

**City of Olivet
Regular Council Minutes
August 14, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.**

Council Call to Order

Present: Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas, Don Walker, Gary Peterson, Steve Penny, Joe Hoffdahl, James Frohm, and Larry Marsh.

Visitors' Section:

Olivet Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Courtney Mead gave a summer-end update. She stated that she and the Olivet Chamber had fun at the "Community Tent" during the Firefighters Festival. Mead noted that there will be three more Farmers' Markets to be held at Memorial Park this year. She also reminded everyone that the Olivet Chamber hosts community meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 located at Memorial Park and encouraged everyone to attend. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that several businesses would attend The University of Olivet's "Comet Fest" and asked if the Olivet Chamber would also be in attendance. Mead said the Chamber will be present at "Comet Fest."

Jenny Heisler addressed the Council asking for an update regarding the Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) ordinance. Mayor Barlund-Maas said that she met with the City Attorney last week and progress is being made.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Penny, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the agenda with the following amendments: Replace Agenda Item A. Olivet College Homecoming Road Closures with The University of Olivet Student Move-in Road Closures. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Previous Minutes

MOTION by Walker, supported by Penny, to approve the regular July 10, 2023, minutes. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION by Walker, supported by Frohm, to approve the special Park Grant July 25, 2023, minutes. Motion carried 5-0 with the following roll call vote:

Barlund-Maas – yes Walker – yes Peterson – yes Marsh – yes Frohm – yes

Hoffdahl – abstain

Penny - abstain

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. The University of Olivet Student Move-In Day Road Closures – Action Item

Campus Safety Officer Jason Ackley is requesting Cottage Street from Main Street to Church Street and East Street from College Street to Cottage Street be closed on Friday, August 18 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for student move-in day. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that DPW Director Staggs would furnish barricades for the event and asked Ackley to be responsible for placing and removing them.

MOTION by Penny, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the road closures of Cottage Street from Main Street to Church Street and East Street from College Street to Cottage Street on Friday, August 18 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for the student move-in day. Motion carried 7-0.

B. Olivet Community Schools Homecoming Parade Road Closures – Action Item

Olivet High School teacher/advisor Brityn Rabakon stated that the Olivet High School homecoming is Friday, September 22. The parade lineup will start at 5:15 p.m. at the old football field and the parade will begin at 5:30 p.m. She is requesting road closures on First Street, College Street, and Main Street. The parade will go up College Street to Main Street to First Street and back to the school. Rabakon stated that she did call the Olivet Fire Department to inquire if they would like to be in the parade. DPW Director Staggs and Olivet Police Chief Garcia will coordinate with road closures and barricades.

MOTION by Penny, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the road closures of First Street, College Street, and Main Street on Friday, September 22 from 5:15 p.m. until the end of the parade for the Olivet Community High School homecoming parade. Motion carried 7-0.

C. Sewer Lift Station Pump Rebuild – Action Item

DPW Director Staggs stated that T.H. Eifert informed him that they still had the broken pump from the main lift station break earlier in the year. Staggs said that T.H. Eifert offered to return the pump to the DPW to be scrapped or rebuild the pump for the DPW to have as a backup for the main lift station. Staggs provided the Council with a quote from T.H. Eifert to rebuild the broken pump. Commissioner Peterson agrees with Staggs to rebuild the pump.

MOTION by Peterson, supported by Penny, to hire T.H. Eifert to rebuild the main lift station pump to be used as a backup at a cost not to exceed \$22,680.00. Motion carried 7-0.

D. Water Tower Inspection – Dixon Engineering – Action Item

DPW Director Staggs informed the Council that the DPW started the EGLE sanitary survey last week. He stated that it is a requirement for the water tower to be inspected every five years and the five years are up so the inspection needs to be done. Staggs provided the Council with a quote from Dixon Engineering to perform inspection services on the City water tower.

MOTION by Peterson, supported by Frohm, to approve hiring Dixon Engineering for the remote inspections of the City water tower at a cost not to exceed \$4,500.00. Motion carried 7-0.

E. ARPA Funds – Council Chairs – Employee Bonuses – Action Item

Commissioner Penny informed the Council that the City currently has a balance of \$121,500.00 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that need to be obligated by December 2024 and spent by December 2026. Penny stated that he would like to use some of the ARPA funds to replace the eight chairs in the Council chambers and provided the Council with three options of chairs to choose from. Discussion took place regarding the product details and pricing of each of the chairs.

MOTION by Penny, supported by Walker, to approve the purchase of eight Brown Leather Executive chairs from Home Depot using ARPA funds at a cost not to exceed 3,500.00. Motion carried 7-0.

Commissioner Penny stated that he would like City employees to receive a retention bonus using the ARPA funds. He is proposing all full-time employees receive \$2,500.00, all part-time employees receive \$1,000.00, and seasonal employees receive \$500.00. Discussion took place regarding the bonus amount for the seasonal employees and employees who work for both the City and the Olivet Fire Department.

MOTION by Penny, supported by Walker, to use ARPA funds for a retention bonus for all City employees. All full-time employees will receive \$2,500.00 each, part-time employees including the hourly firefighters will receive \$1,000.00 each, and seasonal employees will receive \$500.00 each for a total not to exceed \$38,500.00. Employee Krohn will receive both bonuses as he is a full-time City employee and works as an hourly firefighter. Amy Maas will receive \$1,000.00 as an hourly firefighter per Fire Chief Collins because she is the department's billing administrator. Bonuses will be paid on the next quarterly payroll at the end of September. Motion carried 7-0.

F. Banners for Main Street – Informational

DPW Director Staggs provided the Council with a quote for new seasonal banners as the City's current banners are old and tattered. He stated that he has spoken with Olivet Chamber of Commerce Director Mead about the possibility of the chamber donating towards the purchase of the banners. Mead will discuss this with the chamber and will let Staggs know the decision. Discussion took place regarding what banners are needed and where we purchased previous banners. Visitor Jenny Heisler addressed the Council with the idea of pictures of veterans on the City banners.

Approval of the Bills

MOTION by Penny, supported by Hoffdahl, to pay the bills as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Department Head Reports

Police Chief Shawn Garcia – Garcia stated that he made a conditional offer to a retired Michigan State Police Officer regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) position and the offer was accepted. The condition of the offer is contingent on this person taking a refresher course to renew his MCOLES license as he has been in retirement. Garcia informed the Council that he has an interview on Wednesday for the full-time City Police Officer position and will keep us posted. He said he has spoken with Staggs and The University of Olivet Assistant Director of Campus Safety Brad Baker regarding road closures and barricades for "Comet Fest" and "Student Move-In Day." Garcia said the Firefighters Festival went great with no incidents. Garcia informed the Council that there was a rumor that the Eaton County Sheriff's Department would delete another shift. Mayor Barlund-Maas

called on Eaton County Commissioner Jim Mott to respond if he could to the Eaton County Sheriff Department rumor. Mott stated that he is not aware of Eaton County Sheriff's Department deleting another shift, but the department, could possibly be adding hours to the current shift.

DPW Director Jerry Staggs – Staggs stated the Olivet Fire Department has the old fire hydrants they wanted. Staggs asked the Council's permission to take the balance of the old hydrants to the scrap yard. Commissioner Peterson asked Staggs to get a scrap price as he would be interested in purchasing one of the old hydrants. Staggs informed the Council that it is time to take sealed bids regarding leaf pick-up. He would like to get three bids and report the bids to the Council in September. He also stated that there was confusion last year regarding leaf pick-up services with the college. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that she would talk to Michael Saylor at The University of Olivet for clarification on the leaf pick-up. The Council suggested that if the University would like to partake in this service there will be a fee. Walker asked if Xact Excavating had redone the driveways and sidewalks to the correct thickness. Staggs said the driveways have all been redone and the sidewalks were poured correctly.

Fire Chief John Collins – Collins announced that the Olivet Fire Department will receive \$1,000,000.00 from State Representative Angela Whitwer for a new fire truck. He stated the Fire Department would order a fully equipped engine at an estimated amount of \$850,000.00, and the balance of the funds would be spent at the Fire Department's discretion. Collins invited Chief Garcia, City employees, Council members, The University of Olivet, and neighboring townships to join the Fire Department along with State Representative Whitwer on Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. for a news release with video and photo opportunities. He thanked the City for providing porta potties, Staggs for setting and moving the porta potties, and employees Huepenbecker and Emerson along with resident Davis for packing food boxes for the Firefighters Festival. Collins stated that he and Commissioner Walker have been busy with meetings with Fleis & Vandenbrink regarding the feasibility study. He said that Fleis & Vandenbrink will present the findings of the study once completed. Collins updated the Council on grants and stated that the Olivet Fire Department did receive a regional grant for air packs, and he is still waiting to hear if the Fire Department will receive the grant for personal protection equipment. Collins said the department has been busy with twenty calls last month. He said the department has four firefighters attending fire school and two firefighters attending medical training school. Walker praised Collins for all the hard work he put toward receiving the funding from State Representative Whitwer.

Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker – Huepenbecker thanked the City for the bonuses. She stated the office is busy wrapping up the utility billing cycle and is in the process of putting out red tags. Huepenbecker said the office is also working on several planning and zoning issues. She identified one issue involving Eric Libersher who has property on Butterfield Hwy. where a portion of the property with the primary residence is in Walton Township and part of the property is in the City of Olivet. Libersher would like to build a pole barn on the property that is within the City of Olivet that does not have the primary residence. Huepenbecker stated that the County advised her on a variance or an annexation of the property. Huepenbecker is awaiting answers regarding annexing fees so Libersher can decide on whether to ask for a variance or continue with the fee for an annexation. She stated Walton Township is agreeable to an annexation. Discussion took place regarding the issues associated with applying for a variance versus an annexation. Huepenbecker also updated the Council regarding early voting. She stated that early voting is required for State and Federal only. Olivet will not be doing early voting as it is exclusively a City election and it will be held on the normal Tuesday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Next year the City will have the nine-day early voting for the presidential primary election which will be held at Carmel Township.

Mayor Barlund-Maas called on Eaton County Commissioner Jim Mott for an update on Eaton County happenings. Mott confirmed that the City of Olivet has unofficially been awarded the Eaton County

Community Parks Grant. He stated that the County is considering taking over the recycling program from the townships, cities, and municipalities. The County would like to streamline the recycling program and make it more uniform in its operations. The County is proposing a hub and spoke model concept where there is one location that is the hub and different locations around the County where the material would be picked up and taken to that central location (hub). Mott said the County is still working out the details as there are new guidelines for recycling from the State that have been passed down to the County level. Mott adds that Eaton County Transportation Authority (EATRAN) has a survey on their website that they are encouraging people to fill out. Peterson stated that people are tired of taking surveys. Peterson stated that EATRAN received Capitol Area Transportation Authority (CATA) old vans and this is working well for drivers who get hired but do not have a CDL. He said that EATRAN is working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the union to increase EATRAN's starting wages from \$15.00/hr. to \$18.00/hr. with full-time employees receiving benefits and bonuses in hopes of attracting new hires. Mott announced the groundbreaking ceremony for the addition to the Eaton County Juvenile Facility will be on August 24 at 11:00 a.m. and invited the Council to attend.

Commissioner Comments

Joe Hoffdahl – Hoffdahl thanked all City employees for their hard work and Dan LaPoint for the great ice cream at the Firefighters Festival.

Steve Penny – Penny congratulated the Olivet Fire Department and Fire Chief Collins for his hard work that went into securing funds through State Representative Angela Whitwer. He said that he attended his first farmers market on Saturday which he enjoyed. He reminded everyone that school was getting ready to start for the year and advised people to be aware of the increased traffic on First Street.

Don Walker – Walker stated that he had nothing to add.

Larry Marsh – Marsh stated that he had nothing to add.

Gary Peterson – Peterson thanked Fire Chief Collins for the work that went into securing the funds for the Fire Department.

James Frohm – Frohm stated that he had nothing to add.

Laura Barlund-Maas – Barlund-Maas stated she appreciates the \$1,000,000.00 that Fire Chief Collins secured. She said the Firefighters Festival went well and she was excited that she won the raffle for the first time in 27 years. Barlund-Maas stated that in August Olivet College had changed its name to The University of Olivet. She reminded everyone that students are returning to campus and that “Night on the Town” is not happening; instead, there will be “Comet Fest” around the Square on August 24.

Council meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Laura Barlund-Maas, Mayor

Amy Huepenbecker, Clerk/Treasurer