



**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting of Newaygo City Council**  
**November 13, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Fedell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The meeting was held at City Hall located at 28 N. State Road, Newaygo, MI 49337.

Presiding officer: Mayor Fedell  
Secretary: Clerk, Kim Goodin

Roll Call: Present: Black, Burns, DeVries, Engemann, Fedell, Johnson, Walerczyk  
Absent: None

Motion by Johnson, second by Walerczyk to approve the agenda as presented. AIF/MC

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Burns, second by Black to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Council regular meeting minutes from 10/09/2023 and approval of accounts payable of \$137,332.06, \$82,261.21, \$45,969.34, \$89,598.89, \$102,909.61, \$51,682.90, \$1,611.00, \$1,688.92, \$10,839.60, \$3,435.14, \$2,325.00, and \$386.49. Roll Call: Yeas: Black, Burns, DeVries, Engemann, Fedell, Johnson, Walerczyk Absent: None Nay: None. CARRIED

**RESERVED TIME**

**COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS**

Newaygo District Fire Chief Otteren said that the Newaygo Fire District had recently received a grant for some new equipment. He said that all the information and documents that had been requested had been submitted to the consultant working on the Public Safety Study.

**CITY MANAGER REPORT**

Schneider discussed a list of current projects, future projects, and potential projects in the City that was included in packets. He discussed Match on Main Street Grant that the River Stop Café had received. Schneider said that the City's Master Plan was completed approximately five years ago and will have to be reviewed in the near future stating that changes do not need to be made, but the plan has to be reviewed every five years. He said that there are a number of City Ordinances that need to be reviewed and amended and discussed the possibility of hiring a professional planner to assist with the process.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Chief Andres discussed the Police Social Worker Report that was included in packets and said that the Christmas Walk will be held on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. She said that the Police Department is working on a 2<sup>nd</sup> recruit that the City would pay for the recruit to attend the academy and they will work at the City upon completion of the academy. Ron Wight, DPW Superintendent, stated that the department has been very busy preparing all equipment for the winter months, picking up leaves throughout the City, working on Christmas decorations and working on many new construction projects in the City.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

Motion by Burns, second by Black at 7:15 pm to open public hearing to discuss and take comments on request from Mercury Broadband LLC located at 541 S. Industrial Drive for a Tax Abatement. Julie Burrell, Economic Development Director Newaygo County stated that she worked with Mercury Broadband LLC in locating a place for their new building. Burrell said that she is in support of approving the Tax Abatement for Mercury Broadband as they will add approximately 40 new jobs with competitive wages. Colin Loker, Mercury

Broadband General Manager and Reva Erin, Field Sales Representative, were present and said that they are working out of a temporary office in White Cloud and that the building in Newaygo should be completed in the next few months. Loker discussed why Newaygo was chosen for the location and said that Newaygo will be the Central Construction Hub. Schneider stated that the tax abatement score sheet and comments he had received related to the project were included in the packets. Schneider said that Council needed to decide on approving or not approving the Tax Abatement for Mercury Broadband and if approved deciding on the number of years for the tax abatement. Schneider said that the Tax Abatement does not affect current taxes as it is based on the new taxable value of the land and building. Fedell said that the tax abatement score sheet gave 90 points to Mercury Broadband and that is in the range for a length of 12 year tax abatement. Motion by Engemann, second by Burns at 7:25 pm to close the public hearing. AIF/MC

Motion by Engemann, second by Walerczyk to approve Resolution 2023-31 which approves the Mercury Broadband LLC Tax Abatement for 12 years. Roll Call: Yeas: Black, Burns, DeVries, Engemann, Fedell, Johnson, Walerczyk Absent: None Nay: None. CARRIED

Motion by Burns, second by Engemann to approve the Tax Abatement Agreement with Mercury Broadband LLC. AIF/MC

Motion by Johnson, second by Black to deny Special Land Use Request by Jeanne Leaver to allow her residence at 611 Quarterline Rd. to be utilized as a short-term rental. AIF/MC Fedell stated that the Planning Commission had recommended to Council to deny the request as the City legal counsel said that because short-term rentals are not addressed in the City Ordinances that they are not allowed in the City, but did recommend that the City should address short-term rentals.

Motion by Black, second by Burns to approve the City's Residential Waste Service Agreement with American Classic to expire on September 30, 2028 and allow American Classic to start picking up receptacles at 5:00 am. AIF/MC Schneider stated that at the previous Council Meeting, American Classic had been awarded the bid for the City's Residential Waste Service starting in January 2024. He said that the proposed agreement was included in packets and that City Council needed to decide on length of agreement and the earliest start time that receptacles could be picked up in the morning.

Motion by DeVries, second by Engemann to approve Water Service Line Project and SRF Funding and necessary actions to bring project to completion. AIF/MC Schneider discussed water service line project that is a requirement by the State and said that, earlier in the year, the City had done an inventory of water service lines and approximately 150 need to be replaced. He stated that the estimated cost to replace the water service lines is \$1,200,000 and said that we had received a grant from the State to cover approximately 50% of the project. Schneider said that the remaining funding would have to be through a loan with the possibility of TIFA offsetting some of the cost. He said that the loan component of the project will likely necessitate an adjustment in water rates stating that the final annual cost to the water system, and corresponding effect on water rates, will be determined by how much TIFA and Water Department funds are contributed to the project along with term and interest rate on the loan. Council discussed: researching all funding sources available to alleviate increasing water rates, project timing, timing of potential rate increase, and the City's water and sewer rates compared to other local municipalities. Fedell stated that a number of years ago when looking at the yearly increase in rates that the City rates were in the middle compared to other communities.

Motion by Black, second by Walerczyk to approve Ordinance 2023-05 amending Sections of Chapter 42 of the Newaygo City Code entitled Offenses & Miscellaneous Provisions. AIF/MC Schneider stated that the primary purpose of amending sections of chapter 42 of the Code were related to lewd conduct. He said that Ordinance amendments and an updated Resolution related to Park Rules are currently being reviewed.

Motion by Burns, second by Walerczyk to approve Resolution 2023-33 authorizing City of Newaygo Membership in the West Michigan Health Insurance Pool (WMHIP) for a minimum three-year period. AIF/MC Schneider stated that this insurance plan is almost identical to the City's current plan and that many other municipalities and schools are in this insurance pool which produces slightly better rates. He said that he does not have any concerns with a 3 year term.

Motion by Burns, second by Johnson to approve Resolution 2023-34 amending the NCRA Budget for Fiscal Year 2023/2024. AIF/MC Schneider said that NCRA had additional projects related to the Newaygo Skate Park and concrete at the Pickleball Courts that incurred additional expenses. He stated that the City, Brooks Township, Croton Township, and Garfield Township contributed funds to NCRA for these additional expenses.

Eric Johnson said that the proposed Flash Mob event that he wanted to hold on Small Business Saturday at the end of November was being postponed until a date in the spring. Johnson said he will continue to work with the businesses on the details over the winter months and will present a new date and details to City Council in late winter or spring.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

Engemann complimented the DPW Department.

Johnson inquired about the possibility of limiting days and times that certain work could occur downtown to try and eliminate inconveniences to businesses and patrons.

Black suggested that the City research the possibility of new chairs in the Council Chambers.

Motion by Walerczyk, second by Burns to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 PM. AIF/MC

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Mayor – Ed Fedell

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Clerk – Kim Goodin