

BRIDGMAN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
May 17, 2021
6:30 PM

The regular meeting of the Bridgman City Council was held on May 17, 2021 at City Hall, 9765 Maple Street, Bridgman, MI 49106 and remotely by means of electronic conferencing. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rose at 6:31 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT: John Bonkoske, Jan Trapani, Vince Rose, Stacy Stine, Sam Stine, Pam Hahaj (remotely)

COUNCIL ABSENT: Georgia Gipson

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Ganum, City Clerk Holm, Attorney Senica, Police Chief Unruh, Public Service Director Kading, Building Inspector Mattner (remotely), Assessor Baumann, Engineer Nykamp, Parks Director Ball, Fire Chief Buist

The pledge of allegiance was led by council.

Mayor Rose thanked Aaron Koleda and Sam Stine for all their assistance in getting this hybrid meeting off the ground tonight. He explained the meeting procedure and how the public will be able to comment under the Hearing of Citizens.

APPROVE/AMEND THE AGENDA:

Motion by Council Member Stacy Stine, seconded by Council Member Bonkoske to approve the agenda for May 17, 2021 as presented,

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: Trapani, Sam Stine, Rose, Stacy Stine, Hahaj, Bonkoske

Nays: None

Motion carried.

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

- Bill Boyd stated the Mayor sounds garbled and everyone is hard to hear. Also, the speed radar signs that this city is purchasing should have the city logo on it.

ACTION ITEMS:

Motion by Council Member Trapani, seconded by Council Member Sam Stine to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2021 regular meeting,

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: Sam Stine, Rose, Stacy Stine, Hahaj, Bonkoske, Trapani

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Council Member Stacy Stine, seconded by Council Member Bonkoske to approve the bills in the amount of \$68,926.50,

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: Rose, Stacy Stine, Hahaj, Bonkoske, Trapani, Sam Stine
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Motion by Council Member Trapani, seconded by Council Member Sam Stine to approve the Special Events Application submitted by Spencer Carr on behalf of the Bridgman Public Schools for a 5k-10k walk/run to take place on July 10, 2021,

Roll Call:

Yeas: Stacy Stine, Hahaj, Bonkoske, Trapani, Sam Stine, Rose
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Motion by Council Member Bonkoske, seconded by Council Member Stacy Stine to approve the grant agreement in the amount of \$127,900 for an Affordability and Planning Grant from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) to explore the feasibility of water service options in partnership with Lake Township,

Roll Call:

Yeas: Hahaj, Bonkoske, Trapani, Sam Stine, Rose, Stacy Stine
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Motion by Council Member Stacy Stine, seconded by Council Member Trapani to schedule a Public Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) on June 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall,

Roll Call:

Yeas: Bonkoske, Trapani, Sam Stine, Hahaj, Rose, Stacy Stine
Nays: None
Motion carried.

WORKSHOP ITEMS AND REPORTS:

City Attorney's Report – Introduction of a resolution opposing Michigan House Bill 4722 regarding short-term rentals

Attorney Senica explained Michigan House Bill 4722 regarding short-term rentals with council at length. She explained that this bill is a huge overreach by the State for the following reasons:

- It strips away the City's zoning and code enforcement authority. The police will be left to deal with all the issues that go along with short-term rentals in residential neighborhoods such as alcohol/marijuana issues, parking issues, noise, loud music, trash, and safety issues. If this bill passes, the police budget will need to completely be reevaluated.
- Most short-term rental ordinances require an on-duty manager to be available 24-7, just as a hotel would. This bill would eliminate that requirement.
- The Legislatures have determined that the right to rent homes in residential neighborhoods to be used as commercial space just like a hotel, is more important than the housing studies that show there is a desperate need of single-family homes for local families. It is also more important than allowing families peace in their own home.
- Bridgman is the right community for investors to come in and purchase homes to rent out. This would change the entire look and feel of Bridgman including the impact it would have on the schools.

- The primary drive behind this bill is the realtors who can then sell a different commodity.
- She gave examples of the long history Bridgman has had with short-term rentals. She has probably gone through 25 public hearings as the City's Attorney regarding this.

The council discussed the information and how it will change not only Bridgman, but the look and feel of neighborhoods everywhere in the State at length. The council is vehemently opposed to this House Bill and would like to try and collect other resolutions with other municipalities to bring to our State Representatives. Ganum stated this is a hot issue right now with Harbor Country communities and the Best Practices Committee that includes over 17 local governments. There is a Committee meeting tomorrow morning, that is why local governments everywhere are passing resolutions to send out ahead of the meeting.

Motion by Council Member Trapani, seconded by Council Member Bonkoske to adopt Resolution 2021-06, A Resolution Opposing House Bill 4277,

Roll Call:

Yeas: Sam Stine, Hahaj, Rose, Stacy Stine, Bonkoske, Trapani

Nays: None

Motion carried.

City Manager's Report

Ganum added a couple items in addition to his written report. Dave Mutz from the American Legion informed him that the Legion is not going to have a Memorial Day Parade this year. Instead, they are going to hold a small service on Memorial Day at Graceland Cemetery. All city council members are invited to attend. Ryan Kilpatrick has completed the first part of his findings to present to council on June 7, 2021. Lastly, the Berrien County Administrators report just came in today and he will get that information out to council.

Distribution of Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) City of Bridgman Budget and budget workshop

Ganum stated the council has now received the first draft of Fiscal Year 2022. The staff has worked very diligently on this. The City was awarded \$218,000 from Federal Funds which has not yet been received but is included in this budget. He then passed over the presentation to Treasurer Lambrix.

Treasurer Lambrix went through parts of the budget and hit on a few highlights:

- On page 2, the last line is the total balance of the budget which shows a surplus of \$374,267. Part of this surplus is the \$218,000 the City will be receiving from the Federal Funds. Another part is because there were no transfers out of the General Fund to help support the Water and Sewer Funds.
- The Water and Sewer Funds also show a surplus which demonstrates the progress that has been made from the rate increase last year. This surplus is being set aside for future expenditures.
- On page 4 – The Fund Balance in the General Fund is going from 72% down to 68.81%. This is still a healthy fund balance, which has been stable the last several years.
- The department heads are working on their capital assets list for the Capital Improvement Plan. This plan will show items that will be budgeted 5 – 10 years down the road.
- The health insurance premiums went up only 2.5% which is the lowest she has ever seen.
- Tax revenue only went up 1.9% which is basically the rate of inflation.

Assessor Baumann went through a presentation on the history of Headlee and Proposal A.

- In 1978 voters approved the Headlee Amendment and in 1994 voters approved Proposal A.
- He went through the Headlee Milage Reduction Fraction Calculation and explained what happens with the taxable value when the city is growing less than the inflation rate, more than the inflation rate, and growing at inflation rate.
- He explained how Headlee and Proposal A Interacts and how that affects the city's millage rate. Every year the millage rate either remains stable or is reduced slightly.
- He explained the city's revenue loss from Headlee and Proposal A and what the numbers would look like if there was fluidity from year to year.
- Key issues are as follows:
 - Prior to Proposal A, Headlee allows tax rates to move up and down to try and provide revenue growth equal to the rate of inflation. Proposal A legislation eliminated the ability for rates to move in both directions.
 - Home values uncap after a sale allowing the taxable value to increase. Conflicts with Proposal A and Headlee do not allow communities to benefit from these sales.
- Potential Solutions:
 - Allow millage rates to move up and down in relation to the consumer price index. This allows the millage to be reduced when good market conditions allow while also allowing for millage to increase when depressed markets and/or high inflation occur.
 - Remove the uncapping taxable value increases from the millage reduction fraction calculation. This prevents excess uncapped properties to artificially inflate the taxable value growth potentially preventing the jurisdiction from requiring a millage reduction.

Police Chief Unruh went over a few highlights for his upcoming budget:

- The increase under uniforms and equipment this year is for the purchase of new tasers and bulletproof vests. He will apply for a grant for the bulletproof vests that will cover 50% of the cost.
- A new squad car was not purchased last year and a new one is needed. He went out and received quotes from 4 dealerships. The lowest was from Signature Ford out of Owosso, MI. The Taurus will be traded in as well.
- The current body cameras are going on 7 years old which were purchased from donations that were given. Currently Watchguard Video is used in the squad cars and the quote for new body-cameras will interface with the current video systems.

Fire Chief Buist went over a few highlights for his upcoming budget:

- There are numerous testing and maintenance that is scheduled for the fire trucks and equipment annually. He went through and explained each one to give council a better understanding of what needs to be done on an annual basis.
- Tires need to be replaced on the fire truck 4029 which is the oldest engine in the fleet. Tires are supposed to be good for 7 years.
- The new training facility off Rambo Road has received quite a few donations along with the backing from Lake Charter Township and the Cook Nuclear Plant funding part of the facility. The city has less than \$10,000 invested so far. They are going to continue moving forward and hopefully finish the center next year. Benton Harbor now wants to come down and look at the facility.
- He has put in for the Berrien County Fire Chiefs Radio Grant Match to replace the current radios. If the department does not receive those funds, then he will look at purchasing refurbished ones.

Director of Public Services Kading went over highlights from his upcoming budget:

- Buildings and Grounds Budget
 - There will be some renovations done at City Hall including roof repair, various exterior repairs, and several new windows and doors.
 - The City Hall kitchen needs to be remodeled and updated due to the small size and staff staying at work during lunch. This includes a normal size sink, fridge, and more counterspace.
- Department of Public Services Budget
 - Purchasing a new “side by side”/UTV. He explained what it is used for.
 - Purchasing a concrete scarifier for sidewalk repairs to smooth out high spots for safety reasons.
- Major and Local Streets Budget
 - Baldwin Road will have chip seal/fog seal repairs.
 - Mathieu and Willard Streets will have chip seal/fog seal repairs.
 - Stelter Farms will have chip seal/fog seal repairs.
 - Maplewood will have chip seal/fog seal repairs.
- Water and Sewer Budget
 - This year the focus is on priority #4 in the Sanitary Sewer Asset Management Plan. There are several 6 – 8 spot lining repairs that will eliminate infiltration and save on the GRSD bills.
 - There are maintenance items for the water department that includes lighting replacement in the garage, exhaust fan in the chlorine room, roof repairs, water tower exterior cleaning, fire hydrant stripping/painting, and water main valve repair/replacements.
 - Additional money is being set aside for the reserve fund.

Parks and Recreational Director Ball went over highlights for her upcoming budget:

- The Parks Department will match funds to supplement the MNRTF grant of \$50,00 for a total of \$70,000 for Toth Park Playscape Renovations.
- Purchasing a new John Deer Gator to replace the 2006 Cadet.
- The possible replacement of the existing refurbished ice cream machine that was purchased in 2016. Ice cream is the top seller at the concession. A service technician was out today and said the current one is still in good condition.
- Purchasing parking kiosks similar to those in New Buffalo, St. Joseph, and South Haven which are easy to maintain. A fiber optics line will need to be run down Lake Street to better the internet service in the campgrounds and at the beach.
- Purchasing new picnic tables throughout the entire campground, new firepit rings, and a Mobi mat which is an ADA mat rolled out that can be moved throughout the beach.
- The revenues for the beach house is listed at \$85,000 in the budget and needs to be lowered to \$20,000.

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

- No one wished to be heard.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- Member Bonkoske feels that the city should send a response to Lake Charter Township’s letter stating their dissatisfaction for not wanting to participate in a joint committee with the city to discuss shoreline protection. He also gave major kudos to Chief Unruh and his staff. Recently he dealt with one of the officers and he was polite, responsive, fantastic, and could not be prouder.
- Mayor Rose passed out a resolution for council to read regarding Member Gipson’s absences. He asked Attorney Senica to write one up for consideration acknowledging her absences as excused absences per the City Charter due to the recent death of more than one family member.

Motion by Council Member Trapani, seconded by Council Member Bonkoske to adopt Resolution 2021-07, A Resolution excusing Council Member Gipson’s Absences,

Roll Call:

Yeas: Hahaj, Bonkoske, Trapani, Sam Stine, Rose, Stacy Stine

Nays: None

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Rose, seconded by Council Member Trapani to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m.,

Roll Call:

Yeas: Trapani, Sam Stine, Rose, Stacy Stine, Hahaj, Bonkoske

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Vince Rose, Mayor

Allyson Holm, City Clerk