

**CITY OF ITHACA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
August 18, 2020
7:00 PM**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca City Council held and conducted via Zoom in conformity with Governor Whitmer's Executive Order No. 2020-154 (COVID-19), on the 18th day of August, 2020 was called to order by Mayor Schafer at 7:00 p.m. and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Mayor Schafer gave the invocation.

Present were Mayor Alice Schafer and Councilpersons James Andrew, Brett Baublitz, Scott Gray, James Gruesbeck, Clark Hubbard and Rick Koppleberger. Staff present were City Manager Jamey Conn and Clerk-Treasurer Barbara Fandell.

Absent was Councilperson Attorney Jefferson Arnold.

Audience in attendance via Zoom was Rob Endter, Nicholas Dalessandro and Jim Wheeler.

Moved by Gray, second by Andrew to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council of August 4, 2020. Motion carried.

Mayor Schafer asked for Items to be removed from the Consent Agenda; there were none. Moved by Koppleberger, second by Gray to approve the Agenda including the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mayor Schafer asked for public comments. None were offered.

Consent Agenda

Moved by Andrew, second by Gray to approve the consent agenda; items as listed:

- **Ithaca Unit Report for July 2020.**
- **City Manager report which included updates and information on the Fire Authority, Transportation Authority, Gemini Capital Brownfield tax abatement request, Dilts Road property sale, election, Historical Barn, Sidewalk Zone 5 project, Commerce Drive sealcoating completion, scraper dump truck, Beacon and Bridge sign replacement and residential speed limit complaint.**
- **Claims submitted to the Ways and Means Committee by City Clerk-Treasurer Fandell and recommended for payment: Accounts Payable Checks #46760-46797 and Payroll Checks #15914-15924, DD1650-DD1659, EFT #1150-1155 as listed in the Check Register Book.**
- **Correspondence received: SLIPR Transit Authority Ballot Language submitted for November 2020 election**

Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: (7) Baublitz, Gray, Gruesbeck, Hubbard, Koppleberger, Andrew and Schafer

Nos: (0) None

Absent: (0) None

Committee Reports

Mayor Schafer reported the Committee of the Whole met regarding the Fire Authority Agreement dated 8/14/2020. The initial fees will follow the current formula that has been used. The Committee discussed the building and equipment lease options. The Committee recommends moving forward with the agreement, having no changes and for the City Manager to address those issues discussed with the Fire Authority committee. Mayor Schafer further reported the Committee discussed the Brownfield tax abatement requested by Ryan Smith of Gemini Capital and reviewed the figures provided by Mr. Smith. The Committee discussed how the Brownfield and OPRA combination would work, the extension of the abatement would have on the City and all tax payers. The Committee recommends denying the request due to the already awarded OPRA tax abatement and not wanting to extend the abatement out for additional years. Mayor Schafer reported the Committee discussed adding a filing fee for tax abatement requests and directed the City Treasurer to research and present a schedule at the next meeting. In addition, it discussed the fees of Special Use Permits and Variance Request.

Moved by Baublitz, second by Gray to deny the request of Ryan Smith and Gemini Capital to proceed with a Brownfield tax abatement on the downtown projects due to the already awarded OPRA tax abatement and not wanting to extend the abatements additional years. Motion carried.

City Manager Comments

City Manager Conn reported he had the Historical Barn evaluated as directed and the barn structure is good. The cost to refurbish or demo would be close to the same, \$30,000 estimated. Discussion ensued. Councilperson Gray said if it is not being used, it does not make sense to fix it and let it sit. Councilperson Andrew suggested that we find a use for it as it has a lot of memories for the community. City Manager Conn suggested an event venue or wedding barn. Councilperson Gruesbeck agreed that money should not be spent unless there is a decided use for the barn as the funds could be used toward deteriorating streets or parks. Mayor Schafer agreed that priority should be given to where the money is needed. Councilperson Hubbard suggested a community project or putting it out on social media to see how the community feels about it.

Manager Conn further reported that the sidewalk project for Zone 5 began and noted the Transit Authority ballot language was included in the correspondence.

New Business

Clerk-Treasurer Fandell presented the request for delegates to be appointed to the MML Annual Meeting. The Annual conference will be a virtual conference, so the delegate will be able to participate for the meeting only and does not need to attend the conference to participate. Also included is the League's Core Legislative Principles which delegates will be voting on at the Annual Meeting. Clerk Fandell also noted that if any member wanted to attend the annual conference, to notify her by the next meeting.

Moved by Gray, second by Hubbard to appoint City Manager Conn as the delegate and Councilperson Brett Baublitz as the alternate delegate to the MML Annual Meeting and the Clerk to register them. Motion carried.

City Manager Conn reported on the status of the Fire Authority. The Townships have presented the same information to their boards. Emerson, North Start, Newark and Lafayette have made the decision to become incorporating members, Arcada will come in as a contracting member and New Haven is undecided and asked for additional information. Manager Conn plans to attend their Board meeting next month. He requested approval for the City to become an incorporated member and for the Council to appoint a representative to the Authority Board.

Moved by Gray, second by Hubbard for the City of Ithaca to join and become an incorporating member of the new Fire Authority Board and appoint City Manager Jamey Conn as the City's representative to the Authority Board. Motion carried.

Old Business

Mayor Schafer shared that the walking path around Woodland Park looks very nice and the DPW staff did a great job cleaning it up and placing the crushed concrete.

Councilperson Koppleberger shared that due to his new work schedule he has not been able to attend all of the Greater Gratiot Development board meetings. Would like to offer the position to another if interested. The council discussed and the appointments for the positions will remain the City Manager and Councilperson Koppleberger.

Public Comment

Mayor Schafer asked for public comments. None were offered.

Mayor Schafer asked for any additional business to come before the Council. None was offered.

Moved by Baublitz, second by Gray to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:22pm.

Barbara Fandell, City Clerk-Treasurer