

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

Regular Meeting Held January 16, 2017

Mayor Seibold 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.

Present: Commissioners Dills, Duncan, Hamrick, Miller, Zagel and Mayor Seibold

Absent: None

Also Present: City Attorney Huff; City Manager Donovan; Public Safety Director Herald; City Clerk Brower

2017-9. Matt Feyen, 630 Rosewood, was present to protest last year's water/sewer rate increase. He felt the increase unfairly affected duplexes and stated he was now paying 40% more than a single-family home. He cited several sections of the city code that he felt supported his position that the rates be based only on usage.

2017-10. Commissioner Miller thanked the Public Works Department for their work in keeping EGR streets in good condition last week when many other areas were extremely icy.

Commissioner Hamrick reminded everyone of the significance of the Martin Luther King holiday.

Commissioner Zagel reported the Gaslight Village Business Association Board would be meeting next week to begin planning for 2017.

Mayor Seibold announced that the discussion of the Master Plan contract would be removed from the consent agenda and discussed separately and that the approval of the classification and compensation schedule would be postponed until the next City Commission meeting.

2017-11. Request to award a contract to conduct an update of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan.

City Manager Donovan explained the Master Plan was updated in 1999 and the Gaslight Village SubArea Plan was updated in 2006. The City received two proposals in response to an RFP sent out in November 2016. Both firms were interviewed by a subcommittee of Planning and City Commissioners who recommend a contract with MKSK to perform the master plan.

Planning Commission Chairperson John Barbour reported the committee felt the expertise of Brad Strader and his team on the various plans and updates done for the city in recent years would best serve the city in the upcoming process. He felt that since the new master plan would serve the city for 10-15 years, MKSK's higher fees should be viewed as amortized over those years and worth the extra cost.

2017- -A. Dills-Miller. That a contract with MKSK/PLB Planning Group to provide an update of the City's Master Plan at a cost of \$79,250.00 be approved as requested.

Commissioner Dills noted that the interview process clearly showed the experience of MKSK to work with the city, businesses and the public on this project.

Mayor Seibold stated she had gone into the interviews planning to prefer the bid from Williams & Works as it was much lower, but changed her mind during the interview process based on the knowledge, expertise, nationwide resources and the breadth of the staff's experience contained in the MKSK proposal.

Commissioner Duncan questioned the master plan process and the opportunity for public input. Mayor Seibold and Commissioner Dills explained there would be a series of meetings to explain the process and public input sessions and surveys along the way as well as specific meetings with the schools, Gaslight Village Business Association representatives, hospital administrators, etc.

City Manager Donovan explained the relationship with several members of the city's former planning firm and noted that Paul LeBlanc would be involved in the project along with Brad Strader and other MKSK staff

members from other offices around the country. He noted the cost of the consulting work with MKSK would be split over the 2016-17 and 2017-18 fiscal years.

Commissioner Duncan asked if it would be worthwhile to reopen the proposal process to see if additional proposals could be solicited. Mr. Donovan explained the RFP was sent to six firms and only two responded. He noted that there were a limited number of certified planners qualified to conduct a comprehensive master plan in the state. Mayor Seibold stated that while she would have preferred additional proposals to have more options, she was very comfortable with the national expertise and local personnel offered by MKSK.

Commissioner Zagel also expressed disappointment that only two proposals were received, but was satisfied with the detailed process outline provided by MKSK that included so much public input. He looked forward to seeing many new ideas for the future of East Grand Rapids.

Commissioner Zagel questioned whether MKSK would be retained for ongoing planning assistance after the master plan was finished. City Manager Donovan stated the intention was to use MKSK for the time being for continuity, but that the arrangement would be reevaluated after the master plan was finished.

Commissioner Hamrick expressed concern about the cost difference but was willing to agree the expertise offered by MKSK would be very welcome for this project. The commission discussed the possibility of looking for additional proposals, but most agreed that it was unlikely that additional proposals would provide more experience or a better result.

Yeas: Dills, Duncan, Hamrick, Miller, Zagel and Seibold – 6
Nays: -0-

Commissioner Miller thanked the subcommittee for the time and deliberation involved in reviewing, interviewing and deliberating on these proposals.

2017-12. Zagel-Duncan. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2017- -. To approve the minutes of the regular meeting held January 3, 2017.

2017- -A. Report of Finance Committee on disbursement of funds: payroll disbursements of \$223,746.35; county and school disbursements of \$958,088.54, and total remaining disbursements of \$235,511.49.

2017- -B. A five-year contract with Vredevelde Haefner LLC for annual audits of the city's financial statements in the amounts of \$13,650 for FY 2017, \$13,900 for FY 2018, \$14,250 for FY 2019, \$14,500 for FY 2020 and \$14,750 for FY 2021.

2017- -C. An extension of the easement with Consumers Energy for the Ramona electric utility substation upgrade project at Remington Park until April 1, 2017 as set forth in Exhibit "A" attached hereto.

2017- -D. Preliminary minutes of the Joint Facilities Committee meeting held November 10, 2016.

2017- -E. The Public Safety Department Quarterly Report for the period ending September 30, 2016.

Yeas: Dills, Duncan, Hamrick, Miller, Zagel and Seibold – 6
Nays: -0-

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until February 6, 2017.

Karen K. Brower, City Clerk

Attachments: A – Easement with Consumers Energy for Ramona substation project.

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