

Regular Meeting of the Common Council, City of Iron Mountain, County of Dickinson, Michigan held on Monday, December 15, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Room:

Presiding: Mayor VanLaanen
Present: Council Members Rosen, Corombos, Alessandrini, and Farragh
Absent: Council Members Burke and Peterson
Also Present: Asst. City Attorney Robert Pirkola

Agenda

It was moved by Rosen and supported by Alessandrini to approve the agenda as submitted with the addition of the following:

VII. New Business

Agenda Item #5 moved to #2, Discussion of Operations and Management Committee

7. Approval of Agreement with Bacco Construction Re: Equipment Rental

Minutes

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 1, 2008 stand approved as submitted.

Public Comment

Toni Strutz – Vision 2020. – informed the Council that the City was awarded the DNR Trust Grant for the Millie Hill Bat Cave Trail. She thanked the Council for their support during the application process.

Special Presentation

Medallion Management

Mr. George Trujillo from Medallion Management presented the need for low income and special needs housing in Iron Mountain. Member Alessandrini liked their other developments but would not be in favor of the Millie Hill site that has been discussed in the past. Member Rosen asked about the financial situation of the developments. Mr. Trujillo stated that these developments are under MISHDA guidelines and require a 30 year tax abatement with Medallion responsible for a PILOT payment. He said they need the tax abatement and a low cost parcel to help meet the lower rents that MISHDA requires. Member Corombos asked if Medallion could declare out of the MISHDA Program and run the development privately. Mr. Eric Antisdale from Medallion stated they could declare out of the program but have not with any of their other developments. He said that at the end of the 30 year abatement they have negotiated an additional 30 year abatement that included a PILOT payment. Mr. Antisdale said that MISHDA requires a Council resolution for a 6% payment in lieu of taxes. Member Farragh asked about the desired size for a parcel and Member Corombos asked about the number of units they would like at the development. Mr. Antisdale stated that they would be looking for 12 acres and the complex would consist of approximately 50 units. Mr. Trujillo is willing to meet with anyone about possible parcels for the development. Mayor VanLaanen would like the Planning Board to explore development possibilities for City owned parcels.

FY 2008 Audit Presentation

Mr. Robert Schaut of Anderson, Tackman and Company, PLC presented the City's completed FY 2008 Audit. He reviewed various funds and accounts of the City. He said that the City compares favorably to other cities, although it can be difficult to compare any two cities.

Old Business

None

New Business

Part-Time Fire Fighter Hiring Policy

Acting City Manager Stanchina stated that this policy would establish guidelines for hiring part-time fire fighters. Member Alessandrini would like clarification on the policy not having a residency requirement. He feels it may be in conflict with the Charter.

It was moved by Rosen and supported by Farragh to approve the part-time fire fighter policy contingent on a review by City Attorney Pirkola.

Motion prevailed unanimously.

Operations and Management Committee

Member Corombos suggested the creation of an Operations and Management Committee. He would like the committee to have the ability to meet with employees and have discussions with the goal of increasing effectiveness and efficiency in the operations of the City. Mayor VanLaanen expressed concern that this committee interferes with the duties of the City Manager. Member Corombos stated that would not be the intent, the intent is to gain ideas that could help in the operations of the City. Member Farragh said that meetings between the employees and the Council have happened in the past.

It was moved by Alessandrini and supported by Rosen to establish an Operations and Management Committee consisting of Members Corombos, Alessandrini and Mayor VanLaanen.

Motion prevailed unanimously.

Mr. Jim Urbany as a Consultant

Mayor VanLaanen is concerned about this position conflicting with the City Manager. Members Rosen and Corombos do not feel that it conflicts and stated that the Council has the leeway to hire a consultant. Member Rosen feels that Mr. Urbany would be a valuable resource for the City. He stated that this contract would pay Mr. Urbany \$35 p/hour for his consulting services.

It was moved by Rosen and supported by Farragh to approve the consulting contract with Mr. Urbany contingent upon a final review by the City Attorney.

Ayes: 4 (Rosen, Corombos, Alessandrini and Farragh)

Nays: 1 (VanLaanen)

Motion carried.

Charter Amendment

Member Rosen would like to amend the Charter so the Council Members would be seated at the first regular meeting following the election.

It was moved by Alessandrini and supported by Rosen to direct the Acting City Manager to draft amendment language that would seat newly elected council members at the first regular meeting following the election.

Ayes: 4 (Rosen, Corombos, Alessandrini and Farragh)

Nays: 1 (VanLaanen)

Motion carried.

TIFA Board Reappointment

Acting City Manager Stanchina recommended reappointing Mr. Jim Brinker to the appointment he left to temporarily fill the TIFA Administrator position.

It was moved by Farragh and supported by Corombos to reappoint Mr. Brinker to the open seat on the TIFA Board.

Motion prevailed unanimously.

New Business(cont.)

Discussion of Hydraulic Falls Rd.

Member Rosen asked Mayor VanLaanen if he represented the City at YMCA meetings. Mayor VanLaanen said he was there on behalf of his knowledge of TIFA, Access Management and the City. Member Rosen stated that he questions the cost of realigning Hydraulic Falls Rd. versus the benefit. He asked how the proposed frontage road would benefit the residents. Mayor VanLaanen said that once the realignment was not feasible, the frontage road was added in accordance with the Master Plan, as a better alternative. Member Rosen said the owner of Econo Foods was concerned about the loss of parking due to the frontage road. Member Rosen stated that he is opposed to the project in total. Mayor VanLaanen feels that the frontage road would help develop the remaining vacant parcels and help increase taxable value. Member Alessandrini reiterated the concern of Econo Foods about a loss of parking. He does not feel that there is a safety issue in the area. Member Corombos thinks that the TIFA plan would need to be amended for funding this project. He thinks that the City should not spend money foolishly and should start repairing roads. Mayor VanLaanen said that the proposed TIFA pass through could take advantage of the float that results from the State reimbursing the school district based on the bond payments. He would like CFO Bartolameolli to look at this. Member Farragh said that the City should look at fixing what is there. He feels it would be beneficial to bury storm water mains from the hospital under Stephenson Ave. and continue south down Hydraulic Falls Rd.

No action taken.

Bacco Equipment Rental

Member Farragh said that for many years Bacco has rented the City a loader and a rubber tired backhoe during the winter.

It was moved by Alessandrini and supported by Farragh to approve the rental rates of \$62.84/hour for the front end loader and \$43.49/hour for a rubber tired backhoe.

Motion prevailed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The Council reviewed the Payroll Report for the Month of November with regular wages in the amount of \$280,774.64 and OT in the amount of \$18,546.12. The Council also reviewed Claims in the amount of \$677,382.56. The Finance Committee reviewed the claims and payroll reports and recommends approval as submitted.

It was moved by Rosen and supported by Corombos to approve claims in the amount of \$681,406.34 which excludes item #137 Standard Printing Co. LTD.

Motion prevailed unanimously.

It was moved by Alessandrini and supported by Farragh to approve claim #137 in the amount of \$91.80.

Ayes: 4 (Corombos, VanLaanen, Alessandrini and Farragh)

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 (Rosen)

Motion carried.

City Manager Report

Acting City Manager Stanchina reported that the City received official notice it was awarded \$158,400 through the DNR Trust fund grant program for the Bat Cave Trail. He said the total project is approximately \$230,000 the difference is from private contributions and in-kind donations.

City Manager Report (cont.)

He notified the Council that they will receive the funds from the low interest S-2 program. Member Farragh feels that we should stay with STS Consultants for the engineering because of the tight deadlines of this program.

Acting City Manager Stanchina told the Council that STS submitted this project to the State for funding under a possible Obama stimulus program.

He informed the Council that the Assessor has submitted the reassessed Commercial and Industrial property to the Equalization Director for his review. The goal is to have this property on the 2009 tax roll. Member Farragh would like to have a meeting to discuss how to finish the reassessment.

Acting City Manager Stanchina said that he found that residency is in the book of ordinances and is only for full time employees.

Member Alessandrini asked if it would be possible for street lights on Park Ave. in the area of the bat cave.

City Attorney Reports

None

Committee Reports

Acting City Manager Stanchina reported that the City met with Joe LaFave to discuss his Millie Hill Estate subdivision. The City was looking for signatures from the County Drain Commissioner and the County Treasurer. Additionally, Mr. Lafave will work on a developer's agreement to present to the City.

Public Comment

Debbie Manderfield – 606 Fairbanks St. – would like the City to take care of existing roads instead of building new ones.

Council Member Privilege

Member Alessandrini thanked Vision 2020 for their work on the Bat Cave Trail. He would like to have a budget meeting.

Member Corombos thought January 12th could work as a date for a budget meeting

Member Rosen would like to have City Manager interviews on January 10th. He would like to move onto the Park and Recreation Committee and Member Alessandrini will go off of the committee.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.



Jordan Stanchina
Clerk-Treasurer