

City of Northville
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
January 10, 2011

Councilmember Michele Fecht called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. in the Northville City Hall Council Chambers, 215 West Main Street, Northville, Michigan.

Present: Councilmembers Douglas Bingham, Nancy Darga, and Michele Fecht

Absent: Mayor Christopher Johnson (excused), Mayor Pro Tem James Allen (excused)

Also Present: City Manager Patrick Sullivan, Finance Director/Treasurer Sandi Wiktorowski, Director of Public Works James Gallogly, Fire Chief James Allen, Police Chief Gary Goss, Housing Director Sherry Necelis, Interim Parks and Recreation Director Joanna Harris, DDA Executive Director Lori Ward, City Clerk Dianne Massa, Northville Youth Assistance Director Sue Campbell, Housing Commissioners Bob Buckhave and Genie Nehs, reporter from the Northville Record, reporter from Patch.com, and one citizen

CITIZENS COMMENTS None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion Bingham, seconded by Darga to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

FY 2011-2012 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

CITY COUNCIL GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES FOR FY 2011-2012

Discussion brought out the following goals, objectives, and priorities, which were given a priority designation, and were not ranked in any order. The goals were broadly described as follows and the City Manager was directed to summarize the proposed FY2011-2012 City Council goals, objectives, and priorities and place them on a future agenda for City Council review and adoption.

High Priority

Long-Term Fiscal and Financial Stability: Continue efforts to enhance the City's financial condition through implementation of recommendations of the Citizens Budget Committee to form a balanced budget for FY2011-2012, closely monitoring property sales to determine if a Headlee Override election or other more substantial adjustments need to be considered, beginning dialogue with employee groups to identify near and long-term financial stability measures, and pursuing energy efficiency initiatives to achieve long-term savings.

Medium Priority

Water and Sewer System Improvements: Continue efforts to detect water loss through leak detection surveys, remain current with the commitment to MDEQ to clean 50% of the City's sanitary sewer system each year, continued inspection of the City's storm water inlets, replacement of the watermain on S. Rogers Street to provide better fire fighting ability in the

southwest area of the City, continuing to perform corrective action steps to eliminate water infiltration and minimize the City's involvement in the mandated Wayne County sewer improvement project scheduled for 2014, and monitoring anticipated cost cutting measures and rate adjustments likely to be charged to the City by the Detroit Water and Sewer Department.

Implementation of the Downtown Strategic Plan: Continue to implement the Downtown Strategic Plan and its key strategies to improve the physical and economic environment and organizational structure of the downtown and continued progress by the DDA subcommittees responsible for implementation of the Plan.

Retaining the Retail Operation of the Northville Post Office within the Central Business District: Continue to work with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to address the needs of the post office while preserving the economic benefits of a post office (particularly the retail function) within the Central Business District.

Street, Sidewalk, and Bike Path Improvement Connectivity: Continue the annual crack sealing program and the annual street and sidewalk program approved in 1997. Commence with two projects approved by the Wayne County Federal Aid Committee to allocate federal funds for improvements to Rogers Street (Seven Mile Road to W. Main Street) and Main Street (Hutton to Rogers). Continue to pursue planning and funding to expand and connect our pedestrian facilities.

Development and Implementation of "Follow Up" Process for Board/Commission Decisions and Establish Committee to Review Inspection Process: Most of the recommendations of the Building and Planning Review Committee have been successfully implemented, with improvements implemented at a reduced cost. Reductions in the clerical, building and Administrative Staff have affected the Staff time available to pursue objectives.

Lower Priority

Development and Redevelopment Issues: Work to continue quality development and redevelopment of the McDonald Ford property and the old Gardenviews site.

Mill Pond Improvements: Continue to monitor funding opportunities and communications with upstream communities on remediation efforts. Explore funding by the Rouge Remedial Action Plan to address erosion and stabilize the river banks.

Cemetery Build-Out: Continue working to develop the remaining portion of Rural Hill Cemetery within available resources. Clearing (making more space available on a gradual basis) the Phase II area of the cemetery has been a gradual effort undertaken by the Department of Public Works.

Projects On Hold None identified

Projects to be Closed Out None identified

CITY STAFF GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

City Staff goals, objectives, and priorities reports were included as part of the City Council meeting packet. As the City Council had previously received and reviewed City Staff's goals and objectives, City Council determined that Department presentations were not necessary. Instead, it was requested that each Department responded to questions from City Council, which were summarized as follows:

Building Department

Further explanation was given pertaining to the plan to integrate the Assessing and Building Department databases on a regular basis. A separate comment voiced the need to continue to review the fee schedule to be certain that Building Department fees are sufficient to cover costs.

City Clerk and Elections

Further explanation was given pertaining to the coordination efforts with Wayne County to administer school elections.

Downtown Development Authority

Comments voiced support of objective to implement the signage program developed for the downtown as part of the Streetscape Enhancement Project. An update on the status of the previously approved wayfinding sign system to guide visitors to Northville was provided. In response to a question, it was noted that the DDA would be discussing its plans for physical improvement projects at the January 11, 2011 DDA meeting. Brief discussion ensued pertaining to parking lot usage counts. It was noted that the Downtown Ambassadors have volunteered to assist in gathering these parking counts.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the pilot program for electric car charging stations in the downtown. Concern was voiced that the plans to coordinate with GM and DTE to publicize the charging station availability might deter people with other brands of electric cars from using the stations. It was explained that the DDA received a grant from the Department of Energy, through DTE, to install the charging stations. DTE is in partnership with GM to publicize their grant program. The charging stations can be used by any type of electric car.

Council requested the DDA amend its goals to include pursuing bicycle initiative funding. A separate comment voiced the need to install bicycle racks that can accommodate all types of bicycles. It was noted that new bicycle racks are proposed to be installed as part of the Streetscape Enhancement Project.

Finance and Administrative Services

City Council commended the Finance Director and the Finance Department for its efforts in providing information to City Council and the Citizens Budget Committee.

In response to a question, it was further explained that the City had been using its current payroll processing service for about ten years. As such, City staff believed it was beneficial to solicit bids for payroll processing services to determine if further cost savings can be achieved.

Further explanation was given pertaining to the stability of the City's information system, the number of servers the City uses, and the server maintenance and replacement schedule. Brief discussion ensued pertaining to the continued use of Geographic Information System resources through Northville Township.

Fire Department

Further explanation was given pertaining to the goal that proposes to provide fire protection services to the City of Plymouth.

Housing Commission

Questions and discussion pertained to resolving Community Development Block Grant funds use issues and the plan to update the capital improvements history and capital needs plan for Allen Terrace. It was noted that the American Institute of Architects (AIA) will be contacted in order to receive a list of architects that can provide a capital needs analysis proposal. AIA architects should be able to meet the City's minimum insurance requirements as recommended by the City's insurer, MMRMA.

Council requested the Housing Commission amend its goals to also develop and increase the member capacity of the Housing Commission.

Parks and Recreation

A comment suggested that Parks and Recreation consider participating in the Festival and Events brochure, to further publicize the Parks and Recreation Department and its programs. In response to a question, it was noted that the Master Plan 2011-2016 project would be done in-house with existing Staff, along with the assistance of Northville Township’s GIS services.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the use of Facebook and other social media opportunities to increase awareness of Parks and Recreation programs. Additional discussion ensued pertaining to the status of the Township spray park. Council requested the Department amend its goals to include exploration of capital opportunities to fund the spray park.

Police Department

The Police Department was complimented on its professional response to a recent incident that involved an uncooperative homeowner with an aggressive dog.

Public Works

Comments and questions pertained to the procedures used by DPW to set priorities for sidewalk repairs and replacements. The current procedures include a physical survey of sidewalks as well as call-ins received from residents.

Explanation was given on the process used to address non-compliance of snow removal for commercial properties. Explanation was also given on how the information contained in the recent Tree Survey report is used.

Youth Assistance

A comment suggested using youth volunteers to assist at Mill Race Village for various projects and events.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor and Council: None

Staff: None

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment: 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Massa, CMC
City Clerk

Approved as submitted: 02/07/11

Michele Fecht
Councilmember