

REGULAR MEETING – HOUGHTON CITY COUNCIL  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2012 – 5:30 p.m.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY CENTER

PRESENT: Mayor Robert Backon, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Megowen, Councilors Rachel Lankton, Gernot Joachim, Mike Needham, and Daniel Salo.

Also present for the City: City Manager Scott MacInnes, City Clerk Kurt Kuure, and Police Chief John Donnelly.

ABSENT: Councilor Craig Kurtz.

ALSO PRESENT: Representatives of the Daily Mining Gazette, WMPL, WOLV, WLUC TV, and WCUP.

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 Megowen to approve the minutes of the December 28, 2011 Regular Meeting as written.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA: City Manager MacInnes added under New Business – Item C – Ordinance Revisions.

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

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

REPORTS:

City Manager MacInnes reported that Mark Zenner and Mike Reynolds brought the vac truck downstate for repairs. Crews are patching roads and working on water and sewer maintenance. Public Works is able to bring snow for the students to use to build their statues if needed. Christmas trees will be picked up through January.

Police Chief John Donnelly reported that the department answered 92 calls to service, made 5 misdemeanor arrests, 1 felony arrest, issued 28 civil infractions, and 1 city ticket. There were extra patrols out on the New Years' weekend paid for by grant money. Chief Donnelly attended the Safe Routes to School meeting. This committee is working on ways to help children walk to and from school safely. The snowmobile grant was approved.

City Manager MacInnes explained that a group of downtown business owners met and are picking out holiday decorations for next year. They will have something decided in about a month so that the Council will know the cost when they work on the budget.

City Manager MacInnes is organizing a downtown business seminar which will take place on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. There will be two representatives of the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center talking about what free services are available for small businesses. All downtown business owners and their employees will be invited as well as people interested in starting a business downtown.

City Manager MacInnes said that under the Safe Routes to School program he will work on suggested routes for people to take to get to the elementary and high school. The Safe Routes to School Committee will review the routes in February and have some recommendations to improve these routes and make them safer. The master plan neighborhood meetings will be held in March and April. These school routes will be available to discuss at those meetings.

City Manager MacInnes said he will be attending meetings at the end of this month regarding the future of state grants. He will attend a presentation by the DNR regarding the future of their grants. There are also changes with the MEDC and the partnerships they are working with in the UP. There is a new collaborative development council that was created as well as the Lake Superior Community Partnership that will be doing some of the work previously done by WUPPDR. Mr. MacInnes will attend a meeting of these partnerships to see what their future plans are.

Councilor Lankton asked if the proposed sidewalk on Second Street to the elementary school will be proposed under the Safe Routes to School plan. City Manager MacInnes said he expects it to be included in the plan and there may be some complaints from the people who live on that street again.

UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS:

City Manager MacInnes reviewed the street light situation. There are street lights on most corners in town. There are at least 250 feet between lights and

no more than 350 feet between them. The Council reviewed Seventh Avenue between Dodge Street and Portage Street. After the recent removal of one of the lights, there is now 550 feet without a street light. City Manager MacInnes proposed replacing the light that was removed on that street. Councilor Lankton said that the intersection of Military Avenue and Seventh Avenue where it meets Quincy Street is also dark. City Manager MacInnes said that street lighting will also be reviewed by the Safe Routes to School Committee.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Councilor Lankton asked about the cost of preparing the audit as it seems high. City Manager MacInnes said that the cost this year is consistent with the cost of previous years and that it takes a lot of hours to prepare it. The cost did increase a few years ago when the state increased the audit requirements under GASB. A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Joachim to approve the Accounts Payable for December 29, 2011- January 11, 2012 as presented.

The Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Lankton, Joachim, Salo, Backon, Megowen, Needham

No: None

Motion carried.

A Rental Housing Board meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. regarding an application for a rental license at 808 East Houghton Avenue.

Proposed Ordinance 2012-240 was introduced in writing. This proposed ordinance will make the penalty for not paying the rental inspection/license fee a \$50 civil infraction.

Proposed Ordinance 2012-241 was introduced in writing. This proposed ordinance will clarify that the yearly fee for rental properties is an inspection/license fee and will make it consistent throughout the ordinance.

A public hearing for these proposed ordinances will be scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

A motion to adjourn was made by Lankton and seconded by Needham.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried  
Adjourned 5:53 p.m.

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Kurt Kuure, Clerk