

CITY OF LAWRENCE

Common Council

February 21, 2024

Regular Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Wells, Lisa Chavis, Zach Cramer, Kristie Krone, Sherron Freeman, Carlos Jennings, Betty Robinson, and Liz Masur

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Tyrrell Giles

ALSO, BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Bren Britt

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Leatrice Adkisson, Carrie Doehrmann, Scott Krapf

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy Chief of Staff LeAndre Level, Chief of Staff Zachary Brown

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

Council President Betty Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was administered, followed by a prayer given by Councilor Chavis.

Councilor Robinson recognized there was a quorum. It was also recognized there were extra copies of the agenda located in the back of the room along with a sign-up sheet for comments from the citizens.

COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS OR RESOLUTIONS: Councilor Wells made a motion to give a moment of silence for one of our very own, fallen Firefighter Lt. John Andrew “Andy” Ambers. Councilor Cramer 2nd the motion. Motion carried.

Councilor Freeman stated a variance was granted in 2019 that allowed the former Marsh Supermarket building near 56th and Franklin Road to operate as a warehouse. One of the stipulations that was given in this variance was for a grocery store to be open within a year. The owner is not living up to his commitment and has given many excuses about why it has not happened. Due to Covid-19 and supply issues. The owner was served with many violations from the City of Indianapolis. They have now made their legal team aware of these violations and notification was sent on 2/15/2024. These issues affect council districts 1,2 and 3. The building was purchased on 10/1/2019. He’s had enough time to fulfill his obligations.

Councilor Freeman also states she had a conversation with one of her constituents. Ms. Kristin, of Kensington Farms. She would like the council to look into a 4-way stop, on Chadworth Way and Kensworth Drive. Ms. Kristin Christine also stated that her street was misspelled. She wants to know if it can be corrected. Another conversation was had by councilor Freeman and one of her constituents, regarding the blue street signs. There are still the old signs located at 63rd and Twyckenham that need to be replaced.

Councilor Freeman asked how much money is left in the ARP Fund and when is the deadline for it to be spent. What project does the administration plan to spend the money on.

Councilor Krone states she was contacted by a constituent in District 6 regarding signage issue as well. The first is in Persimmon Creek Neighborhood, off Carroll Road and 79th street. Miss Tanya and Mr. Kevin have reached out asking for 3 “Slow Down” signs in their neighborhood. A zoom call took place with Mr. Level, Deputy Chief of Staff, Miss Tanya, Mr. Kevin and Councilor Krone to get clarity on the issue. This information has been passed on to DPW. Councilor Krone second signage request comes from her constituent in Bradford Creek. Mr. Patrick would like the “stop” sign on his cul de sac to be changed to a “yield” sign like the other cul de sac in his neighborhood. Mr. Level has also been made aware of this request.

Councilor Wells states that Councilor Freeman is correct regarding the issue of the variance being granted and the owner not fulfilling his obligations. The variance was not given by the council. Councilor Wells and others fought against the use of the former Marsh Supermarket building as a warehouse. The owner appealed it with the City of Indianapolis and agreed to the grocery store. Councilor states there are multitude of things the administration is doing for the City of Lawrence to get control of our zoning. Councilor Wells announced that Cheri Storm will attend the next meeting. She plans to give a presentation regarding a mobile clinic to spay and neuter cats for a low cost.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Regular Meeting 2-5-2024 and Special Meeting 2-12-2024

Councilor Chavis motioned to approve the minutes. Councilor Jennings 2nd the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS 2-05-2024: Councilor Chavis moved to approve Payroll Claims for \$1,052,912.31 [January 31, 2024, payroll] and Invoices [for vendors] as presented today [for \$1,676,621.84]. Councilor Wells seconded the motion. By a roll call vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Level updated the council and strongly encouraged their attendance for our Black History Month Annual Celebration. Mayor Whitfield and on behalf of the city expressed their condolences and paid tribute to Lt. Andy Ambers who passed away. Comment from Chief Bigsbee, of the Lawrence Police Department, regarding cars parked on the streets and sidewalks in Benjamin Square that was mentioned in our February 5th by Mr. Reece. Informed us LPD has tagged several vehicles in that neighborhood. LPD will continue to monitor the situation. The old street signs have been replaced with the new blue street signs inside Benjamin Square neighborhood per Jim Heneghan, Street Director. Mr. Heneghan also wants the council to know the first round of potholes complaints have been addressed. He expects more complaints to come in as the weather progresses. Fire Chief Wallace wants the council to know Station #37 must move out of their station for a few days due to the leak that took place. The HVAC system must be removed. Mr. Level addressed the question that Councilor Freeman asked regarding ARP. There is 5.6 million dollars left in the fund. In the coming weeks the administration will come before the council on proposed ideas for the remaining funding. Through Federal Regulations, the money can only be used for infrastructure and public safety.

COMMENTS FROM THE CITIZENS: Daniel Rapp, 5718 Walling Wood Drive, his concern is regarding the members on the zoning board. In the 2/5/2024 regular meeting there were appointments voted onto the zoning board. In our 2/12/2024 special meeting the appointments to the zoning board needed to be done over. He asked the council if the appointments made on 2/12/2024 are these the members who will attend the March meeting.

Councilor Wells made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Jennings 2nd the motion.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m., by President Robinson.

Betty Robinson, President

Leatrice Adkisson, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions.