

MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
June 14, 2021

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. Comm. Crosby gave the Invocation. Mayor Smith recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM with the following in attendance.

Mayor	:	Hubert B. Smith
Commissioners	:	Catherine Hamilton
	:	Christine Wasdin
	:	Jay Denney
	:	Edward Crosby
City Clerk	:	Tammy Johnson
City Administrator	:	Carl Scott
Police Chief	:	Joe Hart
City Attorney	:	Hayward Dykes
City Engineer	:	Beth Brant
Fire Chief	:	Tommy Mayville
Public Works Director	:	Nathan Kelley (camera)
Recorder	:	Beth Millsaps

Others in attendance: (Not inclusive) Steven Gonstica, Ethan Floyd, Barb Palmgren, Marie Hallion, Glenna Glover, Teresa Denney, Stephanie Merz, Sam Siegal, Donna Hasting, Audrey Masek, Mike Griffith (Bay Beacon)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MAY 10, 2021, AS SUBMITTED. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

**1. CITIZENS' CONCERNS (non-agenda items) Resident**

Ms. Stephanie Merz, 1329 Bayshore Drive, said her road is not paved, it is the part of Bayshore where Goodwill is at the end, only one way in and one way out. Ms. Merz said new residents have moved into the neighborhood with small children and feels the street isn't safe for children. She said between people speeding and Goodwill blocking the end of the roads with their trucks it is an unsafe place. Mayor Smith asked Chief Hart if he would look at the traffic situation for the resident. Ms. Merz also asked why the street isn't paved. Mrs. Brant along with Comm. Wasdin have been looking at infrastructure improvements. Mayor Smith said each member of the Commission oversees departments and Comm. Wasdin is over streets. Ms. Merz is also concerned about the blocking at the end of the road by the Goodwill. Mr. Scott said they have talked to Goodwill about this before and they will talk to them again. Ms. Merz said the trees in front of their houses are growing over the mailboxes and asked if the city would be cutting anytime soon? Commissioner Wasdin said we will look into it.

**2. CITIZENS' CONCERNS (Non-Agenda Items) Non-Resident**

No non-resident concerns tonight.

**1. ACTION ITEMS – Added Agenda Items**

There are no items to add to the agenda this evening.

**2. ACTION ITEMS – Heritage Museum Signage**

1 Ms. Barb Palmgren, Chairperson of the Heritage Museum, also from the museum are Mr. Steve  
2 Gonstka, Ms. Marie Hallion and Ms. Glenda Glover. Ms. Palmgren said they are here this evening because  
3 they have a lovely sign, or should she say had, on the corner of Okaloosa Avenue and Highway 20, the  
4 residents of the new home built there removed the sign. She said the sign has been returned to the museum.  
5 Chief Hart said the residents had contacted the police department because there have been people coming to  
6 their home thinking it was the museum. Mr. Scott said we allow off premise signs for any business sign,  
7 allowed in right-of-way, Mr. Scott said the visible tract puts the sign two inches into the neighbor's yard.  
8 Ms. Palmgren said they would need someone to put the sign back in the ground. An arrow under the sign  
9 would make it directional. Mayor Smith said unfortunately it is not a city sign, not our position to have the  
10 arrow placed on it, need to look into that as well. Comm. Denney said why not use other side of road? Mr.  
11 Kelly said Mrs. Johnson is correct, public works is looking to replace the sign across the street, it was a  
12 project our former deputy public works director was working on, he has now retired, but the sign is very  
13 close to being done. Chief Hart said the sign would have to be of some size. Mr. Kelley said about three  
14 feet wide, eight to ten feet tall. Comm. Wasdin asked why we were doing that? Mayor Smith said because  
15 we have money that was donated. Mayor Smith asked if public works would be able to put the sign back up?  
16 Ms. Palmgren said it would be nice to have a sign on Highway 20, the museum needs all the help we can  
17 provide, she does believe she could find someone to paint the arrow. Ms. Palmgren said the museum can  
18 have their night at the museum in October and it will be dedicated to the City of Valparaiso to celebrate our  
19 100 years. Mr. Kelley asked direction as to what his crew should do? Mayor Smith said put the sign in the  
20 right of way, but we will not be responsible for placing the arrow.

21 **3. ACTION ITEMS – Poly Engineering Water Pressure Proposal**

22 Comm. Denney said we have discussed before the water pressure situation. He said it would be  
23 expensive to raise the towers, and everyone has at least the minimum pressure required by the State. Comm.  
24 Denney said he reached out to Poly, Ms. Brant said the slides we have were provided somewhere between  
25 three to five years ago, however the house to tank is still the same. She said the pressure is dictated by the  
26 height of the tower. Ms. Brant said it is adequate pressure but not for the comfort of residents. Ms. Brant  
27 said it had been discussed that at certain locations put in a booster valve. Ms. Brant said in looking at certain  
28 addresses and the city over all she believes there could be multiple options from booster stations to additional  
29 valves. Comm. Denney said if we did the individual house, we are looking at \$2,500 a house now with the  
30 modeling technology they have we can see what the true need maybe. Ms. Brant said with the model you  
31 can see what is needed, not just pressure but flow, the model makes more sense instead of guessing. She said  
32 the model gives you definite answers, a very effective tool for around \$5,000. Comm. Denney said in the  
33 past we have spent money with public works to find all the pipes and what sort of shape they are in, with this  
34 system we will take that knowledge and continue forward, should be fruitful. **COMM. DENNEY MADE A**  
35 **MOTION TO SPEND THE MONEY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WATER SYSTEM MODEL**

**FROM POLY ENGINEERING. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION.** Comm. Denney replying to Comm. Wasdin said the funding source would be the half cent sales tax. **VOTE OF COMMISSION 5 TO 0 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.**

**4. ACTION ITEMS – City Infrastructure Prioritization Plan**

Comm. Denney said after the GIS plan he has been working with Mr. Kelly, our responses have always been disaster reaction instead of planning forward. With the infrastructure aging we need to have a prioritized plan for the future. Comm. Denney said we need to look at timely replacements. Comm. Wasdin asked if he was suggesting developing a plan? Comm. Denney said yes, in working with Poly and Ms. Brant, working in all aspects of utilities, start with this water model, now prepared to move forward with that action. Comm. Denney said Poly will come back next month with pricing, he just wanted the Commission to know how important it is to the city to plan for the future. Mrs. Johnson asked if Poly could also look at water sewer rates, Ms. Brant said they do water and sewer rate studies.

**5. ACTION ITEMS – Ordinance No. 711 Commercial Corridor**

Mayor Smith read **ORDINANCE NO. 711, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY AMENDING CHAPTER 114, ARTICLE IV BY ADDING A COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR (C-C) ZONING DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO CODE OF ORDINANCES AND PROVIDING FOR (1) FINDINGS, (2) REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES, (3) SEVERABILITY AND (4) AN EFFECTIVE DATE.** Mr. Scott said the idea behind this ordinance is we don't have enough space, this idea is to expand corridor and limit what business could go there. Mayor Smith said this idea has been something in the works for quite a while. **MAYOR SMITH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 711 FOR A SECOND READING. COMM. DENNEY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.**

**6. ACTION ITEMS – Part Time Allowable Hours**

Comm. Hamilton asked that this be placed on the agenda for tonight. Comm. Hamilton said she is looking at the scheduling of the part time library personnel folks instead of 29 hours she wants to have it so they can work 32 hours. Comm. Denney said isn't there a state law that deals with how many hours are part time? Mrs. Johnson said yes, it is as it has been when your business has over 50 employees, which we do, we have to offer affordable health care to anyone who works more than 29 hours. Mrs. Johnson said due to the affordable care act, 29 hours is max a week, 116 hours is part time. Comm. Hamilton said there must be something that we can do to offer library part time 32 hours instead of 29. Mrs. Johnson said she had spoken with our human resources attorney and was told over 29 hours we have to offer affordable health care. Comm. Hamilton asked who we used as our personnel attorney, Mrs. Johnson said Allen, Norton and Blue and our contact is Shannon. Comm. Hamilton asked Mrs. Johnson for the contact information, Mrs. Johnson said she would get it to her.

1    **7.    ACTION ITEMS – COVID -19 Policy**

2            Mrs. Johnson said the Governor has pretty much taken care of all policy changes. **COMM.**  
3    **WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO DISCONTINUE THE CITY’S COVID POLICY. COMM.**  
4    **HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

5    **1.    OLD BUSINESS – Tom’s Bayou Bridge Utilities Update**

6            Comm. Hamilton said she had been notified that the last piling is in so hopefully no more pounding.

7    **2.    OLD BUSINESS – Ordinance No. 710 Charter Amendment Road Improvements**

8            Mayor Smith said this would be the final reading for **ORDINANCE NO. 710 CHARTER**  
9    **AMENDMENT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY, AMENDING**  
10 **ARTICLE IX, SEC. 11 OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO CHARTER; PROVIDING FOR**  
11 **SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR**  
12 **CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.** Mr. Dykes said this was the ordinance  
13 seeking to amend part of the city charter, that can only happen if charter was drafted before 1973, meets the  
14 criteria to allow for certain amendments to the charter, should the Commission agree to approve. **COMM.**  
15 **WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 710**  
16 **CHARTER AMENDMENT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE**  
17 **MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

18 **1.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – TPO/DOT**

19            Comm. Wasdin said there will be a TPO meeting this week. And she’d like to add Irwin came to  
20 have intersection redesign and that would be so to occur.

21 **2.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Stormwater**

22            Mr. Scott said NTBS audit will occur in June but assures the Commission we will be ready.

23 **3.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Community Liaison Report**

24            Nothing to report this evening.

25 **4.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Regional Sewer Update**

26            Comm. Denney said everything is good to go.

27 **5.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Planning Commission Update**

28            There are no members in the audience this evening.

29 **6.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Department Updates**

30            Mrs. Johnson said the 25<sup>th</sup> of June will be Employee Appreciate Day and we will be closing at 11am.  
31 Chief Mayville said we were able to replace the tank on the truck for free because it was still under  
32 warranty. He said the fire department is planning to give CPR instructions to city employees and  
33 instructions on the defibrillator. Mayor Smith asked if the Commission could also receive instructions?  
34 Chief Mayville said yes, he would like it if everyone was familiar with these safety measure.

35 **7.    REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS - Disbursements**

1           **COMM. CROSBY MADE A MOTION TO PAY THE BILLS AS OUTLINED IN THE**  
2 **MONTHLY FINANCIALS. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED**  
3 **BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

4   **8.   REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Etc.**

5           Mr. Dykes said we have been in discussion with Dr. Harris's attorneys would like for the Commission  
6 to call an Executive Session to meet July 12<sup>th</sup> at 5pm take about 30 to 45 minutes to present and answer  
7 questions to talk about the pending litigation in the CAJTDM v. Valparaiso v Gator Boring/Construction  
8 Services 2020 CA 001918 C, we will need a court reporter and we will need to advertise. Mr. Dykes said the  
9 meeting is opened to the public, then clear the room and once this part of the meeting is over, it will be  
10 opened back up again. **COMM. DENNEY MADE THE MOTION TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE**  
11 **SESSION AT 5PM ON JULY 12<sup>TH</sup>. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH**  
12 **PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.**

13   **1.   ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS – Library Director Position**

14           Comm. Hamilton said she is pleased to announce that Hope Willis, who has been our interim director  
15 at the library, will now be permanent. Comm. Hamilton said she has been with us for about five years, and  
16 we need to give her normal leave time back to her, as of right now she is not receiving it and Comm.  
17 Hamilton said she should. Mrs. Johnson said she was on call or part time, but not a full-time employee when  
18 others have left the city, retired like Chief Hart, and they have come back to work for the city, they have  
19 started over with no leave time. Comm. Hamilton said that is different because they retired, Ms. Willis has  
20 been with the city throughout, she was part time. Mrs. Johnson said was she part time or on call? Because  
21 the city did not pay her during that time. Ms. Willis said she didn't put any hours down. Mayor Smith asked  
22 Mr. Dykes if this could be a problem because the time Ms. Willis worked, she was not compensated. Mr.  
23 Dykes said yes, but he would need to know more details because Florida has very strict employment laws.  
24 Comm. Hamilton said she did not direct her to do anything, it was more like advice, and it was voluntary,  
25 and she was keeping the place open for Ms. Willis because she knew we would have a tough transition. Mr.  
26 Dykes said again maybe or maybe not would need more details. He doesn't know the city's policy on  
27 benefits. Comm. Hamilton said can't I just make that a policy, I am the Commissioner over the library. Mr.  
28 Dykes said if Commission wanted to modify or give Ms. Willis credit for hours that would be at their  
29 discretion. **COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO GIVE MS. WILLIS HER VACATION**  
30 **TIME BACK AS IF SHE NEVER LEFT, FORMALLY MAKE MS. WILLIS THE LIBRARY**  
31 **DIRECTOR, RECEIVE HER CREDIT FOR 5 YEARS OF SERVICE.** Mrs. Johnson asked if this  
32 would be for all employees going forth that leave and come back. Comm. Hamilton said no this is just for  
33 Ms. Willis. Comm. Denney said would have the be on individual basis. **COMM. CROSBY SECONDED**  
34 **THE MOTION.** Ms. Willis thanks the Commission. Comm. Hamilton said she thought she had discussed  
35 the rate for Ms. Willis with Mrs. Johnson, going with \$45,000, Mrs. Johnson said no, I do not recall. Mayor

1 Smith said he is over personnel he sets pay. Comm. Hamilton asked if this must be done at this meeting, as  
2 the library Commissioner she has already set it for \$45,000 a year. Comm. Hamilton asked Ms. Willis if that  
3 was correct, and Ms. Willis said yes, they had agreed on \$45,000. **COMM. HAMILTON ADDED TO**  
4 **HER PREVIOUS MOTION THAT MS. WILLIS SALARY WILL BE \$45,000 A YEAR. COMM.**  
5 **DENNEY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE**  
6 **COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

7 **2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS – Schedule Budget Workshops**

8 Mrs. Johnson has given the Commissioners information on a calendar that is in their packets that  
9 show the next few months, and she needs to know what works best with the Commissioners, so we can begin  
10 the budget process.

11 **ADJOURN**

12 There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:15  
13 PM.

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Hubert B. Smith  
Mayor

Catherine Hamilton  
Chair, VCA

ATTEST:

Tammy Johnson, CMC  
City Clerk

\*\*\*A recording of the June 14, 2021, Commission meeting will be kept on the City’s secure file  
server as a permanent part of these minutes.\*\*\*