

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Mayor Denison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Recognition

A. Recognize Hannah Roberts, Women’s BMX Freestyle Silver Medalist at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games

We honor Hannah Roberts’ many achievements by issuing the following proclamation.

WHEREAS, Hannah Roberts is a native of Buchanan, Michigan, and graduate of Buchanan High School; and

WHEREAS, Hannah Roberts, through her many years of hard work, determination and talent was the first woman to land a 360 tail whip in competition and has become a world-renowned as a three-time BMX Freestyle World Champion; and

WHEREAS, Hannah Roberts represented Team U.S.A. in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in the debut of the Women’s BMX Freestyle event held July 31, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on July 31, 2021, Hannah Roberts battled through injury to win a Silver Medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, becoming the youngest American medalist in cycling since 1912; and

WHEREAS, the City of Buchanan wants to acknowledge that Hannah Roberts has proven herself as an amazing athlete and role model for our local youth;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Buchanan Commission, on the eve of her birthday, proclaims that the 10th day of August each year shall henceforth forever be celebrated as “Hannah Roberts Day” in the City of Buchanan.

City of Buchanan Commission

B. Recognize Mike Baker as the City’s new Director of Public Services

We honor Mike Baker for his 18 years of service to the City of Buchanan. We appreciate the knowledge and experience he has amassed over those years and congratulate him on his promotion to the role of Director of Public Services.

C. Recognize Tim Ganus for being named the City’s new Director of Public Safety

Tim Ganus has been an officer with the City of Buchanan for 9 years and our Chief of Police since January 2020. We honor him for his service and appreciate the knowledge and experience he has amassed over those years and congratulate him on his promotion to the role of expanded role as the Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police.

Mayor Denison led the Pledge.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Roll Call

PRESENT: Mayor Sean Denison, Mayor Pro Tem Mark Weedon, Commissioner Cameron Downey, Commissioner Larry Money, Commissioner Patrick Swem

ABSENT: None

STAFF: City Manager Heather Grace, City Clerk Barbara Pitcher, Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police Tim Ganus, Director of Public Services Mike Baker, Treasurer Stephanie Powers, Community Development Director Rich Murphy

GUESTS: Don Ryman, Alan Robandt, Dan Vigansky, Jeff Rea, Karin Falkenstein, Michael Rowland, Diana Hickock, Norma Ferris, Rebecka Hoyt, Dan Benak, Fran Terry, Ralph McDonald, Tony DeOrnellas, and three others.

V. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, seconded by Commissioner Swem to approve agenda as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

VI. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

Alan Robandt - submitted a handout to the Commission from the National Park Service U.S. Department of Interior regarding rehabilitation standards and guidelines and spoke regarding their applicability to the Ross Sanders House and potential sale to the Michigan Gateway Foundation.

VII. Consent Agenda (can be approved all in one motion, for general housekeeping items)

A. Approve Minutes

July 26, 2021, Regular Meeting; July 27, 2021, Special Meeting of the Joint City Commission and Planning Commission; August 4, 2021, Special Meeting

B. Approve Expenditures for August 9, 2021, in the amount of \$101,454.19

Payments of note: BS&A Software \$32,695.00; Andrews University, Planning Design Study (final payment for services previously rendered) \$9,094.00.

C. 2021 Notice of Meeting Revision

Approve the following changes to the 2021 Notice of Meetings:

Change the regular meeting schedule of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board from the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. to the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Change meeting location change for Buchanan Tree Friends from the Buchanan Art Center to River St. Joe.

Update board name for Buchanan Fine Arts Council to include "Area", as in Buchanan Area Fine Arts Council.

Remove future meetings of the Friends of the Ducks from the schedule.

D. Banner Placement Request Form

Consider approval of banner placement on Redbud Trail, August 16-23, 2021 to promote Buckteens event, submitted by Jerry Flenar.

E. Accept Staff Activity Reports

Motion made by Commissioner Money, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

VIII. Scheduled Matters from the Floor *(if any)*

A. Michigan Gateway Foundation President & CEO Michael Rowland to Discuss Ross Sanders Building

The Michigan Gateway Foundation (“MGF”) is interested in engaging in a dialogue with the City of Buchanan to explore the possibility of the MGF looking to acquire the Ross Sanders Building at 110 E. Front Street for use as the new location for the MGF headquarters. Such a dialogue would also include the potential option of entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with the City regarding the MGF’s intent to historically preserve the building, which is presently supported by the Buchanan Preservation Society.

Rowland presented an overview of the Michigan Gateway Foundation, discussed their preservation efforts to date, and their plans for the Ross Sanders House

B. Greater Niles Chamber - Jeff Rea

Rea highlighted several points from his letter to the Commissioners, discussed how Michigan and Indiana share the same economy and their focus has recently shifted from industrial to commercial and retail. Shared they have purchased new software helps them analyze the local economy, identify problems and make better decisions. Workforce is currently a key issue and they are working to create a pipeline. Discussed they like to partner, not compete, with the local Chamber. Responded to Commissioner Downey’s comments that GNCOC was unable to assist several local businesses who asked for help.

IX. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

A. Community Development Update

Following up on the prior item, Murphy vowed to make connections with Rea and others in such roles.

Social District - Murphy reported that the Social District is moving forward, slowly. Approval has been received from the state. Of three applicants, one has been approved, one is ready to move forward, and the other wants to wait. Progress is being made on the cups and wristbands, and more work to be done on signage and waste receptacles. The City will "go live" with one applicant for the time being and that will give us an opportunity to reassess and adjust.

Downey pointed out that people already drink at the Common and asked if that will go away. Ganus replied that the Common is a City park and, as such, alcohol is not allowed. That being said, he has received no complaints.

Economic Development Incentives - Murphy has studied best practices in facade improvement and restaurant incentive programs. In the recent community survey, more than 500 respondents wanted more places to eat. There are currently 4 restaurants looking at Buchanan. Restaurant incentive programs typically assist with start-up costs as kitchen equipment is very expensive. The City Attorney is currently reviewing the facade program. Another program being considered is for upper residential with forgivable loans for improvements. He's taking the best examples and customizing them to Buchanan. Murphy proposes to launch one program at a time, but there's still a sense of urgency.

Downey asked what Murphy was doing for restaurants already here and suggested that the same things offered to new restaurants be offered to existing restaurants. Weedon recognized that may not look the same for new and existing. Swem emphasized we want to incentivize growth, improvement, and new business - it's not a charity program. Denison stated a restaurant needs to be improving, creating, and offering something new that benefits the community. Swem noted the upper residential program could run in tandem with the restaurant program. Murphy thinks the creation of lofts downtown has been great but noted there's also too much downtown space being used as storage.

Grants - Murphy has submitted 5 grants since his arrival. He wants to have 20 and be proactive. Smaller communities have smaller budgets and need to leverage their dollars. Murphy proposes hiring a grant writer who is good and technical. This person would create a grant inventory of state, local, and federal programs. Murphy will continue to write grants but this would put more lines in the water and enable the City to have a strategy instead of being reactive.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, seconded by Commissioner Money to allow Murphy to work with an independent contractor for grant writing as per the internal memorandum submitted to the Commission. Roll call vote carried by majority.

Voting Yea: Mayor Denison, Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, Commissioner Money

Voting Nay: Commissioner Downey, Commissioner Swem

Discussion on the motion prior to the vote led by Downey asking Murphy how this is different from what he was hired to do. Murphy responded that his job description is extensive. Swem asked what other resources have been exhausted. Murphy replied none. Swem stated he was having a hard time getting to a yes with Murphy overseeing this individual given Murphy hasn't had any wins yet. Weedon stated this was an opportunity to rely on an individual's experience, capture funds and, if not effective, the contract could be terminated.

Murphy ended his update by sharing a Leader Publications ad congratulating Hannah Roberts on achieving her vision.

B. Treasurer's Report

Powers reviewed the financials submitted to the Commission and provided an update on several activities. The investment account is fully transitioned to Honor Credit Union. BS&A training is currently in progress. Data extraction, with the exception of utility billing (scheduled later this week), has been completed. There will be much better reporting capabilities with BS&A once fully implemented. Powers also worked with a staff member from Plante Moran as part of her ongoing development.

C. Buchanan Area Recreation Board - Disc Golf Course Proposal

Tony DeOrnellas recently attended a Buchanan Area Recreation Board meeting to propose the installation of the disc golf course at McCoy's Creek Park. The Board recommended Mr. DeOrnellas present to the commission.

Link to presentation - <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1y5bqaNy-v65bFuk5jomChCH1L6kMSoPd9dR1fSZLnVc/edit?usp=sharing>

DeOrnellas discussed disc golf in general, states it is a sport that is growing and becoming more serious. The project could be funded almost entirely through donations. Businesses could sponsor holes. He discussed the size and scope of the project. A 9-hole course would be a benefit to the community, an 18-hole course will bring people into the community and could potentially host tournaments that could pay for maintenance. Maintenance is minimal with an initial carving of paths and ongoing mowing. He added that the course is designed to maintain McCoy's Creek/Centennial Park as a multiuse park. The high school has a disc golf team and this would be their home course.

Motion made by Commissioner Money, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon to approve DeOrnellas to continue work with the Buchanan Area Recreation Board to develop a disc golf course. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

D. Director of Public Services Report

Consider the purchase of a MIG Welder. Director Baker recommends purchasing from Miller based on the three quotes as follows:

Miller Welding Supply LINK3520-1 Power MIG 260 208-575V \$3,199.00

Praxair LINK 3520-1 Power MIG 260 \$3,199.00

Airgas LINK 3520-1 Welder Power MIG 260 DC CV 250A/26.5V 40% \$3,271.77

Baker thanked the Commission for the Director position and says he looks forward to bringing a new culture to the team.

Motion made by Commissioner Money, seconded by Commissioner Swem to authorize the purchase of a MIG welder from Miller for \$3,199.00. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

E. Resolution 2021.08/230

Consider adoption of Resolution 2021.08/230 to transition the Friends of the Ducks from a formal Subcommittee of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board to a volunteer initiative.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, seconded by Commissioner Money to adopt Resolution 2021.08/230 to transition the Friends of the Ducks from a formal Subcommittee of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board to a volunteer initiative. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

F. Resolution 2021.08/231

Consider adopting Resolution 2021.08/231, a resolution amending Resolution No. 2021.02.219 to reflect the current name of the Buchanan area fine arts council and continued support to utilize city-owned property in the city of Buchanan, County of Berrien, State of Michigan.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, seconded by Commissioner Swem to adopt Resolution 2021.08/231, a resolution amending Resolution No. 2021.02.219 to reflect the current name of the Buchanan area fine arts council and continued support to utilize city-owned property in the city of Buchanan, County of Berrien, State of Michigan. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

X. Unfinished Business

A. Third Street Storm Sewer

City Manager Grace stated there have been some changes in the scope of the project, so bids will need to be updated.

XI. New Business

A. TCF Bank Safe Deposit Box Access

Consider authorizing City Manager Heather Grace and City Treasurer Stephanie Powers to close the City's lockbox at TCF Bank in Buchanan. Grace and Powers will both be present during the opening and all contents will be inventoried so that they can be reported back to the City Commission and the account be closed. Authorization by the Commission is required by TCF Bank as the lockbox designees are no longer employed by the City. The motion should state that City Manager, Heather Grace and City Treasurer, Stephanie Powers are authorized to close the TCP lockbox account for the City of Buchanan.

Motion made by Commissioner Money, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon to authorize City Manager, Heather Grace and City Treasurer, Stephanie Powers to close the TCP lockbox account for the City of Buchanan. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

B. DPW Building Site Selection Update

Motion made by Commissioner Swem, seconded by Commissioner Money to direct Bergmann to proceed with feasibility studies on the existing DPW and feed mill sites. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

XII. Communications *(informational only, formal board action is not necessary for these items, unless so desired)*

A. Trail Maintenance

The Friends of McCoy's Creek Trail placed new mulch, donated by Redbud Hardware, around the benches and fitness stations.

B. WNIT Documentary on the St. Joseph River

WNIT-TV has a very special documentary airing on September 9th at 8 p.m., on the history and revitalization of the St. Joseph River and future developments along its shores. The focus will be on the pivotal role that the river has played in the lives throughout Michiana, and the many ways it

contributes to our overall way of life! WNIT is seeking sponsorships for the documentary. Additional information is included in the packet.

Link to a preview of the documentary - <https://youtu.be/MdqICDjOmzQ>

C. Seasonal & Staff Transitions

College students are moving on and the City is filling key positions. With the promotion of Baker to Director of Public Services, there is an opening at the DPW. Interviews are taking place for the Chamber/Main Street position as well as the administrative assistant.

XIII. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

Steve Raglin (via email read by City Clerk) - requested the Commission resume remote viewing options for the Commission meetings for those who are unable to attend in person due to COVID concerns.

Monroe Lemay (via email read by City Clerk) - Expressed concern regarding a Facebook video she saw of laser tag at the Common stating that it was inappropriate and too violent for children.

XIV. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

Rich and Stephanie's comments reflect that we've been busy, but in a good way. We are moving forward. She appreciates the Commission's vision and thanks the public for their patience.

B. Commissioner Comments

Weedon - Congratulated Hannah Roberts. What we saw that evening shows his children anything is possible. We got to see what Buchanan is like, and the whole world got to see Buchanan embody the vision. Reminded people that we have a long agenda because we have a lot to do. It's amazing to see where this community is going.

Swem - Congratulated Hannah Roberts, Mike Baker, and Tim Ganus. Food trucks must be addressed to level the playing field. He would like to see more creative solutions instead of adding bodies and expenses.

Downey - In total agreement with Swem. We need to get a handle on spending. Expects to see food trucks and parking downtown on the agenda for the next meeting. He is waiting on the answers to a number of questions from the City Manager regarding Plant Moran money and DDA money. Wants City Manager to look at her board schedule and suggests she make a list and let the Commissioners decide where she should spend her time.

Money - Congratulated Hannah Roberts. It was a great turnout and was nice to see so many people rooting her on. Congratulated Mike Baker and Tim Ganus. Thanked the Commission - we're starting to move ahead.

C. Mayor Comments

Thanked the City staff for all their hard work; they've all been putting in long hours. Shared a quote from Abraham Lincoln - "You can have anything you want if you want it badly enough. You can be anything you want to be, do anything you set out to accomplish if you hold to that desire with singleness of purpose." The quote kept coming to mind while with everyone at the Common watching Hannah Roberts. That's the Buchanan he wants his daughter to grow up in. Hannah

Roberts embodies that quote and is a role model who carries herself with class and demonstrated sportsmanship. He is so proud.

XV. Adjourn

Being no further business, motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Weedon, seconded by Commissioner Money to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Barbara A. Pitcher, City Clerk

Mayor Sean Denison