

**City of Olivet  
Regular Council Minutes  
April 08, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Council Call to Order**

Present: Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas, Commissioners: Gary Peterson, Joseph Davis, James Frohm, Larry Marsh, and Joe Hoffdahl.

Absent: Don Walker

**Visitors' Section:** None.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas stated that the agenda needs to be amended to include Item L. Purchase Banners for Main Street with a budget amendment.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the agenda with the addition of Item L. Purchase Banners for Main Street and approve the budget amendment. Motion carried 6-0.

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

**MOTION** by Hoffdahl, supported by Peterson, to approve the March 11, 2024, minutes as written. Motion carried 6-0.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. The University of Olivet Phi Beta Lambda Car Wash – Action Item**

Student James Richardson from Phi Beta Lambda asked the Council's permission to hold a car wash fundraiser at Memorial Park on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. DPW Director Jerry Staggs stated that the room that holds the water and hose is secured with a lock. He asked Richardson to meet him at 12:30 pm to exchange the key for the water room. Police Chief Shawn Garcia stated that signage should be placed at Memorial Park to distinguish the car wash area from the general park area. Mayor Barlund-Maas reminded Phi Beta Lambda that it is their responsibility to lock the water room when the event ends and also to clean up any trash.

**MOTION** by Frohm, supported by Peterson, to approve The University of Olivet Phi Beta Lambda to hold a car wash at Memorial Park on April 10, 2024, from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm with the understanding that Phi Beta Lambda is responsible for locking the water room and cleaning up any trash from the car wash. Motion carried 6-0.

## **B. Water and Sewer Rate Increase – Action Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the Council packet contains the proposed water and sewer increase rates and examples showing what the increase would look like. Commissioner Gary Peterson stated that Olivet has the lowest rates in the County. He also said that he would like the City to take a proactive approach and consider raising the water rate again next year to build funds for future expenses.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the 1% water rate increase and the 3% sewer rate increase starting July 1, 2024. Motion carried 6-0.

## **C. Interfund Loan Payoff – Action Item**

Peterson stated that the water department borrowed money from the sewer department to paint the exterior of the water tower. The loan was for six years and there are two payments left. Peterson stated that the water department has the funds to pay off the loan balance of \$29,669.78 to the sewer department and suggested paying the loan off early.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Hoffdahl, to pay off the loan balance early to the sewer department for \$29,669.78. Motion carried 6-0.

## **D. Federal Holiday Update to the Employee Handbook – Action Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the Council packet contains a sheet showing the employee handbook's current federal and non-federal paid holidays. She said the sheet also shows an update to include additional paid federal holidays that are not included in the handbook. Commissioner James Frohm stated that the current paid holidays along with the additional five federal holidays would give employees fourteen paid holidays off. Commissioner Joseph Davis stated that the fourteen paid holidays are the same as the State Government holidays.

**MOTION** by Frohm, supported by Davis, to approve the update to the handbook to include the five additional federal holidays to the current nine federal and non-federal holidays off with pay. This will become effective starting with the new fiscal year July 1, 2024, except for Juneteenth to be included this fiscal year 2024. Motion carried 6-0.

## **E. Transducer for Spring Street Lift Station – Action Item**

DPW Director Staggs provided a quote from T.H. Eifert to install a transducer at the Spring Street lift station. Staggs stated that the Council approved the purchase of a transducer for the Spring Street lift station from Oudbier Instrument Company a year ago. He said that while waiting for the transducer, the Village of Bellevue needed a transducer immediately, so the transducer was sent to Bellevue. Staggs informed the Council that he has tried to contact Oudbier to get a current quote on a transducer and has not received a return phone call. Staggs reiterated the need for the transducer and stated that T.H. Eifert is closer and provides excellent service to the City. Peterson stated that he does not see a warranty on the quote from T.H. Eifert. Staggs said he believes there is a standard one-year warranty, and he will get the warranty in writing.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Marsh, to hire T.H. Eifert to install the transducer at the Spring Street lift station at a cost not to exceed \$5,960.00. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **F. Eaton County Park Grant Resolution – Action Item**

Davis stated that a resolution must be in place to apply for the Eaton County Parks Grant. This year the City would like to apply for the grant to purchase new equipment for Rotary Park to replace what was removed last year. Davis said that the City will apply for a maximum of \$29,000.00. Frohm asked if repairs had been made at Memorial Park. Staggs stated that he and the Parks Committee have walked Memorial Park to see what repairs and replacements need to be done and the DPW has begun making those repairs.

**MOTION** by Davis, supported by Frohm, to approve the resolution to apply for the Eaton County Parks Grant. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **G. New Computer Clerk’s Office – Action Item**

Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker provided the Council with a quote from VC3 for a new desktop computer. She stated that new computers are budgeted on a rotating cycle for each office and this new fiscal year her office is on schedule to receive a new computer. Davis stated that the quote provided is very reasonable and the old one can be used as a backup if needed.

**MOTION** by Marsh, supported by Davis, to purchase a new computer from VC3 for the clerk’s office at a cost not to exceed \$1,120.00. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **H. Election Year Change – Informational Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the County is encouraging all small municipalities to change their election year to coincide with the state and federal election cycles. She said it is very costly for the City to hold City elections in the odd years along with the added cost of early voting. Huepenbecker stated that under 100 people vote in the city election and the cost to the City is very high. She stated that a resolution will have to be adopted if the Council decides to host City elections with the state and federal elections. Mayor Barlund-Maas said that the election in 2025 would be pushed back to 2026 and that would extend each elected official’s term in office for an extra year. Huepenbecker stated that she will reach out to the County on the time frame and to make sure a resolution is all that is needed.

#### **I. Election Sign Ordinance – Informational Item**

Huepenbecker stated that at a past election, a political campaign sign was placed in the yard behind City Hall by the back driveway. She said because the City does not have any restrictions in the ordinance stating that political campaign signs can’t be placed in certain areas, these types of signs could be placed anywhere on City property except within 100’ of the entrance to a polling location. Huepenbecker checked with other municipalities regarding their regulations on election signs and she has provided this information in the Council packets for the City to consider working towards an election sign ordinance. Discussion took place regarding sign size, placement, length of placement, and types of signs.

## **J. Lexipol Policy Process – Informational Item**

Chief Garcia stated that he and Commissioner Davis have been meeting weekly with Lexipol learning how to work with Lexipol's online platforms. The platforms will be used to update and host the Olivet Police Department policies and procedures. Garcia stated that he and Davis are reviewing and making corrections to the Police Department policy manual. The policies are grouped into tiers and he has provided the Council with the policy implementation flow chart. Garcia is asking for the Council's guidance regarding the order in which the workgroups, City Council, and the City Attorney would review these policies for approval. Discussion took place regarding the order of how the reviewed policies should flow before approval and should each tier be implemented once reviewed or all tiers at once. Garcia said once the policies are reviewed and approved, they will be published on Lexipol's online portal, Knowledge Management System (KMS).

## **K. Budget – First Reading**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the proposed budget along with the analysis is included in the Council packet. Huepenbecker said that the Council needs to review and ask any questions regarding the analysis and proposed budget before the public hearing in May where the budget will be adopted. Peterson asked if the Cell Tower Income line item could be renamed to Metro Act Income. Huepenbecker stated that she would ask City Accountant Kelly Hanna.

## **L. Approval to purchase Banners with a Budget Amendment – Action Item**

Huepenbecker stated that approval to purchase the banners by the Council was given at the November 13, 2023, council meeting. She said the City applied for The University of Olivet Community Investment Grant hoping to use the grant to pay for the new downtown banners. The City did not receive the grant. Huepenbecker informed the Council that an amendment is needed to move \$2,540.00 from the Building & Grounds Miscellaneous Expense line item to the Building & Grounds Capital Outlay.

**MOTION** by Hoffdahl, supported by Davis, to amend the budget by moving \$2,540.00 from Building & Grounds Miscellaneous Expense to Building & Grounds Capital Outlay for the downtown banners. Motion carried 6-0.

## **Approval of the Bills**

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Frohm, to pay the bills with the addition of one late bill. Motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Barlund-Maas called on Eaton County Commissioner Jim Mott to give an update on Eaton County happenings. Mott stated that an open public meeting regarding Eaton County budget concerns will take place on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 5:00 pm at the courthouse in the Commissioner Room.

## **Department Head Reports**

**Police Chief Shawn Garcia** – Garcia stated that the Police Department has purchased a body camera and the two tasers that were approved at the February 12, 2024, council meeting. He said the candidate being considered for the Police Officer position had a medical issue and he will keep the Council informed as he gets more information.

**DPW Director Jerry Staggs** – Staggs thanked the Council for their part in him receiving the Michigan Rural Water Association “Water Operator of the Year” award. He stated that the City was not awarded the Category B Road Grant, but when the grant opens again Don Heck with Wolverine Engineering will reapply. Staggs said in the interim there are sections of Spruce, Yale, and East Streets that need replacing and he and Heck will work together to come up with a plan. He informed the Council that the older mower would be placed on the auction site. Seasonal employee Owen Knoll, who does a great job mowing, will be returning soon. Peterson congratulated Staggs on his award.

**Fire Chief John Collins** – Collins stated the department had 23 calls and he provided the Council with a monthly fire report. He informed the Council that the fire department completed the quarterly report and submitted it to the State for the new fire truck grant. Collins said that Butler Heating & Cooling hosts meals for Emergency Service Responders and last week they provided a beautiful dinner for the Olivet Fire Department and donated two backpack blowers. Collins said that the Fire Department had also applied for The University of Olivet Community Investment Grant and received \$3,000.00 towards a battery-powered fan. Collins informed the Council that the four candidates attending fire school will be done on April 27. Spencer Manufacturing is paying for six fire department personnel to attend the Fire Department Instructor Conference (FDIC). Collins expressed his interest in working with Lexipol to update the Fire Department policies and procedures. Collins would like to move forward with the architect to answer any questions regarding the new fire station and he invited the Council to the fire station to see the need firsthand. He informed the Council that he has spoken with Senator Peters regarding a Congressionally Directed Spending Request (CDS). Collins said that he received an email stating that a CDS request, if awarded, would approve up to 75% with the City responsible for 25%. Collins stated that The University of Olivet has installed numerous Knox boxes on its buildings. The Knox box holds the key that allows firefighters immediate access to the building to investigate the cause of the alarm and permit them to quickly initiate firefighting operations. Collins suggested the City have an ordinance regarding current and new businesses to have a Knox box.

**Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker** – Huepenbecker stated the water bills were mailed out last week and the office has been busy with payments. She said she would research and present information regarding election sign ordinances and switching election years at the May meeting. Huepenbecker congratulated Staggs on his Water Operator of the Year award.

### **Commissioner Comments**

**Joe Hoffdahl** – Hoffdahl congratulated Staggs on his award and thanked all employees.

**Joseph Davis** – Davis stated it has been a busy month. He said the Parks Board is up and running with two meetings so far. Davis informed the Council that the Parks Board has elected its officers and has set the regular meeting dates on July 2, 2024, and October 1, 2024, at 1:00 pm at Olivet City Hall. He said the goal of the Parks Board is to have the Master Parks Plan done within the year. The Master Parks Plan is useful when submitting applications for grants. Davis stated the meetings with Lexipol regarding Police Department policies went well. He also stated that he was glad he attended the Michigan Municipal League (MML) training that covered such topics as the Open Meetings Act and City Budgets.

**Don Walker** – Walker was absent.

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

**Gary Peterson** – Peterson stated that Eaton County Transportation Authority (EATRAN) is doing well and is still considering the Grand Ledge to Delta Township route. He said he would get more information on Wednesday.

**James Frohm** – Frohm asked Staggs what he found out regarding the roof issues on the DPW building and the Fire Station. Staggs stated that both buildings have a flat roof and contractors who work with flat roofs are outside of Michigan. Staggs said he had one quote for \$14,000.00 to replace or \$4,000.00 to repair.

**Laura Barlund-Maas** – Barlund-Maas stated that The University of Olivet's "Black Lives Matter March" is April 16 at 5:30 pm. She congratulated Staggs on receiving the State Water Operator of the Year award and stated job well done.

Council meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

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Laura Barlund-Maas, Mayor

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Amy Huepenbecker, Clerk/Treasurer