

A Regular Meeting of the Otsego City Commission was held on Monday, January 3, 2022.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Trobeck at 7:00 p.m. with the following Commissioners present: Stacey Withee, Brent Milhiem, Lauri Krueger and Dustin McNees. Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Aaron Mitchell; Finance Director Storbeck, and Fire Chief Weber.

The audience joined the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The previous Regular Meeting Minutes were approved.

REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS

None.

I. PRESENTATIONS:

A. ALLEGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONER DUGAN

County Commissioner Dugan gave an update on current Allegan County activities. He answered questions of the Commission regarding Rock-Tenn. He wished everyone a Happy New Year.

II. PUBLIC HEARING:

III. PLANNING AND ZONING:

IV. ORDINANCES:

V. REQUESTS:

A. CONSIDERATION OF TRANSFER STATION COUPON PROGRAM - DISTRIBUTION OF COUPONS BEGINNING IN FEBRUARY - COUPONS EXPIRING DECEMBER 30, 2022

Commissioner McNees moved to approve the Transfer Station Coupon Program, with distribution of coupons beginning in February 2022, and expiring December 30, 2022, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

B. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING TO ESTABLISH SINGLE PREMISE ASSESSMENTS FOR DELINQUENT CHARGES FOR CITY SERVICES ON FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Commissioner Withee moved to approve the request to set a Public Hearing to establish Single Premise Assessments for Delinquent Charges for City Services on February, 7, 2022, seconded by Commissioner Milhiem.

C. CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO ADOPT THE CITY COMMISSION AGENDA POLICY

City Manager Mitchell presented the Commission with the City Commission Agenda Policy. Commissioner McNees asked that "Requests from City Commissioners are expected to come through the Mayor" be removed from the policy, because there should not be any barriers to any discussion items. A discussion took place regarding this amendment and the Mayor's duties.

Commissioner Krueger moved to adopt the City Commission Agenda Policy, with the removal of the wording “Requests from City Commissioners are expected to come through the Mayor”, seconded by Commissioner McNees. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO ADVISE THE DDA/MAIN STREET BOARD TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OF MAINTENANCE PROJECTS INTO THE DDA/MAIN STREET 2022-2023 BUDGET, AS PRESENTED

City Manager Mitchell explained that the DDA built buildings, such as City Hall, the Police Station, and the DPW Building. He commented that as these building age, there are now maintenance needs. He specifically outlined the many maintenance needs at City Hall. He explained how the DDA/Main Street is funded and how the City Commission determines the amount of LCSA funds the DDA/Main Street receives each year, like it did when there was a positive TIF. He explained that the maintenance items will need to be addressed and this is a way to ensure that they are addressed with the funds that they receive. Commissioner Milhiem stated that this year budgets are really going to have to be looked at. He asked how long the Commission will have to look at the entire budget. City Manager Mitchell explained that Finance Director Storbeck will have the completed document to the Commission two-three weeks before it’s adoption, which will give the Commission plenty of time to ask Finance Director Storbeck questions. City Manager Mitchell also commented that the DDA/MS Board meets the second Monday of the month, which gives anyone the opportunity to attend and observe their meetings. Commissioner Milhiem moved to grant the request to advise the DDA/Main Street Board to include the addition of Maintenance Projects into the DDA/Main Street 2022-2023 Budget, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

VI. AGREEMENTS:

A. CONSIDERATION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH WIGHTMAN ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR DIX & WASHINGTON STREET PROJECT

City Manager Mitchell stated that in 2023, the City will be receiving Small Urban Funds which will be used for the Dix and Washington Street Project (mill and fill). He explained that the funds can only be used on Major Roads. He stated this includes Federal monies with a grant ratio of 3:1. This agreement will begin the grant application process. Commissioner Milhiem moved to authorize the execution of an agreement with Wightman Engineering Services for the Dix & Washington Street Project, seconded by Commissioner Withee. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

VII. RESOLUTIONS:

A. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01 – A RESOLUTION TO MOVE THE MARCH 2022 BOARD OF REVIEW STARTING DATE

Commissioner McNees offered the following resolution and moved for its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Krueger.

CITY OF OTSEGO
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01

RESOLUTION MOVING THE MARCH 2022 BOARD OF REVIEW STARTING DATE

WHEREAS, the City Assessor will be unable to attend the established start date for the 2022 March Board of Review which is the second Monday of March, March 14, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Michigan Compiled Law 211.30(2) allows the governing body of a city to authorize an alternative starting date of the Tuesday or Wednesday following the second Monday of March;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Otsego City Commission hereby approves the starting date of the 2022 March Board of Review as Tuesday, March 15, 2022.

YEAS: Commissioners: Cyndi Trobeck, Stacey Withee, Laurie Krueger, Brent Milhiem, Dustin McNees.

NAYS: Commissioners: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioners: None.

ABSENT: Commissioners: None.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

B. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2022-02 - A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE 2022 POVERTY EXEMPTION POLICY

Commissioner McNees offered the following resolution and moved for its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Withee.

CITY OF OTSEGO
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-02

A Resolution to Establish the 2022 Poverty Exemption Policy

WHEREAS, the annual adoption of guidelines for poverty exemptions is required of the City Commission; and

WHEREAS, the principal residence of persons, who the City Assessor and Board of Review determines by reason of poverty to be unable to contribute to the public charge, is eligible for 100 percent exemption from taxation under Public Act 390 of 1994 (MCL 211.7u); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to PA 390 of 1994, the City of Otsego, Allegan County adopts the following guidelines for the Board of Review to implement. The guidelines shall include but not be limited to the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and all persons residing in the household, including any property tax credit returns, filed in the current or immediately preceding year;

To be eligible, a person shall do all the following on an annual basis:

- 1) Be an owner of and occupy as a principal residence the property for which an exemption is requested.

- 2) File a claim with the supervisor/assessor or Board of Review, accompanied by federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence, including any property tax credit returns filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year or a signed State Tax Commission Form 4988, *Poverty Exemption Affidavit*.
- 3) File a claim reporting that the combined assets of all persons does not exceed \$25,000. Assets include but are not limited to, real estate other than the principal residence, personal property, motor vehicles, recreational vehicles and equipment, certificates of deposit, savings accounts, checking accounts, stocks, bonds, life insurance, retirement funds, etc.
- 4) Produce a valid driver's license or other form of identification if requested.
- 5) Produce, if requested, a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property for which an exemption is requested.
- 6) Meet the federal poverty income guidelines published in the prior calendar year in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or alternative guidelines adopted by the governing body providing the alternative guidelines do not provide eligibility requirements less than the federal guidelines. The annual allowable income includes income for all persons residing in the principal residence
- 7) The application for an exemption shall be filed after January 1, but one day prior to the last day of the December Board of Review. The filing of this claim constitutes an appearance before the Board of Review for the purpose of preserving the right of appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$ 12,880
2	\$ 17,420
3	\$ 21,960
4	\$ 26,500
5	\$ 31,040
6	\$ 35,580
7	\$ 40,120
8	\$ 44,660
For each additional person	\$ 4,540

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Review shall follow the above stated policy, state and federal guidelines in granting or denying an exemption. In accordance with statute, the exemption may be granted consecutively with no limitations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution and guidelines supersedes all previous resolutions and/or guidelines.

YEAS: Commissioners: Cyndi Trobeck, Stacey Withee, Laurie Krueger, Brent Milhiem, Dustin McNees.

NAYS: Commissioners: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioners: None.

ABSENT: Commissioners: None.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

VIII. APPOINTMENTS:

A. CONSIDERATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF BOARD OF REVIEW MEMBERS – LINDA ELDRED, RICHARD DELONG, AND KAY STRONG TERMS TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2022

Commissioner Withee moved to confirm the Mayor's reappointment of Board of Review Members – Linda Eldred, Richard DeLong, and Kay Strong, terms to expire December 31, 2022, seconded by Commissioner Milhiem. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The Commission thanked the members for their service.

B. CONSIDERATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF BECKY HOOKER TO FILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM OF LAURIE ANDRUS, TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2022

Commissioner Krueger moved to appoint Becky Hooker to fill the unexpired term of Laurie Andrus, term expiring December 31, 2022, seconded by Commissioner Withee. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The Commission thanked Laurie Andrus for her service.

IX. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

MANAGER'S REPORT

The City Manager gave updates on the following:

1. He briefly reviewed the year 2021
 - a. The financial conversations – which is a testament to all of the Commissioners.
 - b. Blight.
2. He commented that he is hoping for a more peaceful 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Robert Alway, 1012 Barton – commented that the Transfer Station Coupons have been around for a couple of decades; saw meeting posting on door and commented to put it on the website; commented on the resolution regarding poverty exemptions.

Austin Marsman, Martin School Board Trustee – he announced that he is running for County Commissioner. He commented that the Christmas parade was well done. He wished everyone a Happy New Year.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Milhiem – he thanked County Commissioner Dugan for his work on the Rock-Tenn Project. He commented and thanked his fellow Commissioners who have open minds, do not get their feelings hurt, and for not being afraid to bring something to the table. He thanked City Manager Mitchell for the preparation of the City Commission Packets, answering his questions and emails.

Commissioner Withee – she wished everyone a Happy New Year. She thanked City Manager Mitchell and Clerk Cronen for the City Commission Packets. She commented that she is glad to have Commissioner Krueger back.

Commissioner Krueger – She thanked everyone for the well wishes and messages. She thanked County Commissioner Dugan for his report. She commented that it will be very nice that Community Mental Health will be more accessible and within walking distance for the Allegan community. She thanked Robert Alway for his dedication for attending City Commission Meetings for twenty plus years. She wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Commissioner McNees – he thanked the audience for attending. He stated that he hopes that everyone has a “Kick-Ass 2022”.

Mayor Trobeck – she commented that she is glad that the Commission is able to have conversations and talk about anything, while listening and taking others points of view in to consideration. She announced that the final Informational Meeting regarding PA33 of 1951, will be held on Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. She asked that everyone invite their friends and neighbors and share on social media, as the Commission is looking for feedback and we want to be as transparent as possible. She wished everyone a Happy New Year.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner McNees, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. CARRIED – 7:54 p.m.

Angela M. Cronen, MMC
City Clerk