

CITY OF HANCOCK COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023
HANCOCK CITY HALL, 399 QUINCY STREET
Public viewing available via ZOOM.com Meeting ID: 821 4402 1682

Public Hearing - Real property acquisition of three Finlandia University buildings, Mannerheim Hall, Nikander Hall, and Wargelin Hall

Public Hearing Opened at 6:00 pm

- Alan Salmi – 121 Water St., Hancock
 - In support of the acquisition, use human imagination to turn it into gold
- Melissa Bauman – 1905 Canal Rd., Houghton (Portage Township)
 - Hancock hometown
 - Property on Reservation & Elevation from White St. down a lot of buildings in blight condition
 - In support of the acquisition
 - Housing options people are moving back, looking for places they do not need to shovel snow and climb up and downstairs, all ages.
- Jim Hughes – 1900 St. Ann Circle, Hancock
 - Not in support of the acquisition
 - Recent acquired Risto Building, Arena, Quincy Green, Ryan St. Garden all of which have huge liabilities, maintenance
 - Risto's has not had any takers, Houghton County Arena came with many liabilities and lost its biggest user, needs a new roof and other upgrades
 - Quincy Green needs to be sold with the old school
 - Garden back into private ownership
 - City does not need to own more real estate
 - Concentrate on the Business & Technology Park since it has been 20 years in the making
 - 3 new buildings being built on US41 as we speak
 - UPPCO and Hospital are planning projects on Campus Drive
 - Out of sight out of mind, the Business & Tech Park may be a hard sell with no exposure to traffic.
- Michael Lancour – 1039 Quincy St., Hancock
 - In support of the purchase of the buildings
 - Developer would be interested in the dorms, need for housing, people working at the Business & Tech Park as well as Michigan Tech's growth
 - Great asset to the city, whether the city owns them or they are sold to a developer
- Jeff Ratcliff - 1002 Crestwood Dr., Hancock & Economic Developer for KEDA
 - Put into a bad situation by a State appointed Receiver, building probably should have sold by now if they had been allowed to sell at what the market would bear
 - If buildings are not acquired and winterized, they will freeze and rapidly deteriorate and we will lose assets in the city
 - As a resident as well as KEDA I support of the purchase, getting them back on the tax rolls and finding a developer
 - Also, in support of other recent acquisitions, Risto's recently acquired
 - City taking charge of their own destiny
 - When people let their buildings go that is what we end up with and it ends up being the public's responsibility to deal with them, either as wrecks that must be demolished or get ahold of them and develop them
- Nathan Perreault – Former Finlandia Assistant Professor of Management
 - Buildings sentimental value for some people, allows people to come back and see something whatever it may be used for

- Sale of the assets will be allowed hopefully bringing back some of the money to pay off the professors and staff who did not know if they were going to get paid
- He moved on but anything can help seeing the \$10,000 in the receivership come back for people who have families and are looking for that money
- In support of the purchase
- Steven Mauno – 1401 Quincy St. Apt. 404, Hancock
 - In support of the purchase
 - Concerned with vandalism if abandoned with various incidents over the years
- Davy Sprague – 202 Harris Ave., Hancock
 - In support of the City taking ownership of the properties
 - Housing options and plans to factor in public transit
- Frank Fiala – 326 Harris Ave., Hancock
 - In support of the acquisition
- Dean Woodbeck – 1020 Maplewood Dr., Hancock
 - Email comments submitted and placed on file
 - Not in support of the purchase for various reasons

Public Hearing Closed at 6:20 pm

Public Hearing - Rezoning of 2 parcels from Industrial Zone to R-1 Single Family Residential zone.

Public Hearing Opened at 6:20 pm

- Alan Salmi – any possibility to make the trail access with the property owners more solid?
 - Response: No.
- Annika Maki – people could speak against the re-zoning?
 - Response: Yes, and the purpose of this public hearing.
- City Manager, Babcock clarified the current zoning is Industrial, the request to rezone to Residential is more restrictive
- Councilmember Freeman commented, Mr. Wuebben already owns the property, he could at any time block access to the property and trails.
- Councilmember Lounibos commented, I would assume if you were developing an area for R-1 just like other homeowners, in the area, it would be a benefit to keep access because new homeowners would have access.
- Mayor, Rickard commented he has spoken to John Diebel with Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club (KNSC/Hancock Trail Club) they are working with property owners to continue the access from Tomasi Dr.
- City Manager, Babcock commented that Mr. Wuebben is a steward of the trails, activist towards the trails, does not want to limit the trail and it could grow with this future development, may have to be moved, it is an evolving project.

Public Hearing Closed at 6:26 pm

Regular Meeting - 6:26 P.M.

Call to order and pledge of allegiance led by Mayor Kurt Rickard
 Roll Call and verification of quorum
 Present: Blau, McKenzie, Freeman, Rickard, Tanner, Lounibos, Warstler
 Absent: None

Also Present in person: Thomas Fournier; Ginger Alberti, Jeff Ratcliff, Crissy Gerhart, Kenneth Simila, Carol Simila, Kathy Prince; Mary Faller; Mike Faller, Kathy Hookana, Steve Walton, Alan Salmi, Robert Lewis, James Hughes, Jeff Thornton, Bob Arens, Gary Beck, Victoria Dancy, Glenn Bugni, Nancy Bugni, Barbara Rickard, Melissa Bauman, Stephanie Stubenka; Junta Sprague; John Zucher, Tracie Williams, David Chynoweth, Forrest Aho, James Krans, Michael Lancour, Jim Quinlan, Nathan Perreault, Steven Mauno, Kevin Luke, Frank & Emily Fiala, Brenda Ochodnicky, Michael Lahti, Kathy Schreiner, Brian Gorcowski, Mary Babcock, Linda Kalinec, Darick Coponen, Tami Sleeman, John Erickson, Michael Markham and other members of the community

Also Present via Zoom: Michele Blau, Charlie Temple

Review and approval of agenda – Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Warstler to approve the agenda with the additional of New Business item #11 Consider approval to purchase 2 street light poles for Quincy Street from Standard Electric’s quote of \$8,347.06 per light pole and New Business item #12 Consider approval to purchase reducing valves from Dorner per Quote at a total cost of \$14,724.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion Carried

Public Comment

- Mike Lahti - 913 Quincy St., Hancock
 - Commented the crosswalks are not well maintained, they need to be painted, who maintains them the State or the City?
- Robert Lewis – 1117 Roberts St., Hancock
 - Recommended the City purchase the Finlandia Football field, suggested using the funding from the funds in the past budgeted to the PLWSA bonds, which are now paid off. City Manager, Babcock responded that the Hancock School District purchase of this property was just completed.
- Mike Faller – 701 Cliff St., Hancock
 - Lives in a residential district and commented that a Bed & Breakfast went in across the street, referenced the Covenants and zoning
- Jim Krans – 2003 St. Ann Circle, Hancock
 - Commented on the 19 lots in Pleasant Ridge area and a Bed & Breakfast being built in the area. They are not satisfied with the response from the city.

Communication

EGLE – Water Supply Evaluation

Thank you – Goulette Family

Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Freeman to accept and place on file the communication as presented.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion Carried

Review and acceptance of meeting minutes

PLWSA September 12, 2023

Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Warstler to receive and put on file the meeting minutes as presented.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion Carried

Review and approval of City Council meeting minutes

Special Meeting September 18, 2023

Regular Meeting September 20, 2023

Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Warstler to approve and accept the City Council Special meeting minutes of September 18, 2023 and the City Council Regular meeting minutes of September 20, 2023 as presented.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion Carried

Administrative Report

City Manager, Babcock commented on the following:

- MDOT- Adjusted Census Urban Boundary
- EGLE Shoreline Restoration Grant project has been completed.
- Christmas Walk planning has started, it will be November 24th.
- RRC Virtual Academy is available and a great way to learn about the various grant opportunities available now that we are RRC Certified.
- Keweenaw Coop – 50th Anniversary Celebration will be Saturday, October 28th from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
- Rotary Wine Tasting and Silent Auction presented by the Hancock Rotary will be held on November 3rd at 7:00 pm at the Finnish American Heritage Center.
- Halloween Trick-or-Treating will be from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on October 31st and the Church of the Resurrection will be having a Trunk-or-Treat during that time also.
- Community Pumpkin Races sponsored by Keweenaw CAPE will be on October 21st starting at 12:00 pm.
- Maasto Hiihto Trail opening ceremony was held on October 11th.
- Fire Grant of \$10,000 for turnout gear.
- Fire Truck will be picked up the first week of November for repairs.
- MDOT Category B projects for Minnesota, North and Prospect Streets were approved.
- The FY 2023 audit is well underway and moving along.
- A notice was sent to residents on Summit Street, the city has some winter parking spaces available in that area.
- Police Chief, Sleeman gave an update on putting recruit, Ben Galetto, through the Police Officer Academy.
- DPW Director, Erickson, gave an update on the completion of Poplar Street, Salt Barn is coming along and the DPW roof. A notice was sent to residents along the Poplar Street area for input on additional stop signs.

New Business

1. Motion by councilor Warstler and supported by Councilor McKenzie to appoint Steph Olsson to the Downtown Development Authority with a term ending January 31, 2025.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion Carried

2. Motion by Councilor Blau and supported by Councilor Warstler to approve the purchase agreement with Patrick O’Keefe and the firm O’Keefe and Associates Consulting, LLC (“Receiver”) as the Receiver for Finlandia University to purchase Mannerheim Hall, Nikander Hall, and Wargelin Hall in the amount of \$10,000 each.

Roll Call
Yes: Warstler, Lounibos, Tanner, Rickard, Freeman, McKenzie, Blau
No: None
Motion Carried

3. Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Freeman to approve the rezoning of parcels 31-503-001-50 and 31-503-002-25 from Industrial to R-1 Single Family Residential.

Roll Call
Yes: Blau, McKenzie, Freeman, Rickard, Tanner, Lounibos, Warstler
No: None
Motion Carried

4. Motion by McKenzie and supported by Warstler to approve the Rural Transit Assistance program (RTAP) third party contract Michigan Public Transit Association and the City of Hancock for a period of October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2026.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion Carried

5. Motion by Councilor Blau and supported by Councilor Freeman to approve the current accounts payable in the amount of \$705,202.16.

Roll Call
Yes: Warstler, Lounibos, Tanner, Rickard, Freeman, McKenzie, Blau
No: None
Motion Carried

6. Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Freeman to approve change order #2 for the Maasto Hiihto Trail and Bridge repairs in the amount of \$2,147.00.

Roll Call
Yes: Blau, McKenzie, Freeman, Rickard, Tanner, Lounibos, Warstler
No: None
Motion Carried

7. Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Freeman to approve MJO Contracting payment application #6 for the Maasto Hiihto Trail Repairs in the amount of \$164,701.79.

Roll Call

Yes: Warstler, Lounibos, Tanner, Rickard, Freeman, McKenzie, Blau

No: None

Motion Carried

8. Motion by Councilor Warstler and supported by Councilor Blau to approve Payne and Dolan's Hancock Business and Technology Park payment application #6 in the amount of \$679,036.33.

Roll Call

Yes: Blau, McKenzie, Freeman, Rickard, Tanner, Lounibos, Warstler

No: None

Motion Carried

9. Motion by Councilor Blau and supported by Councilor McKenzie to approve the amendment to the listing contract for Kristine Weidner for the Business and Technology Park to extend it to September 27, 2024.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion Carried

10. Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Warstler to approve Central Structures payment application #2 for the Salt and Storage Barn building in the amount of \$180,450.00.

Roll Call

Yes: Warstler, Lounibos, Tanner, Rickard, Freeman, McKenzie, Blau

No: None

Motion Carried

11. Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Warstler to approve the purchase of 2 street light poles for Quincy Street from Standard Electric's quote of \$8,347.06 per light pole.

Roll Call

Yes: Blau, McKenzie, Freeman, Rickard, Tanner, Lounibos, Warstler

No: None

Motion Carried

12. Motion by Councilor McKenzie and supported by Councilor Warstler to approve the purchase of reducing valves from Dorner per quote at a total cost of \$14,724.

Roll Call

Yes: Warstler, Lounibos, Tanner, Rickard, Freeman, McKenzie, Blau

No: None

Motion Carried

Public Comment

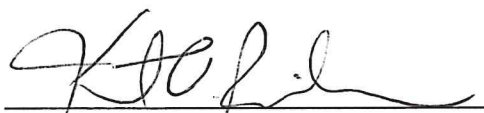
- Ginger Alberti – 932 Ehtel Ave. and 322 Quincy St., Hancock
 - Requested an update on Navy St. as it was missed on the administrative report.
 - City Manager, Babcock gave an update – estimates are being requested for a 1-way street and a walking path.
- Alan Salmi – 121 Water St., Hancock
 - Thank you for property acquisition and where would he forward a plan for consideration of a housing co-op.
- Michael Lancour – 1039 Quincy St., Hancock
 - Asked about the lights that flicker on Quincy St.
 - City Manager, Babcock responded that it is a circuit board problem that is under warranty, awaiting parts.
- Jim Quinlan – 430 Navy St. Unit 12, Hancock
 - Recreation would be eliminated with the road being put through on Navy St.
- Davy Sprague – 202 Harris Ave., Hancock
 - Applaud the Council for the decision to purchase the Finlandia buildings.
- Kevin Luke – 312 Navy St., Hancock
 - Commented on the consideration of a through road on Navy St., consider snow removal issues and the properties in the area were purchased as an opportunity to not have a through street.
- John Zurcher – 1016 Summit St., Hancock
 - Commented on Navy St. not classified as a fire street.

Motion by Councilor Blau and supported by Councilor Freeman to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.


Yes: All

No: None

Motion Carried



Kurt Rickard, Mayor



Linda Kalinec, City Clerk