



CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES - *Proposed*
February 16, 2023

The City Council met for a Workshop Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
City Hall
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Dean at 6:00 p.m.

2. Attendance:

Present: Mayor Dean, Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton, Councilmembers Baldwin, Gardner, Leo, and Muncey.

Absent: Councilmember Lewis.

Others Present: City Manager Heise, Director of Planning, Zoning, & Project Management Cummins, DPW Superintendent Herbert, Clerk Wolters.

Motion by Baldwin, second by Stanton to accept the absence of Councilmember Lewis from tonight's meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried 5-0.

3. Agenda Changes: None.

4. Guest Speaker: None.

5. Public Comments on Agenda Items Only (Limit 3 minutes):

Barry Johnson (resident):

Presented Council his recommendation of changes to the Resolution for the Short-Term Rental Task Force Committee. When he goes to a meeting and there are people judging, he would expect an impartial group of people reviewing and not a list of special interest and predisposed prejudices that was used in the original makeup of the Short-Term Rental Task Force.

Bobbie Gaunt (resident) (Planning Commission member):

She applauds the changes that have been incorporated into the Resolution, including retaining a professional planning consultant, recognizing and adding school and public safety officials to the list of stakeholders and identifying a date. Most importantly, when the task force recommendations are to be presented to the planning commission and city council. What she is concerned about is the makeup of the task force and no explicit requirements for residency, only a preference. As a resident and property owner with no commercial interest, where is her voice represented on this task force.

Cathy Brockington (resident):

She is troubled by the number of people on the committee who have commercial interests versus the residential makeup of the committee. She has read about many other communities that have rental issues with less number of rentals than we do. She noted to city council that this is really an important move that we are making to protect our community, our residential neighborhoods, she really does not want to have commercial enterprises in a residential neighborhood. We need to keep our school and preserve the businesses that are here full time around the year, preserve the neighborhoods and start working on affordable and attainable housing.

Councilmember Gardner entered the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Jane Underwood (resident):

This process is getting done a lot better but there is still work to be done. Let's get it done correctly, there are still issues to be taken care of, let's get it done right. There are too many people who are not full-time residents actually living here and supporting our local organizations, and hopefully, more children in the schools.

Holly Anderson (resident) (Planning Commission member):

She noted it seems like the sticking point is who is going to make up the committee. Her sense of discussion was solving for fair representation. It may be wise to make that more general and name the council and planning component and those people should represent to the extent possible the different constituents who are stakeholder groups in the community affected by these policies.

Steve Manns (resident) (Planning Commission Chair):

The task force is made up of what we thought was various stakeholders throughout the city. The task force will not be making policy recommendations. They will not be implementing any obviously they don't have the power to implement any policies. He described the importance of each of different stakeholders within the community regarding the makeup of the committee.

Brian Elmore (resident):

Thanked Council and Planning Commission for all the collaboration and many iterations of this. It's great to hear all the dialogue and is encouraging as a part-time resident and also short-term rental owner that there he has a representative stakeholder voice in this. There is talk about all the numbers regarding how many short-term rentals there are, but there is no enforcement of the ordinance as it is today. He shouldn't be punished as a rule follower for the people who aren't and are not being enforced for existing ordinance that are in place.

6. Discussion Items:

A. Resolution 230216-A Resolution - Short Term Rental Task Force Recommended by Planning Commission:

On February 2, the Planning Commission held a special meeting and unanimously passed a resolution making a formal recommendation to City Council to form a short-term rental task force in accordance with section 4.28 of the City Charter. The City Council met for a workshop meeting on February 8 and discussed the Planning Commission's recommendations. There was consensus to create a short-term rental task force. The City Council was presented with a draft resolution to form the task force and agreed to discuss the resolution language at its regular meeting. On February 13, the City Council discussed the draft resolution language. The consensus was to make the following changes to the resolution, and schedule a special meeting to review and consider approving the final draft:

- Clarify that a professional planner, approved by City Council, will assist and facilitate the task force's work. This language was added under the fourth whereas.
- Add schools, public safety and other community stakeholders to the fifth whereas.
- Add that residents will be given preference for selection to serve on the task force under the twelfth whereas.
- Strike the language related to a budget and consultant planner from the third resolved section.
- Add that the recommendations and monthly written reports will also go to the City Council under the third resolved section.

Council went into discussion:

- Councilmember Baldwin noted everyone here is familiar with the changes that she proposed. She thanked Council for hearing her changes on Monday. She still believes that for all the things that were discussed on Monday that she doesn't need to reiterate tonight, the resolution is better. But it's still inherently flawed. And she noted she will be casting her no vote and wanted Council to be aware of that.
- Councilmember Gardner said he is in full support of the task force as a member of the Planning Commission and Council member. There is a consensus on the route they need to go, and path is being defined. All the input, it's evident why this hasn't been tackled before. He would like to see a couple more residents on the task force and appreciates the changes that have been made. He suggests that they add another month to the tail end of the timeline for the task force.
- Councilmember Stanton said they will not get to perfection on what everyone wants but all agree to get the task force together. We have way more short-term rentals than communities that are our size. The biggest thing that happened is adding a professional planning professional. The makeup may not be what everyone wants but everyone will have a voice in the final say and will be able to hear from all the stakeholders.
- Councilmember Muncey thanked Barry Johnson for his suggestions and told Council he would re-read the whole Resolution into record if Council decides to make any changes before, they vote.
- Councilmember Leo noted she has been the owner of a short-term rental and long-term renter, she been a non-voter. She has only 2 homes out of 8 neighbors that are owner occupied. She agrees with Councilmember Stanton that 50% is a high number and agrees with Brian Elmore that there needs to be enforcement. She would prefer having one more workshop but also is comfortable voting on this tonight.
- Mayor Dean noted the voters trusted him and elected him. He is a homeowner surrounded by short-term rentals and has two kids in the school. He has no commercial interest in the community and is a civil servant. He is sympathetic to the view of the short-term rental owners. He is ready to call the question on this and getting started on what they have all been elected to do which is make hard decisions.

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner to approve Resolution 230216-A to adopt The Planning Commission's recommendation to form a Short-Term Rental Task Force. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 5-1. Yes: Muncey, Leo, Dean, Stanton, Gardner. No: Baldwin

7. Public Comments (Limit 3 minutes):

Joe Clark (resident):

Resident for 13 years and many family generations prior. This topic is long overdue, and is encouraged to see dialogue and more importantly to see action. He is not opposed to short-term rentals but there is a lack of enforcement and welcomes Council and everyone's consideration. Residents should have rights too and he is interested in contributing.

Sylvia Daplye (resident):

She is a 30 year resident who is currently renting her home out for income to live in another state to take care of an ill family member. She follows all rules and would like to know if she is not. She welcomes the dialog and thanks Council for having this meeting.

8. Correspondence: None.

9. Council Comments:

- Councilmember Baldwin: As they only no vote, she wants to assure all members of planning and council that even though she disagreed with a lot of what was in the Resolution, she agrees with it and gets them somewhere. She will do everything and work just as hard.
- Councilmember Muncey: Reminded everyone that the Task Force is not going to make any decisions. He has had the opportunity to talk to almost half the people in the room and online. He appreciates everyone's opinions and peaceful joint effort without getting angry and emotional. He echoed the Mayor that they have a consensus and need to get the ball rolling.
- Councilmember Gardner: He is amazed by the cross section of people that are engaged on this subject from people that have been here for generations and people that have moved here recently. The Council, Task Force and Planning Commission has the responsibility to go around and touch base with the community.
- Councilmember Leo: She looks forward to the Task Force work and it is something that the community must do to ensure the identity of this community.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton: Knows City staff will start enforcing the rules on short-term rentals. Thanked Ryan Cummins for his excellent reports noting short-term rental statuses in the city. She is looking forward to the Task Force and getting everyone on board and that it will be a great group of people. She hopes the community thinks outside the box on some things or incentives to make people want to live here full-time.
- Mayor Dean:
He has faith in this community. This issue is hard. But it was identified by the residents as a top priority in their strategic planning session. They voted for them to sit and make hard decisions. He doesn't believe this needs to be a zero-sum game where somebody wins and somebody loses. He has faith, no matter what the constituency that everyone can appeal to, they can appeal to their better angels, and come up to solutions that maintain the prosperity and the character and the spirit of this community.

10. Adjourn (Voice call):

Motion by Stanton, second by Baldwin to adjourn, upon voice vote, motion carried 6-0, and Mayor Dean adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Wolters
City Clerk