

**VILLAGE OF GROSSE POINTE SHORES, A MICHIGAN CITY  
MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.  
AT OSIUS PARK PAVILION**

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER** - A monthly meeting of the City Council of Village of Grosse Pointe Shores, a Michigan City was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at the Osius Park Pavilion of the Grosse Pointe Shores Municipal Park on Lake Shore Road. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Kedzierski.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL** – Clerk Bruce Nichols

Present: Mayor Thaddeus Kedzierski, Robert H. Barrette, Sandra Cavataio, Danielle Gehlert, Doug Kucyk, John T. Seago and Matthew Seely

Absent: None

Also present: City Clerk Bruce Nichols  
Interim City Manager Thomas Krolczyk  
City Attorney Brian Renaud  
Finance Officer/Treasurer Rhonda Ricketts  
Public Safety Director John Schulte  
Public Works Director Brett Smith

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 19, 2020 REGULAR (Telephonic) MEETING**

On motion by Council Member Kucyk, seconded by Council Member Barrette, and carried unanimously, it was resolved that the minutes were approved.

**5. RECEIVE AND FILE VARIOUS BOARDS, COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS MINUTES**

On motion by Council Member Kucyk, seconded by Council Member Barrette, and carried unanimously, it was resolved that the various minutes were approved for receipt and filing.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Developer Richard Russell reported the filing of the final and approved Plat of Deeplands Lane Subdivision has been delayed by the inability of the Wayne County Register of Deeds to record the plat during the Covid-19 pandemic. He also reported the neighbors appear satisfied with the final subdivision configuration. The sidewalks in the subdivision still await scheduled completion by contractors.

## 7. REPORTS BY CHAIRPERSONS OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

### A. **Budget and Finance** – Finance Officer/Treasurer Rhonda Ricketts

#### 1. *Approval of Bills*

Finance Officer/Treasurer Rhonda Ricketts reported there was nothing unusual in the monthly expenses other than election supplies and various pool opening expenses. On motion of Council Member Kucyk, seconded by Council Member Barrette, the bills were unanimously approved for payment. (7-0).

#### 2. *Review of Financial Statements*

Finance Officer/Treasurer Rhonda Ricketts presented the Financial Statements for review by Council. She also discussed budget amendments in the amount of \$194,000 which should be revised to \$126,000. The proceeds will come out of the general surplus account. The original estimate of budget amendments was \$89,000.

#### 3. *2019/2020 Proposed Budget Amendments*

On motion by Council Member Cavataio, seconded by Council Member Kucyk, and carried unanimously, it was resolved that the proposed budget amendments in the amount of \$194,000 be revised to \$126,000.

#### 4. *Finance Committee Chairman Report*

Finance Committee Chair Sandra Cavataio stated the objective of the Finance Committee is to retain the high quality of services and reduce their costs. The Finance Committee met on June 11, 2020 and is in the process of assembling a team to discuss potential cost-cutting ideas with the administrative staff members.

### B. **Public Safety** – Chief John Schulte reported on having assisted adjoining communities with protest demonstrators. An employment offer has been extended to a new PSO candidate. Attracting candidates for the position of PSO's is becoming increasingly difficult. *Eyes On Design* will have an open road rally on Saturday, June 20th. The Chief stated it was uncertain as to what to expect in the number of vehicles participating in the road rally. The Grosse Pointe Yacht Club fireworks has been canceled. Our PSO department members are healthy during the pandemic. New upgraded video cameras are being installed in the patrol vehicles. Body cameras will also be utilized by the department. The Chief emphasized the need for hiring a city manager as staff, and the acting interim City Manager, are getting overwhelmed.

On motion by Council Member Gehlert, seconded by Council Member Kucyk, and carried unanimously, Council approved the additional costs incurred by the installation of body cameras on our Public Safety Officers.

### C. **Public Works** – Director Brett Smith reported Covid-19 has presented challenges for the department while working shoulder to shoulder on public works matters. Seven

pumps appear to be able to keep the municipal park dry. The pool is now ready for use. Storms on June 10, 2020 had 70 mile-per-hour winds which knocked out power to many residents. The emergency generators at the municipal building functioned properly. DTE reported the complete restoration of power required 700 Edison workers. The department has kept up with brush removal. The hiring of seasonal employees has greatly improved. The irrigation system is now up and running, except for a few areas along Lake Shore Road.

**D. Parks Committee** – Park Pool Director Jen Serra reported preparation is underway to open the pool while keeping staff and residents safe. All organized pool activities have been canceled for the season. The pool hours will be restricted to residents during limited hours. Shower room issues are being resolved. Red Cross lifeguard certification is also underway.

Council Liaison Matthew Seely reported on several of the safety and health concerns within the pool area that are being addressed considering Covid-19. The State of Michigan has not been helpful in setting guidelines for pool openings. Our pool and park staff have formulated a good plan for the safety of staff and residents. The *Fourth of July Concert* has been canceled due to the limitation of attendees set by Governor Whitmer.

**E. Harbor Committee** – Chairman Donn Schroder reported there are some dock repairs that need to be completed. The marina wall and kayak launch also require some maintenance and repairs as well. It appears the lake level has peaked. He thanked the residents for their compliance with the required management taken at the harbor. The marina is 95% full, with eight wells still open.

**F. Infrastructure Report** – Chairman Sean Schotthoefer reported on a breach in the lake front splash guard near the Wilson property. Repairs on the breach will be complete soon. The *South East Michigan Sanitary District* (SEMSD) has been contacted to set up a meeting to address pressing issues with the *Memorandum of Understanding* with the city; and the prohibitive cost of an excess storm water allowance. Progress continues to lag with Wayne County regarding long needed and neglected county repairs to the seawall. Boring samples along the seawall into the bearing soil have been completed as the initial phase of an engineering study.

**G. GPSIF** – Council Liaison Danielle Gehlert reported that July 13<sup>th</sup> is the next scheduled meeting of the Foundation. She encouraged residents to join the Foundation membership.

**H. Communications Committee** – Chair Danielle Gehlert introduced the new Communications Committee Chair Ted Coutilish. Mr. Coutilish brings great experience to the committee; and will start by formulating a new communications plan for the city.

On motion by Council Member Seely, seconded by Council Member Seago, and carried unanimously, it was resolved that Ted Coutilish was approved as Chair of the Communications Committee.

- I. **Legal Report** –City Attorney Brian Renaud reported on having provided the following legal services during the previous month:

130 *Executive Orders* have been issued by the Governor of the State of Michigan, often conflicting with each other, which has required an inordinate amount of consultation with staff. There were four FOIA requests, with one FOIA request being very time-consuming because of its broad request for information. There were matters concerning the Finance Committee and Ethics Committee, and a boat hoist application on waterfront property involving riparian issues which was subsequently withdrawn by homeowner.

- J. **Manager's Report** – Interim City Manager Tom Krolczyk thanked the Directors of all municipal departments for their tireless efforts in this exceedingly difficult time. The Ford House is nearing completion. DTE will be sending a representative to discuss power outages.

**8. OLD BUSINESS – None**

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Re-Appointment of Grosse Pointe Public Library Board Representative-Prudence Cole

On motion by Council Member Kucyk, seconded by Council Member Barrette, and carried unanimously, Grosse Pointe Public Library Board Representative-Prudence Cole was re-appointed.

- B. Office Supplies Cost Cutting Discussion

Finance Chair Sandra Cavataio stated the Finance Committee determined the Michigan State bidding prices for office supplies results in bulk discounts to the city.

- C. Update – Ethics Committee and Structure

Mayor Kedzierski commented that an ethics ordinance is a complicated matter in determining what conflicts must be reported, and who must report those potential conflicts of interest. As the State of Michigan already has severe criminal penalties for corrupt acts by government officials, the question is whether the city needs an ethics *ordinance* or an ethics *policy*. Violation of an ethics *ordinance* would result in criminal prosecution by the city attorney as a misdemeanor. Those same misdemeanor acts are currently punishable by prosecution at a state or county level. An ethics *policy* for the city would be enforceable by discharge from employment or removal of city officials. The Mayor asked for input from Council Members regarding the adoption of either a *policy* or *ordinance*.

Council Member Seely observed this is the seventh consecutive monthly Council

meeting where this ethics matter has been brought before Council. He pointed out that Council has already approved nine members of the Ethics Committee for recommendation of a course of action. He also noted that the Council will need to ultimately approve either an ethics ordinance or an ethics policy.

On motion by Council Member Seely, seconded by Council Member Seago, it was proposed that resolutions regarding the Ethics Committee membership composition stand as previously approved by Council.

Discussion ensued wherein the motion was withdrawn without a vote as the matter had been previously voted on and stands until overturned by action of the Council.

## **10. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Christina Roehl had concerns regarding repeated power outages. She encouraged city officials to complain to the Michigan Public Service commission about the DTE negligence in allowing these repeated outages in the municipality.

City Clerk Bruce Nichols read a letter into the record written by Finance Officer/Treasurer Rhonda Ricketts asking City Council to reconsider the 80/20 retiree health care resolution passed at the May 2020 City Council meeting. Ms. Ricketts requested that City Council pursue an alternate remedy for any underfunded status in the pension funds or OPEB benefits by a corrective action plan that does not include retiree cost sharing or benefit reductions. She urged reconsideration based on financial devastation to many retirees and breach of promises to employees by the city.

Diane Younk stated that 80/20 cost sharing to the retiree's health care benefits plan will place retirees in considerable financial hardship. She urged the council to reconsider the amendment and reinstate the previous retiree benefits.

Retired city police officer Mike Kortas expresses disapproval of the retiree benefit cutbacks.

Current Water Department Supervisor Michael Way presented objections to a change of the contract without notice to the employees' bargaining unit.

Retired DPW and Firemen Tom Collins objected to the unilateral change to the 80/20 health care benefits change for retirees. Mr. Collins stated that it is not adhering to the contract and asked Council to reconsider the matter.

Retiree Dave Younk stated salary raises in the past were waived in consideration of expected retiree health care benefits in the future.

Mayor Kedzierski addressed the perception of the enormous wealth of the municipal government of the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores is in accurate considering the financial reserves for employee benefits required under state law. The municipality has an average property tax per residence of \$12,000 a year which is the highest in the state. A further raising of property taxes within our community will meet substantial opposition. The possibility of the *Michigan Department of Treasury* placing the Village of

Grosse Pointe Shores on a "fiscal watchlist" is a huge concern. The phantom shifting of funds within our municipal financial statements is not the proper way to fund retiree benefits. The Mayor explained the city's current liability for retiree benefits reserves exceeds 11 million dollars.

Current employees and retirees again expressed their disappointment with having taken reduced salaries for assurance of benefits upon retirement.

#### **11. COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Council Member Seely, thanked Tom Krolczyk for his great job as Acting Interim City Manager.

Council Member Gehlert thanked the administrative staff for their extraordinary efforts during this difficult time; and reiterated the imminent need for a permanent city manager.

Council Member Cavataio stressed appreciation for the retirees voicing their concerns at the City Council meeting.

Council Member Kucyk urged movement on the desperate need of finding a permanent city manager.

Council Member Barrette also supported action to find a permanent city manager.

#### **12. MAYOR'S COMMENTS – Mayor Kedzierski**

Mayor Kedzierski commented on how Covid-19 has placed everything in an exceedingly difficult flux.

#### **13. NOTE DATES OF FUTURE CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS (Tues,7/21/20-7 pm & Tues, 8/18/20 -7pm)**

#### **14. NOTE DATES OF FUTURE TOWN HALL MEETINGS (Sat, 9/12/20 10am)**

#### **15. ADJOURNMENT**

On motion of Council Member Barrette, supported by Council Member Kucyk, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bruce R Nichols  
City Clerk