

Village of Howard City  
Council Meeting Minutes  
December 19, 2022

President Heckman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: VanWagner, Smith, Hagstrom, Williams, Heckman and Bassett. Absent: MacTavish.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Motion by Smith seconded by Williams to approve the agenda as presented. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Deputy Lycer gave the November police report. Motion by Smith seconded by Hagstrom to accept the consent agenda as presented. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Public Comment: None.

Motion by Williams seconded by Smith to open the DDA Plan Renewal Public Hearing at 7:02 pm. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Public Comment: Dave Saucier inquired how long the DDA Plan was for – until 2042. The Plan identifies what the DDA would like to do but can be changed. The Plan was adopted by the DDA, but need to be formally adopted by Council

Motion by VanWagner seconded by Bassett to close the public hearing at 7:05 pm. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Motion by VanWagner seconded by Hagstrom to approve the 2022-1 Ordinance to approve and adopt an amendment to the tax increment financing plan and the development plan for the Downtown Development Authority of the Village of Howard City, Michigan; amend Ordinance No. 2000-4; and related matters. Roll call vote: Bassett, aye; Hagstrom, aye; Smith, aye; VanWagner, aye; Williams, aye; Heckman, aye. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Sheriff Williams was present to answer Council questions on the new proposed Sheriff contract with the Village. Sheriff Williams stated the proposed contract is decreasing the number of Deputies on from 3 to 2. He stated that there is a shortage of police officers throughout every law enforcement agency. Sheriff Williams stated he did not want to enter into a contract in which he did not feel like he could fulfill the commitment; therefore, the decrease in personnel and hours. Trustee Williams asked what happens if the Sheriff Department becomes fully staffed? Would we be able to open discussion to renegotiate contracted hours? Sheriff Williams stated he would be open to discussion at that time. President Heckman stated he receives concerns that Howard City is not doing anything for police protection. Now we are being asked to decrease the number of coverage hours. Sheriff Williams stated coverage from the Sheriff's office is increasing because of the millage that was passed. Mr. Falcon asked if the Sheriff has more deputies on staff now than he did in 2014. Sheriff stated he does not believe he has more deputies on now. Trustee Hagstrom asked how many hours Reynolds Township agreed to. It was stated the township agreed to go from 1,000 hours to 500 for a total of 4,000 hours between the Township and the Village. Trustee VanWagner asked now that there is extra funding, will there be more coverage outside of this contract in the area? Sheriff Williams states that now that general patrol is back, there will be more coverage available. Mr. Falcon informed the Sheriff that several time this past year, we found when there were substitute individuals, those that were dedicated to the Village did not start their shift in the Village. They started in Stanton. Sheriff Williams stated that is a probability and when there are substitutes, he can't guarantee they will start in the Village. The department can make up the Village hours and that should be covered in the contract. Motion by Bassett seconded by Hagstrom to accept the contract with the hours presented and with minor wording changes to be determined by Mr. Falcon, Village Manager, and Sheriff Williams. Roll Call Vote: Bassett, aye; Hagstrom, aye; Smith, nay; VanWagner, aye; Williams, nay; Heckman, aye. Motion CARRIED (4-2)

Mr. Falcon presented Council with a draft Fee Schedule and asked Council to look this over and let him know of any changes and/or additions that Council would like. The fee schedule should be adopted and in place by March 1, 2023.

Motion by Hagstrom seconded by Smith to approve the 2023 Meeting Schedule. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Motion by Hagstrom seconded by Bassett to pay bills with the additions presented by the Treasurer of \$4,254.85 for a total of \$78,379.64. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Motion by Williams seconded by Hagstrom to place an ad for the Michigan Trails Advertising Contract splitting the cost of the quarter page ad of \$855 and the website primary page ad of \$495 between the Village and the DDA. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Mr. Falcon presented Council with a proposed Snow Event Policy. Mr. Falcon will make some changes to the policy and bring back to Council in January.

Mr. Falcon informed Council that it is time to look at his contract; and we will be sending out evaluation forms to Council to fill out in regard to his performance.

Public Comment: Blaine Gebhardt asked for clarification in which ads were agreed upon for the Michigan Trails magazine. Laurie Kropewnicki inquired about the meeting before Council. There was a DDA Informational Meeting held at 6:30 to meet PA57 requirements. She also inquired about a building on Edgerton in which Mr. Falcon stated he has been in contact with the owner and the situation is being taken care of. Dave Saucier questioned the Village winter street budget and how many residents in the Village do not have water/sewer services.

Trustee Williams wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Motion by Williams seconded by Hagstrom to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 pm. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

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Melissa Kuzmik, Clerk

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Randy Heckman, President