

A Workshop Meeting of the Otsego City Commission was held Monday, January 19, 2026.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Withee at 6:00 p.m. with the following Commissioners present: Wayne Rayburn, Jason Smith, Lauri Krueger, and Chuck Moore. Absent: None. Also present: Director of Public Works, Mike Bosch; and Finance Director, Brian Kelley.

Kevin Travis the Supervisor for Watson Township was in attendance to announce his candidacy for the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court Judge position.

County Commissioner Gale Dugan gave an overview of recent Allegan County activities. He answered questions of the Commission.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **A. WATER & SEWER RATE PRESENTATION**

Andy Campbell and Brittany Brower of Bedzinski & Co. presented an analysis and overview of the history of the City's Water and Sewer rates. They outlined recommendations for future rates for the Water and Sewer Funds as part of the future budget process.

Mr. Campbell reported that the Sewer Fund is not an immediate concern at this time; however, continued annual incremental increases were recommended. He commented that the Water Fund is the primary concern, due to the cost associated with lead and copper compliance requirements.

A discussion took place regarding the requirements and timeline for lead service line replacement. Mr. Campbell noted that the City's water rates are among the lowest five percent of municipalities they represent. It was suggested that water rates need to be increased significantly to fund the Water Fund.

Potential grant opportunities were discussed. City Manager Mitchell inquired whether the information could be presented at an open forum. Mr. Campbell stated they would attend a future meeting to present the information and answer questions.

### **B. RFP - 240 HELEN**

City Manager Mitchell updated the Commission on the progress of 240 Helen. He stated that the asbestos survey had been completed and it is scheduled for removal. He commented that the demolition of the building should take place in early February. He explained that he hoped to have the property cleared and cleaned by March.

City Manager Mitchell told the Commission that there were several options for the property. He explained the process of the RFP (Request For Proposal) and suggested to possibly start with the RFP. He asked the Commission to think about the different options and suggested it be discussed at a future Regular City Commission Meeting.

### **C. OFD COST RECOVERY ORDINANCE**

City Manager Mitchell gave an overview of the history of the Cost Recovery Ordinance and why it was initially implemented. He commented that the Fire Department was at a different place when the Ordinance was adopted. The Fire Department was operating with volunteers and now

we have a full-time staff. City Manager Mitchell commented that in the current Ordinance there is a provision for the City Manager to use his discretion when billing for cost recovery. He commented that he would like to be able to use his discretion on future billings for cost recovery cases. A brief discussion took place regarding cost recovery and billing going forward.

#### **REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

None.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Smith – he thanked Andy Campbell and Brittany Brower for the Water & Sewer rate presentation, commenting that it was very informative and helpful. The other Commissioners concurred with Commissioner Smith's comments.

Commissioner Rayburn – he thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner Krueger, seconded by Commissioner Smith. CARRIED – 8:01 p.m.

Angela M. Cronen, MMC City Clerk