

**MANISTEE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
MINUTES OF AUGUST 11, 2020**

The Manistee City Council met in a work session on Tuesday, August 11, 2020 at 7:00 pm, Ramsdell Theatre, 101 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan 49660.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

Public Comments:

Marc Miller, 414 Cedar Street – spoke in support of Ted Fricano’s economic development project at 440 River Street and asked for Council to support the business project.

Mayor Zielinski noted three additional items added to the agenda and gave opportunity for public comment.

Items included:

- Presentation by Ted Fricano to Discuss Plans for Business at 440 River Street and Interest in an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) Designation and Purchase of Adjacent City Property.
- Discussion on Resolution of Support for the Senior Center Millage Proposal
- Discussion on Increasing the Number of Marihuana Licenses allowed in the City.

No additional comments received.

Discussion on Local Revenue Sharing Board Grant – Valerie Bergstrom and Amy Wojciechowski led the discussion on a request for support for a Local Revenue Sharing Board Grant application for the Armory Youth Project.

Discussion included:

- Background of the Armory Youth Project Organization
- Programs provided
- Benefits of the program
- Community Partners
- Phase 1 gym makeover – approved for Manistee County Community Foundation Minger Grant
- Phase 2 proposed indoor and outdoor safety enhancements

CONSENSUS: Council supports this project and the application for the grant.

Discussion on Amending the City Manager’s Employment Agreement to Provide for a Minimum 90-Day Notice When Leaving the City’s Employment – Councilmember Lynda Beaton led the discussion on amending the City Manager’s employment agreement to change the current language to say that a minimum 90-day notice will be given upon leaving the City’s employment.

CONSENSUS: Council directed the City Manager to have the City Attorney draft the new language to provide for the 90-day notice and present the amended agreement to Council for consideration at a future meeting.

Presentation by Ted Fricano of Plans for Business at 440 River Street and Interest in an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) Designation and Purchase of Adjacent City Property. Marc Miller, Manistee Chamber of Commerce Economic Director, led the discussion on the business opportunity for 440 River Street and introduced the property's new owner, Ted Fricano. Mr. Fricano gave the history of the Fricano family business and their success in the industry. He conveyed his commitment to Manistee and shared his vision for the 440 River Street property including his plans to take the neglected property and make it prosperous. Due to the tremendous undertaking with this property, he is requesting the OPRA designation. Mr. Fricano would also like to purchase additional land from the City adjacent to the 440 River Street property to make the property inclusive to the Riverwalk and Marina.

City Manager Thad Taylor stated that the City Assessor has gone through the property and it would qualify for the OPRA. Taylor gave a brief explanation of the OPRA and the financial flexibility it could provide for the property owner to reinvest in the property. He further noted that the DDA has façade grants that could be helpful. Taylor stated a review was done of the property adjacent to 440 River Street; there are a couple of options available for purchase and possible easement for connectivity to the Riverwalk.

CONSENSUS: Council would like the City Manager to work with the Chamber Economic Director and Mr. Fricano to develop options to bring back for consideration at a future meeting.

Discussion on Resolution of Support for the Senior Center Millage Proposal – Councilmember Szymanski led the discussion on the millage renewal for the Senior Center and an additional millage for the Meals on Wheels program. He gave a background of the program, the devastating effect it would have on the community if the program ended, and the help needed to get this millage passed.

CONSENSUS: Council directed staff to draft a resolution of support for the Senior Center millage proposal to bring back for consideration at a future meeting.

Discussion on Increasing the Number of Marijuana Licenses allowed in the City. – Mayor Zielinski led the discussion on the possible increase to the number of Recreational Marijuana Retail Licenses allowed in the City to allow for those that currently have provisional Medical Marijuana permits to expand their businesses.

Discussion included

- The need to help businesses succeed and not hold them back
- A business can have more than one license per location
- Number of licenses to be added

CONSENSUS: Council would like staff to draft a proposed increase to the number of Recreational Retail Licenses allowed in the City to bring back for consideration at a future meeting.

OTHER:

Cooper asked for an update on the DPW Steelworkers contract; questioned if the current number of staff at the Fire Department is sufficient and asked if there was any new information available on the police department hiring process.

Martin-Pontiac commended the Fire Department and Police Department for their efforts with today's events including the fire in her district.

Beaton thanked Bruce Banks from the Water Department for taking the time to go door to door to notify residents of water issue in the Hughes Street area.

Grabowski questioned the status of the permits for the Rozmarek property on River Street; asked if there was any recourse for the insurance claim that was denied for the Riverwalk; requested an update on the blight program.

Cipic suggested that the Chamber of Commerce reach out to the owners of the Highway Bar where the fire occurred and offer assistance.

Szymanski wondered if there was any progress with allowing for the purchase/consumption of alcohol on the Riverwalk; would like to see support to enhance the Riverwalk.

Zielinski thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Pefley MiPMC/CMC
City Clerk