to see them continue on this Board.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Board of Review

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint John Hages and Mona Yassine to the Board of Review to terms ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Radtke, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Derek D'Angelo and Pashko Ujkic to the Zoning Board of Appeals to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski felt both of these gentlemen work very hard, and although they do not always agree with each other, it is good that these two individuals are on the same Board, adding it makes it very fair.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Mayor Taylor stated that completes the appointments that fall under the two-step process, and they are moving on to the appointments based on the one-step process.

Corridor Improvement Authority

Mayor Taylor stated this is a mayoral appointment, and he would like to nominate Robert Artymovich to the Corridor Improvement Authority.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Robert Artymovich to the Corridor Improvement Authority to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Economic Development Corporation / Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

Mayor Taylor stated there are two positions on the Economic Development Corporation / Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, one which is a request for reappointment. He noted there are two separated term ending dates.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint John Meyers III to the Economic Development Corporation/ Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Mayor Taylor stated the next is for an open partial term ending June 30, 2022, and it is a mayoral appointment. He would like someone to make the appointment for Benjamin McMartin to the open term.

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Benjamin McMartin to the Economic Development Corporation/ Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to a term ending June 30, 2022, subject to the

appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Ethnic Community Committee

Mayor Taylor requested that City Council make a motion to reappoint all four individuals to the Ethnic Community Committee.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Abbot Basal, Kozetta Elzhenni, Susan Kattula, and Iqbal Singh to the Ethnic Community Committee to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Local Development Finance Authority

Mayor Taylor stated this is a mayoral appointment, and Dominic Patrus is seeking a reappointment.

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Radtke, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Dominic Patrus to the Local Development Finance Authority to a term ending June 30, 2025, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Arts Commission

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment for five positions, with four of those seeking reappointment, and one open position.

Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to appoint David Bollman, Janet Burns, Lawrence Farhat, Judith Foley, and Patrick Michalski to the Arts Commission to a term ending June 30, 2025, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Beautification Commission

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment for three positions, with two of those seeking reappointment, and one open position.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Steven Duncan, Gary Isom, and Patrick Rye to the Beautification Commission to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Board of Code Appeals

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment for one member seeking reappointment.

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Thaddeus Stanek Jr. to the Board of Code Appeals to a term ending June 30, 2026, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Citizens Advisory Committee – CDBG

Mayor Taylor stated there are seven positions, with five of those seeking reappointment, and two open positions. He added all seven have the same term ending date.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Janet Bartello, Kozeta Elzhenni, Grace Pedrie, Jeanne Schabath-Lewis, and Shawn Taylor to the Citizens Advisory Committee to a term ending June 30, 2022, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Election Commission

Mayor Taylor stated there are two members of the Election Commission seeking reappointment.

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Wayne Davis and Joseph Niman to the Election Commission to a term ending June 30, 2023, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Historical Commission

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment for four positions, with three of those seeking reappointment, and one open position.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Nicholas Cavalli, John Connor, Douglas Harvey, and Geoffrey Hoerauf to the Historical Commission to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Councilman Radtke felt they are reappointing three commissioners who have done a wonderful job, and Mr. Hoerauf, who is a historical interpreter and guide, will do a great job.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Library Board of Trustees

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment, and there is one member seeking reappointment.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Shirley Cozort to the Library Board of Trustees to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Solid Waste Management Commission

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment, and there are two members seeking reappointment.

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Henrietta Baczewski and Wayne Davis to the Solid Waste Management Commission to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Sustainability Commission

Mayor Taylor stated this is a City Council appointment, with two openings;

however, they have two separate term ending dates.

Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Nathan Inks to the Sustainability Commission to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Mobashira Farooqi to the Sustainability Commission to a term ending June 30, 2022, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Postponements

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Radtke, **RESOLVED**, to postpone two appointments to the Citizens Advisory Committee to the June 15, 2021, regular City Council meeting.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Mayor Taylor stated that, since there is no Elected Officials Compensation Commission meeting until 2023, he would like to postpone this to the December 2, 2021, City Council meeting, which will be after the upcoming mayoral and city council election. He noted this will push it off to the newly-elected City Council and Mayor to make that recommendation.

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Taylor, **RESOLVED**, to postpone the appointment to the Elected Officials Compensation Commission to the December 7, 2021, regular City Council meeting.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

9. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for comments from the audience.

- Jon Matthews – ordinances should be inclusive for all residents; thanked the City for keeping everyone safe over the last year; encouraged everyone to continue to wear masks and use good hygiene in an effort to stop the spread of COVID.
- Kelley Skillen – requested a question be added to the community survey regarding anti-discrimination for the LGBTQ community.
- Charles Jefferson – commented on DTE rates increasing; would like to see schools compete at the skateboard park; felt there should be metal detectors at City Hall; questioned activities planned for Juneteenth; talked about resolutions he would like to see regarding ethnicity issues.
- Ken Nelson – requested all resolutions be read into the record rather than be made part of Consent Agenda; concerned about budget discussions; questioned the amount of the City's debt.
- Benjamin Orjada – requested the Council adopt a Resolution for LGBTQ rights in the City without discrimination.

10. REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION AND CITY COUNCIL

Mr. Vanderpool addressed several comments and questions that were raised this evening. Mr. Nelson had inquired about the police vehicles under the Consent Agenda, and Mr. Vanderpool clarified there is one being purchased in the current fiscal year using the current fiscal year funding. Eight of the vehicles are being purchased in the 2022 budget, which starts July 1, 2021. All nine of these vehicles will be delivered and paid in FY 2022, adding that police vehicles have a long lead time, so ordering them now is a wise thing to do. He assured the change in four

of the polling locations will be widely publicized, and in addition to direct mailing, there will also be a significant social media advisory, as well as providing information on the City's website and cable channel. He felt there was some confusion on Mr. Nelson's behalf regarding the location of a drill tower for the Fire Department, and he clarified the ancillary building approved by City Council this evening will be at Station 5, directly adjacent to the drill tower, so this is an ancillary apparatus which is needed to preserve their premier status as a Fire Department across the nation. He addressed the concern about the anti-discrimination ordinance and explained the City has revised all of their internal policies and procedures to include anti-discrimination ordinance language, including prohibiting any type of discrimination, including sexual orientation discrimination, and they still encourage the state to act on behalf of the entire state to ensure there is no discrimination of any kind.

Mr. Vanderpool referred to Mr. Jefferson's comments about metal detectors, and although he admitted it sounds like a good idea, he has talked about it with him in the past. He explained there are two officers present at every Council meeting, and they are on alert and able to take any appropriate action. He explained the Juneteenth activities are coming up, and the African American Coalition will have a table at the Cultural Exchange on June 18. They will be highlighting the City Council's approval of the Juneteenth resolution, which will be blown up and placed on an easel for everyone to see the proactive action City Council is taking to recognize this important date in African American history. He commented on

Mr. Nelson's concern that resolutions should not be on the Consent Agenda, and he reminded the audience that just because something is on the Consent Agenda does not mean there is any less backup material. This backup material is available for anyone to look at it electronically on an e-packet with an internet connection, or they can visit the Clerk's office if they do not have internet. Mr. Vanderpool commented on the City's total debt in response to Mr. Nelson's concern that Sterling Heights has a high debt. He clarified Mr. Nelson's comment is contrary to the facts of the City, and he stated they are at their lowest debt rate since 1989. He reviewed some of their financial achievements that have been implemented, including full funding of the City's long-term liabilities while reducing and eliminating legacy costs. They have increased retiree health care trust fund assets from \$6 million in 2004 to over \$150 million in 2021. Their fund balance is solid at nearly 25 percent, and they continue to have one of the lowest tax rates of all full-service cities in Macomb County, and one of the lowest across the State, in addition to one of the lowest water and sewer rates in southeastern Michigan. They have obtained the highest audit score possible, and they have continued for decades to receive the distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association, as well as maintenance of a AA credit rating, and Standard and Poor provided very high accolades. He felt the comment made regarding an excessive amount of debt does not align with the facts and figures of their budget and what the independent experts are saying about the City's financial position.

Councilman Radtke referred to comments about the City's debt, and he stated that, while some cities prefer to pay for everything in cash, he felt that is foolish. He compared it to saving to pay cash for a house as opposed to getting a mortgage and paying a little at a time while enjoying the benefit of the house the entire time. He pointed out that they are now in one of the lowest interest rate environments in history, so they are paying almost nothing for the full use of a building. They would have to save up for fifteen to twenty years for enough money to buy the building, and in the meantime, things would be deteriorating and money would have to be spent on excessive maintenance. In an environment where they can leverage and pay for it as they go, they can give the residents the services they expect. He felt that is the smart way to do business.

Councilwoman Ziarko commented that this last year has been one everyone will remember, and she felt the City has been successful for many reasons, including the leadership of Administration and Council. She commented that some of the millages brought up tonight were voter-approved, and they voted to spend the money, especially for safe streets and the park system. She stressed that this is a very desirable area, and realtors are using stock photos of the Farmer's Market, Splash Pad, the amphitheater, and others to sell homes. She felt it was a good investment. She questioned whether they will be offering the COVID vaccines at the Farmer's Market for anyone who wishes to get it.

Mr. Vanderpool replied affirmatively, noting they will be providing vaccines starting this Thursday at the Music in the Park event. He advised anyone interested

to look for the Mobile Command Unit, which will be parked by the Splash Pad, and anyone can stop by to get a vaccination. He added no appointments are needed, and they have highly-skilled, talented paramedics to administer the vaccines. He replied to further inquiry that he believed there will be an incentive to get the vaccine, and that will be a free beer coupon that can be redeemed at Patios 'n' Pints, located across the street from the vaccine location. He added they are looking at other incentives as well.

Councilwoman Ziarko stated the Tulsa Massacre, which occurred 100 years ago, has been in the news. She would like to see some type of programming about that massacre done during Black History Month. She felt it is something that would be a good addition.

Councilwoman Schmidt commented on the beautiful Memorial Day ceremony that took place at City Hall, unveiling the new location of the Memorial Garden setting. She commended Grand Marshall Sharon Allen, who served 20 years in the military, and more years than that to the residents of Sterling Heights on various boards and commissions. She stated it was a very humbling and educative speech about Memorial Day and what it is really about. She felt it was a beautiful tribute, and she thanked Ms. Allen for her words and her service. She added that earlier tonight, they unveiled the new Police Memorial Mural in front of the Police Station, with the names of their three fallen officers on the bottom, as well as tiles made at the Detroit Institute of Arts by the police officers and their families. She felt that is a humbling memorial to those who have sacrificed for the residents of this City.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether they still post a list of the City's activities on the website.

Mr. Vanderpool replied affirmatively, and stated he uses it almost daily. He informed that anyone wanting that information can go to the City's website, click on "Calendar", and they can pull up any day or any month to get a listing of activities for the desired date. He cited the example of "Take-Out Tuesday" and "Music in the Park", both of which are included. He stressed the City has a lot of activities and their calendar is a great resource, especially since it is electronic and can be sorted by month, activity, etc., and can be printed out.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether they are still restricting activities to residents only. She questioned where non-residents are welcome.

Mr. Vanderpool explained they are restricting somewhat as they reopen. He cited the example of the Splash Pad, which is normally open to both residents and non-residents, with non-residents paying a fee. He stated they are starting out this year with residents only because they want to see how much usage, especially when they are expecting a high demand after the pandemic for the last year-and-a-half. They can slowly open it back to non-residents. There are other activities across the city where non-residents are allowed to participate, including OktoberFest, the dog park, etc., although there are higher non-resident fees for some of the activities.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski mentioned that Memorial Day means a lot to her, having been married to a retired Major in the U.S. Air Force, and her son will be promoted

on Thursday to Major in the U.S. Marine Corp. She indicated she will be missing at the first Music in the Park for that reason. She is happy they can get back to the "old normal". She inquired as to the ages they will be immunizing on Thursday, noting that those who are underage will not be getting a free beer coupon.

Mr. Vanderpool replied they will be immunizing whatever age limits are now authorized by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. He indicated that will be clarified on their social media.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski agreed with Councilwoman Schmidt's comments on the Veteran's Memorial, adding it is beautiful. There are benches, and they will be putting in picnic tables with umbrellas for staff and residents to reflect and enjoy. She knows the individual who made many of those memorials, and he is a very talented sculptor. She addressed earlier comments made by citizens about Resolutions adopted by City Council. She assured they are not meant to exclude, but they are meant to draw attention to some of the opportunities where they can highlight their vibrancy, inclusiveness, and if they highlight a special childhood illness or a mother's group against gun violence, it does not have to be important to everyone, but they are for those who feel displaced or marginalized to let them know the City is trying to prevent the further propagation of that marginalization. She cautioned that they will not have a resolution for every single group, but she felt they are going in the right direction when they adopt these Resolutions.

Mayor Taylor congratulated Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski on her son's achievement, adding they are a family of public servants, and he is proud to serve with her. He

stated he was recently contacted by a business owner in the city who has a salon, and she rents out "lofts" to the stylists. She would like to expand her business of a hair and nail salon to allow for services such as massage and microblading. He explained that this would require a change in the zoning of her building, or it would require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. He noted that there are certain restrictions and limitations for massage therapy businesses, including hours of operation. She would like her hair stylists and nail technicians to be able to work later, even if the massage therapy and microblading services have to end earlier; however, the current ordinance would limit the hours of the entire operation to what is permitted for massage therapy or microblading. He stated that, without objection from Council, he would like City Administration to bring forward an ordinance that modernizes the current requirements and would reduce those regulations on the entire building, thereby allowing the other services to remain open later, even if the microblading and/or massage therapy is required to end their services earlier. He felt this will apply to other businesses as well, because the trend is to have multiple on-demand services under one roof.

Councilwoman Koski requested that Administration contacts local salons to find out what time they close. She stated she is a licensed cosmetologist and worked for a salon in Clawson, and she stressed she never worked until 8 p.m. She would like to know what beauty salons work on hair until that time of the night.

Councilwoman Ziarko stated she also has her license and she agreed with Councilwoman Koski's concerns. She agreed that salons may stay open later one

or two nights, but she did not feel they keep those hours every night. She felt it is important to find out if it is just one salon asking for this, or whether numerous salons are running into a similar problem. She commented that she is willing to listen to whatever Administration finds, but she stated she is not willing to change an ordinance for one party.

Mayor Taylor is aware the owner of the business leases the space and subleases chairs to the stylists, who work whenever they have customers. He can understand the limited hours for tattoo parlors but this is a hybrid use with diversified services. Councilman Radtke stated he spoke to this business owner, and her concern was not only the business hours in the evening, but also the restriction that her entire business would not be allowed to open until 11 a.m. because the ordinance will not permit a business offering body art to open before 11 a.m. He commented that St. Clair Shores recently updated and modified their body art ordinance because it does not make sense in the present day. He felt they need to rewrite their entire body art ordinance because he felt it does not make sense to require those businesses to be closed between 8 p.m. and 11 a.m. He stressed these are professional artistic people who are very good at their skill. He felt they need to look into best practices and see what other communities are doing.

Councilwoman Schmidt questioned whether they are asking for their ordinance to be tweaked, or whether they are only asking for information.

Mayor Taylor clarified that, at this point, he would like City Administration to prepare a report that identifies the issues, what would have to be done to

accommodate this business specifically, and whether there needs to be an ordinance change. He stated he is not asking for them to bring forth an ordinance change, but the information he is requesting could potentially turn into an ordinance change.

Councilwoman Schmidt recalled Mayor Taylor initially requested an ordinance change.

Mayor Taylor stated he is revising his request to ask for a report.

Councilwoman Schmidt questioned whether this situation could be handled with a variance for this one particular business.

Mr. Kaszubski replied affirmatively, adding they can apply for a zoning variance or a special use for what they want to do. He cautioned that the State considers microblading as tattooing, so they need to be aware of that as well.

Mayor Taylor questioned whether they have already requested a variance.

Mr. Kaszubski replied he does not know the answer to that question.

Mayor Taylor pointed out the problem with requesting a variance is that it is very hard to obtain a variance because they have to show they have no way to use the property and it is not self-created. He is not sure they would be a great candidate for a variance. He assured he is not trying to put the cart before the horse, but he wants to know what they are dealing with so they can make an informed decision as to whether an ordinance change can happen.

Councilwoman Ziarko stated she would like to know how many tattoo salons they have in the city. She recalled the first one was for a location on Van Dyke, and she believes that place is now closed.

Mr. Vanderpool replied to inquiry that he has sufficient information to provide a report. He requested ninety days to do this level of research and report back to Council, if they are agreeable to it.

Mayor Taylor did not feel ninety days is unreasonable. He commended Mr. Vanderpool on doing a good job explaining city operations and how they manage their budget. He agreed with Councilman Radtke on his comments about leveraging money and using debt to finance operations if necessary on capital expenditures in order to provide better services to their customers. He is comfortable for their low level of debt that is giving them a very good value. He stressed the DPW is a very important building where men and women work hard to fix and maintain their fleet vehicles, ambulances, and they are doing it in a comfortable space where they can also get training. He pointed out they discussed the DPW building years ago, as well as redoing all of their city campus buildings, so those discussions have already occurred. He stated he is comfortable with the decisions they made and with the process they had to arrive at those decisions.

Mayor Taylor appreciated the comments and questions from Ms. Skillen and Mr. Orjada, and in June 2014, the City Council passed a non-discrimination ordinance in an attempt to show the community that no one can be fired or denied services

based on sexual orientation. He felt it is a simple concept, and he supported that ordinance. He stated he would support it again, and he does not know if another city in Macomb County that has passed something similar, but he felt the State of Michigan and the federal government should do something about it.

Councilwoman Ziarko noted that ordinance was passed on June 17, 2014, because that was the day of her husband's funeral, but it was such an important issue, she wanted to make sure she was present for the vote. She agreed with Mayor Taylor it was important, and she said the reason they had to rescind it is because they had enough people who signed it and wanted to vote on it. She clarified they cannot vote on an ordinance, so it had to be rescinded. She recalled the hatred in the room that night, and she was very upset to see humanity in that state. She stressed that government is not a business, and government is for everybody, and everybody is served.

Councilman Radtke supported Mayor Taylor's comments on the LGBTQ ordinance. Mayor Taylor recalled that many people who signed the petition to withdraw the ordinance actually thought they were signing a petition in support of it.

12. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

13. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

14. **CLOSED SESSION PERMITTED UNDER ACT 267 OF 1976**

Mr. Kaszubski stated there are no items for closed session this evening.

15. **ADJOURN**

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to adjourn the meeting.

Yes: All. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

MELANIE D. RYSKA, City Clerk