

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF ESCANABA, MICHIGAN  
Regular Council Meeting  
Thursday, December 6, 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.

Nelson moved, Baribeau seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve Regular Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2012, and Special Meeting Minutes from November 20, 2012, as submitted.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

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

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION** – None

**AWARD PRESENTATION**

Mayor Evans presented Certificates of Meritorious Service to the 600 Block Ludington Street Historical Committee Members thanking the Committee for their hard work. Certificates were presented to: Blaine Degrave, Peter Strom, Karen Lindquist, Don Curran, and Carolyn Stacey.

**BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT**

James Rettig, member of the Delta County Coalition Against Homelessness, asked Council to investigate the establishment of transitional housing in the City Commercial District and to establish a task force appointed by Council. Mr. Rettig provided area statistics on homelessness and additional signatures to a petition that was presented to Council which stated:

"We, the people who sign this petition, want the Escanaba City Council to require the Zoning Code Official make an interpretation as to what district or districts should accommodate transitional housing as required by the Zoning Code. See Section 112.1"

Bobbie Stacey, member of the Delta County Coalition Against Homelessness, Advisory Board Member of the Salvation Army, and as a member of the Unitarian Universalist Social Action Committee, who put forth the petition before Council this evening. Mrs. Stacey spoke in support of a Council Task Force on Homelessness, but believed a proposed E2 Special Planned District would be inadequate for Transitional Housing District. Mrs. Stacey suggested to Council that the best districts to develop a well-planned and coordinated "scattered-site" transitional housing program were District E – Commercial and the largely adjacent District C- Multifamily. Mrs. Stacey urged the Council and the Code Official to reach a determination through the Task Force.

Mary Busick, Case Manager of Lutheran Social Services Voices for Youth, reviewed their Homeless Services at 220 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street spoke in support of transitional housing for the homeless and the current homeless shelter their group operates.

Joan Stacey, member of the High School Youth Group on Homelessness, spoke in support of transitional housing for the homeless.

Beth Graham, Chair of the Delta County Coalition Against Homelessness, spoke in support of transitional housing for the homeless and reviewed homeless statistics in Delta County.

Jim Gehling, Chairman of the Unitarian Universalist, spoke in support of transitional housing for the homeless. Mr. Gehling hoped the task force would make quick decisions. Decisions need to be made now and believed their group had all the information the task force would need in order to obtain grants to help the area homelessness.

Nisha Coleman, Unitarian Universalist member, licensed social worker for the State of Michigan, and region chair for the Homeless in the Upper Peninsula, also spoke in support of Transitional Housing in a timely manner. She advised the issue was emotional, and there needed to be a community solution that would benefit everyone.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Approval - 3rd Annual Mites to Men Pond Hockey Tournament - Ludington Park.**

The Escanaba Junior Hockey Association sought Council approval to hold the 3rd Annual Mites to Men Pond Hockey Tournament in Ludington Park southwest of the Bonifas Drive bridge on February 1st through 3rd, 2013. Additionally, they requested the City to provide access to power and provide garbage pickup services. Administration recommended Council approval provided an acceptable liability insurance certificate was filed with the City and event staff clean-up after the event.

**NB-1** Nelson moved, Beauchamp seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve a request by the Escanaba Junior Hockey Association, to hold the 3rd Annual Mites to Men Pond Hockey Tournament in Ludington Park southwest of the Bonifas Drive bridge on February 1st through 3rd, 2013, and provide access to power and provide garbage pickup services, provided an acceptable liability insurance certificate was filed with the City and event staff clean-up after the event.

**Approval – Electrical Transformer(s) Purchase– Electric Department.**

City Administration sought Council approval to purchase ten (10) electrical transformers of various sizes. Request for bids were solicited from six (6) vendors, with five (5) vendors submitting bids. Administration, after evaluating the bids, recommended approval of the bid for the ERMCO transformers from RESCO, Inc. in the amount of \$40,621.00.

**NB-2** Nelson moved, Baribeau seconded, to approve the bid for the ERMCO transformers from RESCO, Inc. in the amount of \$40,621.00.

Upon a Call of the Roll, the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Nelson, Baribeau, Baker, Beauchamp, Evans  
Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Discussion – Transitional Housing/Homelessness Task Force Creation – City Manager.**

Manager O'Toole requested the City Council appoint a task force whose charge would be to research and address the issues of homelessness in the City of Escanaba and come up with potential ways the City and Community partners could address those issues.

Manager O'Toole stated a Task Force should be created as a community, not only in the City of Escanaba, but to send invites to municipalities throughout the entire County to:

- Understand the nature and extent of the current kinds of homelessness;
- Identify gaps in the services, zoning matters, and available facilities;
- Develop a County Wide Strategy to eliminate homelessness;
- Create solution oriented approaches to resolve the issue.

The Council, after considerable discussion among themselves and with members of the community in attendance, asked that a Task Force be created at the next regular

Council meeting. The Council asked individuals who wished to be a member of the Homelessness Task Force to contact City Administration prior to December 20<sup>th</sup>.

**NB-3** Nelson moved, Beauchamp seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve to appoint a task force at the December 20, 2012, City Council meeting, and to extend invites to churches, groups and municipalities within Delta County, and to establish as their basic mission to:

- Understand the nature and extent of the current kinds of homelessness;
- Identify gaps in the services, zoning matters, and available facilities;
- Develop a County Wide Strategy to eliminate homelessness;
- Create solution oriented approaches to resolve the issue.

**Update – Power Generation/Plant Operation Options – City Administration.**

Manager O'Toole updated the City Council and public on the sale of the Power Plant and related items. Mr. O'Toole advised Escanaba Green Energy (EGE) had until December 20<sup>th</sup> to purchase the Power Plant, and reviewed various details of the sale EGE was still working on.

**Approval - New Personal Property Exemption Resolution Amendment – Besse Wood Products.**

Administration sought Council approval of an amendment to the October 18, 2012 Besse Wood Product exemption from taxation for qualified new personal property pursuant to PA 328 of 1998 for property located at 1720 North Lincoln Road, by having the words "as an eligible distressed area" added to the first paragraph, as requested by the State of Michigan.

**NB-5** By Council Member Baribeau, seconded by Council Member Nelson, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to amend the October 18, 2012 Besse Wood Product exemption from taxation for qualified new personal property pursuant to PA 328 of 1998 for property located at 1720 North Lincoln Road, by having the words "as an eligible distressed area" added to the first paragraph.

The amended October 18, 2012, resolution now read:

**RESOLUTION TO GRANT BESSE LLC, INC.  
ABATEMENT OF QUALIFIED NEW PERSONAL PROPERTY**

**Whereas,** Pursuant to P.A. 328 of 1998, City Council has the authority to grant an exemption from the collection of taxes on all new personal property of an eligible business in an industrial development district within the City of Escanaba as an eligible distressed area; and

**Whereas,** BESSE, LLC, is an eligible business located within an industrial development district established by this Council on October 8, 2012, and is primarily a hardwood sawmill operation; and

**Whereas,** Written notice has been given by mail to all owners of real property located within the district and to the public by newspaper advertisement in the Daily Press public posting of the hearing on granting the proposed abatement; and

**Whereas,** On October 18, 2012, a public hearing was held at which the assessor and the representatives of all affected taxing units, as well as all residents and taxpayers of the City of Escanaba, were afforded an opportunity to be heard thereon; and

**Whereas,** The Escanaba City Council deems it to be in the public interest of the City of Escanaba to grant an Abatement of Qualified New Personal Property to BESSE, LLC, as proposed,

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** by the City Council of the City of Escanaba that BESSE LLC,

Be and hereby is granted for a period of twelve (12) years an exemption from the payment of property taxes on all new personal property purchased or leased for use at the existing manufacturing plant located at 1720 North Lincoln Road in the City of Escanaba, Delta County, and State of Michigan, and further described as:

PRT SE1/4 OF SEC 13 T39N R23W & PRT SW1/4 SEC 18 & NW1/4 SEC 19 T39N R22W DESC AS; COM @ SW COR SEC 18 TH N0°14'E 224.38 FT TH N88°39'W 20.65 FT TO E R/W HWY US2&41&M35 AND THE POB TH N23°09'W 131.88 FT TH S88°39'E 413 FT TH N0°14'E 30 FT TH S88°39'E 954 FT TH S0°05'E 351.30 FT TH N85°06'20"E 319.38 FT TH S75°00'38"W PAR W/ & 130 FT N OF CL MOST NLY TRK OF WI CENTRAL RR 1262.37 FT TO BEG OF 1087.68 FT RAD CURVE TO RT CHORD S79°37'28"W 175.07 FT TH S84°05'43"W 1.43 FT TO ELY R/W SD HWY TH N23°09'W 612.56 FT TO POB 16.36 AC M/L

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

**BOARD, COMMISSION, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Nisha Coolman of the Delta County Coalition Against Homelessness, extended an invite to Council Members and public to attend their monthly meetings.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Delta County Historic Society Christmas Bake Sale was scheduled for December 8<sup>th</sup>, at the DeGrand House located at 1925 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South;
- The Escanaba Christmas Parade was scheduled for December 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Hearing no further public comment, the Council adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Richards, CMC  
City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leo J. Evans, Mayor