

**MANISTEE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
MINUTES OF APRIL 14, 2020**

The Manistee City Council met in a work session on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 7:00 pm remotely as authorized by Executive Order of the Governor.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dale Cooper, Lynda Beaton, Roger Zielinski, Jermaine Cipcic, Michael Szymanski, James Grabowski and Erin Martin-Pontiac

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager, Department Directors, Public, and Media

The following message was provided by Mayor Zielinski:

As an important step in preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus, our Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, issued an Executive Order authorizing public boards in Michigan to conduct their meetings remotely. This is a critical step to help stop the spread. All aspects of how this meeting is being run is in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, as modified by the Executive Order, and has been reviewed by the City Attorney.

The City of Manistee is taking various steps to do our part during this pandemic, and this is one of them. We need to keep members of the public, our City Council and City Staff healthy. Therefore, no members of the public, City Council or City Staff are present in the Council Chambers.

Public Comments:

All individuals in attendance of the virtual meeting were in a virtual waiting room, with their microphones muted. When it came time for public comment, each person waiting in the virtual waiting room was called individually by the City Clerk by the last four digits of their telephone number. Individuals were asked if they had a comment or if they were passing.

Mayor Zielinski reviewed the items on the agenda for those in attendance that did not have a copy of the agenda.

No Comments Received.

Discussion on Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan. – City Manager Thad N. Taylor and Finance Director Ed Bradford led a discussion on the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan. Staff presented a proposed budget which is balanced without the use of fund balance. Taylor explained the uncertainty the City faces with State Statutory, Constitutional, and Gas Tax Revenues due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Staff will work to prepare recommendations for budget shortfalls. Staff is also tracking expenses related to the

COVID 19 pandemic to submit to FEMA for reimbursement although it is unknown how much will be received. Bradford reiterated the need for flexibility over the next 12-18 months. He provided one positive note that could benefit the City which is lower interest rates when issuing debt. This could be beneficial as we close on RD Phase II and the potential Capital Improvement Bonds. Bradford also stressed the importance for staff to limit spending and preserve cash for the future.

Areas of discussion included:

- Concerns with making large investments in the Marina during uncertain times; City has applied for State Waterways Grant; information will be available on this around September and guidance will be provided to Council; will be able to decide how to proceed at that time.
- Department heads to review budget priorities and provide a range of cuts in proposed budget based on possible cuts to Statutory and Constitutional Revenue Sharing.
- Appropriate use of Oil & Gas Funds vs. General Fund Balance.
- Marihuana License Fees applied to General Fund Budget; fees are not applied to individual department budgets.
- Police Department to maintain current staff; officer pulled from SSCENT team and put back on road patrol duties. Costs incurred from arbitration to be forwarded to Council for review including labor attorney cost and new costs incurred from award.
- Blight part time officer removed from budget; plan in place to divide the City into eight districts with an officer assigned to each district for blight enforcement.
- \$12,000 remains in budget for Blight to be used for demolition of blighted property; Duffy Street property is a priority.
- Teen Center appropriation eliminated from budget; duplicate services available to the community through the Armory; only 6-7 teens using teen center daily; looking at possible options for the skating rink; will pursue discussions with MRA and Armory.
- Possible reduction to MRA appropriation in exchange for use of the teen center building.

There will be a Public Hearing on April 21, 2020 at 7:00pm to provide a chance for the public to comment on the budget and budget discussion by Council will follow on the agenda.

Adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Pefley CMC/CMMC, MiCPT
City Clerk