



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024
7:30 P.M.**

City Clerk Stuart welcomed everyone to the regularly scheduled January City Council meeting and introduced Council Member Casey R. Ambrose, Council Member Mindy Fernandes, Council Member Tamra Loch, Council Member Bennett Lublin, Council Member John Owsinek, Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Woods, and Mayor Linda Ackley.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Ackley.

PLEDGE TO FLAG & INVOCATION

Invocation by Mayor Pro Tem Woods.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Ackley, Mayor Pro Tem Woods, Council Member Ambrose, Council Member Fernandes, Council Member Loch, Council Member Lublin, and Council Member Owsinek

OTHERS PRESENT

City Manager Whitt, Assistant to the City Manager Jaquays, Finance Director Pesta, Public Safety Deputy Director Shakinas, Acting Police Chief Kolke, City Attorney Vanerian, DPW Superintendent Ladd, and City Clerk Stuart

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES

City Manager Whitt explained the city's auditors Pfeffer, Hanniford, and Palka are present this evening to provide a report on the 2023 fiscal year audit. City Manager Whitt introduced Wyoming County, New York's, new County Administrator and formerly the City of Walled Lake Assistant City Manager Mr. Scott Schrader. City Manager Whitt explained there was a request from an organization for a charitable gaming license. Mayor Ackley added to the agenda.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Scott Schrader, Wyoming County Administrator said he enjoyed his time at Walled Lake and wanted to thank the council. Mr. Schrader said his employment with Walled Lake was extremely enjoyable and he thanked City Manager Whitt, the Mayor, the City Council, and city staff. Mr. Schrader said he will be taking his lessons learned from the City of Walled Lake to his new position in Wyoming County. Mr. Schrader said he has never been in an environment where the appreciation of staff by the City Council was so high. Mr. Schrader said his time with Walled Lake was a wonderful experience and if he is ever needed, please reach out.

Mayor Ackley said thank you to Mr. Schrader for his efforts and she appreciates all he has done for the City of Walled Lake.

City Manager Whitt explained Mr. Schrader is a professional friend he met over 40 years ago, who began as an intern with him. City Manager Whitt explained Mr. Schrader has run county governments in the past and that Mr. Schrader is a template for success, learning from every experience good or bad.

City Manager Whitt introduced city auditor Mr. John Pfeffer of Pepper, Hanniford, and Palka.

Mr. Pfeffer said Mr. Schrader was extremely easy to work with during the audit. Mr. Pfeffer introduced Ms. Kristin Polonowski who has been with the firm for 15 years, conducting most of the fieldwork, and has a lot to do with the audits. Mr. Pfeffer said Mr. Schrader mentioned working with the staff and that is very important. Mr. Pfeffer said when they started with the city under City Manager Whitt, there were noticeable changes in the board and a change in staff attitudes. Mr. Pfeffer said it has been a pleasure working with the staff and opined how important quality leadership is. Mr. Pfeffer said the firm is providing an unmodified opinion, which is the highest level, which indicates the city's financials are presented fairly. Mr. Pfeffer said the State of Michigan received the city's audit in time and with an unmodified opinion. Mr. Pfeffer explained what has transpired with the city's financials number one being the city's large legacy debt of the retirement benefits program. This legacy debt has not risen under the City Manager and City Council's direction. Mr. Pfeffer said the city did benefit most recently with a grant of \$4.3 million from the State of Michigan which helped to reduce the legacy debt to become within the 60% funding requirement. Mr. Pfeffer explained that legacy debt was an issue. Mr. Pfeffer explained the City Council was able to increase the city's equity balance by 10% or 1 million dollars all while paying down the city bond. Mr. Pfeffer said the city is meeting all of its obligations and continuing to provide solid services to the residents of Walled Lake. Mr. Pfeffer explained the City is in a good position, the city also significantly reduced its water loss by transitioning to Oakland County Water Resource Commission (WRC), the healthcare benefit liability has continued to be paid down, and again the city has added a million dollars to its equity balance.

Council Member Lublin said an unmodified opinion is of the highest in the accounting world and this council and staff have worked together to achieve this.

City Manager Whitt said it is this Mayor, this City Council, and this city staff working together, if the council did not support the staff none of these improvements would have been made. City Manager Whitt explained in the past there was no coordination between staff and elected officials.

Derek Bahri said he is a resident of Commerce Township, a board member, and an attorney for Our Children Hold the Key, a non-profit organization. Attorney Bahri explained their group works to combat obesity in youths. Attorney Bahri explained the organization was founded in 2014 to educate and help prevent childhood obesity. Attorney Bahri said every 1 in 3, 10 to 17 years of age are reported to be obese or overweight. Attorney Bahri said there are challenges all

around and their goal is to provide educational programs and encourage physical activity. Attorney Bahri said the group received a charitable gaming license in 2018 from the City of Warren. Attorney Bahri said they host bingo events to help promote awareness and gain funds to grow their mission. Attorney Bahri said the charitable gaming license will provide the opportunity for poker events at Langan All Star Lanes poker room. Attorney Bahri said funds would go to the community starting at Walled Lake Central High School and Walnut Creek Middle School.

Mayor Ackley requested that any funds that were made at Langan's events would be kept in Walled Lake.

Attorney Bahri said yes, every single dollar would go to volunteers and community programs.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods asked if the proceeds have to be in a specific city for fundraising or other cities.

Attorney Bahri said he understands there is not a geographical requirement but if the council wishes to have funds remain in Walled Lake he will do that.

Council Member Loch said the Walled Lake Consolidated School District includes Commerce, Wolverine Lake, and Farmington.

Mayor Ackley said she requests funds to remain in the city of Walled Lake and Walled Lake Consolidated Schools

Council Member Lublin said he applauds the group's efforts, fundraising is not easy, the giving of yourself and your members, he does not see a problem if funding goes to other areas, Walled Lake School District, we are all one. Council Member Lublin said this is controlled by the state, you are responsible for the funds.

Attorney Bahri said obtaining a license from the State is a process and if the council wishes to the proceeds stay in Walled Lake, he will work to do that.

Council Member Loch said she agrees with Mayor Ackley and wishes to see the proceeds stay within the Walled Lake Consolidated School District.

Attorney Bahri said that is completely agreeable.

Council Member Fernandes said there are also parts of Farmington Hills that are within the Walled Lake Consolidated School District. Council Member Fernandes asked how many weekends the group would be hosting at Langan's.

Attorney Bahri said the license allows four sessions lasting four days, the maximum amount is 16 days. Attorney Bahri said they have not confirmed a schedule yet, the supplier who is on

Langans All Star Poker told him no additional days but significant there are openings for days when it is already hosting.

Council Member Fernandes asked if the events would be properly staffed by its members.

Attorney Bahri said yes.

Mayor Ackley said she wants to make sure if they are a part of the Walled Lake Consolidated School District, they are the beneficiaries.

Attorney Bahri said yes that he would make that happen.

City Attorney Vanerian explained funds raised with this event could be limited to the Walled Lake Consolidated School District. Attorney Vanerian explained the council may pass a resolution conditional upon his review and approval of an agreement from the applicant to ensure that funds from the fundraiser would be limited to benefit the students.

CM 01-01-24 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2024-01 A RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL OF A CHARITABLE GAMING LICENSE APPLICATION FOR THE OUR CHILDREN HOLD THE KEY FOUNDATION PROVIDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL FOR A CHARITABLE GAMING LICENSE AS AUTHORIZED BY MICHIGAN COMPILED LAWS, SECTION 432.103(K)(II)

Motion by Loch, seconded by Lublin: UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve resolution 2024-01 a resolution for approval of a charitable gaming license application for the Our Children Hold the Key Foundation providing local government approval for a charitable gaming license as authorized by Michigan Compiled Laws, Section 432.103(K) (II).

Discussion

City Manager Whitt explained there are nine other jurisdictions within the Walled Lake Consolidated School District.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Ambrose, Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Regular Council Meeting and Public Hearing of November 21, 2023

CM 01-02-24 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 2023

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Loch, UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve regular council meeting and public hearing minutes of November 21, 2023.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

COUNCIL REPORT

Council Member Ambrose said the annual tree lighting was great, it was another beautiful event hosted by city administration and staff. Council Member Ambrose said all did a wonderful job and he loved the new additions.

MAYOR'S REPORT None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Consent Agenda Written Departmental / Divisional Statistical Reports
 - a. Police
 - b. Fire
 - c. Finance
 - Warrant

CM 01-03-24 APPROVAL OF CITY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Woods, seconded by Ambrose, UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve City Manager's Consent Agenda items.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

2. Discussion on Public Safety Millage Vote – February 27, 2024 Election

City Manager Whitt explained that the Public Safety Millage is on the ballot for February 27, 2024. City Manager Whitt asked for Deputy Public Safety Director Shakinias to report on items that occurred just over the last two weekends in the city.

Deputy Public Safety Director Shakinias explained all public safety department members were extremely busy with public safety calls and emergencies this past weekend. Deputy Director Shakinias explained the weekend of January 6th and 7th were even less cooperative, on the 6th a shooting call came in at 8:00 am with a 41-year-old male who had been shot. Deputy Director Shakinias explained the person was not shot but rounds were fired from a gun and the injuries were from a physical assault. Deputy Director Shakinias said police officers took immediate control of the scene and the victim, a 41 one year from Livonia was uncooperative on the scene and remains uncooperative. Deputy Director Shakinias explained this situation occurred at a member-only coffee club in the complex. Deputy Director Shakinias said Code Enforcement acted and the site has been closed. The property owner has terminated the lease.

Deputy Director Shakinias explained that on the evening of the 6th, an apartment complex with 8 units caught fire, one tenant's unit was burned out and several other units were damaged. Deputy Director Shakinias explained partners in the community assisted in relocating all the tenants who were affected. Deputy Director Shakinias explained a space heater caught fire. Deputy Director Shakinias said the landlord was aware there was no heat in the unit for over 30 days. Deputy Director Shakinias explained Sunday the 7th was not much better with two death reports, a 41-year-old drank himself to death, and then a suicide. Deputy Director Shakinias said our police officers, firefighters, Deputy Fire Chief, and Deputy Police Chief did a superb job and he is very proud of them.

City Manager Whitt said Deputy Director Shakinias was being kind, we have a commercial slum lord who does not monitor their tenant's activity. City Manager Whitt explained some participants of the members-only coffee shop fled out the back of the establishment into Winwood leaving their items behind which also indicated they were hosting an illegal gambling site. City Manager Whitt explained shots were fired in areas where people frequent. City Manager Whitt said this slum lord was very quick to collect his rent however, he is a slum lord. City Manager Whitt said the city's fire department and police department acted swiftly, this is why we need the police, fire, and public safety millage to pass. City Manager Whitt said the fire at the 14 Mile Road apartment complex is also owned by a slum lord. City Manager Whitt opined we need to take a look at rental ordinances but first and foremost support the city's fire division and police division to continue the good service.

3. Downtown Development Authority Managing Director Report

a. Tax Increment Financing Plan

Managing Director Jaquays explained at last week's DDA meeting the board discussed restating and extending the current Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan. Ms. Jaquays explained the original plan was approved by the City Council in 2008 by ordinance. Ms. Jaquays explained the current amendment before the council this evening for the first reading will permit a 10-year

extension to continue capturing revenue for enhancements and projects with the DDA district. Ms. Jaquays explained the statutory requirements, and the DDA Board passed a resolution with a recommendation to the City Council to amend and extend the current TIF plan. Ms. Jaquays said the required public hearing is scheduled for next month at the city council. Ms. Jaquays said public notices will be sent to the owners in the DDA district and to the taxing authorities the city captures its revenue from. Ms. Jaquays explained on the city's website under the Business Tab is the draft ordinance amendment restating and extending our most recent plan. Ms. Jaquays thanked Finance Director Pesta for preparing the tables and numbers.

City Manager Whitt recommended the council pass the first reading this evening.

CORRESPONDENCE None

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Vanerian said Ms. Jaquays explained the Tax Increment Financing Plan and the first reading is on the agenda this evening. Attorney Vanerian explained the statutory procedure also requires a public hearing. Attorney Vanerian explained the rezoning agreement for 14 Mile and Decker is underway and he has been working with the land owner's attorney on finalizing the language which should come before council next month. Attorney Vanerian explained the substance of the agreement is laid out in the ordinance amendment before the council this evening.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Second Reading C-371-23 Conditional Rezoning of NE Corner of 14 Mile & Decker Rd., Parcel No. 92-17-35-400-055**

CM 01-04-24 MOTION TO APPROVE SECOND READING C-371-23 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE V, ZONING AND PLANNING, CHAPTER 51, ZONING; ARTICLE 3.00, SECTION 3.02 "ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES", TO REZONE A CERTAIN PARCEL FROM C-1 TO C-2, AND AMEND THE ZONING MAP TO REFLECT THE CHANGES TO THE ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Motion by Loch, seconded by Lublin, UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve second reading C-371-23 an ordinance to amend Title V, Zoning and Planning, Chapter 51, Zoning; Article 3.00, Section 3.02 "Zoning District Boundaries", to rezone a certain parcel from C-1 to C-2, and amend the zoning map to reflect the changes to the zoning district boundaries.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Loch, Lublin, Fernandes, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

2. First Reading C-372-24 Amendment to Chapter 26, Article II, Division 2, Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan

CM 01-05-24 MOTION TO APPROVE FIRST READING C-372-24 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 26, ARTICLE II, DIVISION 2 “DEVELOPMENT AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLANS” OF THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO EXTEND AND REAFFIRM THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY DEVELOPMENT AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLANS

Motion by Woods, seconded by Loch, UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve first reading C-372-24 an ordinance to amend Chapter 26, Article II, Division 2 “Development and Tax Increment Financing Plans” of the City of Walled Lake Code of Ordinances to extend and reaffirm the Downtown Development Authority Development and Tax Increment Financing Plans.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

3. Proposed Resolution 2024-02 Appointment of City Manager as the Walled Lake Transportation Representative on the WOTA Authority Board

CM 01-06-24 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2024-02 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE APPOINTING L. DENNIS WHITT AS THE VOTING MEMBER OF THE WESTERN OAKLAND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY BOARD

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Fernandes, UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve resolution 2024-02 a resolution of the City of Walled Lake appointing L. Dennis Whitt as the voting member of the Western Oakland Transportation Authority Board.

Discussion

City Manager Whitt explained that Mr. Schrader the prior representative constantly tried to educate the board and provided examples to them of their failings, but there is no punishment. City Manager Whitt explained we do not have the best relationship with WOTA.

Council Member Lublin said City Manager Whitt will continue to point out the correct legislative processes to the WOTA Board and the task will be daunting.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

4. Proposed Resolution 2024-03 The 2023 Auto Auction Bid Acceptance and Award

**CM 01-07-24 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2024-03 A RESOLUTION
FOR ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS AND DETERMINATION OF
AWARD APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL FOR THE 2023
AUCTION AND AUTHORIZE THE SALE OF SAID ITEMS**

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Loch,

Discussion

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said he rejected the bid for the 1956 Fire Truck.

Council Member Fernandes said she supports this action.

City Manager Whitt explained it is a fire engine, it has been held by the fire department for years, it has been in a barn and tinkered with overtime to repair it. City Manager Whitt said the city does not have anyone in the fire department to work on it. City Manager Whitt said this truck does not serve a purpose, it is excess, and it is a trophy piece more than anything that takes up valuable space. City Manager Whitt said he believes the city acquired the truck, but the city never purchased this truck. City Manager Whitt said we are trying to dispose of it, the bidder is a prior Walled Lake Fire Fighter who has a barn to store it and work on it.

Deputy Director Shakinis said more than \$2500 had been spent to get the vehicle to run, it spent time in a museum in Ypsilanti, and the museum agreed to house the fire truck for one or two years. They no longer have room for it and reverted it back to the city.

Mayor Ackley said there is no space in the city to keep it on display.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods explained the historical value of this truck is going to be worth more in the spring. Mayor Pro Tem Woods explained whoever placed a bid for \$1,000 could turn around and sell it for \$16,000. Mayor Pro Tem Woods explained his research shows the truck is worth more.

City Manager Whitt said he is not sure what to do with the vehicle if the council does not wish to sell it.

Deputy Director Shakinas said the auction ad ran twice in the Oakland press at a cost over \$1,000 of the two bids received one was \$500 and the other \$1000.

Council Member Loch said the vehicle is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said he found that historically 1956 trucks of this nature with the hood on top are collectible pieces that go for \$16-\$22,000. Mayor Pro Tem Woods said historical vehicles should not be sold during Christmas times he requested to have the motion amended to take off the bid and acceptance for the 1956 Fire Truck.

Council Member Owsinek said he disagreed, this truck takes up space, it is of no value to us, if someone wants to pay \$1000, then it needs to go. Council Member Owsinek said the city already put \$2500 into repair and the truck still does not work, it needs to go now. Council Member Owsinek said he would not vote for the removal of this item because the city must make sure we are running a clean and green outfit.

City Manager Whitt said we will not be any worse off until we try it again, we may get less money next time. City Manager Whitt explained the highest bid was from a firefighter who would appreciate and care for it. City Manager Whitt said it would not hurt us to wait to accommodate the request of Mayor Pro Tem Woods.

Council Member Lublin said he agrees with Mayor Pro Tem Woods.

City Manager Whitt said he does not have a preference, there is no right or wrong.

Council Member Ambrose said if the city-owned this truck for more than forty years, he did not see holding onto it for another six months.

Council Member Fernandes said she agrees with Mayor Pro Tem Woods, trying to get the most bang for our buck and wished to hold off for a few months.

Mayor Ackley said some places will pay and show historic vehicles maybe that option should be looked into.

**CM 01-08-24 MOTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION 2024-03 TO REJECT THE
BID OF \$1,000 FOR THE 1956 FIRE TRUCK**

Motion by Woods, seconded by Lublin, MOTION CARRIED: To amend resolution 2024-03 to reject the bid of \$1,000 for the 1956 Fire Truck.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6) Loch, Lublin, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Ackley
Nays (1) Owsinek
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

Main Motion

CM 01-09-24 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2024-03 A RESOLUTION FOR ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS LESS THE BID FOR THE 1956 FIRE TRUCK AND DETERMINATION OF AWARD APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL FOR THE 2023 AUCTION AND AUTHORIZE THE SALE OF SAID ITEMS

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Loch, UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED: To approve resolution 2024-03 a resolution for acceptance of bids less the bid for the 1956 Fire Truck and determination of award approved by City Council for the 2023 Auction and authorize the sale of said items.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Lublin said the auditor mentioned the city is almost 60% funded in pension debt thanks to the state and federal aid for the grant. Council Member Lublin thanked the DPW, for the great city services during the heavy snow removal. Council Member Lublin said the support of the Public Safety Millage at the February 27 2024 election is a must.

Council Member Ambrose said thank you to the city auditor, Mr. Pfeffer, and staff for the successful audit, the city is 60% funded in the pension liabilities, and it helped stop the bleeding. Council Member Ambrose said the annual tree lighting was great. Council Member Ambrose thanked Chief Shakinis and the department and the Fire Department for their work. Council Member Ambrose thanked Mr. Schrader for his work in the city and wished him well in his new position.

Council Member Fernandes said she is thankful for the option to remote into the meetings as she is recovering from surgery. Council Member Fernandes thanked Mr. Schrader for making sure Walled Lake has a voice with WOTA and wished him good luck in his future endeavors.

Council Member Owsinek thanked Mr. Schrader for his time and all his efforts.

Council Member Loch said thank you to Mr. Schrader and wished him the very best in his new position. Council Member Loch said thank you to the men and women in uniform, DPW, and all who are looking out for our safety.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said he appreciates Mr. Schrader's attention to detail. Mayor Pro Tem Woods said he appreciates the snow plowing throughout the city and the work everybody does for the city.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

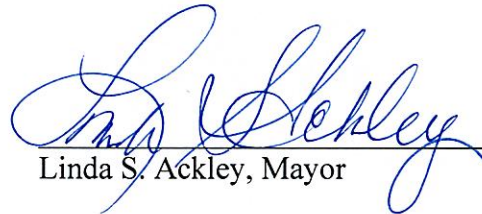
Mayor Ackley said she wishes Mr. Schrader the best in his new position, and he will be missed. Mayor Ackley said the upgraded changes to the city meeting audio and visual system are great. Mayor Ackley had several reports from city residents on the snow plowing to the incidents Chief Shakinis discussed, the feedback was all good, and there were no complaints.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.


Jennifer A. Stuart, City Clerk

Approved 2/20/24


Linda S. Ackley, Mayor