

The regular meeting of the Ishpeming City Council was held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, in the Ishpeming City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Jason Chapman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Jason Chapman, Council Members Lindsay Bean, and Pat Scanlon (3). Absent: Council Members Elizabeth Firby and Renelle Halverson (2). Also present was City Manager Craig Cugini and City Attorney Caroline Bridges.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Public comment was offered through Zoom and in person.

Marilyn Andrew, 624 Elliott Street and a longtime member of the Friends of the Library, expressed her concerns with the library budget. She would like to see the Children’s Library become a full-time position because more and more families are utilizing the Library and wonderful activities are provided for the children. In addition, she would like to see the tube slide at Al Quaal open in 2024.

Raymond Olds, 1165 Ninth Street, commented on the condition of the tennis courts at the playground indicating he considered them to be unsafe to use and needed to be addressed. He also expressed his concern with the election precinct being located at Birchview School.

Claudia Demarest, 821 Maurice Street, questioned why Channel 189 was not currently streaming; asked why agenda comment and old and new business were removed from the agenda and would like the policy amended to have those put back on; and the City Charter, Roberts Rules of Order, and the Open Meetings Act needed to be followed.

Mike Tonkin, 612 N. Third Street, commented on getting two different answers from the City when asking a question; wanted to see priorities set; thought the campground was not needed and there was no staff to maintain it; thought the Siren Communications contracted was not needed; and added safe streets and sidewalks along with water and sewer were the priorities.

John Schooler, 772 Michigan Street, was still waiting to hear back from the City regarding his claim; questioned when the low manholes would be addressed on Empire Street; asked about the snow plan; and questioned if tickets would be issued during the parking ban.

Mary Farmer, 415 S. Lake Street, asked why the MarqTran bus did not stop at the Housing Commission; and thought there were no businesses to go to during the Ladies Night Out event.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon, seconded by Councilmember Bean and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon seconded by Councilmember Bean and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- a. Minutes of Previous Meeting (October 4th, October 18th, and October 25th)
- b. Approval of Disbursements
- c. Reappoint Jim Bertucci to 3-year term-Waste Water Treatment Board, Term Exp. 12/2026
- d. Reappoint Brad Waters and Joseph Pelkola to 3-year terms-Commission on Aging: Term Exp 9/2026
- e. Reappoint Jacqueline Healey to a 5-year term on the Housing Commission: Term Expiring 10/2028
- f. Appoint Corry Richards to fill vacancy on the Planning Commission: Term Expiring 11/2024
- g. Appoint Philip Carter to a 3-year term on the Planning Commission: Term Expiring 11/2026
- h. Nominate Ed Anderson for reappointment to the Marq-Tran Board: Term Expiring 12/2026
- i. Confirm payment to Prime Specialty for emergency repairs to City Hall Heating System Pumps
- j. Declare 143 Library books as surplus

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORT

Finance Director Grant Getschow reviewed the unaudited balance sheet excerpt for the City including the General Fund, Major and Local Street, and Water, Sewer, and Garbage fund for the period ending October 2023.

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon, seconded by Councilmember Bean and carried unanimously to approve the unaudited monthly financial statement report as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2024 BUDGET AND MILLAGE RATES

At 6:27, Mayor Chapman opened the public hearing for the 2024 budget and millage rate.

Raymond Olds, 1165 9th Street, did not have a chance to review the entire budget, but thought several items needed to be revisited. He questioned the purchase of a sidewalk plow; and added he would like to see a fire truck purchased first.

Claudia Demarest, 821 Maurice Street, noted the 2024 budget would not be starting in a deficit due to a transfer from the Motor Pool fund to the General fund; she thought the Lake Superior Community Partnership contract and the Siren Communication contract should be terminated; she added the DPW request for a sidewalk plow, a gator, and a new pick-up truck should be cut.

Ann Olds, 1165 9th Street, questioned the proposed roof at the Al Quaal lodge, the millage rate, the purchase of a sidewalk plow, and the purchase of additional water meters.

At 6:32 p.m., Mayor Chapman closed the public hearing.

Finance Director Getschow noted the Library budget has an \$18,000 increase over the 2023 budget but there were some reductions in the supply lines. He briefly explained the difference between the General Fund versus Public Improvement Fund in municipal finance and noted equipment is purchased from the Public Improvement fund which does not impact the General fund and money cannot be transferred between those funds. He explained the meter program was funded through the Water and Sewer Enterprise funds. Due to failing meeting, the City could save money with the meter replacements and he further added there was a \$250,000 grant that was obtained to cover some of the cost of meter replacements.

Councilmember Scanlon suggested discussion be postpone until a full council was present. A special meeting would be scheduled for Wednesday, November 29th, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATIONS

a. Northern Michigan University NCAA Ski Race: January 19-21, 2024

i. Landowners Authorization form for race sanctioning

b. Ishpeming Community Events: Christmas Festivities and Parade Permit: November-December 2023

c. Ishpeturkey Trot: November 23, 2023

d. Annual Ski Jumping Tournament: January 19 and 20, 2024

A motion was made by Member Scanlon, seconded by Member Bean and carried unanimously to approve the four special event applications as presented including the Landowner Authorization form for the NMU race sanctioning.

SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE 11-2700, PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES – ANDERSON LOFTS AND PENINSULA LOFTS

CJ Felton, Community Housing Network, advised the only change from the first reading of the ordinance was the change from 4% to 7% and the change of the name from “Anderson Peninsula” to “Ishpeming” in Section 3(F).

A motion was made by Member Bean, seconded by Member Scanlon and carried unanimously to approve the second reading of Ordinance # 11-2700 Payment in Lieu of Taxes – Anderson Lofts and Peninsula Loft incorporating the proposed changes as presented.

SIREN COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Adela Piper, CEO of Siren, introduced two additional staff members Trysten Loos and Nic Conroy. She provided some highlights over the last 6 months including some of the local earned media plus national coverage which included the sink hole; she reviewed the shared media which included Facebook pointing out the top posts and reviewed the analytics. She discussed reputation improvements such as blight which was listed as a 4th biggest challenge. She pointed out the public survey ranked infrastructure as the 2nd biggest challenge and the DWSRF was received due to the large number of public comments received in support of the City's drinking water project. There has been more positivity since they received their contract with the City.

Mayor Chapman thanked Adela Piper and Siren Communications for the work done over the last 6-months; and, added Siren has always been very helpful.

Councilmember Bean felt it was not the numbers that were important it was the value of getting ahead of the story and having a more positive view versus a negative view on the City. There was a need and desire to improve the reputation and view of the City. Hiring Siren is has helped to achieve that goal and is a benefit to the City.

Councilmember Scanlon stated getting ahead of stories help to stop rumors and to get questions answered up front. Siren has done a great job for the City, particularly in controlling the narrative.

Manager Cugini advised Siren has been monitoring social media and getting the answers out to the residents that have questions. This was beneficial for community engagement.

APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES GRANT WITH 20% CITY MATCH

Manager Cugini advised the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) grant could be used for Marketing and Zoning. The commitment from the City would be 20% of the grant dollars of up to \$40,000.

A motion was made by Mayor Chapman seconded by Councilmember Scanlon and carried unanimously to authorize the grant match of 20% and to proceed to apply for the RRC grant up to \$40,000.

AUTHORIZATION FOR CITY TREASURER TO PLACE DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS ON TAX ROLLS

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon seconded by Councilmember Bean and carried unanimously to place delinquent utility billing charges and additional landfill or service charges as presented on the December 1, 2023 property tax bill as special assessments.

FIRST READING OF AMENDMENT TO ORDINANCE 11-300, PURCHASING PROCEDURES

City Attorney Bridges deleted the old language in Ordinance 11-300 and it was replaced with the new Purchasing and Contracting Procedures language.

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon, seconded by Councilmember Bean and carried unanimously to approve the first reading of amendment to Ordinance 11-300 Purchasing and Contracting Procedures Ordinance as presented.

PROPOSED POLICY #210, PURCHASING AND CONTRACTING POLICY

City Attorney Bridges explained the policy directs staff on the purchasing procedure.

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon, seconded by Councilmember Bean and carried unanimously to adopted the City of Ishpeming Purchasing and Contracting Policy #210 as presented.

RESOLUTION #18-2023, HEALTH INSURANCE PER PUBLIC ACT 152 OF 2011

A motion was made by Mayor Chapman, seconded by Councilmember Scanlon and carried unanimously to table this item until the special meeting on November 29th.

REQUEST FROM DPW TO PURCHASE GATOR FOR THE CEMETERY/PARKS

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon, seconded by Mayor Chapman and carried unanimously to table this item until the November 29th special Council meeting.

REQUEST FROM DPW TO PURCHASE NEW PICK UP TRUCK

A motion was made by Councilmember Scanlon, seconded by Mayor Chapman and carried unanimously to table this item until the special meeting on November 29th.

PROPOSAL FROM WR CONSTRUCTION FOR WORK ON THE STORM SEWER AT THE OUTFLOW

General Foreman Bill Anderson explained there was a requirement to have confined space certification for this project and this company met those requirements.

A motion was made by Councilmember Bean, seconded by Councilmember Scanlon and carried unanimously to approve the proposal from WR Construction for confined space entry into the 12' deep structure at the outflow in the amount of \$5,500 as presented.

DISCUSS HOW TO PRESENT FINDINGS FROM THE INVESTIGATION ON THE AREA SOUTH OF DIVISION (ACROSS FROM HIGH SCHOOL)

Manager Cugini asked how Council would like to have this information presented from staff's investigation of this area. There was discussion related to the type of data Council would like to see and the format of the information that staff currently had.

It was the consensus to set a special meeting to discuss the findings on December 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. and notify the public and residents in the neighborhood of the special meeting.

UPDATE ON PATCHING BIDS FOR MAIN STREET AND SEVENTH STREET

DPW General Foreman Anderson reported sealed bids were announced and no bids were received. There would be gravel for the winter and paving would take place in the spring.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Public comment was offered on zoom and in person.

Mike Tonkin, 612 N. Third Street, talked about the City Hall door project and indicated sometimes there was a delay in getting materials; however, the City Charter still had to be followed.

Bob Hendrickson, Annual Ski Jumping Tournament, reported planning is underway and the Ski Club was looking forward to hosting another great tournament.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Scanlon asked if the Lake Superior Community Partnership could provide an update at the December meeting; and he would like to have MDOT provide an update in the spring regarding the Lakeshore Roundabout.

Councilmember Bean did not attend the Parks and Recreation meeting in October; attended the Planning Commission meeting and reported the conditional use permit for the Anderson and Peninsula Lofts was approved for apartments on the ground floor; and there was a joint meeting of the DDA and Planning Commission scheduled on Monday, November 27, 2023.

Mayor Chapman congratulated all the Hematite sports teams for all their success; and thanked all Veterans for their service.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Cugini reminded residents that any downtown development suggestions could be brought to the DDA; he would reach out to Doreen Shelly at the Housing Commission regarding MarqTran; announced the Fire Department secured a grant for fire gear; he was working on a Financially Distressed Communities Grant for a new fire truck; provided an update on some blight cases; he had one more month on the GICC Board; he completed training and was certified in Asset Management; public comment was now open for the draft recreation plan; and two façade grants were awarded by the DDA - one for Olson Woodworking on Division Street and one for Jackson's Hardware the "old" Coast to Coast building.

General Foreman Anderson reported on the status of the roundabout to date and advised in approximately two weeks Lakeshore should be open and the light on the highway closed for the winter.

Councilmembers thanked Manager Cugini for his emailed report.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:37 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Bean seconded by Councilmember Scanlon and carried unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,



Cathy Smith
City Clerk