

**BRIDGMAN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 1, 2021
6:30 PM**

The regular meeting of the Bridgman City Council was held on November 1, 2021, at City Hall, 9765 Maple Street, Bridgman, MI 49106 and was called to order by Mayor Rose at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT: Sam Stine, Jan Trapani, John Bonkoske, Vince Rose, Stacy Stine, Pam Hahaj, Georgia Gipson

COUNCIL ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Ganum, Attorney Senica, City Clerk Holm, Police Chief Unruh, Parks Director Ball, Director of Public Services Kading, Building Official Mattner, Assessor Baumann, Fire Chief Buist and Treasurer Lambrich

The pledge of allegiance was led by council.

APPROVE/AMEND THE AGENDA:

Motion by Council Member Stacy Stine, seconded by Council Member Hahaj to approve the agenda for November 1, 2021, as presented, **voice vote, motion carried unanimously.**

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

- Gene Hermann, Representative of the Bridgman American Legion – Spoke about the monument that was built at Greenwood cemetery in honor of our veterans and how the base of the monument was built. Hermann presented the city with a stone which reads “Dedicated to those who never came home”. It would be nice to see that stone placed by the flagpole at City Hall. The Township will also be given one at their next meeting.
- Dorothy, a Bridgman resident who has lived here for over 10 years – Stated that a lot of people that talk with her say there is no affordable housing here in Bridgman. There will be no where to go if the present trend continues. She would like to know if something can be done.

PRESENTATION:

Presentation by Matt Schmidt, Owner, Earned Run Real Estate Group

Schmidt thanked everyone for being able to come tonight to speak about his properties and upcoming projects. He apologized to the council for the fence along Lake Street that was being built without a permit and he did not realize it was on City property. For function and aesthetics, he would like the council to reconsider and allow him to continue building that fence with an agreement. He updated the council on the following regarding his properties:

- Currently his company owns 170 apartments in the City of Bridgman. This includes Sunset Landings, Sunset Dunes, Sunset Village, and Sunset Estates.
- In the last 24 months there have been improvements to his properties which includes new HVAC systems, updating facades, painting, landscaping, along with various other things. In the last two years he has spent \$1.2 million on improvements, and an additional \$1.3 million budgeted in the next two years moving forward.

- He is working on securing funds in the amount of \$5.7 - \$7 million to build 60 additional 2 – 4 bedroom units that will allow for affordable housing options. These would be built in addition to the housing at Sunset Village. He has started working with consultants and the City on this upcoming project.
- He was approached by the City asking for an easement for the Habitat for Humanity project. He is committed to donating enough land to build a road from Willow Street to Baldwin Road.
- He would like to have a long-term partnership with Bridgman and respectfully ask that the council allows the completion of his fence along Lake Street.

ACTION ITEMS:

Motion by Council Member Sam Stine, seconded by Council Member Gipson to approve the minutes from the October 18, 2021, regular meeting, **voice vote, motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Council Member Hahaj, seconded by Council Member Gipson to approve the bills in the amount of \$120,992.86, **voice vote, motion carried unanimously.**

The council discussed the 2021 Drain Assessment Invoice from the Berrien County Drain Commissioner’s Office in the amount of \$24,659.93 at length. The following were some of the talking points:

- The Drain Commissioner’s office has been notified in the last few years of continued problems in the Hidden Creek Subdivision. They had an opportunity to properly maintain and make improvements before the flooding happened which is now costing not only the city, but the city residents as well.
- There was no cost estimate provided to the city before emergency work and continued work after the flood happened. The City has no control over the Drain Commission. They will come in and do necessary repairs and then invoice the city.
- Attorney Senica told the council that it is fair to ask for an itemized bill to review before paying. There should be a file for each drain that shows the documentation on when they have been notified of issues or came out on site. This information can be requested or be made available through a FOIA request. There have been five residents along the Bedortha Drain that have signed a petition. She explained the process of what happens after a petition has been filed with the Drain Commission.
- Ganum explained that this bill is not due until February. He can invite Drain Commissioner Quatrin back to a council meeting to explain the itemized bill. Quatrin would like the City to also be part of the petition filed. Ganum said he can set up an open forum maybe at the school or another venue for Quatrin to explain to the council and the residents what the scope of a project might look like with a cost estimate for the City and the residents in the Bedortha Drain district.

Motion by Council Member Stacy Stine, seconded by Council Member Bonkoske to table paying the 2021 Drain Assessment Invoice from the Berrien County Drain Commissioner’s Office in the amount of \$24,659.93, **voice vote, motion carried unanimously.**

WORKSHOP ITEMS AND REPORTS:

City Clerk’s Report – Redistricting throughout Michigan – proposed Berrien County Apportionment Plan

The council did not have any questions with the written report included in the council packet.

City Assessor's Report – October 2021

Assessor Baumann explained the taxable values in the city that are not impacted by uncapping, will increase by 3.3% for 2022. Due to the inflation rate, the increase could be between 4% – 5% in 2023.

City Attorney's Report (verbal)

Attorney Senica informed council that there will be a closed session at the next meeting on further updates of HB 4722 and any options that the city might have. She explained that HB 4722 passed at the House level recently after midnight after eleven different changes to the bill. The final bill that was passed would allow municipalities to put a cap on the limit of the number of short-term rentals allowed to 30% of residential units. The language included condominiums but did not include apartments. The council discussed the information presented and how that could transform Bridgman.

City Manager's Report

- Ganum showed the council the new holiday banners.
- He thanked Gene Hermann for the stone that was dedicated to the city in honor of those who never returned home. He will put together a small ceremony for Veteran's Day with the city council and invite a few members from the American Legion.
- He shared the idea from his hometown of Grosse Pointe of a very popular poster containing a collage of photographs of buildings in town. He would like to explore creating a Bridgman poster that would be fairly inexpensive. The city could ask residents to submit photos, old and new to create one for Bridgman.

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

- Gene Hermann – Talked about short-term rentals and how he reached out to State Representative Wendzel. If the short-term rental bill passes at the Senate, maybe the city should reach out to other municipalities to file a class action suit or try and file an injunction. He also commented on the Drain Commission being able to do what they want, whenever they want and just send you the bill.
- Bill Boyd – He asked for clarification on the drain commission invoice and what the residents will be additionally charged. Lambrix explained that the total charge from the Drain Commission is \$66,000. The city will be paying the \$25,000 and the difference of \$41,000 will be split up to the residents within the varying drain districts.
- Ganum informed council that the Williams & Essig Drain was turned over from the County to the City by a resolution from 1982. This was discovered when the city called the Drain Commissioner to inform him of a small sink hole at the corner of Pearl and Church Street. The County is willing to take the drain back but the City needs to have an assessment of the drain done first. Thankfully with the SAW grant from 2018 an assessment was done on all city drains. Engineer Nykamp is going to go back through the videos and put a staff report together to send to the County. The council discussed the information presented and if it would be a good idea for the City to maintain that drain or if it should be turned back over to the County.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- No comments were had.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Council Member Gipson, seconded by Council Member Stacy Stine to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m., **voice vote, motion carried unanimously.**

Vince Rose, Mayor

Allyson Holm, City Clerk