



**City of Pleasant Ridge**  
23925 Woodward Avenue  
Pleasant Ridge, Michigan 48069

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**Regular City Commission Meeting  
May 9, 2017**

Having been duly publicized, Mayor Metzger called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Foreman, Krzysiak, Perry, Scott, Mayor Metzger.  
Also Present: City Manager Breuckman, City Attorney Need, City Clerk Drealan.  
Absent: None.

**Public Discussion**

Gail Gerdan, 54 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge Environmental Committee, reminded residents that there will be a native plant sale on Saturday, June 10 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Gainsboro Park. They are hoping to meet or exceed last year's success. Event will be near the DPW building and the Resale Shop.

Ben Hamilton, 17 Wellesley, Pleasant Ridge Foundation, presented an update on the 57th Annual Auction and Gala, May 20, 2017. Photos were shown outlining the plans to upgrade the Community Center patio and playground. Funds raised at the auction will support this project.

Marge Halls, 20 Oakland Park, inquired whether the Commission has discussed solar power and how the city is going to be using it. City Manager Breuckman noted that they are seeking a proposal to put solar power on the roof of the Community Center. The city ordinances do allow residents to install solar power on their homes.

Frank Stutcher, 85 Amherst, questioned why the City has no facilities for basketball at the moment. City Manager noted that there had been numerous complaints and police calls regarding behavior which caused rim locks to be installed temporarily. Assistant City Manager Pietrzak addressed the question of what programs the City offers to teenage boys and girls. He noted that there are sports programs including baseball, swim, yoga classes, soccer camps and other summer programs. There was a discussion regarding signage and possibly reopening the courts in the future. The issue will be revisited at the next Recreation Commission meeting.

## **Governmental Reports**

Chief Kevin Nowak, Pleasant Ridge Police, discussed the locking of the basketball rim. He noted that the Rec Commission heard from a number of citizens, including youths, who were strongly in favor of closing the rim. As a result, the Commission voted unanimously to close it until further notice. Since it has been closed there have been no more complaints or violations issued. There continues to be a suspect on the west side of the City who breaks into cars. He has been seen on security cameras and videos. He recommended always calling if you see anything suspicious. A picture of the suspect will be posted. He thanked the Foundation for their support of the Police Department.

## **City Commission Liaison Reports**

Commissioner Krzysiak reported there has been no meeting of the Recreation Commission. He added that there is a tennis program available for teens.

Commissioner Foreman reported on Ferndale Public Schools. Next School Board meeting is May 15 at the High School. The application deadline for the new Superintendent position is May 15. The Board workshop to prepare for interviews is May 22 at 6:00 p.m. The initial interviews will be conducted on May 30 and 31. School tours for the final candidates will be June 1 through 3. Final interviews will take place on Saturday, June 3. From June 6 through 9 the Board will visit the final candidate's district. On June 12 at 6:00 p.m. at the High School the Board will meet to select the new Superintendent.

Commissioner Perry reported on the Planning Commission/DDA. At the last meeting, the DDA voted to approve their budget. The alleys will be completed soon so more will be available to invest in streetscaping. Another façade improvement grant application was received from the funeral home. A DDA planter program was also discussed.

Commissioner Scott reported on the Historical Commission. The Home and Garden tour will be June 10. Advance tickets can be obtained online. Your ticket will be swapped for a wrist band and booklet which can be picked up near the Museum in the City Hall parking lot. Presale tickets are \$15.00, Day of tour tickets will be \$20.00.

Mayor Metzger noted that Saturday is the City Wide Garage Sale and Ridge Resale. Commissioner Foreman inquired regarding whether the courts will be refurbished before the sand volleyball league begins. Assistant City Manager Pietrzak noted that the courts will be regroomed in time. A minimum of three teams are necessary to have a league. There was some discussion of the rules for sand volleyball. Cost is \$200 per team which includes T-shirts and seven games.

## **Consent Agenda**

### **17-3307**

Motion by Commissioner Krzysiak, second by Commissioner Perry, that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented.

Adopted:                      Yeas: Commissioners Krzysiak, Perry, Foreman, Scott, Mayor Metzger.  
   Nays: None.

### **56 Ridge Road - Request for Ordinance Modification to Allow a Front Yard Fence**

City Manager Breuckman noted that a letter had been received from Robert and Judy Wachler who reside at 56 Ridge Road requesting to install a decorative white picket fence in front of their property, along the sidewalk. Some, but not all, properties on Ridge Road already have fences or hedges. Front yard fences used to be permitted but are no longer allowed by ordinance anywhere in the city. The ordinance allows the Commission to grant variances and modifications to the front fence provision. Some photos of the proposed project and existing fences were presented. Hedges have also been installed as a barrier. An aluminum fence was turned down in 2007. Ridge Road has the largest lots and largest front yard setbacks in the city. Ridge Road has the highest traffic other than Woodward.

Commissioner Foreman inquired as to the materials to be used in the proposed fence. No specific material was presented in the request. He also asked what the timeline of a new ordinance would be. It was noted that writing a new ordinance would be relative simple and suggested that the existing fences be used to set the future standard.

Judy Wachler noted that the fence that they are requesting to install is wood. Robert Wachler noted that there was originally a picket fence on the property that deteriorated. The goal is to try to recreate the original historic look of the home. Commissioner Perry expressed concern about precedent for future fences. Specific concerns can be addressed with the wording of the ordinance. The amendment would be limited to Ridge Road frontage only. Judy Wachler noted that a hedge presents more of a wall than a fence. Commissioner Foreman noted that public comment on any proposed ordinance amendment can be received at the meeting in which the proposed ordinance is presented.

### **17-3308**

Motion by Commissioner Foreman, second by Commissioner Scott, to approve the request to construct a front yard fence at 56 Ridge Road with the following conditions: a wooden picket fence no taller than four feet and no less than one foot off the sidewalk. Further the City Commission direct the City Administration to prepare an ordinance amendment to City Code Chapter 14, Buildings and Building Regulations, Article V, Fences, including sidewalk setback length and 50% opacity.

Adopted:                      Yeas: Commissioners Foreman, Scott, Krzysiak, Perry, Mayor Metzger.  
                                     Nays: None.

### **Anti-Corruption Resolution**

City Manager Breuckman introduced Alex Lenko, 61 Wellesley, from Represent.US which is a group dedicated to bringing change and awareness regarding corruption in government. Southfield has already adopted a similar resolution. Royal Oak is considering it. The goal is to get a similar resolution passed at the state and national level. Mayor Metzger commented on their website and supported concepts such as limited gerrymandering and opening up government financial records for scrutiny. He indicated that he supported the resolution but noted that it needed some editing before being considered for a vote. Commissioner Foreman questioned the \$100 tax rebate language in the resolution. It is intended to create a public pool for campaign financing. The group meets every other Thursday in Royal Oak.

**17-3309**

Motion by Commissioner Krzysiak, second by Commissioner Scott, that the resolution regarding anti-corruption be tabled and that staff work on a draft resolution to be considered at the next regular City Commission meeting.

Adopted:                      Yeas: Commissioners Krzysiak, Scott, Foreman, Perry Mayor Metzger.  
                                     Nays: None.

**Resolution authorizing the Oakland County Brownfield Authority to Undertake Review of the Iron Ridge Development Project**

City Manager Breuckman presented a resolution to authorize the Brownfield Authority plan for Iron Ridge which was discussed at the last meeting. Changes regarding the timing of the capture of taxes was read into the record. Commissioner Krzysiak noted that the property taxes were reduced at the last tax tribunal. The taxable value was reduced from \$1.3 to \$650,000 by the tax tribunal.

**17-3310**

Motion by Perry, second by Scott, that the resolution authorizing the Oakland County Brownfield Authority to undertake review of the Iron Ridge Development project, be approved and that the City of Pleasant Ridge requests that the OCBRA undertake review of the Iron Ridge Project with the following stipulations:

- The Brownfield Plan must specify that the City will only reimburse for our proportional share of expenses if the MEDC or the MDEQ does not approve all or some of the expenses.
- The reimbursement period in the Brownfield Plan not exceed 26 years or a maximum of \$1,473,784 from local taxes in the City of Pleasant Ridge, whichever comes first.
- That the OCBRA revolving loan fund capture be limited to \$50,000 per year for not more than 2 years, therefore having a maximum capture of 28 years in the plan.
- That a claw back or termination provision be included in the reimbursement agreement in the event of non-payment of property taxes by the property owner. Finally, that the City of Pleasant Ridge acknowledges and understands that the OCBRA intends to collect certain administrative fees which will be specified in detail in any Brownfield Plan before it is finally adopted.

Commissioner Krzysiak congratulated everyone for the effort on the project, but expressed concern about the size and scope of project, especially the length of time that the city is committed before realizing returns. Commissioner Perry noted that a project of this size can only be accomplished with a major project of this kind.

Adopted:                      Yeas: Commissioners Perry, Scott, Foreman Mayor Metzger.  
                                     Nays: Commissioner Krzysiak.

**Establishing Public Hearings on June 13, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.**

Public comment will be heard regarding the proposed 2017-2018 millage rates and the 2017-2018 combined city budgets. City Manager Breuckman presented slides regarding the two proposals. The pension issue is increasingly important to the overall budget. Action will be taken in June to take effect on July 1, 2017. Millages are being rolled back as was discussed at the last meeting. He noted that 47% of taxes go to the City. The rest is divided between schools, county, parks and other entities. General costs have decreased in order to balance the increase in pension costs. The fund balance is much smaller than it has been in the past. The police department is approximately 2/3 of the overall pension cost. Pension costs are approximately 8% of overall city expenditures and will increase to 13% over the next few years. Since 2014 MERS has provided much more detailed projections and stronger requirements for adequate pension funding. There was a discussion of the history of the pension benefit plans and the return on investment for the fund. Some serious choices have to be made to address the future deficit that will occur in the near future.

**17-3311**

Motion by Commissioner Perry, second by Commissioner Scott, to set a public hearing on Tuesday, June 13, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. to solicit public comments on the 2017-18 millage rates and combined city budgets.

Adopted:                      Yeas: Commissioners Perry, Scott, Foreman, Krzysiak, Mayor Metzger.  
                                     Nays: None.

**Preliminary 2017-2018 Utility Bill Rates**

City Manager Breuckman presented draft proposed rates for the upcoming utility rates. Utility rates are driven primarily by wholesale and supplier costs. Those cost increases are not bound by regulation. Sewage treatment rates have increased substantially because of the Great Lakes Water Authority agreement. Garbage pickup rates have also increased substantially but that cost includes a shift to single stream recycling that will begin in the fall. This cost may go down when the facility is completed. There are capital improvement projects planned for the sewer lines on West Cambridge, Oxford, Norwich and Hanover. The average consumer will see a 3.94% increase in their utility bills for the coming year. A resolution will be presented next month.

**Letter of Understanding between the City of Pleasant Ridge and the Michigan Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council**

City Manager Breuckman discussed the pension deficit issue that was raised earlier. A hybrid pension and health care savings plan for new hires has been agreed to by the Union to address the funding gap. Officers will receive similar benefits as before but the market risk is shared rather than resting entirely on the City. If the Commission approves the Letter of Understanding, it will be presented to the officers' union for a vote with an effective date of July 1, 2017. Commissioner Krzysiak discussed what a difficult decision-making process this was but acknowledged the financial problem that the City is facing. He noted that he would prefer to retain a defined benefit plan. There was discussion regarding millage requests and what they would fund. Commissioner Foreman and Scott noted that the police union had previously agreed to this plan.

**17-3312**

Motion by Commissioner Foreman, second by Commissioner Scott, to approve the Letter of Understanding between the City and the Police Labor Council and to authorize the Mayor and City Manager to sign that agreement.

Adopted:                   Yeas: Commissioners Foreman, Scott, Perry, Mayor Metzger  
                              Nays: Commissioner Krzysiak.

**City Manager's Report**

City Manager Breuckman reported that Gainsboro Park is about 90% complete. The remaining punch list items are supposed to be completed by May 26, 2017. The grass will be reseeded. The tennis courts will be completed as the weather allows. Solutions to water ponding are being considered while awaiting DEQ permits. Benches and trash cans are being added. They are working on the gates at the dog park and the Community Garden is in operation. There was discussion regarding the Norwich and Hanover project. Norwich will be open for traffic again within the next few days. The water will be shut off on Norwich on May 11, 2017 to replace a hydrant.

**Other Business**

Commissioner Foreman noted that petitions will be available to run for public office. He stated that he will not be running for another term. He encouraged any interested citizen to apply.

City Clerk Amy Drealan noted that qualifying petitions for Mayor and City Commission are available. They are due by July 25 at 4:00 p.m. A minimum of 25 signatures is required. She also mentioned the City Wide Garage Sale and the Memorial Day ceremony.

Commissioner Krzysiak mentioned that the June book for the Book Club will be *The Handmaid's Tale*, by Margaret Atwood. It discusses a dystopian future. The meeting will be June 14 at 7:00 p.m. at Gainsboro Park.

With no further business or discussion, Mayor Metzger adjourned the meeting at 10:19 pm.

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Mayor Kurt Metzger

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Amy M. Drealan, City Clerk

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## Changes to the Collective Bargaining Agreement with our Police Officers Union

spirit elbinger <selbinger@hotmail.com>

Tue 5/9/2017 11:40 AM

To: Kurt Metzger <kmetzger@cityofpleasantridge.org>; Jay Foreman <jforeman@cityofpleasantridge.org>; Jason Krzysiak <jkrzysiak@cityofpleasantridge.org>; Ann Perry <aperry@cityofpleasantridge.org>; Bret Scott <bscott@cityofpleasantridge.org>; James Breuckman <citymanager@cityofpleasantridge.org>; Amy Drealan <cityclerk@cityofpleasantridge.org>;

Dear Mayor, City Commissioners and Administrators:

In consideration of tonight's City Council discussion on potential changes to the retirement benefits of our police officers, i'd like to go on record as being against moving from a defined benefit pension and health insurance coverage plan to a hybrid 401K and savings model for retired officers.

I agree with Commissioner Krzysiak's position that such a change would unduly burden retired officers and their families with a level of risk and uncertainty that we could more easily and effectively shoulder through the collective power of our community.

Their service and personal risk/sacrifice is fundamental to the sense of safety and well-being we enjoy, and it is only fitting that we continue to support them in a manner that entitles us to such service.

Sincerely,

Spirit Elbinger  
30 Devonshire Rd.  
Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069