

**CITY OF ITHACA  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**April 4, 2023**

**7:00 PM**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca City Council was called to order by Mayor Brett Baublitz at 7:00pm. and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present were Mayor Brett Baublitz, Councilpersons James Andrew, Rob Endter, James Gruesbeck, Clark Hubbard and Rick Koppleberger. Staff present was City Manager Jamey Conn and City Clerk Cathy Cameron.

Absent was Councilperson Alison Jerome. (Councilperson Jerome arrived at 7:15pm)

Additional staff present was City Treasurer Barbara Fandell.

Audience in attendance was Debbie Andrew, Cole & Angie Swan.

**Moved by Andrew, second by Endter to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held March 21, 2023. Motion carried.**

Mayor Baublitz stated that Councilperson Jerome had notified Clerk Cameron that she would be arriving late to the meeting.

Mayor Baublitz asked for approval of the agenda and for any items to be removed from the Consent Agenda. Manager Conn requested to add Resolution 2023-04: Pension Funding under New Business. Mayor Baublitz placed it as item 11f.

**Moved by Koppleberger, second by Andrew to approve the agenda, (as amended by adding item 11f. Resolution 2023-04: Pension Funding), including the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.**

**Public Comment**

Mayor Baublitz asked for public comments. There was none.

**Consent Agenda**

**Moved by Koppleberger, second by Endter to approve the consent agenda items as listed:**

- **City Manager's written report, which included updates and information on Planning Commission, DPW Staffing, ZFS Construction, Michigan Class Board of Trustee Meeting, Assessing Services and the Hearthstone Oven.**
- **Financial Reports: February 2023**
- **Claims submitted to the Ways and Means Committee by City Treasurer Fandell and recommended for payment: Accounts Payable Checks #48897-48916 and #1019(A), and Payroll Checks #16699-16709, DD #2475-2494, EFT #1596-1604 as listed in the Check Register Book.**
- **Correspondence received: Proposal 2 election article**

**Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes: (6) Hubbard, Koppleberger, Andrew, Endter, Gruesbeck and Baublitz**

**Nos: (0) None**

**Absent: (1) Jerome**

**Public Hearing: Michigan Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Closeout**

Mayor Baublitz requested a motion to open the public hearing.

**Moved by Hubbard, second by Endter to open the public hearing at 7:05pm. Motion carried.**

Treasurer Fandell read the following statement:

**Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)  
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)  
#MSC-2013-0877-HO / CDFA #14.228**

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Grant Closeout: Public Hearing: April 4, 2023

In April of 2014, the city applied for the MSHDA CDBG grant in the amount of \$450,000, with the goal to assist owner-occupant, single family, low to moderate income with resources for home rehabilitation. This program was previously available through Gratiot County, however the award funds were only going to township residents at the time, so the city made application on its own to aide city residents in need.

The grant program provided financial assistance to families in the form of a loan, repayable from the cash proceeds of the home when sold. As part of the program, the city could, and did, opt to provide forgivable assistance to households by recycling program income. This was due to the lack of resources for home maintenance and loan repayments based on the low to moderate income. To reduce the negative impact on future program income, the city would only forgive repayable balances after five years of the loan being in place and no more than 10% of the balance each year from year 6 through 15 until the balance forgiven equaled 100%.

In September of 2014, the city was awarded \$243,900 in grant funding. These funds, of \$200,000 would provide program activity in rehabilitation of approximately 15 homes and the additional \$43,900 would be for administration.

The city hired the Gratiot County Administrative team of Rose Hubbard, Terri Ball and Larry Wymer as the TPA for the grant. The city and county team promoted the program through direct mailings and telephone contact, website, social media, newsletters, public notices, etc for the program.

The program was successful in assisting five home owners, utilizing \$170,161 of program funds and \$16,300 of administrative funds for a total of \$186,461. The program was completed in 2017.

Work performed on the 5 homes consisted of, but not all-inclusive to, repairs and/or replacements of roofs, eavestroughs, siding, porches, decks, windows, exterior doors and garage doors, exterior paint, repairs, replacements and/or upgrades to electrical, plumbing, lighting, water heaters, furnaces, air conditioning units, insulation, floor covering and cabinets. In addition, the program assisted one home owner with a new bedroom/bath handicap accessible addition on to the current home.

Discussion was held.

**Moved by Endter, second by Hubbard to close the public hearing at 7:09pm. Motion carried.**

**Department/Committee Reports**

There was none.

**City Manager Comments**

Manager Conn reported that the Planning Commission met and approved a paved parking lot for Trinity Truck and Trailer. ZFS plans to begin construction on their four additional storage bins soon. Treasurer Fandell attended the Michigan Class Board of Trustee Meeting, as a board member and representative of the city. Assessing Services and DPW Staffing was discussed under New Business.

**Unfinished Business**

There was none.

**New Business**

Mayor Baublitz presented Resolution 2023-03: Recognition of Cole Swan.

**Moved by Andrew, second by Hubbard to adopt Resolution 2023-03: Recognition of Cole Swan.**

**Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes: (6) Koppleberger, Andrew, Endter, Gruesbeck, Hubbard and Baublitz**

**Nos: (0) None**

**Absent: (1) Jerome**

Council congratulated Cole Swan on his retirement and expressed their gratitude for his dedication to serve the residents of Ithaca.

Councilperson Jerome arrived at 7:15pm.

Manager Conn presented the Professional Assessor Services Agreement with CSZ Services. The agreement listed a contract term of April 1, 2023 through April 1, 2025. The current assessing services agreement ends April 30, 2023. Treasurer Fandell suggested that the agreement of services begin May 1<sup>st</sup> on a monthly basis until the fiscal year start of July 1, 2023. The agreement amount for services is \$30,000 annually. Manager Conn stated that he will contact Chuck Zemla regarding the dates and bring back a final agreement for review.

**Moved by Koppleberger, second by Hubbard to postpone the Assessor Services Agreement until the next regular council meeting. Motion carried.**

Manager Conn presented the proposal from ROWE for engineering services for the State Revolving Fund Project Plan (DWSRF/CWSRF) in the amount of \$27,900.

**Moved by Hubbard, second by Andrew to approve the engineering proposal from ROWE in the amount of \$27,900 for State Revolving Fund Project Plan (DWSRF/CWSRF) and authorize the City Manager to sign the contract. Motion carried.**

Manager Conn reported that a regular full-time employee was hired with the DPW to fill the current vacancy. There were several good candidates for the position. Manager Conn offered an option for Council to consider hiring two Seasonal Specialists at the hourly rate of \$18 (for up to six months) to assist with the lead and copper replacement requirement projects. This would be in addition to hiring one regular seasonal employee. Discussion was held.

**Moved by Hubbard, second by Koppleberger to approve the hiring of two Seasonal Specialists at the hourly rate of \$18 for up to 6 months for the purpose of assisting with the lead and copper replacement requirement projects. Motion carried.**

Clerk Cameron presented the application of interest from Mary Beth Mates to serve on the Planning Commission. Although Ms. Mates resides outside of the city limits, her family does own a business within the city. The Planning Commission Ordinance does allow up to two members that are qualified electors of another local unit of government to serve on the commission. Clerk Cameron recommended the appointment of Ms. Mates to fulfill the remaining vacant term ending June 30, 2023.

**Moved by Koppleberger, second by Hubbard to appoint Mary Beth Mates to the Planning Commission for a partial term ending June 30, 2023. Motion carried.**

Manager Conn presented Resolution 2023-04: Pension Funding. Due to the addition of this resolution on the agenda; copies were distributed to the Council at the beginning of the meeting and it was read aloud in its entirety by Manager Conn. Discussion was held. Manager Conn stated that he will be joining other City Managers that plan to send their respective resolution to the attention of Governor Whitmer and our State Representatives.

**Moved by Hubbard, second by Andrew to adopt Resolution 2023-04: Pension Funding and approve Manager Conn to send a copy on to our Governor and State Representatives.**

**Motion carried by Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes: (7) Koppleberger, Andrew, Endter, Gruesbeck, Hubbard, Jerome and Baublitz**

**Nos: (0) None**

**Absent: (0) None**

**Public Comment**

Mayor Baublitz asked for public comments. Debbie Andrew stated that she came to support Cole Swan, share her appreciation of his kindness and congratulate him on his retirement.

Mayor Baublitz asked for any additional business to come before the Council. Councilperson Gruesbeck inquired on the status of code enforcement. Manager Conn will be advertising for the position soon.

**Moved by Hubbard, second by Jerome to adjourn. Motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

*Approved 4-18-2023*

*Cathy Cameron*

Cathy Cameron, City Clerk

*Approved 4-18-2023*

*I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of minutes approved by the City Council of the City of Ithaca, County of Gratiot, Michigan, at a regular meeting held on April 18, 2023.*

*Cathy Cameron*

Cathy Cameron, City Clerk