

City Commission
April 18, 2016

Mayor Mark Warba called the regular meeting of the City Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Lynn Anderson, Tom Hogenson, and Lorraine James; Mayor Mark J. Warba; City Attorney Eric D. Williams; and City Treasurer Aaron Kuhn.

Absent: Commissioner Dan Rothstein, who was excused.

There were 40 people in the audience.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – Meeting with the Charter Revision group will be added under Unscheduled Business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Hogenson moved, seconded by Commissioner Anderson that the minutes of April 4, 2016 meeting be accepted.

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba
Nays: None

FINANCIAL AND QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT – Aaron Kuhn, City Treasurer, presented the Financial and Quarterly Investment report along with library, park & recreations and pool bills. The library had a cost savings due to not having an Assistant Library Director for the first quarter of 2016.

SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY - Mayor Warba presented the Arbor Day Proclamation to Park and Recreation board members Megan Eppley and Karen Simmon.

a. Arbor Day Proclamation

ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION 2016

WHEREAS, in 1872, J. Sterlin Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and

WHEREAS, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, and

WHEREAS, trees reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce oxygen and provide habitat for wildlife, and

WHEREAS, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products, and

WHEREAS, trees in our City increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, and

WHEREAS, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal, and

WHEREAS, Big Rapids has been recognized as a Tree City USA by The National Arbor Day Foundation and desires to continue its tree-planting practices.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark Warba, Mayor of the City of Big Rapids, do hereby proclaim April 29, 2016 as



ARBOR DAY

in the City of Big Rapids, and urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, and further, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations. Dated this 29th day of April, 2016.

Mark Warba, Mayor

b. Park and Recreation Awards

Mayor Warba presented the Park and Recreation Citizen Recognition Award for 2016 to Travis & Sarah Bowman, Bowman Welding & Fabrication, in recognition of the valuable work and contributions towards Hemlock Park and the handicapped swing.

c. General Federation of Women's Clubs Day Proclamation – Mayor Warba presented the following proclamation to Joyce Ilits and Mary Bechaz. Ms. Ilits commented that she would be stepping down as GFWC president and Mary Bechaz would be stepping in as the new president.

**PROCLAMATION DECLARING
APRIL 24, 2016 – GFWC FEDERATION DAY**

WHEREAS, GFWC-Big Rapids, a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and its members have enhanced the citizens and community of Big Rapids and the surrounding communities through their commitment to volunteer service, which include Picture Lady, Riverwalk and Post Office Garden maintenance, support of reading programs at the Big Rapids Community Library, support of community organizations such as WISE, the Historical Museums, Artworks, the Susan Wheatlake Center, veterans through a Veteran's Day proclamation, the Veteran's Luminary Tribute, and Heifer International, and

WHEREAS, the more than 100,000 members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs provide, on average, more than \$21 million in direct donations and almost \$16 million for in-kind donations as well as over 11 million volunteer hours to more than 200,000 programs and projects benefitting their local communities, and

WHEREAS, GFWC and its more than 4,000 member clubs in all 50 states and more than a dozen countries are at the forefront of grassroots community service, providing crucial support to cultural, educational, health, and legislative issues of importance to women, children, and families throughout the world.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Big Rapids Mayor Mark Warba, calls on the citizens of Big Rapids to recognize

April 24, 2016 as GFWC Federation Day

in celebration of the 126th anniversary of the founding of this esteemed organization.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor expresses much gratitude to GFWC-Big Rapids and its members for their continued work in making Big Rapids and the surrounding communities a better place for all citizens.

Mayor Mark J. Warba

c. Jeff Hull Promotion to Captain – Public Safety Director Andrea Nerbonne announced the promotion of firefighter Jeff Hull to Fire Captain. Mr. Hull's wife was in attendance to pin on his gold badge to signify his Fire Captain status. Mr. Schroeder presented Mr. Hull with a yellow fire helmet, which also signifies his title in the field as a Fire Captain.

STUDY SESSION

a. Public Input Session for Obtaining Public Input and Ideas for Projects to be included in 2016/17 City Budget. There was no public input and no written correspondence.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Jason Briscoe is running for State Representative for the 102nd District. He is a U.S. Marine and will be campaigning for Pro-Life and for making Michigan a part-time legislature.

Sue Glatz asked if staff knew when the new Rental Inspector would be hired. Mr. Sweppenheiser commented that they are employed by the County and he has been informed that a potential offer has been extended to someone. A person may be hired in the near future.

PUBLIC HEARING - None

RESOLUTION NO. 16-40

Commissioner Anderson moved, supported by Commissioner Hogenson, the adoption of the following:

**RESOLUTION REFERRING TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION
A RECOMMENDATION OF CITY OWNED
SURPLUS REAL PROPERTY PARCEL NO. 54-17-11-381-005
LOCATED AT 119 SECOND AVENUE**

WHEREAS, whenever the City has property that may not be needed, the City Commission has asked the Planning Commission to review this excess property and make a recommendation on its disposition, and

WHEREAS, the property located at 119 Second Avenue, Parcel No. 54-17-11-381-005, is a vacant lot which is zoned R2 with a lot size of 25' X 122'.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Commission refer Parcel No. 54-17-11-381-005 to the Planning Commission for a recommendation.

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba

Nays: None

The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.

Dated: April 18, 2016

At the Planning Commission's meeting on January 20, 2016, staff recommended 114 N. Warren Avenue be considered as surplus property. At that meeting, the Planning Commission postponed their decision to gather more information. They met again on March 2, 2016 at which time they voted to not deem this property surplus property. The Mayor asked why staff reconsidered recommending this property as surplus to the City Commission. Mr. Sweppenheiser commented that staff did not believe that the property was being used to its highest potential.

The biggest concern of the Planning Commission was the future use of the Post Office building and parking lot, The City lot is currently used as overflow parking for the Post Office. This is why staff's recommendation changed regarding this parcel.

Staff believes that the property could be put to a better use than being sold as surplus. For example, should the Post Office become decommissioned, it would be possible to redevelop or change the use of that building and future owners of the property may be interested in purchasing the adjoining City parking lot as well, providing more potential for that location.

Commissioner James believes that a lot of people use the Post Office on Division because there are no stairs or ramps.

Commissioner Hogenson asked if the City parking lot at 114 N. Warren was properly marked with signs so that people know it's a City lot. Mr. Sobers commented that there are no signs currently saying that it is a City parking lot. This lot was leased by the Post Office and has been used as a Postal parking lot for a long time. The Post Office has since decided not to renew their lease.

Currently there is no access to the City lot except across the Post Office property. To avoid crossing the Post Office property, the City could make an entrance off of the alley if needed. The cost of creating this entrance would be approximately \$1,000 – \$2,000.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-41

Commissioner Hogenson moved, supported by Commissioner Anderson, the adoption of the following:

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION PERTAINING TO REVIEW OF
114 N. WARREN AVENUE (PARCEL NO. 54-17-11-362-004)
POST OFFICE PARKING LOT**

WHEREAS, the City Commission, per Resolution 15-121, dated November 16, 2015, referred the discontinuation of City owned property identified as 114 N. Warren Avenue (Parcel No. 54-17-11-362-004) to the Planning Commission to determine if it may be surplus property, and

WHEREAS, at its March 2, 2016 meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed future City uses of Parcel No. 54-17-11-362-004 located at 114 N. Warren Avenue and determined that this parcel should not be declared surplus property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Commission accepts the recommendation of the Planning Commission and not declare 114 N. Warren Avenue, Parcel No. 54-17-11-362-004 as surplus property.

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba
Nays: None
The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.
Date: April 18, 2016

RESOLUTION NO 16-42

Commissioner Anderson moved, supported by Commissioner Hogenson, the adoption of the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING GREEN TOWNSHIP
MUTUAL FIRE PROTECTION CONTRACT**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Big Rapids City Commission hereby approves the attached Mutual Fire Protection Contract with Green Township for a period of April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2021, and authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to sign said agreement.

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba
Nays: None
The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.
Dated: April 18, 2016

RESOLUTION NO 16-43

Commissioner Hogenson moved, supported by Commissioner Anderson, the adoption of the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING NORWICH TOWNSHIP
MUTUAL FIRE PROTECTION CONTRACT**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Big Rapids City Commission hereby approves the attached Mutual Fire Protection Contract with Norwich Township for a period of April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2021, and authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to sign said agreement.

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba
Nays: None
The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.
Dated: April 18, 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 16-44

Commissioner Hogenson moved, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, the adoption of the following:

**RESOLUTION ON MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS
TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Commission hereby confirms the following Mayoral appointment/recommendation:

COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

Peg Brennan re-appointed to a full term ending May 2021

DART LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mary Vogt re-appointed to a full term ending May 2019

LIBRARY BOARD

Sharon Kuhn appointed to a full term ending May 2021

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Stacy Pedigo re-appointed to a full term ending May 2019

PLANNING COMMISSION

Paul Jackson appointed to a full term ending May 2019

John Schmidt re-appointed to a full term ending May 2019

Chris Jane appointed to a full term ending May 2019

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE APPEALS BOARD

Fred Pins re-appointed to a full term ending October 2018

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba

Nays: None

The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.

Dated: April 18, 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 16-45

Commissioner Anderson moved, supported by Commissioner Hogenson, the adoption of the following:

**RESOLUTION EXCUSING COMMISSIONER ROTHSTEIN
DUE TO HEALTH CONCERNS**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Commission excuses Commissioner Rothstein from the regular meeting of April 18, 2016 due to health concerns.

Yeas: Anderson, Hogenson, James, Warba

Nays: None

The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.

Dated: April 18, 2016

UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS

- Mr. Sobers commented that the past members of the Charter Revision Commission met to discuss language regarding City Code 8.10 (purchasing) as a Charter amendment.

There are times when the City would benefit from not bidding out certain items. Examples are as follows:

- LED light poles – The City has one type of light throughout the City. If one of the poles gets damaged, the City would prefer to replace it with the exact same type of light pole. It would not be logical to bid out this pole as there is only one supplier in the State of Michigan. If it was bid out, there would be an increased cost from advertising that would have to be incurred.
- Kaiser Blowers – Only Kaiser makes the part for this blower.

The current section (8.10) of the Charter does not allow for the City to waive the bidding process for these types of issues.

The Charter Revision members met on April 7th and after discussing this issue, agreed that optional language should be looked at to amend the Charter. The group will meet again on April 21st to review optional language drafted by Mr. Eric Williams and Mayor Warba. A language recommendation is expected to be brought to the City Commission on May 2, 2016. If City Commission action is taken on May 2nd, then the City can meet the May 10th deadline to have it placed on the August ballot.

Mr. Sobers presented the City Commission with several language alternatives that will be discussed at the April 21st meeting of the Charter Revision group.

- The 2015 Annual Report is done and should be on the website soon.
- Commissioner Hogenson commented that the Big Event was a success and appreciated the work that the students had done.

- Commissioner James asked if the person who hit the light pole at Martz & Shapley had to pay for a new light pole. Mr. Sobers explained that a local wrecker business slid on an icy patch and hit the light pole. Their insurance is covering the cost of a new one.
- Commissioner Anderson commented that there are two new light poles on the corner of Locust and Michigan that look very nice. Commissioner Anderson also wanted to know if there was any more information on the assault at Clay Cliffs. Director Nerbonne said that there was not, but an investigation is still ongoing.

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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Mayor Mark J. Warba

Tamyra K. Gillis, City Clerk