



# MEETING MINUTES

## GRAND RAPIDS COUNCIL

### REGULAR SESSION



Held: December 9, 2024

Page 1 of 4

The Council of The Village of Grand Rapids convened in regular session from 6:00 P.M. to 6:42 P.M. in the Town Hall. Mayor John Berry called the meeting to order with the following members and visitors present:

Rachel Smith – Present  
Rick Tolles – Present  
Jody Donsbach – Absent

Martha Frantz - Present  
Lynn Sylvain – Present  
Louise Estep – Present

Mayor asked for a moment of silence for the people of Pearl Harbor, Dec 7<sup>th</sup> was Pearl Harbor Day, and for the people that perished since then in wars around the world.

Mayor stated Jody had a musical for work.

Estep made a motion seconded by Frantz to excuse Jody Donsbach absence.

Votes were: Frantz – yes Smith – yes Tolles – yes  
Estep – yes Sylvain – abstain

**MOTION APPROVED**

**EMPLOYEES:** Chad Beyer

**VISITORS:** Paula Gillespie

**MINUTES:** Frantz made a motion, seconded by Smith to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 25, 2024.

Sylvain questioned the Kellermeier \$1200 in the minutes; she thought it was more than that.

Administrator stated he believes it was just over \$1200.

Mayor John Berry stated the minutes are accepted as presented.

**BILLS:**

Estep made a motion, seconded by Smith to approve the bills from November 22 – December 6, 2024 in the amount of \$46,633.25.

Sylvain questioned Gearhart Plumbing \$4,255 for boring new service line, asked what it was for and did he get three quotes. Administrator stated he did not get three quotes, it is for a new house being built, they pay us and we pay for boring under the road. Sylvain questioned water heater for public restrooms \$1,196, Administrator stated it is for Lincoln Street Restrooms. Sylvain asked if there is a reason why he did not get three quotes, Administrator stated it is under his spending limit, Sylvain stated so you are not concerned about getting the best price, Administrator said no. Sylvain asked about Cam Tech \$893.75 for hydro excavating water tap, Administrator said for a new water tap in Williamsburg, Sylvain asked about Burning River Lifts \$2,188.18 to repair Town Hall Chair Lift, Administrator stated they are the ones that installed it.

Frantz questioned the Boy Scout Troop 347 per capita recycling payment. Administrator stated the county is now sending payments to us instead of directly to them for the recycling.

Votes were: Frantz - yes Smith– yes Tolles – yes  
Estep – yes Sylvain - no

**MOTION APPROVED**

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:** Paula Gillespie is addressing the council as a whole and read her letter. Paula keeps hearing a lot of business owners do not live here, we are still apart of this community. She is concerned why the Village does not purchase from their own residence businesses, she wondered what the advantage is being a village business if they village is not going to use them. Paula's example was Kellermeier Plumbing bill was quite expensive and we have a local plumber that is qualified to do things like that. Paula is wondering what would happen to the Village revenue if all the businesses get closed down. Paula said business is dying, its not the businesses , its not the chamber, she feels the Village could beautify downtown. Paula stated Whitehouse council beautifies the downtown business district not the chamber. Paula understands that this small village cannot compete with Whitehouse. Paula stated they also have prizes for the residents like little ornaments, which is paid for by the council. Paula believes all the businesses want to work with the council to make a more vibrant downtown. Paula would like to collaborate together to help everyone benefit. Paula received a text stating remind them that we are taxpayers and subject to taxation without representation.

**SHERIFF'S REPORT:** None

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor wanted to personally thank the staff at the office for the great work they did this last year, we have gone through some trials and tribulations with the storm, it wiped out a lot of things in town and they got it back together. Mayor thanked Chad, Jeremy and Dave. Mayor also wanted to thank Kristel for doing an outstanding job at the office, she keeps things up to date and balances things well. Mayor went to the Old Fire Hall this past weekend for the Otsego Food Pantry's Holiday Bazaar, there was a lot of people going through and the chili and hotdogs were wonderful. Mayor stated this weekend is Light up the Night and hopes we have great weather. Also wanted to remind everyone that Santa will be at the new Fire Hall on Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>. Mayor talked with Mr. Baron about the bridge at Blue Bell Park, he is held up with plans through the county but should be done in the Spring.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Administrator said Envirocare took the big tree down on the canal. Tuesday when we got snow someone took out the power pole on RT 65, which provides power to feed the town water. He had Speiser Electric come out, they set a new pole, panel and meter for us. Ray from LB Electric came and installed an antenna on the pole. Everything was up and running on Tuesday and by Wednesday everything was fully operational. Administrator wanted to thank both companies for helping with this, they did a great job and Speiser Electric dropped everything to come help us out immediately.

**FISCAL OFFICER'S REPORT:** Smith stated the Fiscal Officer gave Council the Nov Bank Rec. and everything is reconciled. We have two Resolutions on the agenda tonight, one from the county on Local Government Funds the county would like an answer before year end. The other is a Resolution amending temporary appropriations this will adjust the American Rescue Fund appropriation down to match the fund balance due to paying for the Town Hall chair lift repair out of that fund.

**READING OF COMMUNICATIONS:**

**COMMITTEES:** Frantz contacted Victor Coleman on the street lights status. He mentioned they are having a big restructuring going on, once a decision is made, he will reach out and let her know.

**ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:** Mayor gave the first reading to Resolution 2024-15: Resolution to Approve the Wood County Budget Commission's Local Government Fund Distribution Plan. Estep made a motion seconded by Smith to suspend the rules and declare Resolution 2024-15 an emergency.

Sylvain stated when she read the supplemental information Kristel gave to Council, it says that there is no rhyme or reason for the distribution it is not based on census or mileage, it's a 36 year old practice and wonders why we would move forward with it without further consideration. Smith stated Fiscal Officer noted that she talked to the Wood County Auditors Office they stated they used population numbers to disburse funding but were unsure how the disbursement was calculated back in the 80's, this will be reviewed again most likely in the next 10 years. If you look at the paperwork our number does decline by \$7,000. Sylvain asked what the repercussion was if we do not pass it. Estep is afraid we would be excluded. Estep stated when the Fiscal Officer sent this to us, she stated if we had further questions to reach out to the County Auditors Office. Sylvain asked what the repercussion is with us not going forward. Frantz read from the county letter, failure to obtain these approvals will mean that the statutory method under ORC 5747.51 will have to be used. We recognize that this change will not result in a revenue gain for everyone. However, continuing a 36-year-old distribution method with no objective pattern or documented basis is unsustainable. The proposal presents a clearly defined formula based on a widely accepted criterion which would be adjusted at each census cycle.

Votes were:      Smith – yes                      Tolles – yes                      Estep – yes  
                         Sylvain – no                      Frantz – yes

**MOTION APPROVED**

Estep made a motion seconded by Smith for passage of Resolution 2024-15.

Votes were:      Tolles – yes                      Estep – yes                      Sylvain – no  
                         Frantz – yes                      Smith – yes

**MOTION APPROVED**

Mayor stated Resolution 2024-15 has passed.

Mayor gave the first reading to Resolution 2024-16: Resolution Amending Temporary Appropriation Resolution 2024-12.

Estep made a motion seconded by Tolles to declare Resolution 2024-16 an emergency. Sylvain asked why we were moving money from one account to another. Estep stated we are not moving money, we are reducing the fund down from the cost of repairing the lift.

Votes were:      Tolles -yes                      Estep – yes                      Sylvain – yes  
                         Smith – yes                      Frantz – yes

**MOTION APPROVED**

Estep made a motion seconded by Tolles for passage of Resolution 2024-16.

Votes were:      Estep – yes                      Sylvain – yes                      Smith – yes  
                         Frantz – yes                      Tolles – yes

**MOTION APPROVED**

Mayor stated Resolution 2024-16 has passed.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Sylvain asked if the bushes were trimmed and the handrail fixed at the boat docks, Administrator stated not yet.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Sylvain stated at the last meeting she stated she would bring in Ordinances that might not be followed. Ordinance 452.12 Parking in Alleys and Narrow Streets, Except as otherwise provided by law, no person shall stop, stand or park a vehicle within an alley except



while actually loading and unloading, and then only for a period not to exceed 30 minutes. Sylvain has brought up that we have a resident that paved an alley and is using it as his personal driveway. Sylvain asked the Administrator if he is going to enforce it, Administrator asked if she would like for him to send them a letter, Sylvain stated she would like for him to do his job. Estep stated there are others like behind the business district. Sylvain stated John Berry is partially parking in the alleyway every night, Estep also seen Sylvain truck parked in that alley with her trailer. Sylvain asked if we are going to enforce it, Estep thinks we should have someone take a look at what she is talking about. Sylvain would also like to talk about parking in general. It states the Village Administrator shall post four signs publicly displaying the restricted hours of the parking lot 1, 2, 3, 4 and asked the Administrator if signs are posted. Estep asked Sylvain what she was reading from, Sylvain stated A-4 under parking. Administrator knows there are signs posted in some lots but will have to double check. Sylvain stated on Schedule 1 restricted parking hours on Mill Street from Second to Front there is a two-hour limit and asked if we are enforcing that. Administrator stated he is not the parking police. Sylvain stated she did not bring all the ordinances but she will bring more the next time. Smith stated it would be nice to review this information prior to a meeting that way council can respond in a way that is appropriate. Smith stated it would be nice for Sylvain to share the Ordinances, prior to the meeting she will be discussing it, for review purposes. Estep asked if she would give her copies to the Administrator that way, we can have Kristel scan them in to all of us so we know what you are looking at. Sylvain stated they are her copies. Estep said if you are talking about the parking next to WayMakers with a two-hour limit, she feels that is probably not enough and we should probably look at that. Frantz stated she feels it is an advantage here if you want to park your car here and enjoy shopping, dining and even hiking to the dam, two hours may not be enough to do that. Estep asked if Sylvain would email them out. Sylvain said she would reference them in some manner to let everyone know specifically what she is talking about.

**COMMENTS:** Estep stated we are coming up on the deadline for veterans banners, so if anyone is interested, they have until January 31 to get information to Bob Clark. All this information is on our website. Estep asked if this is the last meeting of the year, Mayor stated yes. Estep made a motion seconded by Smith to authorize the Fiscal Officer to pay the bills that would come due before our next meeting.

Votes were: Estep – yes                      Sylvain – no                      Frantz – yes  
                   Smith – yes                      Tolles – yes

**MOTION APPROVED**

Mayor stated we should think about sidewalks for this upcoming spring. Mayor wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**ADJOURNMENT:**


Smith made a motion seconded by Tolles to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned. The next scheduled meeting is January 13, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. at the Town Hall.

Votes were: Sylvain – yes                      Frantz – yes                      Smith – yes  
                   Tolles - yes                      Estep – yes

**MOTION APPROVED**

  
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 Kristel Beyer, Fiscal Officer

  
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 John Berry, Mayor