

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

**Regular Meeting Held February 15, 2021**

Mayor Favale called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at the East Grand Rapids Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. She announced the meeting was also being held electronically as allowed by the recent amendment to the Michigan Open Meetings Act in response to the COVID-19 crisis. She invited any citizen attending by computer or phone to ask questions or offer comments during the public comment times.

Present in Person: Commissioners Hamrick and Mayor Favale

Present Virtually: Commissioners Arendshorst, Duncan, Hecksel, Pachla and Walters

Absent: None

Also Present: City Attorney Huff; City Manager Charles; Assistant City Manager LaFave; Finance Director Seath; Public Safety Director Herald; City Clerk Brower; Staff Sgt. Schweitzer; PSO Buter; Clerks Postema and VanHouten; Zoning Administrator Gianotti; Engineer Bigorowski; Admin Clerks York and Taylor

2021-27. Approval of Agenda.

2021-027-A. Pachla-Arendshorst. That consent agenda items #11 and #12 be moved to the regular agenda to allow for discussion.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

2021-28. No public comment was received.

2021-29. Commissioner Pachla reminded everyone that Greenwood would be closed at Lakeside Drive periodically this week to allow for construction on the lift station at that corner.

Commissioner Walters thanked the Public Safety Department for releasing follow-up information on the reported hit and run in January. He asked that future posts on public safety events be updated when possible to keep citizens informed and asked that options for restorative justice be explored for the future.

City Manager Charles thanked the Public Works Department for all their work in recent days to keep the streets and sidewalks clear despite the recent snow accumulation.

2021-30. Public Safety Director Herald presented Chief Citation Awards for Public Safety Clerks Dave VanHouten and Bianca Postema for their work in procuring hard to find equipment and supplies during the early days of the pandemic when masks and sanitizing items could not be found in stores.

2021-31. Addition of Deputy City Manager position.

City Manager Charles announced that Doug LaFave would be promoted to a new position of Deputy City Manager. Mr. Charles noted that Doug had done an outstanding job maintaining operations and initiating new programs in the last two years in the absence of a city manager and the new title was well deserved in light of the additional duties he has taken on.

Commissioners Hamrick and Duncan congratulated Deputy City Manager LaFave on his new title and thanked him for all his extra work over the last two years.

Commissioner Pachla expressed his appreciation for Mr. LaFave's innovations and his responsiveness to questions and concerns. Commissioner Arendshorst agreed and noted Doug kept his sense of humor even in difficult times.

Mayor Favale thanked Mr. LaFave for guiding the city through so many new projects and unexpected events over the last two years. She thanked his family for putting up with all of the early morning calls and late night emails while he worked two demanding positions.

Commissioner Walters also thanked Mr. LaFave for doing such an amazing job during the manager vacancy.

City Attorney Huff and Chief Herald congratulated Doug on his promotion and thanked him for his professionalism and positive attitude.

2021-031-A. Hamrick-Arendshorst. That Assistant City Manager Doug LaFave be appointed to a new classification of Deputy City Manager.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

Mayor Favale presented Deputy City Manager LaFave with a plaque containing a key to the city as a symbolic thank you for his dedication. Mr. LaFave thanked everyone for attending and for the kind words. He credited all of the members of the city staff who work so well together to provide programs, services and operations every day for the organization's success.

2021-32. Discussion of spring break meeting.

2021-032-A. Hecksel-Pachla. That the city commission meeting of April 5, 2021 be rescheduled to Monday, March 29 at 6 p.m.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

2021-33. Contracts for administrative and actuarial services for the new City of East Grand Rapids Retirement Plan for city employees.

City Manager Charles explained one of the final steps in withdrawing from the MERS defined benefit pension plan was to approve agreements for the services needed for the new independent pension plan.

Commissioner Walters noted the item was removed from the consent agenda to allow any questions to be discussed since additional information was provided after the original agenda materials were published.

2021-033-A. Walters-Arendshorst. That a contract Fifth Third Bank for investment, custodial and trust management services for the City of East Grand Rapids Retirement Plan be adopted as attached in Exhibit "A."

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

2021-033-B. Pachla-Hecksel. That a contract with Watkins, Ross & Co for administrative and actuarial services for the City of East Grand Rapids Retirement Plan be adopted as attached in Exhibits "B."

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

2021-34. Plan documents for the City of East Grand Rapids Retirement Plan.

2021-034-A. Pachla-Hecksel. That retirement plan documents outlining the structure and benefits of the new City of East Grand Rapids Retirement Plan for city employees to replace the former defined benefit plan with MERS be adopted as attached in Exhibit "C."

Mayor Favale asked for public comment on this issue. No public comment was received. Mayor Favale closed public comment.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

2021-35. Arendshorst-Hecksel. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2021-035-A. Minutes of the regular meeting held February 1, 2021.

2021-035-B. Payroll disbursements of \$222,162.26; county and school disbursements of \$198,183.69, and total remaining disbursements of \$277,525.39.

2021-035-C. Preliminary minutes of the Library Commission meeting held January 25, 2021.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Duncan, Hamrick, Hecksel, Pachla, Walters and Favale – 7

Nays: -0-

2021-36. Mayor Favale reopened the meeting for public comment. No public comment was received.

The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until March 1, 2021.

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Karen K. Brower, City Clerk

Attachments: A – Investment, custodial and trust management contract with Fifth Third Bank  
B – Administrative and actuarial services contract with Watkins, Ross & Co.  
C – City of East Grand Rapids Retirement Plan Document.

Attachments listed above are available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk.