

REGULAR MEETING – HOUGHTON CITY COUNCIL  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2009 – 5:30 p.m.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY CENTER

PRESENT: Mayor Robert Backon, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Megowen, Councilors Eric Peterson, Rachel Lankton, Craig Kurtz, Gernot Joachim, and Lee Hauswirth.

Also present for the City: City Manager Scott MacInnes, Deputy Clerk Ann Vollrath, and Director of Public Works Mark Zenner.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Kim Stoker of the WUPPDR, Eric Waara of UP Engineering, and members of the Calumet High School government class.

REGULAR MEETING: Mayor Backon called to order a Regular Meeting of the Houghton City Council and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Joachim to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2009, Regular Meeting as written.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA: No changes were made to the Agenda.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS COUNCIL: No one addressed the Council.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: Kim Stoker informed the Council that the MSHDA grant for the G.S. Engineering project is complete. They exceeded the new job requirement in the grant. There are 50 employees in their Houghton office and 10 in their Detroit office. Of the 50 Houghton employees, 45 are full-time positions and

5 are part-time positions. City Manager MacInnes said that G.S. Engineering started about eight years ago in the City Center with two employees.

There were no comments from the public. Councilor Lankton said the site looks good.

**REPORTS:**

Director of Public Works Mark Zenner reported that crews have been busy with snow removal. They also had to clean up after the fire on December 26<sup>th</sup>. The deicing chemical is being used on Sheldon Avenue. It is safe for the new sidewalks. The only problem with it is the brown color which looks dirty. The city is now selling the less corrosive salt for downtown. Next year the concrete will be fully cured so regular salt can be used.

The only remaining issues downtown are a water issue in the parking lot of the old Burger King where the drain freezes up. There is also a problem with water behind the Hunan Garden. This is ground water that is originating at the car wash on Montezuma Avenue.

There are some pump issues at Huron Creek which are being fixed.

Crews will start picking up Christmas Trees. People can also drop their trees off by the water tank on Sharon Avenue if they want.

Councilor Joachim asked what the city does when people are pushing snow into the road. Mark Zenner said that if the plow driver notices a problem with snow in the road, he will tell the police department and they will contact the individual.

Scott MacInnes reported that the Downtown Marketing Plan should be complete and delivered to the Council by the second meeting in January.

The second Jibba Jabba Rail Jam will be held on January 16.

The city will close on the Carnegie Building on December 29<sup>th</sup>. This will finish up the VSCI grant. Mr. MacInnes explained that he is always looking for more grant opportunities; however, at this time the state does not have any grants for downtowns to apply for.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Hauswirth to approve the Accounts Payable for December 13-31, 2009.

The Deputy Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Lankton, Hauswirth, Joachim, Backon, Megowen, Peterson, Kurtz

No: None

Motion carried.

City Manager Scott MacInnes appointed Jean LaBarge to another five-year term on the Housing Commission. This term will expire on December 31, 2014.

Mayor Backon appointed Mike Butvilas, Kristine Bradof, Tom Merz, and Jay Green to three-year terms on the Planning Commission. These terms will expire December 31, 2012.

Mayor Backon appointed Illa Garver to another four-year term on the DDA/TIFA. This term will expire December 31, 2013.

A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Kurtz to appoint Debra Zei to another three-year term on the Board of Review. This term will expire December 31, 2012.

The Deputy Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Lankton, Kurtz, Peterson, Megowen, Backon, Joachim, Hauswirth

No: None

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Hauswirth and seconded by Lankton to appoint Robert Megowen to another three-year term on the LDFA. This term expires on December 31, 2012.

The Deputy Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Hauswirth, Lankton, Joachim, Backon, Megowen, Peterson, Kurtz.

No: None

Motion carried

The Council reviewed the revised Credit Card Policy. There will be no interest charged by the company as long as the balance is paid in full by the due date. If someone accesses a cash advance there would be an interest charge at the time the money is advanced. Councilor Peterson said that there may be instances when traveling that a cash advance is necessary and he feels that it would be OK to do. A motion was made by Joachim and seconded by Kurtz to adopt **Resolution 2009-1288** as presented.

The Deputy Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Joachim, Kurtz, Peterson, Megowen, Backon, Lankton, Hauswirth

No: None

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Megowen to adopt **Resolution 2009-1289** authorizing a credit card with Wells Fargo Bank.

The Deputy Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Lankton, Megowen, Kurtz, Peterson, Backon, Joachim, Hauswirth

No: None

Motion carried.

City Manager MacInnes provided the Council with information for the proposed new MERS pension plan. He said he will have MERS refigure the unfunded liability as of January 1, 2010 and present this to the Council again at the end of January. Once the MERS plan is adopted, all new hires must be in it. There is no advantage or disadvantage to the City by adopting the plan. The advantage is to the employees. There are options to get out of the plan in the future if the City feels the need to.

A motion was made by Hauswirth and seconded by Joachim to adopt **Resolution 2009-1295** authorizing the purchase of the Carnegie building.

The Deputy Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Hauswirth, Joachim, Lankton, Backon, Megowen, Peterson, Kurtz

No: None

Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Lankton.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried.  
Adjourned 6:05 p.m.

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Ann Vollrath  
Deputy Clerk