

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2020**

Mayor Beagle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Mayor: P. Beagle
Deputy Mayor: T. Rzeznik
Councilmembers: P. Behrmann
K. Gottschall
T. Gronlund-Fox
P. Sharpe
R. Smiley

AGENDA CHANGES:

Councilmember Gottschall requested the addition of New Business #5 – Discussion regarding the City Hall Reopening Process

MINUTES:

CM-05-47-20: Moved and seconded by Councilmembers Gottschall and Gronlund-Fox to approve the Regular City Council meeting minutes of April 28, 2020.

**Roll Call Vote: (7) AYES – Beagle, Behrmann, Gottschall, Gronlund-Fox,
Rzeznik, Sharpe, Smiley**

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1.) **Notice of Hearing for the Electric Customers of DTE Electric Company Case No. U-20711**

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Mayor Beagle stated that the City was utilizing the video and audio of Zoom. Once connected to the meeting, members of the public wishing to participate in the virtual public comment must alert us that they wish to speak by pressing *9 on their telephone keypad. Pressing *9 will activate the “raise hand” feature signaling to us that you wish to comment. Participants will be called one a time, as would happen during an in-person meeting. When you are unmuted, please introduce yourself by stating your name and address for the record. You will then have (5) minutes to share your comments with the City Council. At the conclusion of your comments or your (5) minutes, you will be muted and removed from the public comment queue.

There were no public comments at this time.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORTS:

- 1.) **Fire Department Monthly Report – March 2020**
- 2.) **Police Department Monthly Report – March 2020**

Councilmember Sharpe wondered about the regular traffic offenses and tickets. He asked where he would find that. Director Moore said that information is under Traffic Offenses, All Other Classifications. Councilmember Sharpe said we had a Traffic Officer for only that type of operation. He thought it looked like we were not getting much out of that Officer. Director Moore said he suspended the Traffic Safety Officer program in March 2020 and put that individual into the normal rotation. He felt it was in the best interest of the Officer not to have that extra citizen contact. Certainly, if the Officer witnessed something happening, he would take enforcement action. Councilmember Sharpe mentioned that the number of this report was not much less than March 2019. Director Moore stated that the Traffic Offenses also includes the speeders and the disobeying of traffic signals. He added that traffic signal data would also show up under the Liquor License and Operating Under the Influence. Also, there will be some data under Other Traffic Complaints. Tickets appear in more than one category. He said he would be happy to show the breakdown in the future.

Mayor Beagle thought it would be a good idea to get that kind of a report. He asked if the Traffic Safety Officer would return once the pandemic was over and Director Moore replied yes.

Councilmember Gottschall asked where we were fueling our vehicles right now. We are trying to look at controlling costs as we move forward with the budget. He asked if we had a contract with someone. Director Moore replied that we do not have a contract. About 18 months ago, both the Police and Fire Departments went from individual fuel vendor cards to a State of Michigan fuel fleet card. By doing that, we saved a great deal of money. That allowed the Police and Fire Officers to gas up anywhere. Councilmember Gottschall knew that some private companies had their own fuel tanks, and he wondered if that would not be as cost effective. Director Moore said that years ago, the City maintained their own fuel tank at the DPW. He was not sure what the cost would be to maintain our own fuel storage tank. Mr. Sikma mentioned the DPW had their own fuel system and thought we could work something out with the Police and Fire Departments. He added that he was unsure about the cost. He said they buy in bulk and saw a reduction in price, but that reduction was also recognized by using the fleet card. They would have to go to the north end of the City to get their fuel.

Mayor Beagle asked how often the cars got refueled. Director Moore replied that the cars are refueled at a minimum of twice a day, regardless of how many miles they drive. The officers refuel the cars at the end of every shift, so the incoming officers have a full tank of gas. Mr. Sikma added that those vehicles are running about 90% of the time if they are in service to maintain the computer systems. Mayor Beagle thought it might be more of an inconvenience for the officers to drive all the way to the DPW to refuel, unlocking and locking the gate and driving back to the station. He thought by rotating the gas stations located in the City would save time. Mr. Sikma thought it would give the gas stations a little more comfort to have the officers there.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik added that a police presence is one of the biggest deterrents of crime. It might not be wise to go to the DPW. He said he would be in favor of keeping it the same if they are going to Wixom gas stations. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik had a question on the Part B Crimes. He wondered if that increase was retail based. Director Moore said that is the allegations of the violations of the Stay at Home Executive Order. It jumped from 2 last year to 18 this year for the month of March. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik noted that there was an increase in Other Service Request as it went up over 100 from the same month last year. He asked why that was. Director Moore replied that he would get that information for him tomorrow.

Councilmember Gronlund-Fox was surprised to see such an increase in Calls for Service. She believed the Calls for Service in other communities are down significantly. Director Moore said that although we are not putting officers in direct contact with the public as we were pre-pandemic, we are still taking a good number of telephone reports and online e-reports. Councilmember Gronlund-Fox was curious if any of the Police or Firefighters had taken advantage of the COVID testing that was offered in Novi. Director Moore replied that he had several officers take advantage of that testing and he was appreciative to the City of Novi for setting that up.

Councilmember Behrmann wanted to make sure that we are utilizing Wixom businesses for fueling the City's vehicles. Director Moore said that it has come to his attention that the officers have visited a gas station at Beck Road and Pontiac Trail that is not in the City because of convenience. He said he will make sure they are utilizing Wixom gas stations in the future. Councilmember Behrmann asked if he had to write any violations due to the COVID closure. Director Moore replied that they have written one citation to a business owner who had been issued several warnings.

Councilmember Smiley asked if that one citation got bumped to the County to process. Director Moore said the ticket itself will be handled in the 52nd District Court. The guidance he received from the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office was that they would rather the local police department write the ticket as opposed to preparing a warrant package and sending it to the Prosecutor's Office for review. He had been told that the judges of the 52nd District Court will be taking those "Stay Home, Stay Safe" tickets seriously. Director Moore explained that there are two ways to charge a person who has committed a misdemeanor. If the misdemeanor has been committed in the officer's presence, the officer can write the ticket. If the misdemeanor was not committed in front of the officer, or if the officer simply wants another set of eyes on the facts of the case, the officer can prepare a complaint warrant package and send it to the Prosecutor's Office. They will review it to determine if there is probable cause to issue a warrant. He said that it was easier and quicker to just write the ticket.

CONSENT AGENDA:

CM-05-48-20: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Smiley and Gronlund-Fox to approve the Consent Agenda as presented which included:

- 1.) Approval to receive and file:
 - a.) Library Board Minutes of February 24, 2020
 - b.) Downtown Development Authority Minutes of February 25, 2020
- 2.) Recommendation to Adopt the Water Asset Management Level of Service Goals for the City of Wixom's Water System

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: (None)

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1.) Submittal of the City Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget and Setting June 9, 2020 as the Date of the Public Hearing Regarding the Budget**

CM-05-49-20: Motion and seconded made by Councilmembers Smiley and Sharpe to receive the City Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget and setting June 9, 2020 as the date of the Public Hearing regarding the Budget.

Ms. Stamper presented a slide show with the highlights of the budgets that were delivered to the Councilmembers. She began by thanking everyone for helping to put this together and said it was rather trying with everyone working remotely. She said that the taxable values are estimated to increase 6.46%. That number included the residential property (5.85%), commercial property (3.64%), industrial property (decrease of 1.39%) and personal property (17.76%). She explained that part of the personal property increase was due to a taxpayer not filing their industrial manufacturing personal property report with the State this year. When they missed that deadline, it defers to the tax role for that year so we will be collecting normal property taxes on that value. When they return to filing next year, that value would come off and return to the state or the local community stabilization form of payment. It is estimated that the General Fund will receive \$328,762 in reimbursement from the Local Community Stabilization Fund. The composition of the City's tax base is 40.63% commercial and industrial, 42.64% residential, 15.29% personal property and 1.43% industrial facility tax. This correlates to a tax revenue increase of \$462,987.

The next slide was the City millage rate proposed at 11.9458 which reflects a reduction of 1.2574 from the prior year level of 13.2032. This reduction consists of a 1.2500 mill reduction in the Water Utility System debt millage due to the payoff of the water debt from the installation of the water system 20 years ago. The remaining decrease of .0074 is related to the Headlee Rollback on all other millages. She said that they were proposing to keep the special voted millage of "Up to 3.5 mills" but continuing at 3 mills. With those millage rates going down,

when we compare those same 31 communities as we do every year, we are now falling at the eighth lowest millage rate. Last year we were tenth lowest.

Overall, we should see an increase by \$48,393 or 0.3730% over last year's budget in the proposed 2020-2021 revenue. She compared that to the estimated actual 2019-2020 revenue because that seems to change a bit during the year. The bottom chart showed a much larger difference of just over \$1 million. She said she reduced that by our last year's budget stabilization. She mentioned that the State has a revenue conference this Friday and a webinar on Monday, May 18, 2020 that will shed a little light on what the effect of our State Shared Revenue is going to be. The Building permits show a \$77,000 decrease and other miscellaneous income at around \$114,000 decrease. The DDA contribution is up \$121,552, which is the repayment of the debt. They have experienced a larger capture in tax revenue this year due to the development across the street.

Ms. Stamper said the State Shared Revenue is estimated to decrease by \$365,894 when compared to the 2019-2020 budget amount. Our actual budget was \$1,284,910 so we are reducing that down to \$919,016 with those COVID-19 affects. We continue to compare to our high revenue back in 2002-2003 because there have been a lot of changes to State Shared Revenue throughout the years. If we would have continued to be at that level, we would have received just shy of \$7 million through today had those cuts not occurred. That loss will be magnified this year by the COVID-19 pandemic. The original estimate prior to COVID-19 for 2020-2021 was \$1,308,221, a difference of \$389,205. She indicated the next screen showed the changes in expenditures. We are looking at a \$263,000 difference. Most of those are related to wages and fringes. There is a 2.5% pay increase that was included in all the union contracts and Council action that was taken for non-union employees.

Ms. Stamper mentioned that we continue to fund the City's normal cost of Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB). That is for people who are still employed. We fund their current time that they are earning. That occurs on both to the OPEB and the pension. Included in the budget is \$97,661 for the OPEB contribution and \$202,584 for the pension. Prior to the bonding, the OPEB was \$625,000 and our current bond payment is \$506,000. Our prior funding of the pension was estimated at \$2 million for this year without the bonding; however, with the bonding, our payment is \$904,000.

Ms. Stamper said the General Fund reflects an estimated balance at the close of 2020-2021 of \$2,562,312, or 27.56% of expenditures. Due to the new development in the DDA, there is an increase to the captured taxes within the DDA District. The General Fund budget reflects a contribution from the DDA of \$367,477 which was reduced by \$50,000 to allow funding for the Executive Director position.

She said that they anticipate the payment will be complete by 2022-2023, and that could be accelerated by what we experience with the new development across Pontiac Trail.

Ms. Stamper explained the Budget Stabilization Fund reflects an estimated balance at the close of 2020-2021 of \$1,364,666 or 14.68% of expenditures. Our full-time positions reflect the recognition of a full-time firefighter position added during 2019-2020, changing the number of employees to 54. Our high employment of full-time employees was 65 during 2003-2004, so this is a reduction of 17.48% since that time.

She stated the Solid Waste collection and recycling fee will be set at \$175 and placed on the summer tax bill. Collection services are provided through a contract with Waste Management until 2022. She explained that the combined sewer and water utility rate will increase from \$67.80/unit to \$70.30/unit along with meter maintenance and special sewer costs. The residential sewer charge cap will change from \$126.00/quarter to \$140.30/quarter. The residential sewer only customers will increase from \$83.50/quarter to \$91.75/quarter. Industrial sewer only customers will increase from \$118.25/quarter to \$130.00/quarter. She mentioned that during 2019-2020, capital improvement bonds were issued in the amount of \$5,375,000 to fund Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements.

Ms. Stamper stated the next slide was a snapshot of the capital budget this year. She said we will be contributing our annual amount of \$980,000. Since the ten-year contribution is spread over time, the annual expenditures fluctuate throughout that same time period; therefore, the annual expenditure shown below is higher than this year's contribution. This year, we have \$2,861,280 in capital expenditures and the chart reflected that information by department.

Ms. Stamper said the Major Road Improvements of \$490,000 included improvements to Beck Road (Potter Road to Pontiac Trail), Landrow Extension Preliminary Engineering, Beck Road widening, general road and drainage repairs and pavement management. The Local Road Improvements of \$345,000 provide funding for pavement management and preservation, concrete industrial repairs, miscellaneous repairs, Hidden Creek and Maple Run II preventative Maintenance. The Safety Path Improvements of \$529,000 are budgeted which include Wixom Road north of Potter to Palmer Drive, Wixom Road south of Pontiac Trail engineering and easements and connection of Michigan Airline Trail with the regional system.

She added that Wastewater Improvements of \$1,519,038 consist of treatment plant upgrades, biological phosphorus removal system, influent pumps, wiring and controls for SCADA system, solids handling. The water improvements of \$301,479

consist of meter replacement, distribution, valves and hydrants, roof repairs on Maple Forest and Grand Oaks, water tower recoat, security systems, well maintenance, hydrant hydro-fits, SCADA and repair and replacements as needed.

Ms. Stamper indicated that the that budget study sessions for Council had been scheduled for May 19, 2020 and May 20, 2020.

Mayor Beagle thanked Ms. Stamper for the long hours she spent working on this budget. He knew this was hard to put together with the uncertainties from the State.

Councilmember Smiley also thanked Ms. Stamper for her good work.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik appreciated Ms. Stamper putting this together in such short time under the current circumstances. He wondered if all the expected impacts of COVID-19 were considered. He was thinking about the cancelled events of the Parks & Recreation and the weddings at the Community Center. Ms. Stamper included some of them not knowing what the summer would look like. She said she scaled back on the Civic Center rentals as well as the wages that were affiliated with that, like monitors. The expense side will adjust as appropriate. She said if they did not utilize it then it went back to the fund balance. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik commented that the bonding was perfect timing.

Councilmember Gottschall asked if we had heard any more about property tax payments and how those might be affected. Ms. Stamper replied that property taxes will not be affected. Property tax collection is covered by State statute, along with our own Charter. She has been instructed to continue under the State statute. There has been no mention of changing the due date and she will update the Council if she hears anything regarding that. Councilmember Gottschall asked what share of our revenue in total was property tax versus any other sources. Ms. Stamper replied that our current general operating tax revenue is just shy of \$8 million. Our overall revenue is just shy of \$12 million. A fair share of that is property tax revenue. Councilmember Gottschall said that the highlights on the revenue comparison, under Building Permits and Fees, show an increase to rental review of \$18,000. He wondered what accounted for that. Ms. Stamper replied that those are cyclical. They are apartment units or rental homes within the City that are scheduled to be inspected by our Building Department. That amount is the estimated revenue for those inspections. It also depends on the owners scheduling those inspections. We try to do the inspections as close to the schedule as we can, but sometimes they fall into the next year. It varies from year to year as to the number inspected.

Councilmember Gottschall knew that the State Shared Revenue was currently up in the air as far as the exact numbers. For the expenditures, he noticed in the City Manager budget there was a line for the Assistant City Manager/Economic Development position. He commented that he was not a fan of that line. In terms of the Building Inspector line, there was an increase contract cost of nearly \$15,000, yet a separate page showed a decrease in revenue. Ms. Stamper explained that Code Enforcement was done for us and so it was built into the that expenditure amount. That is not a cost-share at all. She calculated 62% of the revenue so that amount should be exact in the budget. She would investigate things further to see what other items are involved in the decrease in that Department. Councilmember Gottschall questioned if that increase was strictly for Code Enforcement. Ms. Stamper replied that it could be. We are also comparing it to last years budget, which may be lower than what we are going to bring in this year.

In regard to the Police Capital Expenditures, Councilmember Gottschall said that we talked previously about having a non-idling policy and how we spread out the purchasing of Police vehicles. He asked if there was more information about that. Director Moore said that the plan for this next fiscal year was to only purchase one vehicle. The reason is because we have two that we have not been able to put into the service yet due to COVID-19. We are going into the 2020-2021 fiscal year with two brand new vehicles. He mentioned some discussions were held regarding better batteries that could work with our in-car computer systems. That was still on his to-do list. Councilmember Gottschall wondered if Ford Motor Company ever consulted with police when they made changes to their cruisers. Director Moore said he did not know but he wished they would. The changeover cost went from \$8,000 to \$15,000 per vehicle.

Councilmember Sharpe commented that he has been personally involved with the police counsel and they deal with certain agencies around the country, including the California Sheriff and the Michigan State Police. He said they consulted with the agencies on how to develop new vehicles. The new Explorer was built with the police in mind and are different vehicles than the general public can buy. He stated the police have a lot of input. He thanked the City of Wixom for supporting Ford Motor Company. Director Moore noted that Michigan State Police beats the nation in testing and evaluating vehicles. The Ford Explorer Police Interceptor package always goes right to the top of the list.

Councilmember Gottschall said the final question he had was on the Wastewater/Water budget. He asked about the water tower recoat and if that was covered under the contract we have with Adept/Tribar. Mr. Sikma said that we do have seven years left on the contract with them for the revenue coming in for the painting. That was one of the reasons we talked about recoating and to update the name. So far, we have gotten \$150,000 from them. Councilmember Gottschall

asked if the recoating was due to the sale of the company or regularly scheduled maintenance. Mr. Sikma replied that we do have to coat the tower periodically and we do that every ten to fifteen years anyway. We are not doing it now just to update the name.

Councilmember Behrmann didn't see any of the changes that were made during the previous Police and Fire budget discussions. He wondered if we decided not to move ahead with those. Director Moore noted that most of the items for the Police are included in this budget, like the electric bike and the increase in overtime. He did remove the remodeling of the Police kitchen until we see how the tax revenue pans out. Chief Roberts said there was no increase in staffing because he received no direction to move forward on those proposals. The one addition was the result of the collective bargaining agreement.

Mayor Beagle asked how many residential sewer only customers we had. Mr. Sikma said he would get that number to him tomorrow.

**Roll Call Vote: (7) AYES – Beagle, Behrmann, Gottschall, Gronlund-Fox,
Rzeznik, Sharpe, Smiley**

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried

**2.) Request for Authorization to Waive the Bid Process and Purchase
Microsoft SQL Server Software from CDW-G of Vernon Hills, Illinois,
Through the Michigan Master Computing-MiDEAL Bid Process, at a
Price of \$5,634 from the City Network Account #411-283-971.322**

CM-05-50-20: Motion and seconded made by Councilmember Smiley and Deputy Mayor Rzeznik to waive the bid process and purchase Microsoft SQL Server Software from CDW-G of Vernon Hills, Illinois, through the Michigan Master Computing-MiDEAL bid process, at a price of \$5,634 from the City Network Account #411-283-971.322.

Mr. Blackburn explained this is the replacement of a software product we use called SQL Server from Microsoft. This supports the core financial, which is a database for financials, property taxes and assessing, and building permits. This runs on a central server.

Mayor Beagle noted that this went through the bid process. Mr. Blackburn said that was correct. The State of Michigan does a bidding process for all the software that they require to purchase. They get better pricing compared to small municipalities, so they open that pricing table up to the municipalities.

Councilmember Smiley asked if this was an upgrade or a replacement. Mr. Blackburn said the current system we are running is being discontinued by Microsoft, so they ended their support. This will run in the background so there is no learning curve for the employees.

Councilmember Sharpe found it interesting that the budget number was the same even though the bid came in 2020. He wondered how that occurred. Mr. Blackburn said that when they specified the design of the server, it came in over budget, so they started removing some of the components. Councilmember Sharpe asked if it still covered our needs with those items removed. Mr. Blackburn replied that it did. We may outgrow some of the memory in three or four years, but we can add it in the future.

Councilmember Sharpe asked the City Manager if this met the City's needs. Mr. Brown replied that Mr. Blackburn and Will made this recommendation so he felt confident in their recommendation.

**Roll Call Vote: (7) AYES – Beagle, Behrmann, Gottschall, Gronlund-Fox,
Rzeznik, Sharpe, Smiley**

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried

- 3.) Request for Authorization to Waive the Bid Process and Purchase A Replacement Database Host Server from SHI International Corp Of Somerset, New Jersey, through the National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance, at a Price of \$15,366 from City Network Account #411-283-971.322**

CM-05-51-20: Motion and seconded made by Councilmember Smiley and Deputy Mayor Rzeznik to waive the bid process and purchase a replacement database host server from SHI International Corp of Somerset, New Jersey, through the National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance, at a price of \$15,366 from City Network Account #411-283-971.322.

**Roll Call Vote: (7) AYES – Beagle, Behrmann, Gottschall, Gronlund-Fox,
Rzeznik, Sharpe, Smiley**

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried

- 4.) Recommendation to Accept Hubbell, Roth & Clark's (HRC's) Proposal for Engineering Services for the 2020 Safety Path and Sidewalk Program for a Total Price not to Exceed \$88,690 from Safety Path Construction Account #223-555-971.390**

CM-05-52-20: Motion and seconded made by Deputy Mayor Rzeznik and Councilmember Smiley to accept Hubbell, Roth & Clark's (HRC's) proposal for engineering services for the 2020 Safety Path and Sidewalk Program for a total price not to exceed \$88,690 from Safety Path Construction account #223-555-971.390.

Mr. Brown commented that there were some questions from Council regarding this report, so an email was sent out today to answer those questions. He said we had a 2020 Safety Path Program that we took some action on in September covering the design and engineering work. This is a subsequent move. The initial plans for the construction engineering are still in play but there has been some additional cost for design engineering because of the change in scope that became necessary. They had a boardwalk in an area that was hard to traverse. Instead we had to go with a prefabricated bridge that requires some additional design engineering by HRC. Some of the design elements were dropped off because of not getting easements accomplished in this cycle. The costs were such that we would split it over two fiscal years. This work would close some additional gaps in the City's sidewalks, and we would like to use the Safety Path Millage for it. He indicated that Mr. Darga from HRC was present to answer any additional questions.

Councilmember Gronlund-Fox thanked the City Manager for sending out the additional information. She asked if the work that has already been done, and the proposed work in question, would cost more than the \$510,000 budget. Mr. Brown said we would not be exceeding the budgeted amount and should not have to have a budget amendment. Councilmember Gronlund-Fox was unclear if this would be done in June or August. Mr. Brown explained that if we want to make the connection from the Airline Trail, we will know the scope of the work and we could take it to a select number of companies to quote. If we kept this with the package that included the work done north on Wixom Road, it would go out through the formal bid process and that would take a couple of months. He thought we should think about taking that out of the bid package to solicit bids more quickly. There was still easement work that needed to be completed so he was not sure if that needed to be done at this meeting but maybe at the next meeting. Mr. Darga agreed. Councilmember Gronlund-Fox asked if there was a way to get some of those quotes before the next meeting. Mr. Darga did not think it would be possible for the next meeting, but maybe the first meeting in June.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik stated that Item #1 of the HRC proposal describes the scope of the work from Charms Road to Hopkins Drive but the graphic shows a segment south of Charms Road which includes the Tuck property. He asked if it included the Tuck property. Mr. Sikma said we would like to do that area provided we can get the easement. He mentioned that preliminary discussions with the Tuck family seem to indicate that they will help us, but we haven't spoken with them for about a year. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik asked if the HRC estimate included that and Mr.

Sikma replied that it did. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik stated the Airline Trail connector shows a five-foot safety path and he did not feel that was acceptable as it just did not work for a community like ours. He hoped they could take another look and make it at least six feet. Mr. Darga thought the main reason it was marked as a five-foot path was because of the location of the house, and there was limited right-of-way there. He added that the homeowner is nervous about having the sidewalk there. He wondered if this would be more of a Road Commission question. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik suggested they take a tape measure out there to see what a five-foot path would look like. Mr. Sikma assured him that they would do what they can in that area.

Councilmember Gottschall wondered if using the land acquisition fund would be beneficial for the entire parcel when having discussions with the homeowner. He was aware that it was not a possibility in the past, but they may be open to it now. He added that he would be in support of that. Mr. Sikma indicated that we have talked with the homeowner and he has not indicated that he would like to sell, but we will continue to ask him. Councilmember Gottschall suggested of asking him, find out what the fair market value and make him an offer. The worse that could happen is he declines, or the best that would happen is we would have it for the development.

Councilmember Sharpe knew that HRC was a contracted City advisor, but he wondered if there was a reason that we did not go out for bid on this \$88,000. Mr. Brown explained his experience is that a City has a relationship with an existing engineering contractor, and you assign that work to that contractor consistently and exclusively due to the learning curves that are involved. He believed the understanding of the City's needs and the trust relationship is there. We could reevaluate that, but the current standing is that we do stick with HRC for our engineering needs. Councilmember Sharpe said one of the things he does professionally is benchmark engineering rates. He believed that these charges were robust. He questioned how it would compare to other firms. He asked if we were getting a contracted rate that we get over time or is it benchmarked somehow. He wasn't saying that we needed to change, and he realizes relationships are important, but he didn't think we were going to get any deals with anybody. Mr. Brown thought this was something that could be more important going forward considering what is happening with suppressed revenue sources. He added that this is something we will have to reevaluate. Councilmember Sharpe stated that there had been no other reason other than this is what we have always done. Mr. Brown said the work that we have is done on a package basis. He added that the past practice has been to do it with to utilize the existing relationship we have with HRC.

Councilmember Behrmann asked why we were taking engineering from the construction budget when we have a separate line item for engineering. Mr. Sikma replied that a portion of that engineering is for construction as it is part of the process. He stated that we have a design engineering piece and a construction engineering. We are taking all of it from the construction. Councilmember Behrmann noted that more than 50% of the budget construction has gone to HRC for engineering and they have not done any construction. Mr. Sikma said we have \$510,000 of the budget to put in the sidewalks and the \$88,000 plus the \$55,000 was for engineering. Councilmember Behrmann said that the budget indicates we only spent \$190,000 so far. Mr. Sikma said that we put a portion in last fall along Grand River and a sidewalk that went in just south of Maple on Wixom Road. Councilmember Behrmann recalled last November the Council was asked to approve the no bid to put the sidewalk in front of that house. It was explained at that time that if they approved it, they would have concrete poured that week. He asked why we were now spending \$30,000 for engineering on it. Mr. Sikma said now we must bid this project. There is a package that will have to go out and that is a portion of this piece as well.

Mayor Beagle said he appreciated the breakdown sheet that HRC includes in their proposal. This shows the total cost for so many hours of a specific person. He thought if we compared that with other engineering firms in the area, they would be about the same price. He knew there were communities who went out for bid every time they had an engineering project, but he did not think that was beneficial. We have worked with HRC for many years and we are satisfied with them. They are as competitive as anybody else.

**Roll Call Vote: (6) AYES – Beagle, Behrmann, Gottschall, Gronlund-Fox,
Rzeznik, Smiley
(1) NAYS - Sharpe**

Motion Carried

5.) Discussion on the City Hall Reopening Process

Councilmember Gottschall said he wanted to have a discussion to get everyone's take on what reopening will look like for the City. He asked what staff would come back first or if everybody would come back at the same time. He wondered if we should be cancelling all events through the summer. By discussing this now, he thought we could be doing some planning ahead of time.

Mayor Beagle said that he stopped by City Hall and thought the City Manager had been doing a good job with preparations. He explained that plexiglass has been installed at the Clerk's office, Building Department and Finance Department. He believed the desks were already arranged in such a way that we are okay with the

social distancing rule. In the Building Department there is concern if someone comes in with large blueprints, they will not fit through the slot in the plexiglass, so they are working at getting baskets for plans to be placed outside of the door. From that aspect, he thought City Hall would be ready to open for business as soon as Monday, May 18, 2020 should that be what Mr. Brown wanted to do.

Mr. Brown said that we have been working on the fiscal plan for reopening. We are reusing some soap dispenser containers for hand sanitizer mounted around City Hall for people to use.

Mayor Beagle added that people cannot reach through the holes in the plexiglass to open the doors. It is still a secure area and a good plan.

Mr. Brown commented that we are fortunate with the way City Hall is set up that we have the options to facilitate that. In regard to bringing back employees, he said that there are a number of employees who have been working throughout and we are making some additions to the employees who are considered essential because of realities that are coming into play right now. Fortunately, we have seen an uptake in activity in our Construction and Development Department. That has necessitated bringing additional staff back. The Police, Fire and DPW have maintained staffing throughout this period. There are positions within the DPW and the Community Services as to bringing people back and how that would function. Tim Sikma and Ron Moore have been instrumental in helping us to plan the reopening. People were notified today who will be brought in as essential employees and they are following the Executive Order that requires those kinds of employees. He thought the City was moving toward reopening. He added that he has some calls into other people for their legal standpoint. We are going to record audio tracks to play over the TV in the lobby to remind people of the six-foot distance, the use of hand sanitizer and the wearing of masks. Those are some of the details that we still need to work through. He wanted to bring the employees back and allow them to get comfortable before we open to the public which will all happen very soon.

Councilmember Gottschall knew that the Cultural Center and events would be impacted. He asked about the Senior Center and the various Parks and Recreation events. He wondered what the plan was for those employees. Mr. Brown said that there are a few things in the works with the Community Center staff and he has not had a chance to talk about it with the potentially affected employees, so he didn't want to go into detail now. There were some things in mind that would utilize their talents and bring them back to work. We are fortunate to have employees with the "all hands-on deck" attitude and he thought they would be willing to help in other areas.

Councilmember Gronlund-Fox said it sounded like the City Manager had a good plan in place. She knew it was hard to know when to open City Hall. She liked the idea of bringing staff back before opening to the public. She asked if he had a date that he anticipated when no one would be working remotely. Mr. Brown thought that there would be most City Hall employees back to work next week. He thought it would be valuable for them to come back to work and it would be beneficial for us to get feedback from them as to what additional measures would make them feel more comfortable and safer. Having these employees see the physical layout of City Hall and how it will function will be important. Councilmember Gronlund-Fox commented that if seasonal workers were not hired yet, some of the Parks and Recreation employees could work in the parks. She believed when the Governor lifts the Executive Order, even more people would be using the parks. Mr. Brown stated that we have brought back seasonal workers because we have been given the green light for cutting the grass. We have a gentleman who has been a long-term seasonal employee who is really good, especially around the headstones at the Cemetery.

Councilmember Smiley thought this discussion was good for the update. He believed that Mr. Brown, Director Moore and Mr. Sikma had been all over this since the beginning and kept the Council well-updated. He hoped they would just keep doing what they were doing to adapt to things coming from Lansing. He asked what they saw was the biggest worry was in bringing everybody back.

Director Moore thought the biggest challenge is that there are so many new protocols that are now in place, somebody will have to walk them through what they need to do when they arrive, or how we are going to deal face to face with the public once we open. Many weeks ago, we ordered surgical masks and disinfectant wipes. The biggest challenge will be bringing everyone up to speed who has been gone for so long.

Mr. Brown thought a lot of what we needed to do is well known, but we need to make sure it becomes routine and spelled out. A concern of his was getting back to business and the challenge when people become a little sloppy because it is not in their face as much. He said we need to keep that at the top of everyone's minds and make sure they are staying careful in protecting themselves and the public. He mentioned that they will be doing another sanitizing of the work areas before everyone comes back.

Mayor Beagle asked for an explanation of the disinfecting process. Mr. Brown said that we had a company do a fogging service for us several weeks ago. They do a basic fogging service which decontaminates surfaces in the area. There is another version where they apply a product through the fogging process that provides a longer lasting coating on the surfaces, so it retains more of a resistance to the

germs. He said we did that several weeks ago. It has a 60-day shelf life. If you are cleaning on a day-to-day basis, you are removing some of the protection. We have not done that in the Police Department because of some logistical issues. We have developed a new plan so we will get the Police Department fogged this time. Mr. Sikma added that this process covers surfaces up to eight feet high. He hoped this would be done as early as this Friday.

Mayor Beagle thanked Marilyn Stamper for her long hours. Director Moore, Mr. Sikma, and Mr. Brown have done a great job with this. He appreciated everything that has been done to keep everyone safe.

Mr. Brown noted that he has a great deal of appreciation for the employees in Wixom. They are the farthest things from high maintenance on this and everybody understands what is going on. Everybody is being careful about the way they conduct themselves, but everyone is still about doing the job and doing what they can to keep the ball rolling and Wixom serviced. He added that Chief Roberts has been doing a lot of work as well. He gave a shout out to everyone in the Police and Fire Departments who are on the front lines every day. These are challenging circumstances and he appreciated the attitude of all the employees.

Mayor Beagle commented that Wixom is one of the few communities in this area that hasn't missed a beat.

Councilmember Gottschall suggested that we prerecord a video that goes out to everyone by email. It could show the expectations as we come back into the offices in terms of masks, workspaces, and sanitizing. Director Moore thought that was a fantastic idea. He said they could send an unpublished YouTube video to them and three minutes later they have been trained.

Mayor Beagle thought there were some events that we would have to cancel, but once everybody got back and we talk about it we can make the decision. We may push the concerts back, so they start in July instead of June. Councilmember Gottschall thought that would be dictated through the State level as we move through the six phases of reopening, as well as our comfort with the liability of taking that on as a City.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC: (None)

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:

Mr. Brown said that we have received a memo from Waste Management regarding the reestablishment of the bulk and yard waste pickup. They are now back to their normal schedule. If things change, we could see this schedule change as well. He said that the Gleaners Food Distribution would be happening again this Thursday from 2:30 – 5:30 p.m. We had a tremendous turnout at our prior event two weeks

ago. There were a lot of people who benefited from this opportunity. A few changes were made on how to handle the crowd this time. This time the people will enter the west driveway (between City Hall and the Wixom Station). A single line will proceed to the back of the parking lot. We will be geared up with additional volunteers and Police staffing this time.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilmember Behrmann asked if there was a date for demolition of the house now that construction is allowed again. Ms. Magee said she talked to them today. They are working on one partial project that needs to be completed and then we will be next. Councilmember Behrmann reminded everyone to fill out their Census forms. He stated that over the years (both before he was on Council and now), he has been hearing discussions regarding these contracts with our vendors and whether we should be sending them out for bid. When he joined the Council, the big discussion was whether we should switch our wastewater contract. We seem to have found another good company that is taking care of us and saving us money. He thought we did need to make sure we were looking into all contracts with all of our vendors to make sure we are paying a good price. If there is another firm doing the same level of service for us and is going to save us money, we owe it to citizens to go with the cheaper price.

Councilmember Gottschall appreciated people's comments regarding the reopening of City Hall and what that will look like. He knew it would be an ongoing discussion as things start to change a little more. He hoped everyone would continue to stay safe. He has seen a lot of people get their mulch delivered and there was an incident in the Wildwood subdivision recently with combustion that caused property damage. He reminded everyone to keep an eye on their mulch piles. Stay safe.

Councilmember Gronlund-Fox thanked all the City of Wixom staff.

Councilmember Sharpe thanked Kailyn McMahon for keeping our seniors engaged. She sent out an email that was fun to read with very good links. He also gave a shout out to the Library Director, Andrea Dickson. He went online to check out a book and it worked flawlessly. There are so many features and media available in our Library. We are fortunate to have a good staff and a Library that is supported by City staff and Council.

Councilmember Smiley thanked Ms. Stamper for help tonight and Ken Milburn for recording this meeting. He noted that this is Police Week so be sure to say thanks.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik thanked Ms. Stamper and the Department Heads for all that they did to present this budget tonight. He was looking forward to the study sessions on May 19th and 20th. He has been encouraged while driving around the

City and seeing all the construction. He saw work being done at the intersection of Pontiac Trail and Beck Road. He wondered if that was a County intersection and Mr. Sikma replied yes and said they are upgrading the lights. It is tri-party funds so we will share the expense on that. Deputy Mayor Rzeznik said there is still \$122 billion dollars left in the SBA Disaster Loans. For those Wixom businesses that were discouraged, he said there is still money out there. Main Street Oakland County did their first mass crowd funding campaign and they will match up to \$4,000. He knew Wixom was participating. They have a goal of \$15,000 and they are at about \$1,800 on their way there. He encouraged people to log onto the site, Patronicity, to support some of our mom and pop businesses. Stay safe.

Mayor Beagle thanked Marilyn Stamper for all her hard work on the budget and he looked forward to the budget hearings next week. He reminded everyone that the Census is nine simple questions and by answering those questions, it provides support to our community for the next ten years. He looked forward to seeing the banner being put up tomorrow. Stay safe and buy local.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Catherine Buck
City Clerk

Approved 5-26-2020
