

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

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jermaine Cipicic

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager, Department Directors, and Public

Public Comments on Work Session Related Items.

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.

The City Clerk reviewed the items on the agenda for those in attendance that did not have a copy of the agenda.

Tara Hernandez, 344 River Street – Taco ‘Bout It Mexican Fusion/ expressed appreciation for the allowance of additional outdoor seating on River Street and reported a noticeable increase in business as a result.

Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Economic Development Update – Marc Miller, Economic Development Director provided the quarterly economic development report.

Discussion included:

- 72 meetings/engagements/contacts with developers (County wide)
- 50 COVID recovery contacts/meetings with local community (County wide)
- 3 Retention visits and new business startups
- Experiencing Interest in Manistee from entities outside of the community
- Purchase agreement signed for the property previously known as the Boat House Grill
- Potential interest in Amor Sign property
- WSCC project progressing; possible late fall opening
- Monroe Cottages and Hollander Development moving forward
- Implemented River Street Reinvigoration Plan
- DDA agreement
- Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) engagement for grants
- Another round of grants for businesses in Manistee County through MEDC – Michigan Small Business Restart Program
- Council would like economic development updates to include statistics broken down for the City
- Interest from merchants to explore outdoor retail space

Discussion on City Hall Hours of Operation – City Manager Thad N. Taylor led the discussion on proposed changes to City Hall hours of operation.

Discussion included:

- Extended hours of operation Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday with Wednesday closure
- Provides for separation of workers to limit exposure
- Allows for deep cleaning of the building on Wednesday
- Combination of in-person work and remote work
- Will publish communication of new hours for notice to the public
- New hours to begin the last week of the July after completion of Work Share Program

CONSENSUS: Council directed staff to move forward with the new hours of operation for City Hall beginning July 27, 2020 and to notify the public of the changes.

Discussion on Dumpster Enclosures – Councilmember Szymanski led the discussion on compliance with the ordinance regulating dumpsters in the City.

Discussion included:

- Concrete slabs and enclosures for dumpsters regardless of when installed
- Enforcement
- Notice informing owners of need for compliance
- Timeframe for compliance
- Requirements prevent rodents and improve appearance
- Flexibility for dumpsters not within public view

CONSENSUS: Council directed staff to work on compliance with the current dumpster ordinance but provide flexibility for dumpsters that are not visible to the public.

Discussion on Labor Fest. – Councilmember Szymanski led the discussion on Labor Fest.

Discussion included:

- Cancellation of other events due to the current pandemic
- Compliance with current executive order
- Alcohol will not be served at the event
- Timeframe for booking bands
- Limited number of attendees for music portion of event
- Social distancing concerns with parade
- Event will be on the July 21st agenda for consideration

CONSENSUS: No consensus given.

Discussion on Sleighbell Parade – Councilmember Szymanski led the discussion on the Sleighbell Parade.

Discussion included:

- Concerns with large crowds that attend this event
- Visitors come from all over to attend
- Holiday craft bazaar has already been cancelled
- Decision to proceed or cancel needs to be made for contract purposes
- Maintaining compliance with social distancing and masks will be difficult

- Safety concerns
- Need for discussion with the City Attorney to see if this event would violate the current executive order
- Consistency with cancellations
- Additional discussion needed

CONSENSUS: No consensus given.

Other –

Grabowski inquired if building permits on River Street properties had expired and requested information on the asphalt work needed on First Street.

Beaton commented on concerns with landscaping maintenance in the DDA district and with the shortage of long-term rentals in the City.

Szymanski reminded staff that he would like a list of the police officers assigned to each blight district and would like it made available to the public.

Bradford reported on the successful bond sale, outstanding interest rate received, and gross savings on refunded bonds.

Zielinski thanked staff for their hard work during difficult times.

Adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Pefley MiPMC, CMC
City Clerk