

A Regular Meeting of the Otsego City Commission was held on Monday, December 19, 2022.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Withee at 7:00 p.m. with the following Commissioners present: Lauri Krueger, Jason Smith, Chuck Moore, and Wayne Rayburn. Absent: None. Also present: City Manager, Aaron Mitchell; and Fire Chief, Brandon Weber.

The audience joined the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The December 5, 2022, Regular Minutes, were approved as submitted, motion Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Moore. CARRIED.

REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS

Robert Alway, 1012 Barton – he commented that the resolution for the matching funds for the pavilion was a good idea.

Nick Breedveld, 1101 Barton – he commented in regards to the resolution for the park grant - that the park already has bathrooms. He questioned when they would be open and who would maintain them.

I. PRESENTATIONS:

A. COUNTY COMMISSIONER GALE DUGAN UPDATE

County Commissioner Dugan gave an update on current Allegan County activities. He answered questions of the audience. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, happy holidays, and for everyone to stay safe during the upcoming blizzard.

II. PUBLIC HEARING:

III. PLANNING AND ZONING:

IV. ORDINANCES:

V. REQUESTS:

VI. AGREEMENTS:

VII. RESOLUTIONS:

A. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2022-28 A RESOLUTION OF AUTHORIZATION – LOCAL UNIT OF GOVERNMENT MATCH WITHOUT DONATED FUNDS

City Manager Mitchell explained that the grant funds are from ARPA funds and must be used towards outdoor recreation. He explained that the resolution will authorize him to apply for the grant. The grant application is for a play structure and a bathroom facility, by the pavilion. He stated that the bathroom facility would be maintained by the DPW staff. He stated that if the grant was awarded the matching funds of \$17,000, would come from the General Fund. Commissioner Smith asked if the grant could be turned down. Commissioner Rayburn asked if there were available funds in the General Fund for this. City Manager Mitchell indicated there

are funds available. At this time, City Manager Mitchell explained the grant awarding process and answered questions of the Commission.

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

CITY OF OTSEGO
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-28

A RESOLUTION OF AUTHORIZATION –
LOCAL UNIT OF GOVERNMENT MATCH WITHOUT DONATED FUNDS

WHEREAS, the City of Otsego supports the submission of an application titled, “Riverfront Park – Phase Three” to the Spark grant program for the construction of a bathroom facility and play structure, at the Riverfront/Pavilion area at 210 North Farmer Street, Otsego, MI 49078; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Otsego is hereby making a financial commitment to the project in the amount of \$17,610.00, Ten-Percent (10%) matching funds, in cash and/or force account; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Otsego hereby authorizes submission of a Spark Application for \$158,490.00, and further resolves to make available its financial obligation amount of \$17,610.00 (10 %), of a total \$176,100.00 project cost, during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

YEAS: Commissioners: Stacey Withee, Chuck Moore, Lauri Krueger, Jason Smith,
Wayne Rayburn

NAYS: Commissioners: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioners: None.

ABSENT: Commissioners: None.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

VIII. APPOINTMENTS:

IX. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING

City Manager Mitchell stated that there needs to be a very important conversation regarding staffing at the Fire Department. He stated that it comes down to a Fire truck or operations. He commented that it is very eye-opening with the number of calls increasing. He briefly explained the Safer Grant that the Fire Department applied for, but unfortunately didn't receive, resulting in firefighter burnout, and stress because of the unprecedented amount of calls. He stated that we have to plan for the future and something has to change. He indicated that there are time restraints in making decisions and putting together a millage proposal.

At this time, Fire Chief Weber gave a presentation “Otsego Fire Department Staffing Proposal 2023”. He covered the following:

- Historical Call Volume
- Current Department Synopsis
- Call Type Comparison 2015/2022
- Comparison to other Departments
- Four Staffing Options
- Advantages
- Disadvantages

Fire Chief Weber answered questions of the Commission.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the staff options and a potential millage increase to fund the additional staff. City Manager Mitchell commented that 2 Mills would be an accurate portrayal of the funds needed. He commented that 1 Mill would patch the problem and 2 Mills would fix the problem. City Manager Mitchell commented that the purchasing of an aerial fire truck will have to wait. He explained that once the Commission decides on how to proceed forward, a resolution would be prepared with proposed ballot language for the Commission to review and approve for the May 2023 election.

MANAGER’S REPORT

The City Manager gave updates on the following:

- Dam Inspection
- Housing Study
- He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
- He stated that if anyone has questions about the Fire Department presentation to contact him or Fire Chief Weber.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Robert Alway, 1012 Barton – he asked if the Public Safety millage was reduced by Headlee. He commented that he is looking forward to the restrooms at the pavilion.

Karin Breedveld, 1101 Barton – she thanked and complimented Fire Chief Weber on his presentation. She asked if the presentation would be on-line.

Nick Breedveld, 1101 Barton – he asked the following questions: is the City done selling sand; when will the LCSA money come in.

COMMISSIONER'S' COMMENTS

Commissioner Moore – he thanked the County Commissioner Dugan. He thanked Fire Chief Weber for his presentation, commenting that it is overwhelming. He stated that he appreciates what the Fire Department is doing and hopes that the Commission can come up with a good strategy for the Fire Department moving forward.

Commissioner Krueger – she thanked County Commissioner Dugan for his report. She thanked Fire Chief Weber for the fantastic presentation and all of the work he put into gathering of the information. She commented that this information needs to be talked about with the residents. She stated that the direction is going to have to be decided quickly. She thanked the audience for attending. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and to be careful in the upcoming snow storm.

Commissioner Smith – he thanked County Commissioner Dugan for his report. He thanked Fire Chief Weber for his presentation, and commented that he put a lot of work into it. He commented that the Commission will do something for the Fire Department and do it quickly, not leave anyone in the dark anymore. He thanked City Manager Mitchell for all he does.

Commissioner Rayburn – he thanked Fire Chief Weber for his presentation. He commented that it was overwhelming and gave him a lot to think about. He stated that he is pro-Public Safety with the City's aging community and saving a life is very important. He commented that he is not pro-millage, but this has to be considered. He stated that with society the way that it is now, it is hard to keep employees. He thanked County Commissioner Dugan for his report. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Mayor Withee – she thanked Fire Chief Weber for his presentation. She commented that she has sat through the presentation twice, tonight and previously at the Township meeting. She stated that we have vulnerable, health-risky residents in our community, and we need to make this a priority. She commented that we need to think seriously about this and educate our community. She wished everyone Happy Holidays and to not be a statistic.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner Krueger, seconded by Commissioner Smith. CARRIED – 8:46 p.m.

Angela M. Cronen, MMC
City Clerk