



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
PUBLIC HEARING
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2017
7:00 P.M.**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Ackley.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Ackley, Mayor Pro Tem Ambrose, Council Member Helke, Council Member Lublin, Council Member Loch, Council Member Owsinek, Council Member Robertson

ABSENT:

There being a quorum present, the meeting was declared in session.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Whitt, Police Chief Shakinias, Fire Chief Coomer, Finance Director Coogan and City Clerk Stuart

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Proposed Resolution 2017-14 Withdrawing from the Commerce, Walled Lake, Wixom Trailway Council

Mayor Ackley said the City Council nor administration have given any thought to not doing the trailway. She said the Council will not raise taxes, delete City services or allow the City infrastructure to collapse. This is a dollar issue that will affect the tax payers of Walled Lake.

Open Public Hearing 7:05 p.m.

Kenneth Kolke – 179 Spring Park - said he would like to pass on his opportunity to speak.

Karen Kolke – 179 Spring Park – said she saw the notice of special meeting on the City’s website and that this was an important issue and she went door to door in her surrounding area to notify people of the meeting.

Dennis Burks – 206 Spring park – stated that he had been a resident for 53 years and that he saw the Public Notice tab on the City’s website, but opined that the City was not noticing the meetings right. He stated, “Read the Michigan law.” Mr. Burks opined that “we cannot believe what we are told.” Mr. Burks stated that the City was \$10 million dollars in debt in 2013 and now in 2017 the City is still \$9 million dollars in debt. Mr. Burks opined that there was “no reason for this and it is due to extremely poor management”. Mr. Burks said in the City, there is equipment that can be used and people who owe the courts can maintain the Trailway, and suggest placing signs that say, “travel at your own risk”. Mr. Burks suggested that Walled Lake is not the area it used to be stating, “Who knows what’s lurking in the bushes, children should

not be allowed out there by themselves because there are too many things that happen.” Mr. Burks stated, ” Do not depend on the Spinal Column to keep you informed.”

Janice Leonhardt – said she is a resident of Walled Lake and member of the historical society. She urges City Council’s support in participation in the rails to trails project and if need be, some special funding. She said appreciates the attention to the funding towards this project. She clearly sees the advantages. She said Council is sitting here tonight but are planning for future generations. The benefit of being a good neighbor is extending our boundaries and strengthening our community as whole. To be good neighbor we need to have open boundaries. Several grants would be available and she knows they are to be working on them. She went on the internet and pulled up several and she has a whole leaflet of them. The Heritage grant is one and that would help with restoration of the train depot building. There are also Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grants, federal fund grants, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds could be used for trails. She said that is something the council should take advantage of and look into. She said some of the funds are matching. Sometimes you have to give a little to get something back. She encouraged council to do that. She provided a visual aid of a document from the early 70’s about a walking tour of Walled Lake and Wolverine Lake Village. She referenced an article about the train depot building. She said that building is a vital part of Walled Lake’s history and should be included in any future planning. If claimed as an historical site there are grants available. She offered to help as a volunteer. She hoped that the trail was part of the 5 year Parks and Recreation’s master plan. She said she served on Commerce Township’s Park and Recreation and had a lot to do with their original bike path process, she knows it needs to be included in the plan. She said when she came in to the meeting hall tonight she was sad to hear that representative Kristine Wolfgang from Oakland County would be speaking after hearing Walled Lake residents she requested she be allowed to speak now. She said to Council don’t be a monkey in the middle for the community citizens need a place to relax and enjoy the community. She said the City’s future with its neighbors and residents depend on Council.

Anna Santa Maria – 1833 Scheifle – said she has been a renter in Walled lake for two years. She is an avid runner. She said she is curious of the funding issue if it is because of the installation or the long-term maintenance. She works for a civil engineering firm dealing with sewer and water services. She understands how bad it is. She said she is curious with the funding and what the problem is. She said she received message about tonight’s meeting on her water bill two days ago.

Robin Spooner – 1779 Swaney – said he agrees, the communication is terrible he just found out about tonight’s meeting on his water bill. He said he and his wife ride. He drives over to a Haggerty Road or City of Wixom to use available bike paths. He said they have been waiting for this trail to open for years. He said as far as funding the City has roughly 3500 homes and businesses. He read it would cost \$2500 a year to operate the trail. That basically comes down to a \$1 a year for everybody add it to the water bill to cover the \$2500. Other City’s do a tax on grocery bags or a \$0.1 cent/cup tax at fast food restaurants. There are other ways besides raising taxes.

Mayor Ackley said to clarify, the cost the estimated for the engineering study is \$165,000 and up. That is just for the engineering study to be done in order to apply for a grant. This money is due upfront before you can apply for the grant.

Carol Rogers – 1440 Dover Hill N – said she is avid rider she rides all the time. To have a trail that she can use and bring friends here and use the train depot building as a gathering spot would be phenomenal. She said it would bring a lot of people into Walled Lake. It is also a community benefit. She said she has lived here 29 1/2 years and she would pay an increase in taxes to cover the cost.

Matt Smolek – 315 Wellsboro – said he is a lifetime resident of Walled Lake. He said he lives by himself and he is on a fixed income. He is worried about this tax increase and how much it will be. He said the people who have lived here for many years especially older folks are on a fixed income. He is very concerned and he does not want to move. He said if Council can find other ways and means to fund the project would be wonderful.

Jennifer Mehs – 1635 Oakgrove – said she agrees that communication is terrible she found out about tonight's meeting on her water bill as well. She felt there should have been more on the website that there was a meeting tonight. She said she is not sure about the grants, she read the purchase went through and the City is on the hook now. Walled Lake owns the trail and the City has to do something with it. She said she and her family moved here 10 years ago, there is really no downtown they came here for the lake and bike trails in Novi. She said the trail in Walled Lake would be good. She said there are a ton of volunteers to help with the trail. She said the firework show is all volunteer work. She said people are really avid about this trail and it would receive a lot of community support from walkers and bikers. She is for the trail but not for tax increase.

Ryan Woods – 111 Chestnut Ridge – said he moved to the City from Dearborn. He has met a lot of good people and neighbors. He said the world is a competitive place. He has younger kids and believes the trail is important and at the same time Council must be fiscally responsible. His taxes have gone up quite a bit. He said coming from Dearborn, he has been involved in projects as volunteer, in particular the John Dingle train station. They opened a Tim Hortons and they use the lease money and the taxes are in payment in lieu; that money goes for maintenance of the train station. He said places and projects in Detroit have gotten together with DTE energy working with solar panels. The funds saved from using solar panels are used back in the neighborhoods they are located in. He said Council needs a stable source of money but at the same time Council wants to accomplish the project. It should not always be funded with tax payer money. You can take the train station and turn it into a dual use facility and still keep the heritage of it. Make it a coffee station and use that tax revenue to put back into the trail. He said Dearborn put a trail in near Camp Dearborn the cost was \$290,000. He said it was tax payer money and he did not use it. He said he would use the trail in Walled Lake even though he does not have direct connection to trail. He said Council must be fiscally responsible.

John Calvert – 7235 Strawberry Lane – said he from Livingston County and is a member of Friends of the Lakelands Trail. He said there was a similar situation in Hamburg Township. He said once the trail was upgraded there was no money for maintenance. The Friends stepped up

and donated funds. The community embraced the trail more and more and came up with the money for maintenance. A project called "Safe Routes to School" of which two Walled Lake schools are part of; Walled Lake Elementary and Guest Elementary have participated in. It would be a shame not to follow through with the trail. In Hamburg Township part of Livingston County they started a "Safe Route to School" and the trail was a pivotal component. They started with about six children walking to school and ended up with over 200. The project helped with pollution problems, childhood obesity and diabetes. There is a senior center facility close to the trail as well and they immediately took over using the trail on a daily basis. It is a community asset and he encouraged Council to do everything thing they can to move forward. There are others ways to fund. The Friends group was formed with help from major contributors. He said there is a transmission line that runs the length of trail he suggested contacting ITC they offer grants to help. There is a Great Lakes to Lake trail running from Port Huron to South Haven. The trail in Livingston County is a key component just like Walled Lake's trail and he encourages Walled Lake to move forward so the Great Lakes to Lake trail can become a reality.

Nancy Krupiarz – Michigan Trails & Greenways – said she is executive Director of Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance they are a statewide non-profit that advocates for multiuse trails for biking and walking also providing technical assistance which they did at the beginning of this project. There are many ways to raise dollars for the pre-development work, local match for development and maintenance. One of the primary things that can be done is organizing a Friends group they are highly important in fundraising efforts. There are many trail groups throughout the state that find once the volunteers get involved, the volunteers know and are connected to the business people in town they visit and once they illuminate that the whole trail then acquires general awareness. Then other businesses get involved because they see the opportunities available. This has been happening in Traverse City – Tart Trails has been networking for years and it keeps grow. Another option is to front load when fundraising; package it all together come up with pre-development dollars, local match and maintenance costs all in one. Do one big fundraising campaign. You don't have to develop the trail right off the bat, you have your own timeline to fundraise as you go. This trail is part of the Great Lake to Lakes trail, a 250-mile trail that began in 2007 and they have many people across the state that are so excited about it. They would be happy to publicize the need for the Walled Lake trail. There are many people outside of Walled Lake that would be happy to donate to get the Great Lakes to Lake trail accomplished. A Pertinacity which is another grant available that Michigan Economic Development corporation matches 50%. The Friends group could help to put together. There are volunteers available to monitor the trail for trash/debris and maintenance. The national rate for a volunteer's time is \$23.56 it is a valuable resource to take advantage of. They can also be organized to staff tables at events or festivals. The trail is such an important project, there is a lot of support for it. She hopes Council does not waste this rare opportunity. Not every community has a rail trail to use that is safe, away from traffic and has nature along it. This could be turned into a very valuable asset for the community and she hopes Council does it.

Mike Esker – 3411 Glenview Court – said he is a Commerce Township resident. He uses the trail probably two to three times a week all year long. It is a wonderful piece of land a beautiful ride. He is the manager of American Cycle and Fitness at 14 Mile and Haggerty Road. The benefits of this trail to his business is obvious. He said bigger than that, the rail trails are becoming more and more popular they are becoming destinations. When he goes on vacation he

seeks them out, they cycle vacation, they spend a lot of money in the destination areas they visit. He said that can only benefit a local community. As a manager of his facility, he has a big customer base of Walled Lake, Commerce, and Wixom people. They have a lot of inquiries of the status of the trail and when it will be open. A little bit of maintenance and forward thought into the future Council will be surprised how many people will use the trail. He said he wanted to distill the myth that rail trails bring crime into a community. Rail trails will eliminate crime in a community, the undesirables will not be on a trail if it is full of people enjoying it. It is not clandestine enough for them to go. There are plenty of studies to prove that.

Mayor Kevin Hinkley, City of Wixom – 3250 Johanna Ware – said he can guarantee he will have a copy of tonight’s minutes and he will be implementing a lot of the suggestions from tonight’s meeting to offset the cost of the trail in his community. He said one of the things that all three communities committed to understanding some council members here this evening were not here 2, 3, 4 years ago – however, the three communities committed and as the railway is developed that it would be no cost to the taxpayers. They would find grants, monies from businesses to help offset the cost for many of the trail expenses. He said he is speaking tonight on behalf of City of Wixom, they believe that Walled Lake’s departure from the Trailway Council will have a huge negative impact on this region. He said not to forget the economic growth that is the result of properly planned and maintained trail ways. There are countless studies, too numerous to paraphrase here tonight. However highlighting a few items; trails build strong economically viable communities. According to the National Home Builders, a study cited by the New York Times – “trails are the number one amenity for potential homeowners seek when they are looking at moving into a community. Trails provide communities with a valuable amenity that leads into increased housing values. In Indianapolis alone, for example, property values with trails are more than \$140 million dollars. Trails revitalize neighborhoods. They are seeing the same thing happen in Wixom with the Heritage housing development. Trails build local businesses. Bicycle tours are a growing affluent segment of the tourist market. They contribute significantly to local businesses that are well connected to the trails. The Virginia Creeper trail reported visitors spend \$1.6 million dollars annually providing an estimated 27 new fulltime jobs. One of Wixom’s local business Drafting Table Brewing Company on the eastern side of the Huron Valley Trailway, have participated in several organized rides with neighboring breweries in neighboring communities and have an 18 space bike rack on site. Many of the businesses see an increase in patrons. It seems half of the visitors of Wixom’s downtown Dairy Queen in summer months are on bikes. Trailways also help to create vibrant healthy communities offering mobility alternatives to driving a car. One study in Lincoln Nebraska showed every dollar of investment in trails led to almost \$3 dollars of direct medical benefits to the community. There are economic development tools through the Oakland County Mainstreet program such as the Trail Oriented Development which aids to economic revitalization. He said Council needs to think out of the box when working on trail maintenance. Once it is constructed; local DDA’s community foundations, recreational millages and/or endowments, memorial benches, etc. can be used to help offset the cost. Local businesses can also contribute by sponsoring signage, a garbage receptacle, or sponsor a mile, etc. He said he understands current council members were not part if this originally and he understands it is a tough decision. He said Council must find a way to fund this and work with Commerce and Wixom before they say they are out. He said Council needs to say they are in and figure it out together. We have worked a long time with Walled Lake, we are buddies this is what we do. We help each other.

He asked Council to take a long-term view when considering the proposal to withdrawal and not be short sided, please keep in mind your children and grandchildren and think about the community they would like to settle down in and raise their families in. He thanked Council for their time and he hopes Council will work with them.

Tim Sikma – 3150 Highland Blvd – said he echo's Mayor Hinkley's comments.

John Hensler – 5045 Mansfield Ave. – said he is the trail manager for the MI Airline Trail. He started back in May. He said he made a presentation back in June giving an overview of the trail and what the plan was. He said he is asking Council to reconsider withdrawing from the Trailway Council for a number of reasons. As trail manager, it is his job to identify funding and revenue opportunities to offset the development as well as maintenance costs. Nobody from the Trailway Council is asking anybody to raise taxes or increase millages. He said there are a lot of resources available, for example, the billboards along M-5 Highway. There is currently a billboard along the trail property that crosses M-5 and discussions are being had about another one being added. That sign is on trailway property, those funds from the leases go directly to the Trailway Council and then they will determine how to spend it whether it be for development, kiosks, etc. If Walled Lake leaves the Trailway Council, they will forgo the sharing of those resources. Another source of funding are private foundations who may donate towards costs for engineering and designing of the trail. There are several other foundations the Trailway Council will be approaching for funding as well. The Trailway Council is reaching out to their rail trail groups in Oakland County and Southeast Michigan to determine what types of surfacing technologies they used. There are a lot of low cost options available. They would like to make the Walled Lake depot headquarters for the trail. Maybe rent it out for community events. It would be a center piece for the trail. There is a big parking lot there. They want to make it a place that people from all over can come, park and get on the trail. Use it enjoy it and when done they come back and have dinner in a local restaurant. He hopes that Walled Lake would allow the Trailway Council an opportunity to review the interlocal agreement and explore options that will satisfy the City's needs and financial obligations. He said there may be a way for Walled Lake to remain on the Council as a nonvoting member but still benefit from the grant applications and other revenue sources and trail wide maintenance. According to the terms of the existing interlocal agreement any community that decides to withdraw from the Trailway Council is still required to contribute its share of the operating budget for fiscal year 2017 which goes through December. Leaving in March is certainly premature, why not wait to see if they can come up with other funding sources and grant opportunities. If it doesn't work maybe leave in November or December 2017. He said he firmly believes the optimal success of the trail will happen when all three communities work together to make it the great fantastic resource they feel it is going to be. It is important for current and future residents and businesses to be able to benefit as well for all kinds of generations to come.

David Scott – Commerce Township Supervisor – 8610 Buffalo Drive – said he is the current Commerce Township Supervisor and father of three. He said all of Walled Lake has been a really good neighbor for a long time. He retired from a 30-year service with Oakland County Sheriff's office. The communities have always backed each other up. He said early on in his campaign this trail should have been a county park not a city, village or township park. It goes from Lyon to Oxford. Do bad things happen on a trail they have? Yes, they have. The more the

trail is active the least that will occur along it. The more eyes, more lights, more activity on the trail the problems will dissipate. He said Walled Lake is unequivocally in for 2017, the budget is fixed. Leaving in March is premature. As a member of the Trailway Council, everything has to be done in a unanimous setting, Walled Lake can vote no. Walled Lake does not need to leave, if something is not right express it they will work through it. As three communities, we will score so much higher in an application for a grant. The problem we have obviously, the portion we cannot devour with a grant or trust fund application, is the design and engineering. When the design and engineering has to be done - just like building a road the Trailway Council will have to address prevailing wages, MDOT standards, etc. All those things have to be considered. There is a substantial amount of money that has already been put forth, it is in a hold back with MDOT. At the completion of the project money will come back to each of the three communities. There is money still vested that can be utilized to cover expenditures. He said Commerce is going to hold the City's arm and help the City monetarily and get through this project in total. There is time where we as a Trailway Council vote and Wixom and Commerce would like to proceed to seek a grant and we will not ask Walled Lake for a contribution at that time. Volunteerism is clearly out there to help, we can make this a success story. Don't worry about other places, go to West Bloomfield. Before Council acts on their resolution invite the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation to a city meeting for a presentation on what it costs to build and maintain a trail. Council will find the cost is almost nonexistence. The maintenance is almost nonexistent. He said Council does not have to leave. What other opportunity does Walled Lake have to operate a green space park, and grow from out of nothing. He said the businesses in the West Bloomfield area have made big bucks. People ride their bikes, get off their bikes in the community buy coffee, snacks, food and gifts from the local area and then they ride home. Commerce Township does not have a downtown that will benefit as Walled Lake can. He said the Trailway Council is negotiating with Adams Outdoor Advertising for a second billboard and this will provide funds from the lease agreements and it will be divided amongst all three communities' year after year. It is not tax dollars, it is advertising dollars. He said Huron Valley Hospital has reached out to him, they want to be a partner with the community. They want to donate. The signs for the trail are already purchased waiting to be installed by the Trailway Council. He said the Walled Lake Council is being premature be leaving in advance. They don't have to leave and staying won't necessarily be a cost definitive problem. The train depot staging area - men have left families and children to go protect our country and their bodied have come back on that train. We owe it the history of this community. People have to understand not all history happened on the battlefield of the Virginia's. One if the most important speeches of the civil war didn't happen in Virginia it happened on Commerce Road in 1879 at the Michigan Military Academy. He said embrace the trail. He said the Trailway Council has only owned the trail since February and have not had a chance to visit the neighboring business to gain their help. The depot is going to be an absolute center piece for this. This is a destination. There are very few staging places available. West Bloomfield has a six-car parking lot, Commerce Township has an opportunity to put in a staging area at the end of Crumb Road. He said this is a long-term agreement, don't walk away now that we are owners. As a team, we can make this work, we can work through agreements. There will be times to agree to disagree. He said before he arrived on the scene, MDOT agreed they were installing a pedestrian bridge over M-5 Highway, his predecessors, a 7-member board with only two citizens in the room agreed to spend an additional \$500,000 to make it a pretty bridge. He said even in the hardest of times, we can make this work, remain a team, not always agreeing, all decisions

have to be unanimous. The Trailway Council cannot spend money erroneously. The guarantees if Council chooses to withdrawal is you own what you own. Walled Lake will not get revenue from billboard advertising. He asked Council to stay on board and reap the benefits. Coming in 2017 the Michigan Marijuana Medical Act has changed, there will be a new set of rules he has no doubt those closed dispensaries will re-open and those businesses will want to partner and spend money in the communities. He asked Council to stay a partner, don't walk away, keep an open mind. The money is there, the growth is there, and the partnerships are waiting to jump on board.

Michelle Ekkmeyer – 22121 Lancrest Court – said she is glad to hear Walled Lake is committed to maintaining trail. The exposure and benefit to state and local residents in addition to out of state travelers cannot be oversold. The health, safety and financial benefits to everyone are huge. There is time to build up maintenance monies. When it is, new, there is little maintenance it takes about 7 years for a regular schedule of maintenance to take place. There is time to create a nest egg. The Great Lakes to Lakes trail are fortunate as they have large local donors. She said there is an existing offer to pay Walled Lake's portion of engineering costs. Please don't let cost get in the way. She said Walled Lake has no less than five restaurants near the trail, the idea of signage along the trail for those restaurants is a very real scenario. There is an opportunity for people to spend money in Walled Lake. More than 10,000 people every year go to Iowa to ride bike across the state. We have a great opportunity for these rides to happen here in Michigan. The Great Lakes to Lake trail really has an opportunity to bring some great people to local neighborhoods. If Council would like to speak with people in leadership who have had a trail longer than minute she can help with that, as well as Mr. Hensler. They can provide real answers to their questions.

Beth Branovain – 28697 Apple Blossom – said she is an avid rider. She is one of those people who spends money along the bike trails. She receives a magazine from the Rails to Trails organization and they highlight all kinds of trails throughout the U.S. She said on one of her ventures she stayed at a local bed and breakfast along the trail, she said the owner was incentivized to do so because they know how much money bikers brings to the trails and communities. Every place she goes she spends money. She eats, sleeps and spends money. She said people are looking for places to ride bicycles. This trail is a missing piece to connect the trails.

Thomas Morris – 30500 Northwestern Hwy – said he is in support of the trail. He is a rider and rides along the trail. He and his wife very much enjoy the trail. He is looking forward to the connection being made. He said it will be an asset to the community. He thanked Council for hosting this meeting.

Matt Fitzhorn – 236 Summit – said he owns Vincere Cycles in Milford, Michigan. He said he supports the trail. He said people from Milford will come into Walled Lake by bicycle it is not that far for a cyclist. The trail provides recreation to not only your own community but to people around the area as well. It will bring people into Walled Lake. The trail systems in Milford bring a huge number of people into Milford not just the locals. Cyclist really like to spend money and that is a fact. The Great Lakes to Lake trail will allow people from all over to come and bring

people into the community Walled Lake can be a part of that. He urged Council to continue with the project.

Wendy Malinasky – 1900 Spruce Drive – said she is a Commerce resident and she reiterates what everyone has said. She said he son rode 45 miles last year in three hours. Kids will use it.

Rachel Skonsen – 2905 Merganser – said she is resident of the Village of Wolverine Lake and mother of three boys. She said her and her children used the West Bloomfield trail a lot. They used it together, it was family time and a time to bond. It would be really nice to have that same option here. She saw so many families along the trails. It was a great place to center the family. She referenced an article discussing the cost of loneliness. There is a real epidemic of loneliness, depression and isolation. The trail offers a place for people and communities to connect, it's a powerful place. She met complete strangers that became her friend out on the trail. She asked to have that here.

Fred Dore – 2173 Pleasant – said he lives in Commerce Township and is a cycling advocate and member of Michigan Trails and Greenways Association. He oversaw organizing cycling tours. He said what he has not heard here among the folks who spoke tonight is the property everyone is speaking of was acquired by the Trailway Council \$2.6 million dollars and of that not one dollar came from any of three communities involved Commerce, Walled Lake or Wixom. The entirety of the \$2.6 million dollars came from two grants one being Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund and the MDOT Tap Program which is a federal highway program. That \$2.6 million came from in case of the trust fund, the residents of Michigan and the tap monies were all the residents of the U.S.A. It is not a local investment, it is a state investment and national investment. This is the way these kinds of projects get purchased for development and this the way they get developed. \$2.6 million dollars was thrown in our hands. It did not cost us a thing. Now we are charged with the responsibility of doing something with it that causes us to have buy in and also make it high quality for everyone to use. The folks in Walled Lake, Commerce and Wixom, all of Oakland County, and all of Michigan. Now that process is why we are here today because in order to get further grant funding to construct the trail to where it will be a high-quality trail that will have a riding surface and other amenities that will cause people to want to come here. We have to put up a little of bit of money ourselves. He said his understanding for the process of funding from local entities so far, is the 2016 budget \$30,000 dollars came from Walled Lake and in the 2017 budget Walled Lake has appropriated \$38,000. That is a total of \$68,000 that the City has appropriated thus far. He has heard other communities say that they will fill in any additional monies that Walled Lake would have to provide to pay for the engineering study. Walled Lake may not have to appropriate any money at all. It has already been discussed right here, the 2017 money is appropriated, that's done, the City is in. What is being asked of the City additional to that, may very well be a very very small amount of money. He said the figures that he has seen for the 2017 budget says that each of the communities will make a contribution of \$62,000. The City has already put in \$30,000 and the balance of which Mr. Scott said Commerce would step up to the plate. There are other opportunities to fill in monies to where the City will not have to appropriate any more money. The next step beyond that engineering study is then additional grants to actually pay for construction. There again the Michigan Department of Natural Resources trust fund and the MDOT Tap program can be the funding to cover the cost of construction. That could be up to

\$2 million and up we don't know until the engineering cost estimate is done. The point is there are grant opportunities. Think about this we have had \$2.6 million dollars dropped in our hands and we have the opportunity to get another \$2 or 3 million. We are debating about the money we have to bring to cover that gap. Come on folks, the one criticism that Michigan always gets is a failure to have a regional vision of things. Here we are a region of three communities that are kissing cousins and live and work in each other communities and we can't figure out how to maintain regional view of three communities that encompass 10 square miles? Come on. Can't we all just get along? As part of his role when he was organizing bike tours was to look for places that had little traffic on the road ways as they have to serve as the median for bicycle travel. The tours he organized were in upper peninsula of Michigan. He sought out destination sites that people wanted to go and would go to. He located routes the travel that people would be comfortable riding and have amenities they needed. That is what people look for. He has heard people talk about a bicycle vacation, they will also be looking for what they can access while on their bicycle. If the 5.6 miles of the trail is built here it will be literally the final gap in the trails going across Oakland County. That is absolutely monumental. You will have a continuous trailway from the City of Pontiac all the way to the west boundary of Oakland County in the City of South Lyon. That is absolutely tremendous to be able to do that. He rides the West Bloomfield trail through Pontiac and Auburn Hills. The businesses along there benefit. Bicycle riders will come when they know there is a destination where there is a place they can ride. He said he is from Missouri, there was a trailway built along the Missouri River, in the St. Louis area to Kansas City. It is 240 miles of continuous trailway and along that trailway the towns benefit. There are bed and breakfasts restaurants. Everything is flourishing. The Great Lakes to Lake concept will be a destination. What an opportunity do not pass on it. He said it has been articulated quite clearly that Walled Lake does not have to withdrawal from the Trailway Council. The City can stay on the council and figure out the monetary deficiency that the City has and work around it. Should the City choose to withdraw from the Trailway Council that Trailway Council, with only two members remaining, will be severely encumbered when they start trying to write grant applications for construction of their pieces of the trail. The DNR Trust fund Board that awards these grants will ask them when they make their application, what about that section of trail in Walled Lake? It is a mile and a quarter long, what's going to be done with that? He said he hopes Council feels the burden and the pressure of abandoning Commerce and Wixom in this endeavor. He prays to God that Council will find it within their souls to stay aboard and work cooperatively for the benefit of this region.

Close Public Hearing 8:27 p.m.

City Manager Whitt requested to address the City Council. Mr. Whitt explained that there was good discussion and but there was not yet a reason to vote on the tabled resolution. Mr. Whitt opined that the issue is about the money and the vision of how taxpayers' money will be spent. Mr. Whitt stated that the Walled Lake City Council had never articulated to him that they were not in favor of developing the trail. Mr. Whitt explained that the City Council intends to develop and maintain the trail regardless of what the City Council decides regarding membership in the Trailway Council. Mr. Whitt suggested that the City Council instructs him and Mayor Ackley to meet with Mayor Hinkley and Supervisor Scott to renegotiate the Trailway agreement because all the members of City Council support a fair and reasonable development of the trail. Mr. Whitt explained that it was the past Trailway Council activities and expenditures that were the real

issues. Mr. Whitt explained that he was not referring to the new Trailway Council membership but he said when he had served as a representative on the trailway council he was told he did not have a say. Mr. Whitt opined that there were votes taken by the Trailway Council Board and then something different was done than what the board voted for and that such activity had that left a bad taste, and as an example, he gave an example of a vote taken by the Trailway Council to award a bid to an engineering company, yet late the bid was then awarded to some other firm without a vote of the Trailway Council. Mr. Whitt suggested the discussion were at a stage to negotiate.

Mayor Ackley opined that there had been a lot of good points made and room for an open discussion. Mayor Ackley stated she welcomed the offer from Mayor Hinkley and Commerce Supervisor Scott to re-negotiate the interlocal agreement between the three local governments.

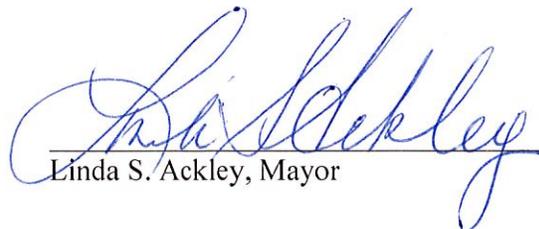
**CM 03-01-17 TO FURTHER DISCUSS RESOLUTION 2017-14 AND INSTRUCT
THE MAYOR AND CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO
NEGOTIATIONS TO DISCUSS THE TRAILWAY COUNCIL
INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH COMMERCE AND WIXOM
REPRESENTATIVES**

Motion by Robertson, seconded by Loch, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To further discuss Resolution 2017-14 and instruct the Mayor and City Manager to enter into negotiations to discuss the trailway council interlocal agreement with Commerce and Wixom representatives.

Meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.



Jennifer Stuart, City Clerk



Linda S. Ackley, Mayor

*approved
4-18-17*