

**City of Olivet**  
**Public Hearing & Regular Council Minutes**  
**March 14, 2022 – 6:45 p.m.**

**Council Call to Order**

Present: Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas, Gary Peterson, Joe Hoffdahl, James Frohm, Don Walker, Larry Marsh, and Steve Penny.

**Public Hearing – USDA Grant:**

Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas stated that the USDA grant, if awarded, will pay up to 35% of a tractor purchase. Commissioner Gary Peterson asked about the application process for this grant. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker said the public hearing is one of the requirements of the USDA Grant application process. DPW Director Jerry Staggs stated that he has three bids on tractors. Peterson voiced his concerns about the distance to a dealer if repairs are needed. Staggs also stated that the dealerships will be close enough or possibly the dealer make a service call in the event of the tractor needing repair in the future.

**Visitors' Section:**

Dan LaPoint presented the plaque for the Veterans Memorial. LaPoint informed Council that he would like to host a party on May 22, 2022, to celebrate the Veterans Memorial. He is seeking approval to set up tents, tables with chairs, serve a meal, and have a live band. LaPoint stated that it will take three months to get the recycled plastic benches that have been ordered for the Veterans Memorial. He explained there is flooding where the newly poured concrete sits, so a drain is needed. He has offered to dig a drain to the river under the sidewalk. All labor and materials will be at his expense. Mayor Barlund-Maas suggested that LaPoint and Council members discuss the organization and logistics for the suggested party.

Eaton County Commissioner Jim Mott informed Council the off-road vehicle (ORV) Ordinance for Eaton County passed last month. This allows individual and ORV clubs to ride legally on designated county roads. The ordinance allows cities, villages, and townships to designate what roads can be used for ORV use at their discretion.

Jennifer Dingman and Kevin Whipple addressed the Council and asked if the City of Olivet would consider adopting an ORV ordinance. Dingman provided information on the safety of ORV use and state laws. Whipple stated that allowing ORVs on the City's secondary roads, Washington Street and Butterfield Hwy., could boost the economy as ORV riders could frequent our local businesses.

Commissioner Gary Peterson stated his concerns regarding allowing ORVs on the streets, speeding, and misuse.

Police Chief Shawn Garcia stated he is not opposed to an ORV Ordinance, but would like more restrictions on age and type of ORVs. He would like to see how things go with the County ordinance before making any decisions on an ordinance for the City.

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that she will send this to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Anthony Merriman, from the ELITE Greek Society at Olivet College, asked Council's permission to hold a Black Lives Matter March on Wednesday, April 13, 2022, for approximately two hours in the afternoon. He is requesting road closures of East, College, and Cottage streets around the college square for this march. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that this event was held last year and there were no problems. She suggested that Merriman work with Chief Garcia on the details.

Olivet College Band Director Jeremy Duby asked Council's permission to host the Out of the Darkness annual suicide prevention walk. This will be their fifth year hosting the walk and they have raised over \$50,000.00 for this cause. He is proposing the walk be held Saturday, March 26, 2022. No streets will be closed for this event. The walk will take place on the sidewalks. Student Chair Victoria Herson stated that registration for this event will start at 9:00 am, the walk will begin at 10:00 am, and end at noon. She added that there will be speakers and a silent auction. This event is open to the public.

Director of the Charlotte Library David Bodda introduced himself to Council. He invited people to come and enjoy the library and experience the new technology and electronic resources the library now offers.

### **Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION** by Hoffdahl, supported by Penny to approve the agenda with the addition of agenda Item H. Fire Truck Purchase. Motion carried 7-0.

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Penny to approve the February 2022 minutes. Motion carried 7-0.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Fire Department Purchase – Fire Hose/Helmets – Action Item**

Fire Chief John Collins explained that the Fire Department needs to purchase hoses and helmets as these items have exceeded their life span. Collins stated that the Fire Department would like to purchase six lengths of hose at fifty ft. each for a total of \$2,400.00 out of budget line item 336-931. He also stated the department would like to purchase ten new helmets with integrated lights at a cost of \$350.00 each. Collins said they are planning on using the donation previously received from Olivet Congregational Church to help pay for the helmets out of budget line item 336-743.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Frohm, to purchase six lengths of hose at a cost not to exceed \$2,400.00 and ten helmets with lights at a cost not to exceed \$3,500.00. Motion carried 7-0.

#### **B. CDL Class – John Krohn - Action Item.**

DPW Director Jerry Staggs informed Council that employee John Krohn has completed his written portion of the CDL class. He stated that the State of Michigan is now requiring a three-day class to obtain a CDL license. The class will be held in Midland, Michigan, and is approximately \$2,000.00. The class consists of education materials, the use of a truck, an independent tester, and the driving test. The class has a 95% passing rate.

**MOTION** by Hoffdahl, supported by Penny, to send Krohn to CDL school for three days at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.00. Motion carried 7-0.

### **C. Water/Sewer Department Vac Trailer – Action Item**

DPW Director Jerry Staggs informed Council the quote for the vac trailer that was previously furnished is due to expire. He stated the vac trailer would be a good investment for the City as it can be used for multiple applications such as sewer drain cleaning and water valve exercising. Staggs also reminded Council of the Distribution System Material Inventory (DSMI) which is due by 2025. Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is requiring the DSMI to evaluate the amount of lead pipe that is in the City water system. The vac trailer can be used to assist with the DSMI. If lead pipes are found, the City is responsible for the replacement of the lead pipe eighteen inches into a resident's home. Mayor Barlund-Maas informed Council the Finance Committee discussed using \$25,000.00 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money toward the purchase of the vac trailer with the balance paid from their budget.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Walker to approve the purchase of the vac trailer at a cost not to exceed \$77,000.00 with \$25,000.00 coming from the ARPA funds. Motion carried 7-0.

### **D. City Hall Computer Server w/Budget Amendment – Action Item**

Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker informed Council that I.T. Right has recommended that City Hall purchase a new server due to a shortage of storage space on the current server. Huepenbecker said that \$5,000.00 was budgeted between the Clerk and Police Department for the server this year, but the price has increased an additional \$1,700.00. She stated a budget amendment will be needed. She suggested that the \$1,700.00 be split between each department because each department uses the server.

**MOTION** by Penny, supported by Walker to purchase a server for City Hall using the \$5,000.00 that was budgeted, along with a budget amendment from Capital Outlay for an additional \$1,700.00 to be split between each department. Motion carried 7-0.

### **E. Police Department Computer Purchase – Action Item**

Police Chief Shawn Garcia furnished a quote from I.T. Right for a new computer for the Police Department. He states the current computer is in need of replacement and is budgeted for this year.

**MOTION** by Penny, supported by Hoffdahl to purchase a new computer from I.T. Right at a cost not to exceed \$1,512.25. Motion carried 7-0.

### **F. Code Enforcement Officer – Action Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas informed the Council that she had spoken with Deputy Clerk Drema Emerson regarding Code Enforcement. Emerson has time available and is interested in taking on Code Enforcement for the City. Mayor Barlund-Maas has spoken with the City Attorney regarding this designation of duties. According to City Ordinance, Council designates the Code Enforcement Officer. Clerk/Treasurer Huepenbecker stated that Emerson will be doing Code Enforcement on

Wednesday mornings and her pay will remain the same. Huepenbecker also stated that Chief Shawn Garcia is willing to step in and help Emerson should the need arise.

**MOTION** by Frohm, supported by Peterson to appoint Deputy Clerk Emerson to be the City Code Enforcement Officer. Motion carried 7-0.

### **G. Walnut Tree – Action Item**

Commissioner Gary Peterson informed Council that he received a call from a resident who inquired about a walnut tree that was cut down on Court Street. The property owner believed that the trees were on his property. Peterson and DPW Director Staggs went to the residence and found that one of the cut walnut trees was on City property. Peterson and Staggs talked with the property owner about the error and the property owner agreed to pay the City of Olivet the amount he received from selling the walnut tree.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Walker to accept the offer from the homeowner to pay the City the amount he received for the walnut tree. Motion carried 7-0.

### **H. Fire Truck Purchase – Discussion**

Fire Chief John Collins informed Council of an opportunity to save money on the purchase of a fire truck. A Spencer Manufacturing salesman informed Collins about a demo firetruck that is currently available. The cost of the truck is \$500,000.00 and would need some additions totaling around \$10,000.00. The same truck if ordered would be over \$600,000.00. Collins said financing was available through Spencer Manufacturing and he would give Clerk/Treasurer Huepenbecker's contact information to them. Huepenbecker will contact Rural Development for grant and financing availability. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated a special meeting would have to be held to move forward on the proposed purchase.

### **Approval of the Bills**

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Frohm, to pay the bills as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

### **Department Head Reports**

**Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker** – Huepenbecker stated that she has been finalizing tax settlements with the County and processing grant paperwork. She said that the new utility billing cycle starts next week. She stated that the City has been receiving payments for past-due parking tickets.

**Police Chief Shawn Garcia** – Garcia stated that he has not yet placed an ad for an officer on MColes. He is exploring the idea of hiring an experienced Lansing Police Department officer who will be retiring in June. Garcia also stated that he has heard the Sheriff's Department could possibly be cutting back services to the residents of Olivet. Garcia will get more information on this at the Police Chief's meeting.

**DPW Director Jerry Staggs** – Staggs informed Council that the lift station stairs are in and the project is almost completed. He stated that T.H. Eifert has done a great job. Staggs stated that the DPW has begun spring clean-up and patching potholes.

**Fire Chief John Collins** – Collins stated that the Fire Department has been very busy assisting other fire departments since all are low on personnel. He informed Council that three firefighters will be finishing fire school within the next week. He also stated that the Fire Department received a donation from the Lions Club of \$5,000.00. The money will be used to upgrade the department chainsaws and invest in a new stair chair. Collins would like to sell the old chainsaws on the Surplus Auction Site.

### **Commissioner Comments**

**Joe Hoffdahl** – Hoffdahl thanked all employees. Hoffdahl also thanked Dan LaPoint for the beautiful plaque for the Veterans Memorial.

**Larry Marsh** – Marsh stated he had nothing to add.

**Gary Peterson** – Peterson informed Council that there will be a change in personnel at EATRAN. Peterson said that an ad will be placed in the paper for the executive director position should anyone be interested. He also states that Clinton County is having second thoughts regarding Regional Transportation. Peterson will get more information on this at the next EATRAN meeting.

**Steve Penny** – Penny stated he had nothing to add.

**James Frohm** – Frohm stated he had nothing to add.

**Don Walker** – Walker thanked the Lions Club and the Olivet Congregational Church for their donations to the Fire Department. Walker also thanked Council for its support on the fire truck.

**Laura Barlund-Maas** – Barlund-Maas stated she had nothing to add.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Penny to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Motion carried 7-0. Council entered Executive Session at 8:35 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** 8:35 p.m. – 9:31 p.m.

**RETURNED TO REGULAR MEETING:** 9:31 p.m.

Mayor Barlund-Maas explained that the personnel issues discussed in executive session were related to the possibility of using some American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money to provide bonuses to city employees based on their time of employment with the city during the pandemic. The amounts discussed were \$150.00 per month for up to 24 months for full-time employees and a \$450.00 total bonus for the part-time police officer. The Council also discussed providing a bonus to Fire Department personnel on a three-tier scale based on medical runs:

- ❖ 0-19 runs \$200.00 bonus
- ❖ 20-39 runs \$400.00 bonus
- ❖ 40+ runs \$10.00 per run

All the above bonus amounts would total \$27,090.00.

**MOTION** by Penny, supported by Peterson to award pandemic bonuses to employees as explained. Motion carried 6-0 with the following roll call vote:

Barlund-Maas – yes	Penny – yes	Frohm – yes	Hoffdahl – yes
Marsh – yes	Walker – yes	Peterson – abstain	

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that Council had also discussed in executive session the possibility of a “sign-on” bonus for the potential full-time police officer the city hires. Many departments are using these bonuses, structured in various tiers of payment, to attract personnel. Council had discussed giving a \$4,500.00 bonus, paid in three installments of \$1,500.00; the first installment would be awarded at the date of hire to be included with the first regular payroll check, the second at six months, and the third at twelve months.

**MOTION** by Penny, supported by Frohm to approve the sign-on bonus for the new full-time police officer. Motion carried 7-0.

Council meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

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Laura Barlund-Maas, Mayor

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Amy Huepenbecker, Clerk/Treasurer