

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF ESCANABA, MICHIGAN
Regular Council Meeting
Thursday, January 5, 2012**

The meeting was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Leo J. Evans at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 410 Ludington Street.

Present: Mayor Leo J. Evans, Council Members, Walter A. "Pete" Baker, Patricia A. Baribeau, Ronald J. Beauchamp, and Brady L. Nelson.

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager James V. O'Toole, City Attorney Ralph B.K. Peterson, City Department Heads, media, and members of the public.

City Clerk Robert S. Richards gave the invocation and led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Baker moved, Nelson seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve Special Meeting Minutes from December 7, 2011, December 14, 2011, and Regular Meeting Minutes from December 15, 2011, as submitted.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Council Member Beauchamp asked to add discussion on City 2012 Meeting schedules.

Baker moved, Beauchamp seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve the City Council Agenda as amended.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION - None

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing - Stephenson Avenue Improvement - Project Closeout.

The City of Escanaba received ICE Grant funds for the reconstruction of Stephenson Avenue. With the project nearing completion, and grants funds expended, the City was required to hold a Public Hearing to allow members of the public to speak regarding any aspect of the project.

This being a public hearing, Mayor Evans asked if there was any public comment.

City resident John Harris stated the original plans included a bicycle path on Stephenson Avenue. He believed there were funds allocated for a bicycle path along Stephenson Avenue as part of the project. Mr. Harris questioned why a bicycle path was not constructed. Mr. Harris stated Stephenson Avenue was a major road to Gladstone, Michigan. Mr. Harris stated it was a goal of their group to have a bicycle path connecting the communities of Escanaba and Gladstone. The local hi-way could not have a bicycle path. Mr. Harris believed a bike path along Stephenson Avenue was going to be a good start to connect the communities.

Public Works Superintendent/City Engineer William Farrell stated there was an extra 4 feet to widen the sidewalks on each side of Stephenson Avenue. Mr. Farrell stated although the bike path was not marked, the four foot section closest to the curb was made to accommodate bicycle traffic along that section of Stephenson Avenue. Mr. Farrell stated the final set of project plans did delineate that four foot section of sidewalk for the bicycle path along Stephenson Avenue.

Hearing no public comment, Mayor Evans closed the public hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval - Traffic Control Order (TCO) – No. 978 - Department of Public Safety.

On December 20, 2011, the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee recommended approval of one (1) Traffic Control Order. A Traffic Control Order has an immediate effect but must be approved by Council within 90 days in order to become permanent. Administration recommended the following TCO be approved by Council:

- a. TCO No. 978. An order to remove “No Parking” signs (3) on the 200 Block in front of 207, 213, and 221 North 11th Street.

NB-1 Nelson moved, Baribeau seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve Traffic Control Order #978, an order to remove “No Parking” signs (3) on the 200 Block in front of 207, 213, and 221 North 11th Street.

Discussion – Condemnation Hearing Date - Setting Date for Public Hearing – 700 Ludington Street.

Administration requested Council set the date of February 16, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. as a public hearing date on the possible condemnation of a building located at 700 Ludington Street, Escanaba, MI.

NB-2 After Council questions regarding condemnation procedures, Nelson moved, Baker seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to set the date of February 16, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. for a public hearing date regarding condemnation of the building located at 700 Ludington Street, Escanaba, MI.

Scheduling of Public Hearing - Citizen Participation - 2012/13 Fiscal Year Budget Preparation.

Each year, City Council held public hearings to facilitate input from its citizens for the City's next fiscal year budget. Council Members informed members of the public the first of five (5) scheduled public hearings was scheduled for January 19, 2012, for citizen input on the 2012/13 Fiscal Year Budget. Council Members advised the next two public hearings would be held on February 16, 2012, and March 15, 2012.

Beauchamp moved, Baribeau seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to schedule a public hearing for January 19, 2012, for citizen input on the 2012/13 Fiscal Year Budget.

Update – Power Generation/Plant Operation Options/Power Purchase – Electric Department.

Administration updated the City Council and public on the status of the Power Plant and power purchase agreement.

Discussion – City Board and Commission meeting dates.

Council Member Beauchamp stated he was expecting Council and City Board and Commission Meeting Calendar schedules be given to them so the schedules could be relayed to members of the public. He was advised by the City Clerk that the schedules were posted on the City Public Notice Board, and the City Manager incorporated the meeting calendar into the January News Letter. Council Member Beauchamp believed it was Council's responsibility to have the information sent to them so further additional information be relayed to members of the public at a regular City Council Meeting, and that further information be displayed on the City Web Site. Council Member Beauchamp asked that in the future the yearly Council and Meeting schedules be forwarded to Council so the information could be relayed to members of the public.

Manager O'Toole stated information was also forwarded to Department Heads in charge of City Boards and Commissions. They were asked to have the City Boards and Commissions formerly adopt their yearly schedule.

Council Member Baker thanked the City Clerk and Administration for insuring the technical aspects of the law were met, but also believed it was Council's duties to highlight the information at a regular open Council meeting.

Council Members also encouraged members of the public to volunteer and serve on the City Board and commissions.

With Council consensus, Administration was directed to incorporate Council and City Board and Commission Meeting calendar on the City Web Site.

APPOINTMENT(S) TO CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES - None

Mayor Evans, with Council consensus, appointed Gilbert X. Cheves to the Electric Advisory Committee, term ending 2015.

BOARD, COMMISSION, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council Members reviewed City Board and Commission meetings each attended since the last City Council Meeting.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

City resident Scott Carlson gave condolences to the family of Robert Miller and asked members of the public who wished to donate to the family to contact them.

City resident Lil Zorza commented on the proposal of a homeless shelter on the 600 block of Ludington Street.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Proclamation and Certificate of Appreciation to Robert A. Smith upon his retirement. Proclaiming January 5, 2012, as "Robert A. Smith Day"
- Encouraged members of the public to dispose of their Christmas Trees at the City disposal sites.

Hearing no further public comment, the Council adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Richards, CMC
City Clerk

Approved: _____
Leo J. Evans, Mayor