

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON  
CITY COUNCIL  
FEBRUARY 26, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order:**

The regular meeting, held at the NIESA located at 1296 West Grand River in Williamston, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Tammy Gilroy, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. Roll Call:**

Mayor Tammy Gilroy, Mayor Pro-tem Brandon Lanyon, Council members Steve Jenkins, and Dan Rhines. Absent: Tommy Pratt (arrived 7:04 pm), Scott VanAllsburg (arrived 7:04 pm) and Terry Hansen.

Also present: City Manager John Hanifan, Deputy Clerk Barbara Burke, City Attorney Timothy Perrone, Police Chief Jeff Weiss, Spicer Group Representative Phil Westmoreland, MDOT Representatives Melissa Longworth and Andrea Strach, JFM Productions, citizens Jen Bennett, Jennifer Normandin, Adam Normandin, David Jones, Ann Lemmen, Ray Lemmen, Amanda Hart, Rahn Wright, Robin Kodet, Jim Belles, and other members of the public.

Motion by **Lanyon**, second by **Jenkins**, to excuse absent members. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**4. Approval of Agenda:**

Motion by **Jenkins**, second by **Lanyon**, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**5. Audience Participation:**

Jen Bennett said she was attending on behalf of the Plymouth Landing subdivision. They are opposed to the Dollar General development proposed on Williamston Road and listed reasons.

Adam Normandin spoke against the Dollar General, saying it was not good for the community.

(Pratt and VanAllsburg arrived, 7:04 pm)

Jim Carr is opposed to the Dollar General saying it does not fit with the goals of the City's Master Plan.

**6. Council Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2024:**

Motion by **Rhines**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to approve the February 12, 2024, minutes as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**7. Accounts Payable:**

Motion by **Lanyon**, second by **Rhines**, to approve the February 26, 2024, accounts payable as presented, reference #'s 77362-77386, EFT 753, ACH 743-771 from dates 2/8/24 through 2/19/24 for a total of \$716,597.71. Yes: Jenkins, VanAllsburg, Rhines, Gilroy, Lanyon, Pratt. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8. Senior Center Update:**

Julie Rudd, Executive Director of the Williamston Area Senior Center, gave an update. She hired Anne McKenney as the Activities/Events Coordinator. More people are coming to the Senior Center. Their future vision is to have a building of their own. They are looking to purchase the Merindorf Building located south of town and she listed all the positive elements which this building and property offer. A local realtor will help with the building. They want to renew their millage and asked what the City needs from them. They are tossing around ideas for a new name, perhaps Northeast Ingham Senior Center or Senior Center of Northeast Ingham County. Their current lease expires in July 2025.

**9. Action Items**

**9a. Appointment of Don Bixler to the Board of Review for a Term to Expire 01/01/25:**

Motion by **Lanyon**, second by **VanAllsburg**, to appoint Don Bixler to the Board of Review for a term to expire 01/01/25. Yes: Rhines, Gilroy, Lanyon, Pratt, Jenkins, VanAllsburg. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**9b. Appointment of Jane Reagan as Alternate to the Board of Review for a Term to Expire 01/01/26:**

Motion by **VanAllsburg**, second by **Lanyon**, to appoint Jane Reagan as alternate to the Board of Review for a term to expire 01/01/26. Yes: Gilroy, Lanyon, Pratt, Jenkins, VanAllsburg, Rhines. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**9c. Amendment to City Manager's Employment Agreement:**

Motion by **Rhines**, second by **Lanyon**, to amend the City Manager's employment agreement with the following terms:

- 1) 3-year extension to existing agreement. (Current agreement expires in February 2025; new expiration would be February 2028.)
- 2) The option to join the Municipal Employee Retirement System (MERS) Hybrid Defined Benefit, which is an open retirement group. (The current Defined Contribution annual cost is approximately 8% or \$8,250. The DB annual cost would be approximately \$14,000. A MERS amendment resolution at a future meeting will be required.)
- 3) \$500/month for additional duties as Zoning Administrator, DDA Director. Historically, the monthly compensation for employees serving in each of these roles was \$500.

Yes: Lanyon, Pratt, Jenkins, VanAllsburg, Rhines, Gilroy. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**10. Discussion Items**

**10a. Road Diet:**

Manager Hanifan reported a public open house on the road diet will be held on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, starting at 6 pm. This will be at the Williamston Middle School Cafeteria, 3845 Vanneter Road.

MDOT representatives Melissa Longworth and Andrea Strach spoke on the road diet and will be at the public open house.

**10b. Construction Project Update(s):**

Manager Hanifan reported there will be a public open house for the Lloyd Street and Williams Street construction projects on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 5 pm. These projects may begin March 18 and possibly be done by Memorial Day. Updates will be posted on the City's website and social media, and letters will be sent to residents/business owners in the area.

**10c. Communication from WCS – Housing Committee:**

Manager Hanifan reported the Williamston Community Schools Board of Education Housing Committee will host a meeting on Thursday, March 7, 2024, at 6 pm. He included some statistics in the meeting packet. The City will be represented at this meeting.

**12. Department Head Reports**

**12a. City Manager:**

Manager Hanifan reported most Boards/Commissions met this month. There is a Friends of Williamston Parks meeting tomorrow.

**12b. Police Chief:**

Chief Weiss reported two more reserve officers have been hired and there will be a student in the academy in May. The Blue Mass was last Sunday at St. Mary's, and it was very well-received. The no left turn traffic control order by the elementary schools is going well, they are still in the educational phase.

**12c. Treasurer**

A budget printout was submitted for Council review.

**13. Committee/Sub-Committee Reports:**

Councilman Jenkins reported on the TIFA 2A/2B meeting. There are funds in the TIFA 2A with which some projects can be done. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be sent for the Ice House building.

Mayor Gilroy reported the DDA is working on community events, partnering with service organizations. The new website will soon be launched with a new look and feel. Lina Chapman is organizing the chainsaw art carving event which will be held on the day of the Light Parade.

**14. Audience Participation:**

Jennifer Normandin said she is opposed to the Dollar General.

Jeff Kodet spoke on the road diet and losing parking spaces. He spoke of comments on social media.

Amanda Hart is scared of the road diet and feels it will harm businesses by losing parking spots.

Mike Yanz of NIESA said he still has concerns about turning the trucks. He would like actual width numbers from MDOT.

Jim Belles said he retired from MDOT and had comments on the road diet.

Andrea Strach with MDOT said the Putnam and Grand River signal is slated to be upgraded/modernized within the next five years.

David Jones said losing parking spaces is not good and spoke of the impact.

**15. Council Member Comments:**

Councilman Rhines said Council has been talking about the road diet for a very long time. Downtown projects are not easy. When the DDA parking lot was re-done, more parking spaces were added at that time.

Councilman VanAllsburg encouraged everyone to go to the Williamston Theatre to see Maytag Virgin – it is getting great reviews.

Councilman Lanyon said the traffic order near the school has helped.

Councilman Jenkins thanked everyone who came and aired their concerns. Safety is the number one concern – safety outweighs negative comments. He encourages people to come to meetings and give feedback.

Councilman Pratt echoed what Councilman Jenkins said. He appreciates people voicing their concerns. Studies and presentations have shown him the safety of a road diet.

Mayor Gilroy echoed Council member comments. She has tried to stress being a transparent community, a transparent City Council and City staff. She appreciates everyone coming out, it means the community is engaged and concerned. She is excited about the upcoming open houses as this means more opportunity for community engagement. Whatever ends up coming from it, it is going to be better for the City of Williamston, residents, and businesses. There is one more month of no parking on City streets from 2am-5am.

**16. Adjourn to the Call of the Chair:**

Mayor Gilroy adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

**\*Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

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**Barbara J. Burke, Deputy Clerk**

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**Tammy Gilroy, Mayor**

**Date Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_