

City of Northville
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 15, 2014

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 p.m. in the City of Northville Municipal Building, City Council Chambers, 215 W. Main Street, Northville, Michigan, 48167.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Christopher Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem James Allen, Councilmembers Nancy Darga and Sam Ekong

Absent: Councilmember Ryan McKindles (excused)

Also Present: City Manager Patrick Sullivan, City Clerk Dianne Massa, Police Chief Michael Carlson, Housing Director Sherry Necelis, Director of Public Works James Gallogly, Downtown Development Authority Director Lori Ward, and 18 citizens

PRESENTATIONS

The Mayor and City Council welcomed the new Chief of Police, Michael Carlson.

A. Citizens Comments None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

As the shared parking agreements have not been executed between Mr. White and the Rayson and 412 N. Center Street property owners, it was requested that New Business – Request to Establish Micro Brewery at 410 N. Center Street be tabled.

Motion Darga, seconded by Allen to adopt the agenda and consent agenda as amended:

Approve City Council Minutes of:

- Regular Meeting of August 4, 2014
- Regular Meeting of August 18, 2014
- Regular Meeting of September 2, 2014

Receive Bills List: None

Receive Board and Commission Minutes: None

Receive Departmental Reports:

- Youth Assistance: 9/14

Board and Commission Appointments: None

Special Event Request / Skeletons Are Alive / October 3, 2014

Special Event Request / High School Homecoming Parade / October 10, 2014

Special Event Request / Cemetery Walk / First Baptist Church of Northville / October 12, 2014

Request to Dispose of Assets / Security Cameras, Copier

Request to Canvass / Clean Water Action
Proposed Halloween “Trick-or Treat” Hours and Street Closures / October 31, 2014
SMART Municipal Credits

Motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

A. Amendment to Chapter 90 Vegetation / Code of Ordinances / First Reading

At its August 4, 2014 meeting, City Council directed City Staff to investigate the City’s Weed Ordinance (Article III of Chapter 90) as it relates to milkweed. Article III defines milkweed, along with seven other listed plant species, as noxious and poisonous weeds in the City of Northville.

The noxious and poisonous weeds list in the City’s Code of Ordinances has not been reviewed since 1962. At one time, these weeds were thought to be undesirable and were defined as noxious and poisonous weeds in the ordinance. New information is learned about the pros and cons of these naturally appearing weeds in Michigan. Though in the past milkweed was thought to be undesirable from an agricultural point of view, it is now known this plant is critical to the health and survival of the Monarch butterfly. Milkweed is no longer on the State’s noxious weeds list, nor is it on the Federal list of noxious weeds. This is also true about ox-eye daisies, goldenrod, and burdock, all of which are on the City’s current list of noxious and poisonous weeds. Only Canada thistles, wild carrots, ragweed, and poison ivy in the City’s current list are on the State’s lists of noxious and poisonous weeds.

Instead of keeping a list of noxious and poisonous weeds in the City’s Code of Ordinances, it was recommended the Ordinance would reference the lists used by the State of Michigan. In this way, the City with its limited resources will not have to investigate and maintain a current list of noxious and poisonous weeds. Instead, it can rely on the State of Michigan to keep its lists current.

The City Attorney reviewed modifications made to Chapter 90 “VEGETATION”, Article III and approved it for recommendation to City Council. Key changes are summarized as follows:

- Section 90-61 Noxious and poisonous weeds Purpose: Section modified to eliminate the current list and include all species identified in the State of Michigan’s noxious weeds and restricted noxious weed list available from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as established under Act 329 of 1965.

No public comments.

Motion Darga, seconded by Allen to introduce for first reading a proposed amendment to Chapter 90 Vegetation, Article III Weeds in the City of Northville Code of Ordinances as presented, with second reading and possible adoption scheduled for October 6, 2014. **Motion carried unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

A. Request to Establish a Micro Brewery at 410 N. Center Street - Tabled

B. Fire Alarm Replacement at Allen Terrace

Allen Terrace is a 100-unit apartment building which has 98 one-bedroom apartments and two two-bedroom apartments. Due to a malfunction in the fire alarm system, it was discovered that several residents could not hear the audible alarm in the hallway. Subsequently, it has been determined that the system needs to be updated.

On June 25, 2014, a bid opening was held for replacing the existing fire alarm system at Allen Terrace. Only one bid was received. To ensure a competitive bidding process, a second request for proposals was published. On August 7, 2014, two bids were received as follow:

Simplex Grinnell	\$164,800
RedGuard	\$269,000

Due to the age of the current system and the changes to the Michigan Building Code and National Fire Code, the current system is inadequate. The current alarm panel is a Simplex 4100 system, which does not meet UL 864 9th Edition Standards and must be replaced. The scope of work includes audible and strobe alarm devices as well as an additional smoke detector in each bedroom, installing stairwell smoke detectors, and upgrading all audible and visual alarms in the building. Currently, there is only one hard-wired smoke detector installed in each unit.

At its September 10, 2014 meeting, the Housing Commission unanimously recommended awarding the contract to Simplex Grinnell. This company has been the fire alarm contractor since Allen Terrace opened in 1979.

City Council Questions, Comments, and Discussion: In response to a question from Council, it was explained that currently there is only one hardwired smoke detector in each apartment. It was also explained that Community Development Block Grant Funds from years 2011, 2012, and 2013 will fund approximately \$138,000 of this project, with the balance to come from Allen Terrace Operating Funds.

Motion Ekong, seconded by Allen to approve contract with Simplex Grinnell in the amount of \$164,800 to replace the fire alarm system at Allen Terrace. **Motion carried unanimously.**

C. Security Camera System

In October 2013, the City of Northville was awarded a Risk Avoidance Program Grant from Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority for the purchase and installation of security cameras in and around City Hall, overlooking Town Square, and at the Comerica Community Connection. The grant covered 50% of the project cost. City Administration used an information technology consultant to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the project. On April 15, 2014, 14 bids were received and at its May 5, 2014 meeting, City Council awarded the contract to Holman Surveillance Systems in the amount of \$28,339.

The Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) portion of the project included two cameras attached to the elevator tower of the Cady Parking Deck to cover Town Square, two cameras in the stair tower of the elevator at Cady Parking Deck, and three cameras at the Comerica Community Connection. The security system in the Connection includes two interior cameras pointing north and south and one camera mounted on the north side of the Connection that covers the plaza. Electrical work was completed in the basement of the Connection to provide an outlet for security equipment and an internet wire to the utility closet.

The lower level of the Cady Deck “cage” is utilized to store the necessary equipment for the cameras attached to the elevator tower.

The installation of the equipment took place over the summer and was completed in early July. After the system was installed, several deficiencies were noted. Both of the cameras in Town Square cover the same area and do not zoom in. None of the cameras installed cover the front of the plaza near the fountain. It also became apparent that, in order to maximize the usefulness of the equipment, it would be crucial to have remote access to the cameras and the recordings.

A proposal was solicited from Holman, the company that installed the equipment. The total amount of the estimate to address the deficiencies noted above is \$4,870.99. This includes the installation of a new Pan Tilt Zoom Camera on the south façade of the Connection that would be directed at Town Square, removing one of the cameras on the north façade of the Cady Deck tower and replacing the other with a Pan Tilt Zoom Camera, and the installation of remote viewing on the City Manager’s and DDA Director’s office computers. The DDA budgeted \$12,000 for their share of the project. The MMRMA RAP Grant will pay an additional \$830.50 of the \$4,870.99. The DDA has sufficient funds remaining in the project budget to cover the cost of the expanded system.

City Council Questions, Comments, and Discussion: It was clarified that Holman Surveillance Systems was not responsible for the system and equipment deficiencies. Holman bid on and installed the system as specified in the RFP written by an outside consultant.

Motion Allen, seconded by Ekong to approve the quote by Holman Surveillance Systems in the amount of \$4,870.99 to expand the Downtown Security System to include the addition of a new Pan Tilt Zoom camera on the south facade of the Walkway, the replacement of a POE Dome Camera with a Pan Tilt Zoom Camera on the north façade of the Cady Deck Elevator Tower, and the setup of remote viewing on two computers in City Hall. **Motion carried unanimously.**

D. Building Department Reorganization

Since 2010, the City of Northville has contracted with the City of Plymouth for Building Department services. During the recession, Plymouth and Northville’s building activity was reduced to low levels, and contracting with Plymouth for a part-time Building Official worked at that time. However, an increase in building activity in the last two to three years has the Building Department back to pre-recession activity. Due to this increase in building activity, and the desire to improve Building Department procedures, City Administration has reviewed proposals and options to provide increased and improved services in this area. Additionally, it was determined that improved management was needed pertaining to construction sites, tree preservation, soil erosion, drainage issues, and Historic District details.

Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc. of Ann Arbor has provided planning and other services to the community for many years. They currently provide consulting support to the Planning Commission, Historic District Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals. They are very familiar with the community as they have developed much of the Zoning Ordinance and have written and updated our Community Master Plan.

Code Enforcement Services, a division of Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc., provides Building Department services to many communities. The full-service building department services include plan review, building inspection, and ordinance enforcement services. The City has used Code Enforcement Services in the past when there were multiple commercial buildings under construction in the downtown.

The Building Official will have part-time office hours and will respond to questions, telephone calls, do plan reviews, analyze the Building Department processes, and recommend improvements for the above activities if warranted. A separate inspector will work with the Building Official and provide building inspection services.

The proposal from Code Enforcement Services was provided to City Council for its review. The proposal outlines the services to be provided and the hourly rates to be charged for those services.

City Council Questions, Comments, and Discussion: Comments from City Council voiced the belief that this was a positive step in improving how projects are to be managed. Discussion ensued pertaining to Carlisle/Wortman having well-trained building inspectors that have worked in the other communities with these same issues. It was also noted that the building inspectors and the Building Official are not engineers. However, they will ensure that the applicant/builder will pull and provide county permits if those are required as part of their project. In addition, soil and drainage matters require review by a civil engineer. The Building Official will ensure that those reviews are done and are provided to the City as part of the building permit application process. In response to a question, it was explained that the agreement with Carlisle/Wortman will be on a monthly basis and may be terminated.

Matthew Mowers, 131 Rayson voiced support of the recommendation to hire a new Building Official, noting the current Building Official is often difficult to reach and appears to be overloaded. He questioned whether using a firm affiliated with Carlisle/Wortman, which is the firm used for Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) reviews, would create a conflict of interest for BZA decisions.

It was explained that Carlisle/Wortman provides the BZA with a review and an analysis for applications appealing the Building Official's decision. Carlisle/Wortman does not make a recommendation or decision.

Jennifer Luikart, resident supported the recommendation and hoped that the new Building Official would be more readily available to residents.

Mike Rowan, 516 Randolph questioned why city ordinances and state laws have been ignored; why he must call the police to get action when ordinances and laws are broken; what will be done to "right" all of the "wrongs;" why the City Manager, as the supervisor the Building Department, does not know all of the ordinances; and why the City Manager dissolved the Building Department.

City Council pointed out that it was the Council that made the decision to reduce staff in the Building Department, as well as in other City departments. The decisions were made as the City went into the recession. The City had not had a situation that greatly reduced taxable value since the Great Depression. There was no precedent for this revenue loss and the subsequent reductions. Reductions were made with following a detailed review by a citizens budget committee comprised of 25-30 residents of the City. At that time, Building Department activity was down and it was not feasible to retain a full-time Building Official. City Council knows there is a problem with the Building Official, and the City Manager has made a recommendation to work toward resolving the issues. The new consultant will be better able to manage oversight of projects, building codes, and ordinances.

Tim Luikart, resident spoke of the need for the ability to terminate the agreement if the new consultant is not meeting the City Council's objectives.

Maureen Hayes, 418 Randolph voiced support for the decision to retain a new Building Official. She spoke of the house built at 412 Randolph that went beyond the legal setbacks and its impact to her personally and to her property. Hayes commented on the need to spend \$15,000 to file a lawsuit against

the property owners, the belief the City did not protect her and should reimburse her legal fees, a perceived lack of response by the Building Official before the basement was poured and by the City Manager afterward, her neighbors threatening to contact various state agencies during her garage demolition that is being built within all legal parameters, the mindset of certain builders that they can build beyond what the ordinance allows with no repercussion, and why it took this long for the City to make a change to the Building Department.

Oliver Owens, 255 West echoed comments made by previous residents and voiced appreciation for new efforts to improve the Building Department. He refrained from further comment due to pending litigation against builder Mike Miller.

Motion Allen, seconded by Darga to accept the proposal from Carlisle Wortman Associates, dated September 10, 2014 for Building Department Services. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

A. Mayor and Council Communications

Darga spoke of the first Northville Tour de Ville bicycle ride event that coincided with Victorian Festival, noting there were approximately 400 participants. She thanked Rotary for organizing this event.

B. Staff Communications None

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment: 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Massa, CMC
City Clerk

Approved as submitted: 10/06/2014

Christopher J. Johnson
Mayor