

City of South Lyon
Regular City Council Meeting
March 13, 2023

Mayor Pelchat called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Pelchat led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Mayor Pelchat and Councilmembers: Kennedy, Dilg, Kivell, Mosier, Kurtzweil and Hansen

Also present: Fire Chief Thorington, Chief Baaki, Finance and Benefit Administrator Tiernan and Clerk/Treasurer Deaton

Absent: City Manager Zelenak

MINUTES- 2/27/23 & 3/1/23

CM 3-1-23 MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Kivell, supported by Hansen

Motion to approve minutes as presented

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CM 3-2-23 MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Kennedy, supported by Mosier

Motion to approve minutes as presented

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BILLS

CM 3-3-23 MOTION TO APPROVE BILLS

Motion by Kennedy, supported by Kivell

Motion to approve the bills as presented

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

AGENDA

CM 3-4-23 MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Dilg, supported by Mosier

Motion to approve the agenda as presented

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Parks and Recreation resignation- Erica Wilson
2. Police/Fire Open House- Road Closure
3. Housing Commission appointment- Jennifer Redfern

CM 3-5-23 MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Dilg, supported by Kennedy

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carl Richards of 390 Lenox stated Parks and Recreation is the most active commission and they have the biggest budget. He further stated Erica Wilson was on the commission for 20 years and she has done a wonderful job and she will be missed, but he wishes her the best. He tries to attend all their meetings. He then stated he wants to draw attention to the occupants in the building uptown at the corner of Lake and

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10 Mile. The sign says Noble appliance and just so everyone knows they are a big company. He heard their radio announcements on the radio and they have 3 or 4 outlets in the metro area. They are a big concern; they haven't done anything at the location here in town. He then stated at the last meeting, they said they didn't get the grant for the biggest deal of the 3 grants. It was the one for the bridge at 8 Mile near Volunteer Park. The smallest one was approved for the bridge replacement on bike path across from the tube mill. He further stated he thinks it just needs some repair work and a paint job.

DISCUSSION- Downtown

Downtown and Economic Director Mack stated the winter Farmer's Market was once again successful which isn't surprising with Diana being the Market Manager. He then stated the Carnivale event was successful even with the almost foot of snow that we got the night before. He stated there were only 2 vendors that couldn't make it. He then thanked DPW for clearing the snow from the streets and sidewalks. There were a lot of families downtown and the street performers, the tarot card readings, the character artists, and the Disney characters were all very good. He thanked everyone who helped execute the event and everyone that attended. He then stated he attended the Michigan Downtown Associations Advocacy Day at the Capitol in Lansing and he met with our State Representative Jason Morgan and House Speaker Pro Tem Laura Pohusky, as well as staff from Stephanie Young's office. He stated he spoke about issues regarding South Lyon with Representative Morgan, such as Dua Vino opening and some of the projects we are working on. He is on appropriations so it is good to have his ear. He mentioned Dua Vino is open and the ribbon cutting was last Monday, and they opened Tuesday. It has been very busy since then. He then stated we have a new business coming to the old KV Sports building, which is Jodea Bella. It is like an antique furniture store and they have a lot of nice products.

Councilmember Kurtzweil stated a lot of people are excited that her store is opening here and she believes she does consignment as well and a lot of people that are in that tier of retail that follow her. This is a great addition to our downtown. She is a real classy lady and she has a great store. Her store in New Hudson is closing this week. She then asked if there is any information on the building on the corner. Mr. Mack stated he knows they are doing some work in there, but he hasn't heard anything else.

Councilmember Kurtzweil stated it doesn't make sense for them to work on it while it's for sale. They are either going to sell it and let the new tenant come in and reconfigure the floor plan. Or maybe there is something else going on. There is frustration in the community about this building, but everyone has to remember it is private property and the city can't tell them what to do with that property, other than ensuring they abide by our zoning laws and ordinances that are in place. She also stated the current banking crisis will make it difficult to get large commercial loans. They are going to wait and see what the new regulations are. We all have to have patience with the corner and hope the owner does the right thing.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT

Fire Chief Thorington stated they are at 288 incidents for the year which is high. They are averaging about a 100 a month. He stated Dua Vino's kept them busy when they first opened because their smoke detector kept going off due to the dishwasher steam. They had someone fix it pretty quick. He then stated the ladder truck is done, and Lt. Noechel went for the final inspection last week and everything was good. Now it will be driven to Grayling this week and they will put in some shelves and sticker it and put in the radios. He is hoping within the next 2 weeks, but realistically the end of next month. He further stated we had a structure fire on Longfellow a few nights ago and our engine arrived quickly and knocked it down. Saved the back half of the building. The township assisted with water. He then stated they have applied for a grant for a new truck, but unfortunately, they removed fire trucks from the grant availability. He stated they put in for 500 Knox Boxes which is a lock box that are put on the business's buildings in town, and they are keyed specific to the jurisdiction so only South Lyon will have the keys for the South

Lyon businesses. It is a \$112,000 grant. Councilmember Hansen asked if there are any plans for social media about the truck being on the way. Chief Thorington stated he spoke with the City Manager and there will be something sort of social splash. Councilmember Kurtzweil stated the most photographed picture is when you put the flag on the truck and raise the ladder.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT

Chief Baaki stated there have been a rash of larcenies from autos and there was a vehicle stolen from our area last month. He stated the vehicle was discovered in Detroit. They have a suspect in custody that was driving that vehicle, and some of the items stolen from the vehicles were also in the vehicle. He further stated our detectives are working with detectives from Detroit to try to find where the remainder of the items are. There was also some credit card usage. As a public service announcement, everyone needs to lock their vehicle, and take your keys and valuables with you. These are crimes of opportunity when people walk by and try door handles. He then stated the truck should be done in a few days, then graphics will be added and hopefully it will be on the road next week.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS- None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Police/Fire dispatch contract with the City of Novi

Mayor Pelchat stated current agreement with the City of Novi will expire on June 30, 2023. The present rate is \$151,411. Novi officials have offered to renew the agreement for 3 years with annual increases of 4%. The agreement includes dispatch services for both the Police and Fire Departments, as well as short term prisoner lock-up. The proposed rates are: 2023-24, \$157,467; 2024-25, \$163,766, and 2025-26, \$170,317

CM 3-6-23 MOTION TO APPROVE AGREEMENT

Motion by, Kurtzweil, supported by Kennedy

Motion to approve the 3-year agreement, as presented, with the City of Novi to provide dispatch and lock-up services for the South Lyon Police and Fire Departments

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Mosier- Yes

Kurtzweil- Yes

Kennedy- Yes

Dilg- Yes

Hansen- Yes

Kivell- Yes

Pelchat- Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUDGET- No discussion was held

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carl Richards of 390 Lenox stated it is important for everyone to know the bike path on the west end to Dixboro. He took his bike down there and there is a lot of damage. It is tremendous, most on our side. He reported it to the tube mill. It is serious enough that unless you can get a budget amendment to clean this up, he doesn't recommend the kids and the creek cleanup go there. There are 3 major blockages near the drain itself. It is serious and you may be shocked to walk down and see it. His opinion is its not safe. Thank heavens for the DPW for everything they did cleaning up after the storm.

MANAGER'S REPORT- No discussion was held

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COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Dilg thanked Erica Wilson for her years on the Parks and Recreation Commission. She then welcomed Jennifer Redfern for joining the Housing Commission. She then mentioned that she went to Dua Vino on Friday night and she was happy to see so many people walking around town in the evening going from one business to another. She is hoping we can open a few more things down there and that will continue. Councilmember Dilg then read a letter from the Oakland County Treasurer regarding help for people that might be facing foreclosure. *See attached letter*

Councilmember Hansen reminded everyone of the Cocktails and Community event on March 16th at the Corner Social at 7pm to benefit Active Faith. It has a \$10.00 cover charge which includes a drink. He stated on March 17th, St Patrick's Day, Witches Hat Brewing is having an event to benefit St. Jude and they're going to have a special food menu as well. They have raised over \$29,000 in the past and hoping to raise over \$30,000 this year. He then stated on Monday March 20th from noon to 2pm at American Credit Union at 128 West Ganson in Jackson there is a Michigan Public Service Commission and there is a public comment period where you can voice your feelings regarding the recent power outages we faced in the community. He urges everyone to attend, and on March 21st there is a virtual meeting occurring. On April 23rd the 19th annual Earth Day and Spring Clean Up celebration is occurring from 9am – 1pm at 400 McMunn. He then stated he wanted to bring up an issue with DTE. He stated there was an article in Bridge Michigan magazine confirming his fears that DTE did cut operations to meet profits months before our horrendous power outages. He stated they found out that DTE's financial statements show they paid out 700 billion to investors in 2022, then paused hiring and maintenance to hit revenue targets and pay out dividends. He then stated job openings went unfulfilled, contractors were limited and maintenance was postponed. He further stated while many of our residents were cold and without power, the CEO of DTE held a conference call with Wall Street Analysts telling them the company delivered strong financial results continuing our excellent track record of creating shareholder value. Shareholder value over our residents. This is the worst of what is wrong with having a for profit utility company. He further stated we must hold DTE accountable and he urges everyone to take action. Write your State Congressman, write your State Senator, write your Governor and your Congresswoman, write your Senators and when you have no feeling in your hand from writing, call them. Don't stop until this company is held accountable. There needs to be some kind of checks on the utility companies and it's time to reign them in.

Councilmember Kurtzweil thanked Erica Wilson for her decades of service on the Parks and Recreation Commission. She and Erica started out on the commission together and she has been a good friend over the years and her and Mike are just a wonderful family, including their children. She then reminded everyone about the Girl Scouts. The girls stood out in the cold at the McHattie Center and Busch's and if you know one, buy some cookies, they are hardworking ladies and it's a great organization. She stated she buys them and freezes them and gives them as gifts. There are a lot of uses for them. She then stated the Quilt and Fiber show will be at City Hall. They will be setting up this Friday, and the show runs from March 20th through March 31st with the reception on March 24th. The quilts are incredible and some of the smaller ones will go on sale, and there are additional quilts that will be donated with proceeds to Safe House which is a women and children's shelter in Ann Arbor. Please do a good deed this month and help out the shelter by buying a nice quilt. She then stated there is no reason for anyone to leave South Lyon for St Patrick's Day, we have all the fish fries, and all the restaurants. St Joes almost always sell out. She then stated Aubree's, the Corner Social will have events. Get downtown and have a good time and be safe.

Councilmember Kennedy stated he wants to welcome the new businesses that are opening up in the City of South Lyon. He then welcomed Dua Vino, the Italian restaurant that opened in the old RCA building and is managed by Tom Palushaj. It took a few years, and no shortage of challenges, to get to their ribbon cutting last week, and we are certainly glad they are here. He then welcomed the Schwegler Insurance Agency and its owner, Dan Schwegler to the City of South Lyon. Dan and his partners were responsible for renovating the RCA building and bringing in Tom Palushaj to manage the Dua Vino restaurant. Tom relocated his business here from Lyon Township and has his offices on the second floor of the building. He then welcomed Jody Sherman, and her vintage home furnishings store, Jodea Bella Home, which will be relocating to the former KV Sports location in Downtown South Lyon within the next few weeks. They offer an extensive inventory of home furnishings and will also be offering classes in furniture refinishing. He stated he spoke with Jody today, he mentioned that her story was like Goldilocks and the three bears; she had tried a location in Lyon Township behind Greener Pastures but the building layout was difficult; next she tried a location in an old church in New Hudson, but it was too small; and now she has found the perfect location in downtown South Lyon and I wish her many years of success there.

Councilmember Mosier thanked Erica Wilson her 20 years of service on the Parks and Recreation Commission. She stated she served on the board with her as well and she was always very helpful. She then thanked the DDA and their Promotions Committee. They did an excellent job on the Carnivale event and she thinks it is shaping up to be one of the better events in the city. She then thanked the volunteers that have signed up for the boards and commissions, she thinks they are finally getting full. She then stated the biggest thank you goes to the DPW, they did a great job. They did a great job getting the roads clear, then they came back and did all the snow removal so we could have Carnivale. They worked hard and she is thankful for that.

Councilmember Kivell thanked Erica Wilson and stated she has been holding down the fort for a very long time. He stated he was able to help get the Parks and Recreation Commission going again while Wallace was the mayor, and we got that going just in time to be able to get the bike paths going. It worked out great and it is terrific stuff. He then stated he bumped into the owners of the theatre and they are planning on having a new venture and he is delighted to see a building that large getting back online to bring more people downtown. He is looking forward to that.

Mayor Pelchat thanked Erica Wilson for her dedication to the community. We've had a hard time keeping everything staffed with our volunteers but we are finally on an upswing. He further stated if anyone has thought about getting involved and you haven't, once you break the ice and meet everyone that is working on the boards and commissions it is a lot of fun, and you get to meet some great people. He thanked Mayor Pro Tem for filling in for him a couple weeks ago when he wasn't feeling well.

ADJOURNMENT

CM 3-7-23 MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion by Kurtzweil

VOTE:

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Dan Pelchat

MOTION CARRIED



City Clerk/Treasurer Lisa Deaton



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Robert Wittenberg, Treasurer

Jody Weissler DeFoe, Chief Deputy Treasurer

Oakland County Treasurer's Office Foreclosure Prevention

The Oakland County Treasurer's Office is in the final stretch of our Foreclosure Prevention efforts. The tax foreclosure deadline for the 2020 or prior year taxes is on March 31st, 2023. That means if these taxes aren't paid off by March 31st or any interested party hasn't entered into a repayment schedule with the Treasurer's office by then, the property will be foreclosed.

Since December of 2022, the Treasurer's office has conducted over a thousand Taxpayer Assistance Meetings to assist taxpayers with keeping their properties by working with them to get on a repayment schedule and/or by identifying resources that may be beneficial to them and their situation. We are here to help and strongly encourage taxpayers to contact us before the tax foreclosure deadline if they have delinquent taxes for 2020 or prior tax years. Taxpayers interested in scheduling a Taxpayer Assistance Meeting may call us at 248-858-0611 or they may visit www.oakgov.com/treasurer

Some of the resources available to assist taxpayers include:

- **Michigan Homeowners Assistance Fund (MIHAF)** which is a state grant that will cover up to \$25K for delinquent taxes (2019 and forward), mortgage payments, and utility bills. Must be a primary residence, make <150% AMI, and prove covid hardship in order to qualify. Apply at mihaf.michigan.gov.
- **Financial Empowerment Center** in the Treasurer's Office which provides one-on-one financial coaching and services to help taxpayers achieve their financial goals. Contact Reda at nafsor@oakgov.com or 248-807-5287.
- **Lakeshore Legal Aid** provides free legal services to people who are low income and seniors. 1-888-783-8190 is the number for new clients.

Again, we are here to help and strongly encourage taxpayers to contact the Treasurer's office if they have delinquent taxes for 2020 or prior tax years. If taxpayers are interested in scheduling a Taxpayer Assistance Meeting, they may call us at 248-858-0611 or they may visit www.oakgov.com/treasurer.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Wittenberg".

Robert Wittenberg
Oakland County Treasurer