

Council Chamber
Henry L. Brown Municipal Bldg.
One Grand Street
Coldwater, Michigan



February 22, 2021
5:30 p.m.
(517) 279-9501
www.coldwater.org

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES REGULAR MEETING

Any interested person or group may address the City Council on any agenda item or on any matter of City concern including items not on the Agenda during the agenda items designated Public Comment. The comment of any member of the public or any special interest group may be limited in time. Such limitation shall not be less than five minutes unless otherwise explained by the presiding officer, subject to appeal by the Council.

For individuals who may wish to give public comment, the method for providing public comment during this remote-participation meeting is to call the following toll-free numbers: [1-888-475-4499](tel:1-888-475-4499) or [1-877-853-5257](tel:1-877-853-5257) (Meeting ID: 876-9877-4446) Participant ID is not required. Callers wishing to give public comment may call in before the meeting starts and wait in a "virtual waiting room." Those calling in will be able to hear the audio of the City Council meeting, but their telephone/microphone will be muted. At the time for Public Comment, press *9 on your telephone to "raise your hand," and you will be called upon. Once you have been called upon, press *6 to unmute your telephone/microphone so that you may be heard. Callers who do not wish to give public comment are encouraged to view the meeting live-streamed on YouTube at, bit.ly/ColdwaterVideo or on Skitter channel 61.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Kramer called the meeting to order with the following Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Emily Rissman and Travis Machan, representing the 1st Ward; Councilmembers Chad Johnson and Jim Knaack, representing the 2nd Ward; Councilmembers Michael Beckwith and John Petzko, representing the 3rd Ward; Councilmembers Randall Hazelbaker and Scott Houtz, representing the 4th Ward. The Mayor indicated he was located in Venice, Florida, and all other Councilmembers indicated they were located inside the City of Coldwater during this electronic meeting. There were no email comments received before 3:30 p.m. prior to the meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT: Keith Baker, Megan Angell, Tom Eldridge, Sheila Puffenburger, Sue Heath, Shauna Chávez, Dean Walrack, Jeff Budd, Deb Sikorski, Samantha Albright, Joe Scheid; Don Reid and one other.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA (Item Numbers 1-3):

The items listed in the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the City Council and the City Manager and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a Councilmember or citizen. In this event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and Council action will be taken separately on said item. Those items so approved under the heading "Consent Agenda" will appear in the Council minutes in their proper form.

1. City Council Regular Minutes of February 8, 2021.
 - Closed Session Minutes of February 8, 2021.
2. Coldwater Housing Commission Regular Minutes of January 12, 2021.
3. City Council and Planning Commission Special Joint Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2021.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Beckwith, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, to approve Consent Agenda Items 1-3, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Johnson, Knaack, Beckwith, Petzko, Hazelbaker, Houtz, Rissman, Machan and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. Bills and Accounts: \$114,384.32.

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Machan, seconded by Councilmember Petzko, to approve Bills and Accounts in the amount of \$114,384.32, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Knaack, Beckwith, Petzko, Hazelbaker, Houtz, Rissman, Machan,

Johnson and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried.

5. City Manager's Report.

- **Final Call for Board of Review Appeals** – The March Board of Review is Monday March 8, Tuesday March 9, and Wednesday March 10, 2021. Appeals will be accepted by letter if postmarked on or before Wednesday March 10, 2021. Questions can be made to City Assessor Deb Sikorski or Deputy Assessor Samantha Albright at 279-6929.
- **600 West Chicago Street** – Proposed Sales Agreement, Coach Road Capital, LLC. The company that proposed the development of a 200-unit apartment project on City owned property located at 600 West Chicago Street has formally withdrawn its purchase offer. As a result, there will not be any further action on the draft sales agreement that was tabled at the February 8, 2021 City Council meeting.
- **Multiple City/CBPU Employment Opportunities** – Due to retirements and recent departures, the City of Coldwater and Coldwater Board of Public Utilities has a number of professional employment opportunities available. We are looking for experienced professionals in Payroll/Accounting, Staff Accountant, Marketing Coordinator and Police Officer positions. The City/CBPU offers competitive wages and excellent benefits and the opportunity to work with a great team. Persons interested in any of the positions can find out more on the City's website at www.coldwater.org or by contacting Nicki Luce at nluce@coldwater.org or 517-279-9531.
- **Snow Storm Response** – The winter had been relatively mild until recently and the 8-10 inches of snow that fell Monday night February 15, 2021 into Tuesday February 16, 2021 morning was the largest event yet this year. The Department of Municipal Services crews worked throughout the evening and overnight to keep roads safe and clear and was able to substantially clean up the City's streets, sidewalks and parking lots by Tuesday afternoon. The quick response and cleanup of town were noticed by our residents and community. I wanted to acknowledge the staff's dedicated efforts during the recent snowstorm. Thank you! In addition, the piles of snow on downtown sidewalks and streets are scheduled to be removed next week.
- **Did You Know?** – Did you know that the City of Coldwater is one of four owners of the Branch and St. Joseph Counties Rail Users Association, Inc. (RUA)? The other owners are Star of the West Milling in Quincy, Sekisui Voltek in Coldwater and Panel Processing also located in Coldwater. The RUA owns and operates approximately 10.1 miles of railroad from the eastern county line of Branch County west to Behnke Rd. just west of the Coldwater city limits. The rail line previously extended into St. Joseph County but that section of railroad was abandoned and the assets sold to help maintain and upgrade the remaining rail line. The Indiana Northeastern Railroad (INRR) headquartered in Hillsdale,

MI, is the freight rail operator on the RUA line and provides service to a number of Branch County industries including Sun Grow, Voltek, Ceres (agricultural co-op) and Darling Ingredients. Most recently, the INRR has been transporting shipments of corn oil that are delivered to Coldwater by railcar, transferred to trucks and then shipped to its final destination to a processing plant in Albion, MI. The availability of rail service is a significant economic development asset and is often referenced in discussions when attempting to recruit new business to the area. The RUA is also important to local tourism efforts as the host for the nonprofit Little River Railroad excursion trains that operate passenger trips on historic steam locomotives throughout the year from the historic Coldwater railroad depot.

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Hazelbaker, seconded by Councilmember Houtz, to approve and place on file the City Manager's report, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Beckwith, Petzko, Hazelbaker, Houtz, Rissman, Machan, Johnson, Knaack and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried.

6. Memo from Keith Baker, City Manager, regarding first budget amendments for FY 2020-2021.

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Knaack, seconded by Councilmember Beckwith, to approve the first budget amendments for FY 2020-2021 (attached in Addendum A), as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Petzko, Hazelbaker, Houtz, Rissman, Machan, Johnson, Knaack, Beckwith and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried.

7. Letter from Dean Walrack, Planning/Zoning Administrator, regarding amending Codified Ordinances, Planning and Zoning Code to expand Administrative Site Plan Review,

Extension-granting for approved actions, and Home Occupations – Consider adoption of Ordinance No. 842.

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Machan, seconded by Councilmember Hazelbaker, to adopt Ordinance No. 842 (attached in Addendum B), as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Hazelbaker, Houtz, Rissman, Machan, Johnson, Knaack, Beckwith, Petzko, and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried.

8. Memo from Debra Sikorski, NSD Director/City Assessor, regarding Policy amendment Application for Poverty Exemptions – Consider adoption of Resolution No. 21-09 and Policy No. P21-01.

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Houtz, to adopt Resolution No. 21-09 and approve Policy No. P21-01, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Houtz, Rissman, Machan, Johnson, Knaack, Beckwith, Petzko, Hazelbaker and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried.

9. Presentation of the 2020 Annual Police Department Report by Joseph Scheid, Public Safety Director.

Council Action: None - Presentation only.

10. Jeffrey Budd, CBPU Director: Electric Capacity Discussion.

Council Action: None - Discussion only.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Mayor Kramer – With a \$750,000.00 fund balance Council needs to narrow down 20 ideas with staff mailing a survey to facilitate.

NEW BUSINESS

11. Closed session pursuant to Section 8(h) of PA 267 of 1976 to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute – Electric capacity and pricing.

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Knaack, seconded by Councilmember Houtz, to enter into Closed Session pursuant to Section 8(h) of PA 267 of 1976 to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute – Electric capacity and pricing, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Councilmember: Rissman, Machan, Johnson, Knaack, Beckwith, Petzko, Hazelbaker, Houtz and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried. (6:43 p.m.)

Council Action: Motion by Councilmember Knaack, seconded by Councilmember Machan, to reconvene to the regular meeting of February 22, 2021, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:


Ayes: Councilmember: Machan, Johnson, Knaack, Beckwith, Petzko, Hazelbaker, Houtz, Rissman and Mayor Kramer.

Nays: Councilmember: None.

Motion carried. (7:38 p.m.)

ADJOURNMENT

Noting no other business to come before Council, Mayor Kramer adjourned the regular meeting at 7:39 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shauna Chávez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a distinct 'C'.

Shauna Chávez
Deputy City Clerk