

**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
1345 E. Main Street City of Niles, Michigan**

Monday, December 13, 2021

PRESENT: Council Members: Georgia Boggs, Gretchen Bertschy, Amanda Dunnem, Travis Timm, Charlie McAfee, William Weimer, John DiCostanzo and Jessica Nelson

ABSENT: Mayor Nick Shelton

STAFF: Richard Huff, Robert Landgraf, Tina Bergman

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular Niles City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Bertschy at 6:00 p.m. December 13, 2021. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Pro Tem Bertschy.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Council Member DiCostanzo moved, **Council Member Nelson** seconded to approve the agenda with the removal of Item 6.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Timm, McAfee, Weimer, DiCostanzo, Nelson, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem

NAY: None **MOTION CARRIED**

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:(PUBLIC COMMENTS)

Denise Peters shared that the Thanksgiving Day Run was a huge success and there were many volunteers that provided their support.

Stephanie Reno owner of SLR Pilates, Trap House Gym, and Vice-President of River Essence Group. Regarding the after meeting of the Appointment Committee. The DDA has 6 seats open, 3 up for renewal and 3 empty seats, for some time. Even with qualified applicants, the seats have not been filled. She is again asking for complete transparency from the DDA and that any reappointments be postponed until after the DDA provides an evaluation of the performance of their members. She has filled out two applications along with other business owners, to not be chosen. New people are needed.

William Lakeman with the Four Flags Antique Mall stated he is also interested in a seat on the DDA committee and voiced his concerns with the DDA and the NODE.

Melanie Kennedy owner of the Grand LV, requested consideration of Stephanie Reno as a DDA Board member. She would also like to gain understanding of the reluctance to appoint Stephanie.

PRESENTATIONS:

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Consideration of approving the minutes of November 22, 2021.
2. Consideration of approving the list of bills dated December 8, 2021.
3. Consideration of the City Administrator and the City Attorney to negotiate a purchase agreement for parcel 11-72-4560-0042-03-7.
4. Consideration of approving interest only Revolving Loan payments through December 2022 for Brian Williams dba The Brass Eye.

5. Consideration of approving the request by the DDA/Main Street to conduct the 18th Annual Hunter Ice Festival and the 12th Annual Frigid 5K Run event in the downtown area January 14 – January 16, 2022 and waiving the \$2,645.00 in fees to various departments.

Council Member Nelson moved, **Council Member Timm** seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

ROLL CALL: YEA: McAfee, Weimer, DiCostanzo, Nelson, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Timm

NAY: None **MOTION CARRIED**

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Introduction of Items for Discussion

Items for Council Action

REMOVED

- ~~6. Consideration of approving the MERS Application for Additional Service Credit Purchase for Scott Swanson and authorizing the Mayor to sign the application.~~

7. Consideration of approving to accept the estimate of \$2,691.67 to be charged to the Parks Repairs and Maintenance Fund from Creative Vinyl Signs of Dowagiac, MI for the necessary repairs to the Welcome to Niles sign at Donovan Park and authorizing the City Administrator to sign the estimate.

Council Member DiCostanzo moved, **Council Member Dunnem** seconded to approve to accept the estimate of \$2,691.67 to be charged to the Parks Repairs and Maintenance Fund from Creative Vinyl Signs of Dowagiac, MI for the necessary repairs to the Welcome to Niles sign at Donovan Park and authorizing the City Administrator to sign the estimate.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Weimer, DiCostanzo, Nelson, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Timm

NAY: None **MOTION CARRIED**

8. Consideration of approving Provisional Certificates for Class C grow and processing to Origins MI, LLC to conduct marihuana business activities at 901 Wayne Street.

Council Member DiCostanzo moved, **Council Member Timm** seconded to approve Provisional Certificates for Class C grow and processing to Origins MI, LLC to conduct marihuana business activities at 901 Wayne Street.

ROLL CALL: YEA: DiCostanzo, Nelson, Bertschy, Dunnem, Timm, McAfee, Weimer

NAY: Boggs **MOTION CARRIED**

APPOINTMENTS:

9. **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:** Consideration of approving the first reading of an ordinance to regulate possession and consumption of alcoholic liquor within the Social District's Common Areas.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT:

Council Member DiCostanzo thanked the business owners in sharing their thoughts on the makeup of the DDA. There are 3 reappointments on the agenda. He agrees to delaying the approval of any reappointments or new appointments. He stated that he supports Stephanie Reno to be appointed. Member DiCostanzo had the opportunity to spend a couple of hours with Senator LaSata and Representative Paquette as a liaison to the Utilities Board relaying his concerns along with Utilities Manager Jeff Dunlap regarding the State mandate replacement of all lead service lines. It was determined to cost over \$18,000,000 to replace all of the lines. The State wants a 50% match paid by local municipalities with the remaining 50% to be paid by the State and matching funds. This would equal a 50% increase to rate payers. He is asking that public to contact Representative Paquette, the

Senators and Congressman Upton to put the financial burden on the State or the Federal government.

Council Member Nelson stated that Small Business Saturday was a success and thanked the volunteers.

Council Member Boggs thanked Council Member DiCostanzo for input and those in support of the DDA for coming out and voicing their opinion. She also agreed that the 48% of our renters cannot afford the cost of replacing the lead service lines.

Council Member Bertschy appreciated the participation tonight. Thanked Vickie and Stephanie for what they've done downtown. The Sights & Lights voting starts today. She also appreciates the information from Council Member DiCostanzo.

Council Member Dunnem made a motion to excuse Council Member Boggs from the November 22, 2021 council meeting. Nelson supported. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MAYOR'S REPORT: None

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Weimer moved to adjourn at 6:03pm.

Tina Bergman
Niles City Deputy Clerk

Date