

MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Tom Banks called the regular Council meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The meeting was held at the City Offices located at 139 S. Saginaw Street, Montrose, MI.

ROLL CALL: Present council members were Mayor Tom Banks, Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Richard, Bob Arnold, Todd Pangle, Lori Machuk, and Melissa Wallace-Hoose. Also present was City Manager Barbara Valentine and eleven citizens. Council member Ryan Heslop was recorded absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Tom Banks led The Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

PRESENTATIONS: *MICHIGAN PIPE AND VALVE AND ZENNER WATER METERS:* Michigan Pipe and Valve Representative Mike Brown who has over 34 ½ years of experience working with municipalities', discussed the two water meters that Zenner provides; ultrasonic and multi-jet meters. Zenner has been around for 135 years and the largest water and gas meter company in the world. Mike Brown also discussed moving away from cellular 5G to satellite down the road, Zenner excels at a mesh network which is non cellular. Life expectancy of the mesh network is longer than the cellular network. SLC Meters quote was also observed at this time.

Valentine added that water meter end points are communication components attached to the mechanical water meter, and they have half a life of the water meters. The expected life span of water meters is 20 years, so the End Point Unit is expected to fail at about the 10-year mark, and this is already happening. This is a maintenance item that should be calculated into the Water Rates. The Badger Water Meters that the city has can accommodate either the Cellular End Point recommended by our current Vendor, SLC Meter, LLC, or the Council can choose to transition to an End Point Unit that utilizes a wireless line-of-sight network that requires no cellular capability.

This may become a significant issue in the coming months because the current system located on the Tower was damaged in the recent storms and we do not yet know to what extent. A Zenner Meter End Point system does not require the use of a Tower and is housed in the City Hall. Both units allow for Remote Reading and Notifications of errors and leaks. The most significant costs will be the setup and installation of the End Points to every user over a 60-day period. We have time so this is mostly Informational. No decision needs to be made at this Meeting.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold that at the next meeting in 2 weeks that this be put on the agenda. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Resident Clint Diffin spoke about water rate increases 15 years ago and asked if flooding in his back yard and the building inspector to be added to the next city council meeting agenda. Representative from SLC Meter, Jim Thomspson, spoke about having the option to make changes to the quote he turned in for the meters and mentioned the endpoints quoted are for twenty years not ten years. Mayor Banks offered SLC to come back and speak at the next council meeting.

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MATTERS OF COUNCIL ACTION:

1. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION WATER METER END POINT REPLACEMENT:* Action taken under Presentations.

2. *DISCUSSION/UPDATE THUMB AUDIO VIDEO:* Valentine reported that Mr. Kitts, with the AudioNisual Dept at Montrose Schools, recommended Kevin Strieter with Thumb Audio as a contractor to install video recording equipment at the City Hall. We are currently required by Michigan Law to audiotape all Meetings. However, it is likely only a matter of time before that requirement will include Video. Mayor Banks has been working with the schools on this proposal. Currently Mr. Kitts class is videotaping the Meetings, however these Meetings are not City Property, and we have no Contract or Agreement with the schools regarding ownership or access to the Videos produced (they are not FOIA-able through the City because they are not our property). That will change once the city purchases equipment and begins videotaping and posting the videos online when the New Website launches (60-90 days). Mr. Strieter has agreed to work with the class on the installation and setup of the camera and recording system, and that is the primary reason that you see one quote. The purpose is to create a program that benefits the schools and the city.

- **MOTION** by Pangle **SECOND** by Richard to direct the city manager to apply for a grant to cover the cost of the AD project that was suggested from the Jennings Foundation. Roll Call Vote: Arnold – Aye, Hoose - Aye, Pangle – Aye, Mayor Pro-Tem Richard – Aye, Machuk – Aye, and Mayor Banks – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried. Council member Heslop – Absent. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

3. *DISCUSSION/UPDATE OF MIHOPE GRANT PROGRESS:* Valentine indicated that she is working on completing this Grant and thanked Hoose for using her contacts to reach out the Resident at 202 Feher Drive to get us the required paperwork. We are now waiting for the completion of the Energy Audit for that address and the resolution of a new Claim of incompleteness at 177 Coke Drive that Retrofoam will be rectifying on April 8th. We should get the OK to make the payment to Retrofoam and request Reimbursement by 4/14/25. Once Reimbursement from MSHDA to the City is complete, we can close the Grant out.

4. *DISCUSSION/UPDATE MODIFICATION OF E & O CLAIM TO THE CITY'S INSURANCE POLICY:* Valentine said she sent another email this week to our Adjuster, Mark Ott, however, it took 6 weeks to get a response.

- **MOTION** by Arnold **SECOND** by Banks that we go with the attorney, then if it doesn't go through then we look for a different insurance company. Roll Call Vote: Pangle – Aye, Machuk – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Hoose – Aye, Mayor Pro-Tem Richard – Aye, and Mayor Banks – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.
- **MOTION** by Pangle **SECOND** by Richard to move agenda item No. 5 to No. 13 and add onto the next city council meeting agenda, discussion of flooding on Coke Drive and the city's building inspector. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

5. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION GBL ORDINANCE CORRECTIONS/MODIFICATIONS:* Item discussed under agenda item No. 13.

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6. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTIONS USDA GRADUATION LETTER*: Valentine reported that she has resolved this issue, however, there is still an issue with the current Auditor, so moving forward, the city needs to discuss to avoid anything of this nature again.

7. *DISCUSSION/DIRECTION GENESEE STREET CLOSURE FOR FARMER'S MARKET*: Blackbird is taking over operation of the Farmer's Market this year and is expanding the Footprint. They are not using White's Tavern lot this year, so the city will need to consider pedestrian safety concerns and consider this option.

- **MOTION** by Machuk **SECOND** by Richard that we allow the M-57 Market/Blackbird Market the closure of Genesee Street from M-57 to the car wash on Saturdays for the 2 months. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

8. *DISCUSSION/UPDATE ON MASTER PLAN*: We have work to do on the Master Plan, and some of the issues will have to be addressed very soon. The Manager's recommendation is that we table this issue for now. Planning Board will need to focus on those changes and send them to the Council.

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Hoose to put aside until October per Valentine's recommendation. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

9. *DISCUSSION/UPDATE ON HICKORY STREET PROJECT*: I am providing an initial Project Estimate. This is the very beginning of the process, just the evaluation of the Street itself. We met with Spicer on April 2nd and went over the initial findings and discussed the water, sewer, and storm drain needs. We are also adding Curb and Gutter to this estimate. This is for a half mile of Hickory Street. We will start with the full Engineering and then we take those numbers and look for streets, water, and sewer funding options, as well as what we have as Match from Fund Balances in the Streets, Water, Sewer, and General Fund (Storm).

- **MOTION** by Hoose **SECOND** by Pangle to add engineering services to the next Council meeting agenda. Roll Call Vote: All Ayes. Motion Carried.

10. *RECOGNITION TO CELEBRATE PROFESSIONAL MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK MAY 4 TO MAY 10, 2025*: Valentine relayed that Rush thanked council for acknowledging this declaration and praised Rush for her knowledge and devotion to the City of Montrose. Rush won Clerk of the Year for the State of MI for 2024.

- **MOTION** by Pangle **SECOND** by Arnold that we recognize Professional Municipal Clerks Week May 4 to May 10th at a discretionary expense and specifically thank our city clerk. Roll Call Vote: Arnold – Aye, Mayor Pro-Tem Richard – Aye, Machuk – Aye, Pangle – Aye, Hoose – Aye, and Mayor Banks – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

11. *DISCUSSION/UPDATE 217 GENESEE ST TREES*: During the storm last week a double-trunk tree came down at this address. There are several issues with this incident that Council needs to be aware of.

- a. 3-foot sidewalk with a wall was built at this address. Three feet is not an ADA compatible sidewalk width. The sidewalk was built at the curb, which is unsafe for pedestrians, children, pets, etc. The installation of the wall required the removal of tree roots that essentially killed 5 large maple and oak trees, which is why the tree came down.

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- b. The removal of the trees was the responsibility of the City but the homeowner and staff were told that there was no money to do so. This is not acceptable. There was money in the Streets Funds to remove these trees. This refusal to remove these trees created a danger to the public.
- c. We do not have a Tree Removal company on Contract. The local company was twice the price of the Contractor I brought in. We should have a company under contract with an agreed upon rate.
- **MOTION** by Pangle **SECOND** by Hoose to direct the city manager to start looking at potential tree service contracts and bring us who you find available. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

12. APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL COUNCILMAN ROBERT ARNOLDS ABSENCE AT THE 03/25/25 CITY COUNCIL MEETING

- **MOTION** by Pangle **SECOND** by Richard to approve Robert Arnold's absence at the March 25, 2025 council meeting. All Ayes. Motion Carried.
- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold that we have discussion on the building inspector at the next meeting, that would be Matt Leoni, also the Coke Drive flooding be put on for the next meeting. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

*Prior to voting on the motion, Valentine reminded the council that a motion was already made earlier to add these items onto the next council meeting. The council thought the motion was to add onto tonight's agenda for discussion, however, according to the recording, this was the 2nd motion tonight asking to be placed onto the next council meeting agenda.

13. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION GBL ORDINANCE CORRECTIONS/MODIFICATIONS: Planning Board and DDA have both recommended that the City go in a different direction with the GBL, splitting the Business Registration actions and the Building Inspection actions. Included in council packet are samples of single page Business Registration forms used in other communities. Some are basic and some ask for more specific information. This is only one part of the process that would replace what the city was trying to accomplish in the Historic Downtown area with the GBL.

The next step will be to work on the changes in Zoning for the Historic Downtown District with the Planning Board and the DDA Board, and both are in favor of these changes. I have met with Spicer Engineering and requested a Letter of Agreement - a Proposal - for an in-depth Engineering Inspection of all the Downtown Buildings. This will assist property owners and potential new investors that are seeking locations for further development. This is how we capitalize on the Investment at 106 E Saginaw and move Montrose forward. I am also exploring our options with the MLCC regarding the Liquor Licensing process for a Social District, and requirements for Event Licenses. Council put enforcement of the GBL on pause so we have time to work through this process with Planning and ODA.

- **MOTION** by Arnold **SECOND** by Pangle that we adopt the Northville example, add any additional policy information to it and send the rest to Planning. Roll Call Vote: Machuk – Abstain, Hoose – Aye, Arnold – Aye, Mayor Pro-Tem Richard – Aye, Pangle – Aye, and Mayor Banks – Aye. Five (5) Ayes. One (1) Abstain. Motion Carried.

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Valentine inquired if the council was opposed to the city office going to 4–10-hour days permanently and Mayor Pro-Tem Richard replied that it's the city managers discretion, we can always visit it again in the future.

TRAINING:

1. *RRC TRAINING REGISTRATIONS:* Valentine reported that Todd Pangle, Ryan Heslop, Tom Banks, Mark Richard, Lori Machuk, and herself are now signed up for RRD training. Logins and passwords are within your packet.

REPORTS:

1. *MANAGER REPORT:* *On file at the city office.*

PUBLIC COMMENTS: A citizen mentioned using ServePro to help with downed trees. City Manager Valentine mentioned the Tony Hawk Foundation Grant for schools for a skate park.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS: Machuk announced the next Garden Club meeting will be held at the Depot on April 15th at 7pm. Mayor Banks said he and Township Supervisor Coetta Adams spoke to local third graders at the elementary school. City Manager Valentine mentioned the Tony Hawk Foundation Grant is an option for a skate park.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COUNCIL: NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Richard **SECOND** by Arnold to adjourn. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Mayor Banks adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Prepared by City Clerk, Tina Rush