

The regular meeting of the Clare City Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers by Mayor Pat Humphrey who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, Carolyn (Gus) Murphy, Jean McConnell and Karla Swanson. Absent: None. Also present were Ken Hibl, City Manager; Brian Gregory, Police Chief; and Diane Lyon, City Clerk.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

Moved by Commissioner Swanson second by Commissioner Murphy to approve the items listed with an asterisk (\*) (Amended Agenda (Item D removed due to the rejection of the low bid (100k) received on the equipment to be sold), Minutes, Communications, and Bills) that are considered to be routine by the City Commission. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: None. *Motion Carried.*

3. \*APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

*Approved By Consent Agenda.*

4. \*APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA:

*Approved By Consent Agenda.*

5. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

**A. PURCHASE OF POLICE VEHICLE**

The City of Clare applied for and received a USDA grant in the amount of \$21K for the purchase of a new police vehicle, thereby assisting us in maintaining our vehicle replacement cycle. The City is required to execute the purchase of the vehicle by Nov 17th or the grant funds will be withdrawn.

The Michigan State Police conduct an annual test and assessment of police vehicles and rate them in five critical categories for law enforcement operations: Vehicle Dynamics; Acceleration & Top Speed; Brake Testing; Ergonomics & Communications; and Fuel Economy. All categories are assigned point values based on the tests and assessments. The 2016 MSP evaluation included six police vehicles: Chevrolet Caprice, Chevrolet Impala, Chevrolet Tahoe, Dodge Charger, Ford Taurus, and Ford Explorer. Charts from the MSP's 117-page evaluation report depict the results of the tests in each of the five critical evaluation categories. If one tabulates the cumulative results of the test scores, the clear and undisputed leader is the Dodge Charger (#1 in four of the five evaluated categories – it ranked #3/last in Fuel Economy...a ranking it shares with Chevrolet Caprice, Ford Taurus, and Ford Explorer), thus explaining why it is today's top choice of state and local law enforcement agencies – just as the Ford Explorer was that choice four years ago and the Ford Crown Victoria was previously that choice for at least a decade.

As outlined in Chief Gregory's attached letter, he used the test results as the primary evaluation tool to formulate his recommendation on which police vehicle the City should purchase. He augmented the evaluation results through personal discussions with neighboring police agencies regarding their recent vehicle purchases and the rationale they used to make their purchases, hands-on testing of two (Charger and Explorer) of the vehicles, two years of daily experience using one (Explorer) of the evaluated vehicles, and vehicle equipment and costs. Based on all these factors, he has recommended the purchase of a Dodge Charger. The C/M Hibl concurs with his assessment and supports his recommendation.

Chief Gregory was present to provide information and answer any questions of the City Commission. Chief Gregory provided that the City presently has 3 road patrol vehicles and 1 K-9 Unit in use. One of the road patrol units is a 2009 Chevy vehicle with many miles used by the school liaison officer. The City has a 5<sup>th</sup> vehicle that is parked because it is not road worthy with engine and dashboard issues and it has 130K miles on the odometer. The K-9 Unit (Explorer) has approximately 23K miles, one Explorer has less than 20K and the other Explorer has 40K miles.

Commissioner Swanson posed two questions; if we had only received a \$10K grant, would we be looking at purchasing a less expensive vehicle since the City's radius only 4-5 miles and are there any local vendors that could supply a police vehicle.

Chief Gregory offered that he had inquired with Maguire's about purchasing a Caprice however the County informed the Chief that they had purchased six Caprices in past years and would never order that vehicle again because they don't hold up. Police agencies are no longer using the Ford Taurus. The Charger offers better maneuverability, stability, and braking than other makes/models of vehicles, and while the police have had no problems with the Explorers currently in use, there is only a \$1.5K price difference between the Explorer and Charger.

Motion by Commissioner McConnell second by Commissioner Humphrey to approve the purchase of a police vehicle by adoption of Resolution 2016-123. Roll call vote: Yeas: None. Nays: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, Carolyn (Gus) Murphy, Jean McConnell and Karla Swanson. Absent: None. *Motion Defeated.*

#### **B. CLARE COUNTY UNSOLD TAX SALE PARCELS**

The Clare County Treasurer forwarded correspondence to the City advising of two parcels (the lots are vacant – one is the site of an abandoned gas well and the other is a contiguous, vacant lot) of residential property that were offered at tax sale but did not sell. The City has the choice of accepting the parcels back from the County or rejecting them. The City Commission is asked to make this determination so we can inform the County Treasurer of its desires.

Motion by Commissioner Bonham second by Commissioner Swanson to reject acceptance of the unsold tax parcels by adoption of Resolution 2016-127. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, Carolyn (Gus) Murphy, Jean McConnell and Karla Swanson. Nays: None. Absent: None. *Motion Carried.*

#### **C. 2017 POVERTY EXEMPTION**

Public Act 390 of 1994 requires each governing body to approve a Poverty Exemption Application to be administered by the municipalities appointed Board of Review. Furthermore, Public Act 390 requires the governing body to annually approve income levels for the Board of Review to follow in their review of property tax poverty exemption applications from owners of residential properties. Public Act 390 along with other applicable bulletins and regulations from the State Tax Commission provide the federal poverty income levels, the required asset tests and other procedural requirements for the poverty exemption application.

The City's Assessor has prepared the Poverty Exemption Application for 2017 including the federal poverty levels to be used by the Board of Review. The Assessor will assist the City of Clare's Board of Review in their consideration of applications under the provisions of Public Act 390 to insure compliance.

Motion by Commissioner Bonham second by Commissioner Swanson to approve the 2017 Poverty Exemption Application and Income Levels by adoption of Resolution 2016-128. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, Carolyn (Gus) Murphy, Jean McConnell and Karla Swanson. Nays: None. Absent: None. *Motion Carried.*

#### **8. TREASURER'S REPORT**

In the Treasurer's absence the report was provided as part of the packet review.

#### **9. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Clare Rotary Grant. We've been informed that a Rotary grant to provide benches in our new recreation complex (cost of \$2.4K) has been approved.

Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) Program. We have been very successful in obtaining grant funding from a wide variety of sources during the past two decades. One of our most-utilized sources of grant funding has been the Community Development Block Fund Grant (CDBG) program, which is now primarily managed by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). Commencing in October 1, 2017, MEDC's prime criteria for grant eligibility will be formal certification as a

Redevelopment Ready Community. The three-step process to attain certification is delineated in an outline document. The RRC Program definitely has its merits, and it is difficult to dispute its' municipal marketability benefits. But the process is somewhat lengthy, is resource and time intensive, and is bureaucratic – particularly from the aspect of still more Lansing micromanagement of local government. But if we want to continue our successful track record of grant funding for Clare, we need to endure the bureaucracy and expend the resources needed to attain certification. So I completed the first three blocks of required Best Practices training this week, and I am scheduled to attend the second training iteration in February. We will attempt to complete (or at least commence) the bulk of the mandatory self-assessment in December and January. We have to successfully complete each step before MEDC will formally acknowledge our advancement to the next step; our goal will be to attain certification by Oct 1st.

Woodlawn Bridge Update. We received reports of vehicular traffic using the bridge transporting loads well in excess of the recently-imposed 3T weight restriction; consequently the bridge was re-inspected and found to have significantly more deck timbers that are cracked – the majority of them being in the center of the bridge. Consequently, Gourdie-Fraser structural engineers have instructed us to place a narrow barrier in the center of the bridge to preclude further use of this sector of the bridge and requiring all vehicles to use only the outer opposing-traffic sectors/lanes of the bridge. If additional cracks occur, we will be required to close the bridge in its entirety. The unfortunate aspect of this alleged weight restriction violation is that we determined we had a \$10K repair option available to us by installing new spreader beams under the bridge, thereby providing us an estimated 3-5 years of additional life of the bridge and allowing us to raise the load limit to 10T. That option is now gone as the entire deck will have to be replaced. While we continue to review options, it appears that the cost to install a new timber bridge will be approx. \$70K. The lead time from order to delivery of the wooden bridge material is 10 weeks, excluding installation/construction.

City Hall Closure. City Hall will be closed to the public (employees will be working) on Nov 11th, Veteran's Day; all City offices will be closed on Nov 15th for an employee bargaining unit negotiated holiday.

Planning Commission. The Commission is scheduled to meet on Wed, Nov 9th. Scheduled agenda items include consideration of a new parking lot for American Marble & Granite and approval of the City's updated Master Plan.

Approval of Emergency Invoice. I approved the attached emergency repair invoice for parts needed to repair our Vactor. This mechanical malfunction occurred during the process of repairing a recent water main leak on McEwan Street. The Vactor is one of our most critical and essential equipment items.

Lake Board Meeting. The Lake Board is tentatively scheduled to meet on Monday, Nov 14th. Tony Groves of Progressive Engineering will provide the Board the results of their lake study; provide dredging options (w/anticipated costs); and ask the Board to make initial decisions regarding the direction (select one of the proposed options; initiate an assessment process; direct no action be taken, etc.) they wish to take.

1,4-Dioxane Emergency Order. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has issued an emergency order based on potential health and safety issues with this contaminant. Our Water Department continuously monitors our system for contaminants and with the exception of test results from the Hatton Township Landfill has found no evidence that would indicate our public water system is or will be adversely affected by this order.

Airport Taxiway Project. We held a 90% design completion review at the Clare Airport on Nov 3rd with representatives of MDOT and Mead & Hunt, our airport project engineer. Bids are scheduled to be let in Jan 2017 with construction to complete the 04/22 Taxiway tentatively scheduled for Aug 2017.

Property Donation. The City is now the owner of two contiguous lakefront residential lots along Witbeck Drive donated to us by Mr. & Mrs. Gary Rossier, who had intended to build their retirement home on this site but received a gift of property in another very

desirable retirement location – so they decided to “pay it forward” by donating their previous retirement site (the vacant lots on Witbeck Drive) to the City.

10. \*COMMUNICATIONS

*Approved By Consent Agenda.*

SOS Press Releases. The Secretary of State has released three news bulletins in the past week. The first one urges registered voters to participate in the upcoming election, the second one discusses the integrity of elections in Michigan; and the third provides a link to a question & answer video pertaining to elections, veteran’s services, and other topics.

SOS Q&A Video Release. The Secretary of State’s office has released a question & answer video regarding election issues and what voters need to know before they go to the polls.

MPSC Survey. The Michigan Public Service Commission sent a request to complete a survey regarding cable/video providers and they have provided their most recent publication of Consumer Tips.

Charter Communications Correspondence. Charter Communications announces a new Government Affairs Representative, Karen Coronado, for East Michigan.

ACLU Voter ID Letter. The American Civil Liberties Union has forwarded a letter regarding Michigan’s identification requirements to all Michigan Clerks.

MCTWF Audit Findings. The Michigan Conference of Teamsters Health & Welfare Fund have provided their recent audit findings.

11. EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: County Commissioner Leonard Strouse informed the City Commission that the Clare County Board of Commissioners reinstated their agreement with the Middle Michigan Development Corporation.

12. COMMISSION DISCUSSION TOPICS: The Commission discussed writing a letter to the editor of the Clare County Review in response to a letter written to the editor that was published in the November 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the newspaper due to the inaccuracies outlined in that letter. The Review no longer requires verification of the author’s existence or accuracy of the information. The Commission determined they would not do so because it would only encourage back and forth banter and they do not want to get into that practice.

Some Commissioners have been approached by residents inquiring why the City does not offer leaf pickup when other surrounding communities do provide this service. The City of Harrison has their own equipment for leaf pickup and the Village of Farwell has leaf pickup service. The City has looked into providing this service in the past but it would cost approximately \$150K-\$200K just to get into it. Once a site to dump the leaves has been determined it must be registered with the DNR and it is regulated so the City would have to hire another employee to maintain the operation.

Commissioner Bonham questioned why we have not sold the inoperable police vehicle rather than simply leaving it parked. He recommended putting it up for bids if the police have no intention of repairing the vehicle.

Commissioner Swanson announced that Father Rudy, a former Pastor at St. Cecilia’s Church, has passed away.

13. \*APPROVAL OF BILLS

*Approved By Consent Agenda.*

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Bonham second by Commissioner McConnell to adjourn the meeting. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: None. *Motion Carried.* Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.