

Roll Call

The Kalamazoo City Commission met as a Committee of the Whole on Monday, October 4, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. This meeting was held as an electronic meeting under the authority of the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976) as amended by PA 254 of 2020.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor David Anderson
Vice Mayor Patrese Griffin
Eric Cunningham
Jeanne Hess
Erin Knott
Chris Praedel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Jack Urban*

All members present indicated they were physically located in the City of Kalamazoo.

Also present were Deputy City Manager Jeff Chamberlain, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Commissioner Excused

Commissioner Cunningham, seconded by Commissioner Hess, moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Urban. With a voice vote the motion passed.

Public Comments

Next, when an opportunity was given for general public comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

Alphonso Harris, City resident, stated rules that prohibited sleeping in parks were anti-homeless.

Review of Items on
Upcoming Agendas

Deputy City Manager Chamberlain reviewed items on the agenda for the 7:00 business meeting. Deputy City Manager Chamberlain stated the October 18th business meeting agenda would be a full agenda, including the Graphic Packaging tax abatement item. Deputy City Manager Chamberlain stated the October 18th Committee of the Whole (CoW) agenda would include a presentation on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) internal assessment as well as other presentations.

2021-00
Energy Efficiency
Program

Redevelopment Project Manager Jamie McCarthy and Brittany Cullimore, Program Coordinator for Consumers Energy, delivered a presentation entitled *Kalamazoo Energy Collaborative: City Commission Update, October 4, 2021*. A copy of the slides from this presentation was filed with the papers for this meeting.

*Commissioner Urban arrived at 5:14 p.m.

Public Services Director James Baker described the Helping Neighbors program, which was a partnership between the City and Consumers Energy to help people identify water leaks and other energy inefficiencies. Director Baker noted program was for both in-City and outside-City customers, and he reported there were 3,899 participants to-date, including 257 full energy audits performed or scheduled. Director Baker indicated lead and copper testing through the City was free, and free water filters were available for those who needed them.

In response to a question from Commissioner Urban, Ms. McCarthy stated the City had identified multi-family residential buildings that would qualify for the Energy Collaborative.

Ms. Cullimore indicated apartment buildings needed to be 20,000 sq. ft. (15-20 units) or larger to qualify for the program.

In response to a question from Commissioner Praedel Ms. Cullimore stated the Kalamazoo Energy Collaborative was the first of its kind in the nation. Ms. Cullimore indicated there were other benchmarking programs, but the Kalamazoo program was the first one in Michigan to partner directly with a city.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hess, Ms. Cullimore stated Consumers Energy was hoping to have 5-6 buildings signed up for the program by the end of October, with onboarding and deployment of the online tool happening in November.

Mayor Anderson expressed excitement that Kalamazoo was the first city in Michigan to be engaged in an energy benchmarking partnership, and he asked how the City Commission could help.

Ms. Cullimore stated the Commission could help by expressing public support for the program and for energy efficiency. Ms. Cullimore noted programs like this were able to help the City achieve its climate action goals.

Ms. McCarthy indicated the Energy Collaborative team would like to highlight participants and their results/growth in spring, when the participant group would be larger. Ms. McCarthy stated City staff had been engaging with owners of commercial buildings, but there would be more direct outreach after the pilot group was through the program.

Commissioner Urban remarked on the shockingly high price of utility bills, and he asked whether the City would share personal stories of how the energy audits reduced those bills.

Director Baker commented that the City hoped to see results from the 257 home energy audits, but there was no mechanism to tell the before/after story. Director Baker stated he would work with Consumers Energy on the storytelling.

Deputy City Manager Chamberlain provided introductory remarks about the work of the Bronson Park Education Committee that resulted in a ground penetrating radar survey of the Bronson Park Mound.

Councilwoman Phyllis Davis from the Match-E-Be-Nash-E-Wish Band of Potawatomi Indians provided introductory remarks.

Dr. David Brose, Deputy City Manager Chamberlain, and Councilwoman Davis delivered a presentation entitled *Summary of Archeological Interpretations: Bronson Park Mound Ground-Penetrating Radar Survey*. (A copy of the slides from this presentation were filed with the papers for the meeting.) Dr. Brose briefly described the history of Native American habitation of Michigan and Kalamazoo County, and he reviewed the history of excavation at the Bronson Park Mound. Deputy City Manager Chamberlain summarized the results of the survey as follows: the mound was not a burial area; there were no significant structures

2021-00
Energy Efficiency
Program (cont'd)

2021-00
Presentation re: the
Bronson Park Mound

2021-00

Presentation re: the
Bronson Park Mound
(cont'd)

buried in or around the mound; the mound and the area around it appeared to have been used for ceremonial purposes; and the mound was around 1,000 years old. Councilwoman Davis described the importance of the four quadrants and four sacred medicines. Councilwoman Davis indicated the tribe's desire was to preserve and use the mound to teach the community about the history of native peoples. Deputy City Manager Chamberlain described the plan for the mound, which included the installation of four interpretive signs near the mound at the four points of the compass. In addition, "Grandfather Stones" would be placed around the outer edge of the mound itself with an inner ring of native plants related to the Four Directions. Deputy City Manager Chamberlain indicated the timeline was to contract for the project over the winter so that work could start in early spring of 2022.

Councilwoman Davis offered closing remarks.

Commissioner Cunningham stated he was honored that City staff continued the journey to move this work forward from 2018. Commissioner Cunningham noted the Potawatomi made decisions with an eye to their impact for seven generations, and he stated he had tried to apply this principle. Commissioner Cunningham remarked on the relative youth of the United States and its relatively short history compared to other countries.

Commissioner Hess thanked the Education Committee for its work and for their presentation. Commissioner Hess stated the markers would do a lot to educate people, as most people had no idea what the mound was. Commissioner Hess observed that both presentations during the meeting involved thinking about future generations.

Commissioner Urban thanked the committee for its persistence in doing the work over a span of years. Commissioner Urban stated the mound would have formal presence.

Commissioner
Comments

Next an opportunity was given for comments from City Commissioners, but no comments were offered.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on November 8, 2021

Approved by: _____

David F. Anderson, Mayor

Dated: November 8, 2021

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