A regular meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7:00 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.

Roll Call

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson
Vice Mayor Patrese Griffin
Eric Cunningham
Jeanne Hess
Erin Knott
Chris Praedel
Jack Urban

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

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

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

2021-00
Presentation of the 2021 Social Justice Youth Awards

Mayor Anderson introduced the community sponsors and presenters of the 2021 Social Justice Youth Awards.

Derek Nofz, Community Affairs Manager at Consumers Energy, presented the Consumer's Energy Social Justice Youth Award to Syann Hollins.

Ron Foor, Community President of Fifth Third Bank, presented the Fifth Third Bank Social Justice Youth Award to Cecilia Mireles Caballero.

Steve Senesi presented the Kalamazoo Nonviolent Opponents of War Social Justice Youth Award to Jayleen Johnson.

John Pinkster, Director of South Operations for Life EMS, presented the Life EMS Social Justice Youth Award to August O'Neil.

Dr. Betty Lodge-Dennis and Mr. Tony Dennis presented the Lodge-Dennis Social Justice Youth Award to Sierra Ward.

Judy Woolsey, Assistant to the CEO of Schupan & Sons, presented the Schupan & Sons Social Justice Youth Award to Keyara Price.

Dr. Lewis Walker presented the Dr. Lewis Walker Social Justice Youth Awards to Makayla Bolton, Jamillah Clark, and Maya Daniels.

Proclamation
2021-000

Vice Mayor Griffin proclaimed January 19, 2021 a *National Day of Racial Healing*. Sholanna Lewis, Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Director at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, received the proclamation.

Adoption of the Agenda

By unanimous consent the City Commission adopted its meeting agenda as presented.

Public Comments

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

Sarah Jacobs, Director of the Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care, expressed support for the creation of new affordable housing and asked the City Commission to approve the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) that were on the agenda.

Casey Coker, City resident, expressed opposition to the action taken by the City Commission on December 21st to forgive the City Manager for lying about the separation of former Public Safety Chief Karianne Thomas. Ms. Coker expressed concern about rumors that City employees participated in the riot at the U.S. Capitol on January 6th.

Lisa Wilcutt, non-resident, expressed support for the LIFT Foundation PILOT for an affordable housing project. Ms. Wilcutt addressed concerns from people who were opposed to this project.

Michelle Davis, representing Housing Resources Incorporated, expressed support for a PILOT for the LIFT Foundation and for funding for the rehabilitation of the Knights Inn.

Ray Sweeney, City resident and a member of the ISAAC Housing Task Force, expressed support for affordable housing.

Richard Stewart, City resident, expressed opposition to a PILOT for the LIFT Foundation because the project included the creation of a 77-car parking lot in a Natural Features Protection (NFP) area. Mr. Stewart expressed concern about the Mayor's involvement in the LIFT Foundation project.

Tina McClinton, City resident, expressed opposition to the granting of a PILOT for the LIFT Foundation due to the Natural Features Protection (NFP) area that would be impacted.

Jacob Johnson, City resident, thanked the City for the racial healing proclamation. Mr. Johnson offered comments about racial inequality in the City, the need for a line item in the budget for a black agenda, and the Mayor's involvement with housing projects in the City.

Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda items were presented as follows with a recommendation to approve the items and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the city:

- approval of a contract with J. Ranck Electric, Inc. for the Phosphate Upgrades, Electrical, & Instrumentation Project, in the amount of $3,401,561. — **2021-000**

- approval of a contract extension and purchase order with RathCo Safety and Supply, Inc. in the amount of $200,000 for the rental of temporary traffic control devices. — **2021-000**

- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving an Act 381 Brownfield Plan for a redevelopment project at 508 Harrison Street and 660 Gull Road. — **2021-000** Resolution 21-02

2021-000 Resolution 21-03	- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving a Payment in Lieu of Taxes for the 530 Rose St. Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership for Rose St. Senior located at 530 S. Rose Street (Parcel No. 0622119026), pursuant to Section 35-4 of the Kalamazoo City Code.
2021-000 Resolution 21-04	- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving a Payment in Lieu of Taxes for a Limited Dividend Housing Association, Limited Partnership to be formed by the LIFT Foundation for ten properties located in the 200 and 300 blocks of Lake Street, pursuant to Section 354 of the Kalamazoo City Code.
2021-000 Resolutions 21-05a and 21-05b	- adoption of two (2) **RESOLUTIONS** granting a Payment in Lieu of Taxes to River Caddis Development, LLC (or, a LDHALP to be formed by River Caddis Development, LLC) for the properties located at 508 Harrison Street (PARCEL NO. 0615295101), and 660 Gull Road (PARCEL NO. 0615287030), for the proposed 4% and 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects.
2021-000 Resolution 21-06	- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving an application for a new Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) certificate in the Park-Cedar-Burdick-Lovell NEZ.
2021-000 Resolution 21-07	- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving the partial retirement and reissuance of Hospital Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2016 for Bronson Healthcare Group, Inc.
2021-000	- approval of a loan request for renovation and acquisition of the Knights Inn for $200,000 of Housing for All funding and $50,000 allocation of HOME (HUD) funding.
2021-000	- approval of a recommendation to postpone until February 1, 2021 consideration of a purchase agreement with, and acceptance of a warranty deed from, Robert E. Endias and Eileen F. Stryker, Trustees of the Endias-Stryker Living Trust, for 4,281square feet of Parcel #0635227001 at 2300 Angling Road for the amount of $8,562.

Commissioner Urban, seconded by Commissioner Cunningham, moved to approve the consent agenda requests and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the City.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Cunningham, Hess, Knott, Praedel, Urban, Vice Mayor Griffin, Mayor Anderson*

NAYS: None

*At the time of the vote, Mayor Anderson abstained from voting on Item G-5, a resolution approving a Payment in Lieu of Taxes for the LIFT Foundation for ten properties on Lake Street, and Item G-9, a loan and grant for the renovation of the Knights Inn, due to a conflict of interest.

Regular Agenda

Regular Agenda items were considered next.

2021-00
Approval of the FY 2021 Budget

City Manager Ritsema provided an overview of the process used to develop the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY2021) budget.

Commissioner Urban asked how the priorities for the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) had changed due the events of 2020.

In response to Commissioner Urban, Public Safety Chief Vernon Coakley stated he was listening to the community and hearing the changes they wanted. Chief Coakley identified the following programs, initiatives, and actions he was putting in place for 2021:

- the creation of a Division of Community Affairs, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- the implementation of 21st Century Policing policies and practices
- the addition of staff positions for a Public Information Officer and a Community Collaborator
- enhanced training for officers in social justice, diversity, implicit bias, and de-escalation tactics
- an emphasis on diversity and cultural competence in the recruitment and hiring process
- involving the Citizens Public Safety Review and Appeals Board in the hiring process.
- emphasizing community collaboration in criminal investigations
- strong post-pandemic outreach, including Group Violence Intervention, a Youth Bureau, Youth Academy, and Citizen Academy
- the incorporation of social service delivery within KDPS

In response to a question from Commissioner Hess, Chief Coakley stated the KDPS budget was large because officers were police officers, fire fighters, and medical first responders. Chief Coakley noted the largest expense in the budget was personnel.

In response to a question from Commissioner Praedel, Chief Coakley confirmed KDPS recruits received their training at the Kalamazoo Valley Community College police academy.

Vice Mayor Griffin asked where there were opportunities to fund a response to gun violence and staffing for sustainability initiatives.

In response to Vice Mayor Griffin, City Manager Ritsema stated the City Administration and City Commission had the ability to make budget amendments throughout the year, with one possible source being the undesignated fund balance.

Community Planning and Economic Development Department Director Rebekah Kik stated the impact on staffing would be considered as the Environmental Sustainability Plan was being finalized.

Chief Coakley added that he had directed staff to look for grant funding opportunities to enhance outreach programming.

Vice Mayor Griffin stated she appreciated the role of Public Safety to address gun violence, but the underlying factors needed to be addressed by the City Commission. Vice Mayor Griffin stated the Commission needed to prioritize a gun violence response with dollars, not just words.

2021-000
Approval of the
FY2021 Budget
(cont'd)

Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Cunningham, moved to take the following actions to adopt the annual appropriation resolution and approve the component unit budgets and fee schedules:

Resolution 21-08

- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving and adopting the annual appropriation for the year 2021, setting forth the number of mills to be levied, approved an interim appropriation for the year 2021, and establishing policies for the administration of the budget.

- approval of the proposed FY2021 Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) budget as submitted by the BRA Board.

- approval of the proposed FY2021 Economic Development Corporation (EDC) budget as submitted by the EDC Board.

- approval of the FY2021 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Operating Budget, and the existing two-mill DDA Tax Levy.

- approval of the FY2021 Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) Operating Budget.

- approval of the proposed 2021 fee schedule for the Kalamazoo Municipal Golf Association.

Resolution 21-09

- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** approving the 2021 fees for various permits, hearings, etc. within the Community Planning & Economic Development department.

Resolution 21-10

- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** to establish the Department of Parks and Recreation fees and charges for 2021.

Resolution 21-11

- adoption of a **RESOLUTION** to establish the City of Kalamazoo Cemetery fees and charges for 2021.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Commissioner Knott noted budget preparation started in April, and she requested a City Commission retreat so that Commissioners could express their priorities and ask questions early in the process.

Mayor Anderson stated the budget could be amended to reflect changes in the City Commission's desires and focus. Mayor Anderson urged Commissioners to not forget the host of core services provided by the City every day, and he thanked all City staff for their work and their commitment to the City's vision.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Cunningham, Hess, Knott, Praedel, Urban, Vice Mayor Griffin, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

City Manager Ritsema thanked CFO Steve Vicenzi, Accounting and Budget Division Manager Jennifer Clark, Budget and Accounting Specialist Valetta Sellers-Evans, and department directors for their work on the budget.

2021-00
City Manager's Report

Public Services Director James Baker reviewed the *Odor Remediation Progress Quarterly Report*.

In response to a question from Commissioner Praedel, Director Baker indicated there would be a presentation on February 1st regarding utility rates

In response to a question from Commissioner Hess, Director Baker stated all development projects needed to adhere to the City's stormwater ordinance, which required a net-zero discharge when comparing the stormwater discharge on the site before and after development. Director Baker stated any development in a floodplain was subject to rules established by the Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). Director Baker explained the result of the net-zero rule was that an area prone to flooding would continue its history of flooding. Director Baker reviewed recently completed and almost-complete flood mitigation projects.

Vice Mayor Griffin asked for simplified reports that residents could understand.

Director Baker suggested that a report to the community would be good, and he was open to discussions about how to best communicate with residents.

Chief Coakley outlined his plan to address any protests or demonstrations that might happen in the City due to the inauguration of President Biden. Chief Coakley emphasized the City's commitment to community safety and effective communication. Chief Coakley reported there was no intelligence indicating demonstrations that would impact Kalamazoo.

2021-00
City Clerk's Report

City Clerk Borling reported the receipt of the following correspondence:

- correspondence from Gwendolyn Hooker regarding the DROP program and the circumstances surrounding the firing/retiring of former Public Safety Chief Karianne Thomas.

- correspondence from a City of Kalamazoo homeowner regarding water and sewer rates.

Unfinished Business

Next, items of Unfinished Business were considered.

2021-00
Resolution 21-12
Amending the City Commission Rules re: Committee of the Whole Meetings

City Manager Ritsema highlighted the City Administration's recommendation regarding Committee of the Whole meetings: that Committee of the Whole meetings be held prior to each City Commission Regular Business meetings, from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

City Attorney Robinson stated the proposed resolution included a new Rule 4a that was temporary and in effect only through July 31st. City Attorney Robinson indicated Rule 4a would suspend Neighborhood Meetings during the trial period, and he explained that Work Sessions, Special Meetings, and Committee of the Whole meetings would all be called Committee of the Whole meetings, with the order of business providing flexibility to form the meetings as needed. City Attorney Robinson reviewed some of the parliamentary procedures relevant to Committee of the Whole meetings.

2021-00
Resolution 21-12 Amending the City Commission Rules re: Committee of the Whole Meetings (cont'd)

Commissioner Urban expressed confidence that Commissioners would try to make Committee of the Whole meetings work, and any abuse of speaking privileges would be addressed.

Commissioner Cunningham, seconded by Commissioner Urban, moved to adopt a **RESOLUTION** amending the City Commission Rules to govern Committee of the Whole meetings on a trial basis.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Commissioner Knott stated she did not see the need for Committee of the Whole (CoW) meetings. Commissioner Knott remarked on the City Commission's failure to do the work of addressing hard issues over the past six weeks, and she stated there was an open question of how the Commission was going to rebuild trust with the community. Commissioner Knott indicated there was conflict resolution and other work the Commission needed to do before experimenting with CoW meetings. Commissioner Knott stated she supported having work sessions to discuss specific topics, but she could review the agendas for upcoming business meetings on her own time.

Commissioner Urban stated Commissioners would have the opportunity to address issues during CoW meetings.

Commissioner Cunningham questioned what conflict needed to be resolved.

Commissioner Knott stated the Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) consultants had indicated the City Commission needed conflict resolution sessions before continuing with more healing sessions.

Vice Mayor Griffin stated she did not object to CoW meetings. Vice Mayor Griffin expressed agreement with Commissioner Knott and stated it was unlikely that people would get excited about CoW meetings as a new opportunity for communication when the City Commission did not use existing opportunities to address situations and problems. Vice Mayor Griffin noted she had asked questions during recent City Commission business meetings that went unanswered, and if they were answered during business meetings, they would not get answered during CoW meetings.

Commissioner Praedel stated he was willing to try CoW meetings, as they represented another opportunity for people to gain insight into Commissioners' thinking and how they approached their work. Commissioner Praedel noted the elimination of small group meetings would give back a full day to City staff every two weeks.

Mayor Anderson observed this discussion was about two separate but related topics: methods and relationships. Mayor Anderson stated the CoW format might offer opportunities for broad, open discussion among Commissioners, but there would still be a need for work sessions to address specific topics.

With a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Cunningham, Hess, Knott, Praedel, Urban, Vice Mayor Griffin, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

City Commissioner Comments

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments from City Commissioners.

Commissioner Urban reminded people the LIFT Foundation had a good reputation for creating affordable housing in the community. Commissioner Urban stated the Lake Street property was not part of the NFP area when the site plan was approved. Commissioner Urban noted a good portion of the wooded area would remain.

Commissioner Cunningham remarked this was his last City budget to approve, and he expressed appreciation for the Foundation for Excellence. Commissioner Cunningham stated he was working closely with Director Baker on the odor issue. Commissioner Cunningham encouraged Commissioners to speak up or make a motion if they thought there should be more conversation about certain issues. Commissioner Cunningham remarked that community trust was at an all-time low.

Commissioner Knott addressed the resolution adopted by the City Commission on December 21st regarding the City Manager and the separation of former Public Safety Chief Karianne Thomas. Commissioner Knott reported she had talked with Commissioner Urban on December 19th, and during that conversation he said nothing about the resolution, which he introduced two days later. Commissioner Knott stated the City Commission needed to investigate Karianne Thomas's separation from the City. Commissioner Knott suggested the following topics for the next CoW meeting: hiring and retention bonuses for department directors; whether there was a policy for these bonuses; and whether bonuses were granted equitably.

Commissioner Praedel noted City Hall was lit up to honor people who had died because of COVID-19. Commissioner Praedel commented on the 95th birthday of Betty Lee Ongley, the former Mayor of the City of Portage and the first female mayor in Michigan. Commissioner Praedel noted Ms. Ongley had been a volunteer for the American Red Cross for 70 years, and the Red Cross would be recognizing that service. Commissioner Praedel acknowledged the receipt of correspondence from a resident regarding utility rates, and he announced there would be a presentation on utility rates at the next Commission meeting. Commissioner Praedel stated the items on the agenda for this meeting were a demonstration that the City's commitment to housing was alive and well. Commissioner Praedel remarked on the Mayor's contributions to housing and affordable housing in the City and stated he did not see any secret agenda in the Mayor's work on housing projects.

Commissioner Hess stated the City was seeking a culture of collaboration and communication. Commissioner Hess expressed gratitude for Martin Luther King Jr. Day events, TRHT events, tonight's discussion, the public recognition of youth, the Odor Task Force report, the Public Services Department, KDPS, and all educators. Commissioner Hess stated she was optimistic about the ability of the community to work towards healing and justice. Commissioner Hess announced there would be a COVID-19 vaccine question and answer forum on Thursday, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Commissioner Hess read the following statement that City Manager Ritsema had issued regarding the riots at the U.S. Capitol on January 6th:

> There have been inquiries by local citizens questioning if any KDPS or other City employees were engaged in the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. To date the City administration has no information and no reason to believe that any City employee was engaged in any criminal behavior

City Commissioner Comments (cont'd)

in our nation's capital on January 6. If evidence becomes available to the contrary, the City will fully cooperate with authorities who are investigating the incident.

Vice Mayor Griffin congratulated the Social Justice Youth Award winners. Vice Mayor Griffin acknowledged the receipt of correspondence from Gwendolyn Hooker regarding the DROP program and accountability. Vice Mayor Griffin noted the City Commission approved the entrance of officers into the DROP program, and she requested that Commissioners participate more fully in the evaluation of whether an officer should be allowed to continue their employment with the City after retirement. Vice Mayor Griffin expressed agreement with Commissioner Knott's remarks about accountability. Vice Mayor Griffin stated she had asked for a conversation about accountability, and to the Commissioners who did not want that conversation she asked for their plans on moving forward and rebuilding trust with the community. Vice Mayor Griffin requested that the first CoW meeting agenda include a conversation about accountability, rebuilding trust with the community, and the other topics raised by Commissioner Knott. Vice Mayor Griffin observed that none of the affordable housing projects on the agenda involved home ownership, and she urged people to be mindful of the wealth gap and home ownership gap. Vice Mayor Griffin recommended the ableism training offered by the Disability Network, and she stated there were things the City needed to do to make the community more accessible.

Motion re: Items for the Upcoming City Commission Agendas

Commissioner Cunningham, seconded by Commissioner Urban, moved that in the next public meeting the City Commission have two agenda items: 1) around accountability and 2) around the investigation of the situation involving the City Manager and the releasing of the previous Public Safety Chief.

With a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Cunningham, Hess, Knott, Praedel, Urban, Vice Mayor Griffin, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

Mayor Anderson spoke about his experience being a builder and his passion for making sure people have quality housing. Mayor Anderson offered remarks on his volunteer for work for affordable housing, the LIFT Foundation development on Stockbridge Avenue, and need for ongoing discussions about improving the community, and the recent memorial service for COVID-19 victims. Mayor Anderson reported he and his wife had recovered from COVID-19 and were out of quarantine. Mayor Anderson offered remarks on the presidential inauguration and peaceful transfer of power.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on

Approved by: ______________________________

David F. Anderson, Mayor
Dated: