

CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022
IN CITY HALL

1. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 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.
5. **REPORT FROM CITY MANAGER**
Mr. Vanderpool highlighted the good work done by the City's Police Chief. He explained that the City of Sterling Heights has been on the forefront of substance abuse programming and has let the way in the State of Michigan with their Opioid Quick Response Team, the creation of the Sterling Heights Drug Free Coalition, and the SMART Moves Elementary School Anti-Drug Programming. He informed that Chief Dwojakowski was nominated by the Michigan Association Chiefs of Police to be stakeholder on the Governor's Opioid Task Force Advisory Group. This group is composed of medical professionals, substance abuse professional, university researchers, and law enforcement leaders at the local, state, and federal

levels. He explained the group's mission is to ensure a holistic approach to the opioid pandemic, and the group makes decisions on state and federal spending, programming, and health care for people with substance abuse disorder. Mr. Vanderpool added that, in December 2021, Chief Dwojakowski was nominated by the Michigan Association Chiefs of Police to represent all local police departments in Michigan as a steering committee member on the Michigan Alliance for Drug-Endangered Children (Michigan DEC Alliance). Their mission is to reduce the harm experienced by youth in communities caused by caregiver and opioid substance misuse. He commended Chief Dwojakowski for being a leader in this area, and a model for not only Chiefs across the state, but for so many others working in this area.

Mr. Vanderpool noted a few meetings ago, a couple of residents expressed concern that they would like to see the City Council's online meeting e-packet made a little more user-friendly to navigate. They are in a PDF format when downloading them and depending on the PDF version or platform someone is using, the agenda items are not always tabbed or bookmarked. He assured the City is working on it, and he announced that this Spring, they will be unveiling a new platform that will provide a much-improved organization of the packet. It will be able to be easily navigated regardless of the platform or PDF version being used. He will provide more information when it is ready to go. He added that the City appreciates the feedback from residents who expressed concern in that area.

Mr. Vanderpool provided an update on the anticipated snow event predicted over the next couple of days. He stated a snow emergency has been declared, and it will be effective tomorrow at 7 p.m. to allow residents to get home from work, possibly requiring minimal parking in the street while they clear their driveways, and they can then make sure their cars are off the street. This snow emergency will likely remain active until Monday. He explained snow removal operations will be focused on major roads for Wednesday and Thursday. He noted that either late Thursday night, or early Friday morning, DPW anticipates commencing snow removal operations in neighborhoods, and that is anticipated to be completed late Saturday or early Sunday. He emphasized that with a heavy snowfall of a foot or more, it will take at least 48 hours to get through the residential roads. He indicated they will continuously have about forty pieces of apparatus out throughout the snow emergency. He advised that on-street parking enforcement will commence in earnest on Thursday morning and continue through Saturday or Sunday, depending upon compliance. He cautioned that any repeat offenders from over the last two years will be ticketed and fined \$100, and if it is a third offense, the fine is \$125. Mr. Vanderpool stressed they have great compliance, but they still have to issue 400 to 500 snow enforcement tickets in each snow emergency, so he urged everyone to comply so they do not have to issue any tickets. He pointed out it is possible they may have to tow some non-compliant vehicles if they cannot get a plow or emergency vehicle apparatus down a particular street, and the City can do so without warning during a snow emergency

event. He reminded everyone that sidewalks must be cleared within 24 hours after snow stops falling. He added there will be no refuse cancellation but there will likely be some delays.

Mr. Vanderpool stated that City Hall, Parks and Recreation facilities, and the library will open tomorrow as scheduled; however, they will all be closing early at 1 p.m. in anticipation of possible treacherous road conditions. He added the recycling drop-off center will be closed on Thursday through Saturday, and he reminded everyone that for those unable to clear their driveways and sidewalks, they can use on-demand services. He encouraged those interested to go to the City's website to learn how to make those arrangements by a simple download of the app, through such companies as Plowz & Mowz, Lawn Guru, and others.

Mr. Vanderpool encouraged anyone not receiving the City's emergency notices or updates to go to the City's website and sign up. He stated he is pleased that the notices provided this evening exceeded 100,000 people, between those who subscribe to ListServ, social media outlets, SeeClickFix, and their Sterling Heights TV audience. He noted this number does not include the people who receive the information through mass media press releases to all of the major news stations and print outlets. He stressed the City appreciates everyone's patience as they go through this snow emergency, and he is confident the snow removal will go well, adding that the DPW crews love this and do an outstanding job. He felt Sterling Heights stands out in these emergencies as going above and beyond to get the job done.

Mr. Vanderpool concluded his report by requesting that, at the conclusion of tonight's agenda, City Council convene a Closed Session pursuant to Section 8(H) of the Open Meetings Act for Council to consult with the City Attorney regarding two confidential written legal opinions.

6. PRESENTATIONS

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to adopt a resolution designating February 2022 as Black History Month in the City of Sterling Heights. He invited African American Coalition Chairperson AeYanna Yett to give the presentation.

AeYanna Yett, Chairperson of the African American Coalition, acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which they are meeting, and the labor of her enslaved ancestors. She stressed this Coalition, as well as the celebration of Black History Month, means so much to her as they work together to create change and promote belonging and inclusivity in this City. She noted she experienced a great deal of discrimination and racism when growing up in this City, but she learned the importance of allies and supporters that changed the narrative of hatred to promote love and acceptance. She stated read the Resolution and stressed what a privilege it is for her to present it to the City. She reviewed the background of Black History Month, explaining it recognizes and celebrates the many historical achievements and contributions made by African Americans to the society and culture of the United States. She stated the theme for this year's Black History Month is "Black Health and Wellness." She outlined various activities that are going to take place in the City in honor of this, as well as the specific dates for each activity.

Mayor Taylor accepted the Resolution on behalf of City Council, and his photo was taken with Ms. Yett.

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Sierawski, **RESOLVED**, to designate February 2022 as Black History Month in the City of Sterling Heights and call upon residents, businesses, and community organizations to learn about and appreciate the abundant and impactful historical contributions of African Americans to the success of the United States.

Councilman Radtke stated he is happy to sponsor the Resolution, and he felt these are great because they urge the community to learn about their neighbors.

Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Yett for presenting this Resolution, adding it is appreciated. He added they also appreciate the great work the African American Coalition is doing, and he assured he speaks for the entire Council, encouraging their Coalition to advised them if they need anything. He explained they want to know, as the City's leaders, what they can do to better serve every member of their community. He is proud they are taking a more active role in Black History Month than they have in years past, providing opportunities and programs for people across the community to celebrate this important recognition. He added they have thousands of black residents in Sterling Heights, and he thanked them for their contributions to making Sterling Heights a great place to live, work, and play.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

B. Mayor Taylor stated this is to adopt a resolution recognizing and congratulating the Sarisan Slovak Folk Ensemble on the milestone of its 50th anniversary. He invited Ethnic Community Committee member Carmen Williams to give the presentation.

Ethnic Community Committee member Carmen Williams explained that the Sarisan Slovak Folk Ensemble was founded in 1971 by Milan Straka and continues under his direction today, currently based at SS. Cyril and Methodius Slovak Catholic Church in Sterling Heights. She provided information on their background experience and accomplishments, noting they have traveled throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe, as well as performing locally in the metro Detroit area at various ethnic festivals, cultural events, charity benefits, and fraternal events. She explained the ensemble promotes Slovak culture and diversity through dance from many different regions of Slovakia. She read the Resolution and presented it to Mr. and Mrs. Weechi on behalf of Mr. Straka, who could not be present this evening. Mrs. Weechi indicated she is a former member of the group, having danced with them for thirty years, but has since retired. She talked about the many places they have traveled, and stated they appreciate the recognition from the City.

Mayor Taylor presented the Resolution, and a photo was taken.

Moved by Sierawski, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution recognizing and congratulating the Sarisan Slovak Folk Ensemble on the milestone of its 50th anniversary.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski stated she loves the Slovak dance and everything about it, including the costumes and the lively dances. She thanked them for sharing their talents with the City of Sterling Heights.

Mayor Taylor thanked them for being present this evening to accept this Resolution and for the fifty years of adding to the rich cultural diversity of the City, spreading their heritage in a fun and exciting way. He wished them well.

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, but there were no comments from the audience.

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

- A. To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 18, 2022.
- B. To approve payment of the bills as presented: General Fund - \$1,334,750.71, Water & Sewer Fund - \$1,419,146.36, Other Funds - \$5,355,034.21, Total Checks - \$8,108,931.28.
- C. **RESOLVED**, to approve the Sub-Rental Agreement between the City of Sterling Heights and TurfTank USA, Inc., 3330 Cobb Parkway NW, Suite 324-380, Acworth, GA 30101, for the rental of one (1) Intelligent One field marking robot, supplies, and one-time set-up fee, and the purchase of additional athletic field marking paint and authorize the City Manager to sign the Agreement on behalf of the City.
- D. **RESOLVED**, to approve the Reinstatement and Ratification of and First Amendment to Lease Agreement and First Amendment to Memorandum of Lease Agreement and Grant of Easements between the City of Sterling Heights, as Landlord, and New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC, as Tenant, and authorize the City Manager to sign the agreements on behalf of the City.
- E. **RESOLVED**, to approve the Professional Services Agreement between the City of Sterling Heights and Plante & Moran, PLLC, 3000 Town Center, Suite 100, Southfield, MI 48075, for financial accounting assistance and consulting services and authorize the City Manager to sign the Agreement on behalf of the City.
- F. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for purchase and installation of engineered wood fiber mulch from Unique Clips, 23075 27 Mile Rd., Ray, MI 48096, at unit pricing bid through December 31, 2022, and authorize the City Manager to exercise the option to extend the bid term two additional one-year periods at unit pricing bid.
- G. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for street sweeping services to Rolar Property Services, Inc., 33333 Dequindre, Suite B, Troy, MI 48083, at unit pricing bid through November 22, 2022, and authorize the City Manager to exercise

the option to extend the bid term through November 22, 2023, at the unit pricing bid.

- H. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for turf fertilization and weed control at municipal sites to Green Meadows Lawnscape, Inc., 2359 Avon Industrial Drive, Rochester Hills, MI 48309, for a one-year period at unit pricing bid.
- I. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for medical assessments of Fire Department personnel to Bio-Care, Inc., 1778 Holloway Drive, Suite A, Holt, MI 48842, at unit pricing bid.
- J. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution establishing the schedule of City Council Budget Workshops and Charter Public Hearing for the purpose of reviewing and acting upon the fiscal year 2022/23 proposed budget and to direct the City Clerk to provide the appropriate notice as required by Michigan's Open Meetings Act.
- K. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating the meeting places for the Sterling Heights Board of Review for 2022.
- L. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution approving the 2022 Real Property Tax Hardship Exemption Guidelines for Tax Relief under Section 211.7u, Public Act 206 of 1893.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

8. **CONSIDERATION**

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider an appointment to City of Sterling Heights Ethnic Community Committee. He opened the floor for public comments, but no one from the audience spoke.

Mayor Taylor explained this is a mayoral appointment, and he would like two more weeks to make a decision on this appointment, so he stated he would entertain a motion to postpone this until the next meeting, scheduled for February 15, 2022.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Sierawski, **RESOLVED**, to postpone the appointment to the Ethnic Community Committee to the February 15, 2022, regular City Council meeting.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

9. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS**

Mayor Taylor opened the floor for comments from the audience.

- Ken Nelson – talked about his opposition to Council’s recent adoption of an ordinance amending Chapter 25 of the City Code by adding Article 1.

10. **REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION AND CITY COUNCIL**

Mr. Vanderpool stated he has nothing further to add at this time.

Councilwoman Ziarko stated she received two telephone calls today regarding a business license fee. She recalled that City Council passed an ordinance a couple of years ago that this fee would go into effect. She requested that Mr. Vanderpool explain to business owners and non-profits what this means. She questioned whether places of worship, since they are considered non-profit, would have to register as a business.

Mr. Vanderpool replied provided an update on the business license fee, noting that a little over a year ago, the City Council approved an updated Business Licensing ordinance, replacing their prior business registration process, which did not encompass all of the businesses in Sterling Heights. He explained this ordinance is centered on public safety, and they now require all businesses, regarding of their corporation status which includes not-for-profits and any other business in the City, to go through an annual online, highly-automated business licensing renewal process. They want to make sure they have updated contact information for all businesses, especially property managers throughout the City. He noted any emergency, such a fire, watermain break, etc., where they need to contact the property managers, they have this information readily available for Police, Fire, and DPW. In addition, they want to work hand in hand with the 3,000+ businesses they have in the City to make sure the City is doing all they can to

promote either their product, services, or cause, and to provide them greater exposure. He added their goal is to list all of their businesses on their website, with links if the business would like. Mr. Vanderpool stated this has been a long-standing effort in the City, and they are glad to get it done. They have had very positive feedback from those who have registered online, and he added they have not had many complaints. He informed the registration fee was waived the first year by City Council because of being in a pandemic environment, so this will be the first round where the \$60 fee will be collected. He felt the value-added service being provided with this process, especially in the name of public safety, is worth the fee.

Councilwoman Ziarko questioned how the businesses were originally notified of this registration process. She further questioned whether businesses have the ability to pay this fee online. She asked whether the directory of all the businesses will be online as well, or whether it will be in hard copy format.

Mr. Vanderpool explained they hired a number of part-time employees who spent months canvassing the City, going from business to business to make sure they had a complete database of the 3,000+ businesses. He indicated that process went smooth, and the database was developed. These businesses were then notified of this process, when it would be going online, and they now have emails to efficiently communicate electronically. He commented they have yet to determine how they will provide exposure and marketing of the businesses, and they will need a little more engagement and collaboration with the businesses.

He advised because the database is complete, they can now sort those businesses by type. He stated the City would like to engage the Chamber of Commerce as well.

Councilman Radtke expressed opposition to the business licensing fee, referring to it as an unmitigated money grab by the City, and he felt it should be repealed, which is why he voted against it.

Councilwoman Schmidt stated she was touched by seeing a number of posts on the Sterling Heights Facebook pages this evening, where members of their community are offering parking spots in their driveways for households that may have more cars than they can fit in their driveways. She felt this shows they live in an amazing, giving, and welcoming community. She stressed the cars parking in the street during a snow emergency is not only a safety issue, but it is a courtesy issue to neighbors as well, so the more cars they can get off the street, the quicker DPW can get in and clean the streets, while providing proper access for the emergency vehicles as well. She suggested if residents have space in their driveways, they can possibly consider helping out a neighbor who may need to borrow a parking space just for the snow emergency. She felt they live in a great community.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski cautioned everyone to travel safe over the next couple of days, and she urged residents to help those who need it. She agreed with Councilwoman Schmidt that this is a caring, concerned community, and she added it is a great place to promote belonging.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether the Business Registration ordinance requires home businesses to register as well.

Clerk Melanie Ryska replied that the Business Registration process is only for brick-and-mortar businesses, and they do not license home businesses.

13. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

14. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

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

Mr. Kaszubski stated there are two items for closed session this evening.

16. **ADJOURN**

Mayor Taylor indicated they will be going into Closed Session and will not be returning.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to adjourn the meeting and go into Closed Session.

Yes: Koski, Radtke, Schmidt, Sierawski, Taylor, Yanez, Ziarko.

No: None.

The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 7:37 p.m.

The meeting adjourned from Closed Session at 8:21 p.m.

MELANIE D. RYSKA, City Clerk