

**City of Marine City  
City Commission  
May 5, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Marine City Commission was held on Thursday, May 5, 2016, in the Fire Hall, 200 South Parker Street, Marine City, Michigan, and was called to order by Mayor Skotarczyk at 7:00 pm.

After a prayer offered by Reverend Slaton, the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Skotarczyk.

**Present: Mayor Raymond Skotarczyk, Commissioners Terrance Avery, Elizabeth Hendrick, Dianne Lovett, Raymond Meli, David Simpson, James Turner, City Manager Elaine Leven, City Clerk Kristen Baxter**

**Absent: None**

**Communications**

The following Communications were received:

- Pending City Commission Agenda Items
- DNR – Pavilion/Restroom

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to accept and file the Communications. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

**Public Comment**

Rosalie Skwiers, 211 Michigan, advised of an ADA update for small businesses. In addition, she said the city was losing potential customers due to not enough available parking.

Bill Haas, 203 Pleasant, noted the empty spots where trees were removed on South Water Street, said the city needed to advertise the sealed bid process, and said renters deserved better sidewalks.

Lorraine Teper, 250 Riverview Street, spoke of the easement at the end of Riverview Street. She said people were using the easement as a park instead of an easement. She requested a metal sign be posted.

Susan Wilburn, Clay Township, introduced herself as the new City of Marine City Building Official and asked the Board if anyone had any questions for her.

Bill Klaassen, 620 North Mary Street, said that trees needed to be spaced for ease of parking on South Water Street, and said that city sidewalks must be ADA compliant.

Joe Moran, 710 Pleasant, said Marine City had a reputation for being negative, but that it was undergoing a renaissance with new businesses and new jobs. He said the negativity needed to stop with the city moving forward to become "**one**".

Melissa Fisher, 240 South Water Street, said the whole town needed to work together as one. She said she supported Tom and Kathy Vertin because they have brought so much to the city. She said the hotel is nothing but an asset to Marine City.

Michael Hilferink, 218 Pleasant, said the current Marine City has the same conflict and discourse in local politics as they did in 2008. He asked the Board who they were listening to.

Bob Klingler, 837 Degurse, reported that he represented the new and the old in Marine City and said he wanted the new and old to come together. Mr. Klinger said that people who were in the audience, came to the meeting because they care for and love Marine City.

Joe Aprile, 406 Robertson, said that property maintenance around the city had not been addressed for years. He specifically mentioned the property located at Robertson and Third Street and asked the city to look into the blight issue.

### **Approve Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to add item **#11-M Building Official Employment Agreement** to the Agenda. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve the Agenda, as amended. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

### **Approve Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to approve the City Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2016, as presented. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

## **Consent Agenda**

The following Consent Agenda items were presented:

- Historical Commission Minutes ~ January 19, 2016
- TIFA Minutes ~ March 15, 2016
- Business License ~ Brenner Contracting, LLC
- Special Event ~ Memorial Day Parade

Motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Avery, to accept the Consent Agenda and file, as presented. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### ***Commercial Redevelopment District ~ Inn on Water Street***

Mayor Skotarczyk opened the Public Hearing to receive public comments for and against the Commercial Redevelopment District ~ Inn on Water Street at 7:38 pm.

Rosalie Skwiers, 211 Michigan, spoke in opposition to the hotel due to no money going to the city's general fund from the hotel. She asked what was in it for the city. She also commented that she couldn't see how the path of travel and ADA accommodations could be met.

Melissa Fisher, 240 South Water Street, spoke about TIFA balancing itself out. She said residents should not ask what the city was going to do for them, but what they were doing for the city.

James LaLonde, East China, reported that he met out of town friends in Marine City recently and said they enjoyed all that the city had to offer.

Lynn Zyrowski, 2552 N. Belle River, East China, said she supported the hotel development. She said it would be nice to have the facility in town and the employment opportunities it would offer.

Louise Beutell, 535 North Main Street, said there were many ways for all of Marine City to benefit in a positive way from the hotel.

Rebecca Lepley, 539 North William Street, said she was thrilled to have a place for people to stay in Marine City when they visited.

Robert Klingler, 837 Degurse, reported that he received a five-year tax abatement on 837 Degurse from the city several years ago, and has since added six properties within the city to date. Mr. Klingler said everyone wanted to prosper and there must be fairness across the board. He also said Marine City has been great embracing new businesses.

Bill Haas, 203 Pleasant, spoke about the parking problem in downtown Marine City. He also said that the police should be walking down South Water Street at midnight instead of 8:30 pm.

Cheryl Deveraux, President of Marine City Chamber of Commerce, commented in support of the hotel, saying that people were looking for a place to stay overnight in Marine City.

Rosalie Skwiers, 211 Michigan, said she was concerned about where people were going to park.

Mayor Skotarczyk closed the Public Hearing at 8:09 pm.

### ***Commercial Facilities Exemption Certificate ~ Inn on Water Street***

Mayor Skotarczyk opened the Public Hearing to receive public comments for and against the Commercial Facilities Exemption Certificate ~ Inn on Water Street at 8:09 pm.

Rosalie Skwiers, 211 Michigan, commented that it was corporate welfare that the hotel was given tax money. She said she was not against development, but the hotel project should not have been given tax money.

Rebecca Lepley, 539 North William Street, said that people needed to understand the difference between spending money and investing money. She commented that the hotel project was a good investment. She explained that, with TIFA, the city could invest in long-term returns.

Kathy Vertin, 160 South Water Street, detailed the hotel plans and subsequent parking, reporting that thirty-five parking places had been built into the hotel plans for twenty-four rooms. In addition, two car garages will be provided for the condominiums.

John Sapienza, 126 Jefferson, said he supported the hotel and commented that grant opportunities should be applied evenly throughout the city.

Dan Casey, CEO of Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County, said the hotel was an important project for Marine City; Blue Meets Green chose the hotel as one of St. Clair County's ten top projects. Mr. Casey reported that for every dollar invested in a community, the community benefited by a return of three times that amount. Mr. Casey said the Economic Development Alliance was fully committed to supporting the hotel project and he urged support.

Robert Klingler, 837 Degurse, said that he supports the hotel, but asked what would happen in five or so years, if the hotel went belly up. Mr. Klingler said that a 25% leverage was a big leverage.

Randy Maiers, St. Clair County Community Foundation, reported that he looked at the financials for the hotel, and said that the City of Marine City was not on the hook for anything. He further said the hotel was a huge opportunity to push Marine City forward and to have a successful downtown. Mr. Maiers said the Community Foundation was willing to put their private money towards the hotel because they believed in Marine City and the hotel project.

Mike Hilferink, 211 Pleasant, commented that people weren't against the hotel project, they just wanted the project done fairly and responsibly. He said that it wasn't fair for Tom and Kathy Vertin to ask for a handout for the hotel.

Tom Vertin, 160 South Water Street, said that he thought people would be happy that Marine City was going to be the recipient of free grant money and the economic development coming to Marine City, as a result of the hotel project.

Joseph Moran, 710 Pleasant, to promote transparency, suggested a roll call vote be taken on agenda items and have each Board member give a reason for their vote for the sake of clarity.

John Sapienza, 126 Jefferson, spoke again about fairness, and reported that he was denied a grant from the city.

Rosalie Skwiers, 211 Michigan, said the hotel project was not without gambles for the city because they would be stuck with the building if the business fails. She said if they want to develop the business, they should pay for it themselves.

Mike Hilferink, 211 Pleasant, commented that it was easy to apply for grants when they are paid through TIFA.

Mayor Skotarczyk closed the Public Hearing at 9:01 pm.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### ***Teen Center Resolution***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve a resolution to receive and hold property from the River Rec Teen Zone, as presented; Resolution No. 14-2016. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

### ***Beach Fun Raiser Resolution***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Avery, to approve a resolution to receive and hold property from the Beach Fun Raiser to make renovations and hire personnel for the Marine City Public Beach, as presented; Resolution No. 15-2016. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

### ***Water Street Trees***

City Manager Leven began the discussion by stating that there was no clear direction for perfect trees for Water Street. She suggested that the discussion be tabled and revisited, due to the length of the meeting.

A short discussion ensued with Mayor Skotarczyk suggesting that DPW Superintendent Itrich collaborate with Judy Jobin of the Marine City Garden Club.

Commissioner Lovett concurred saying that they together could make a decision on what trees would be best for the city and move forward. Mrs. Lovett said she didn't see a need for it to come back to the Board for final approval.

Commissioner Hendrick said she would like the final approval to come from the Board due to possible blight issues with some of the trees, as well as final placement of the trees.

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to table the discussion of Water Street Trees, pending DPW Superintendent Itrich's investigation, and bring information back to the May 19, 2016 meeting. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: Lovett. Motion Carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***The Council on Aging ~ Request for Financial Support***

Laurie Adair, Washington Life Center supervisor, appealed to the Board for financial assistance to help defray expenses at Washington Life Center.

Commissioner Avery asked where the money would come from in the budget.

City Manager Leven responded that community appropriation funds were available, and asked that all future requests come to the Board in January or February prior to budget workshops.

Motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Hendrick, to provide a \$500.00 donation to the St. Clair County Council on Aging. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

### ***Bid Recommendation ~ Library Air Conditioner***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve a bid from Hopkins Heating & Cooling, in the amount of \$2,965.00, to replace the air conditioning unit at the Marine City Library, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

### ***Bid Recommendation ~ DPW Roof***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve a bid from TMG Services, in the amount of \$8,900.00, to replace the roof at the Department of Public Works, in addition to keeping \$600.00 in reserve for necessary wood replacement, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

***Waive Competitive Bidding ~ Crack Sealant***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to waive competitive bidding for the 2016 Crack Sealing Program according to the specifications given by DPW Superintendent Itrich. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

***Waive Competitive Bidding ~ Exmark Lawn Mower***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to waive competitive bidding for the purchase of an Exmark lawn mower. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Meli, to approve a bid from Zimmer's Sales & Service for the purchase of an Exmark Lazer E Series 742 lawn mower, in the amount of \$8,071.00, as presented. Roll Call Vote: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Meli, Simpson, Turner. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

***Donation of Park Benches***

Department of Public Works Superintendent Itrich, addressed the Board, and said he needed clarification of the direction the Board wanted to take regarding the donation of park benches. He said it was his understanding that the Board wanted final say prior to any addition to a city park.

Commissioner Turner said there was no need to come to the Board, to use his discretion.

Mayor Skotarczyk concurred and said that the Board did not need to get involved. Mayor Skotarczyk reported that if something came along larger than the benches, to bring it back to the Board for consideration.

***Brick Paver Fund Raiser ~ Historic City Hall***

Amy Bouren, representing Friends of City Hall, asked for approval for a brick paver fund raiser. Ms. Bouren said the fund raiser would be held at Historic City Hall and, ultimately, the brick pavers would be installed around the rudder and capstan fixtures located on the east lawn.

Mayor Skotarczyk supported the project 100%, saying that it would be nice to have the pavers.

Commissioner Simpson said the pavers would compliment the existing bandstand and flowerbed, and said that he appreciated that the Friends of City Hall addressed the maintenance of the project.

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Avery, to approve the Brick Paver Fund Raiser for the Friends of City Hall, as presented. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

### ***Commercial Redevelopment District Formation ~ Inn on Water Street***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve a resolution to establish a Commercial Redevelopment District; Resolution No. 016-2016, as presented.

Commissioner Hendrick stated that she had many questions and would like the discussion to be public record. She added that she was fully supportive of the hotel, but was not supportive of subsidizing the cleanup or the 50% tax abatement. Her questions included the following:

- Questioned a parcel located on Bridge Street and Market Street and asked if it was resolved. Tom Vertin responded that the title search had been cleared up.
- Questioned what would happen if there were not enough funds in the TIFA Budget to pay off the debt for the Brownfield. Michael Hilfinger responded that Tom and Kathy Vertin would be on the hook for the debt.
- Questioned if the condominiums were included in the 50% tax abatement. Dan Casey responded that they were not.
- Questioned if the property were to sell, what would happen to the agreements/contracts. Dan Casey responded that they would transfer to the new owners.
- Questioned who would oversee process. Dan Casey responded that Envirollogic would administer to the grant, loan, and Brownfield Authority.

A full list of questions are attached.

Commissioner Meli said he had a problem with the twelve year tax abatement and basing the taxes on what Terhune's paid. He questioned why this project would receive a longer abatement than other businesses. He further said that the city needed to grow on taxes to meet obligations to pay for city services.

Commissioner Simpson said he supported the hotel because the city would benefit by receiving additional tax revenue from the condominiums, the additional use of water, and from tourism. He said the homework was done on the project and it was well researched.

Mayor Skotarczyk said he was in favor of the hotel as it was an excellent opportunity to add value to the city.

Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Lovett, Simpson, Turner. Nays: Hendrick, Meli. Motion Carried.

Commissioners Hendrick and Meli both qualified their vote by indicating that they supported the hotel project, but did not support the proposed tax abatement.

### ***Commercial Facilities Exemption Certificate ~ Inn on Water Street***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to approve a resolution for a Commercial Facilities Exemption Certificate; Resolution No. 017-2016, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Lovett, Simpson, Turner. Nays: Hendrick, Meli. Motion Carried.

### ***Amended Brownfield Plan ~ Inn on Water Street***

Motion by Commissioner Lovett, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve a resolution supporting a Brownfield Plan Amendment; Resolution No. 018-2016, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Lovett, Simpson, Turner. Nays: Hendrick, Meli. Motion Carried.

### ***Brownfield Plan Development and Reimbursement Agreement ~ Inn on Water Street***

Commissioner Simpson asked for figures to be double checked and the plan changed, due to discrepancies.

Commissioner Hendrick concurred, saying she was looking for correct figures before approving agreement.

Dan Casey, CEO of Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County, responded and said the figures would be amended and suggested that the agreement contain the following verbiage, "***After review by City Attorney, as to form***", so it may be approved. Adding the

agreement verbiage would allow the document to be reviewed by City Attorney Downey, prior to execution.

City Attorney Downey answered said that this would be acceptable.

Motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to approve a Development and Reimbursement Agreement between the City of Marine City and the St. Clair County Brownfield Authority, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Lovett, Simpson, Turner. Nays: Hendrick, Meli. Motion Carried.

### ***Board Appointment ~ Library Board***

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve the appointment of Mary Beth Schindler to the Library Board for a three-year term. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

### ***Building Inspector Employment Agreement***

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Simpson, to approve the Building Inspector Employment Agreement for Susan Wilburn, as presented. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

## **FINANCIAL BUSINESS**

### ***Disbursements***

Motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Lovett, to approve total disbursements, including payroll, in the amount of \$97,295.20, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ayes: Skotarczyk, Avery, Hendrick, Lovett, Simpson, Turner. Nays: Meli. Motion Carried.

## **CITY MANAGER REPORT**

City Manager Leven provided updates on the following:

- Received and distributed legislative update on ballot gag order.
- Funding approved for Patronicity for the Beach Attendant Fun Raiser.

## **COMMISSIONER PRIVILEGE**

Commissioner Simpson announced that the Budget Workshops were completed and the budget was balanced for the coming year. He said he was disappointed with the voter turnout for the May 3, 2016 election.

Commissioner Lovett thanked Tom and Kathy Vertin for their work on the hotel project and said she was looking forward to seeing the beautiful asset to the city.

Commissioner Turner thanked Tom and Kathy Vertin and applauded them for sitting through the meeting with a smile on their faces.

Mayor Skotarczyk said that, instead of people complaining about Tom and Kathy Vertin bringing tax dollars and grants to the city, they should be applauded.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Hendrick, seconded by Commissioner Meli, to adjourn at 10:20 pm. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kristen Baxter*

Kristen Baxter  
City Clerk