

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan
September 17, 2024

The regular meeting of the Saint Louis City Council was called to order by Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw on Tuesday September 17, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Council Members Present: Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw, Fares E. Azzam, Mayor Pro Tem William R. Leonard, Elizabeth A. Upton.

Council Members Absent: Kevin D. Palmer (excused)

City Manager: Kurt Giles
Clerk: Jamie Long
Police Chief: Richard Ramereiz

Others in Attendance: Keith Risdon-Utilities Director, Susan Whitford-Resident, Sara Piaskowski-Farmers Market Manager, Lou Fleury-OHM, Max Clever-Spicer and four students.

Mayor Echtenaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Upton to approve the agenda for September 17, 2024 with an addition of item 11D, wine tasting at the farmers market. All ayes carried the motion.

City Council Minutes.

Moved by Upton, supported by Leonard, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 3, 2024. All ayes carried the motion.

Claims & Accounts.

City Council discussed the Claims & Accounts.

Moved by Upton, supported by Leonard, to approve the Claims & Accounts in the amount of \$907,729.86. All ayes carried the motion.

Monthly Reports.

City Council discussed the August 2024 Monthly Reports.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Upton, to receive the August 2024 Monthly Reports and place them on file. All ayes carried the motion.

Audience Recognition.

Sue Whitford of 403 E. Tyrell informed the council that the home to the north of hers, 117 South East Street is in very poor condition. Whitford said the state of the property and the infestation of wildlife is causing deterioration to her property. Whitford stated she is unable to utilize her back deck, for the view of the home on 117 South East Street is not one anyone would care to see. Whitford stated she has been making complaints since 2020 and she feels nothing is being done.

Manager Giles informed Whitford that there is a process that has to be followed, and the due date has not yet been reached.

Sara Piaskowski, the Farmers Market Manager, introduced herself to the council and gave a brief update of the plans for the building she and her husband purchased at 201 North Mill. Piaskowski's plans included a year-round market, partnering with Alma and possibly Breckenridge. Piaskowski stated that the plan is to have more health classes and the building will include space for events to be held.

Consent Agenda.

Mayor Echtenaw requested approval/receipt of Consent Agenda item "a" through "d" as shown below:

- a. Payment to OHM for Consultant Construction Engineering.
- b. PA 660 Audit Results.
- c. Payment to Fredrickson for a Schwarze A7SE Street Sweeper.
- d. DWAM Grant Work Directive.

Moved by Upton, supported by Leonard, to approve Consent Agenda item "a" through "d."
All ayes carried the motion.

Resolution 2024-20MDOT State Trunkline Maintenance.

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot, Michigan held on the 17th day of September, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

Present: Azzam, Leonard, Upton, Echtenaw

Absent: Palmer

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member Azzam and supported by Member Upton:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Transportation has offered the City of St. Louis a contractual agreement for maintenance of the State of Michigan Trunklines and Bridges which are located within the geographical boundaries of the City of St. Louis; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis has affirmatively determined that entering into a contractual agreement for the aforementioned purposes is in the best interests of all affected parties; and

WHEREAS, the St. Louis City Staff has reviewed the terms and conditions of said offered contractual agreement and has recommended to the City of St. Louis City Council approve said agreement; and

WHEREAS, the St. Louis City Council has reviewed and considered the contractual agreement and the recommendations of its staff and determined approval of said agreement is in the best public interest of the City and its residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Mayor and City Council of the City of St. Louis hereby approves a contractual agreement (Contract No. 20240406) with the Michigan Department of Transportation, the terms of said contractual agreement as outlined therein and being effective for the period October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2029

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council designates Keith Risdon, P.E., its Director of Public Services, as the Contract Administrator and Street Maintenance Superintendent, and further authorizes Mr. Risdon and/or City Manager Kurt Giles to act on the City's behalf for the purposes of the administration and budgetary provisions of said contract and for signing the agreement.

ALL RESOLUTIONS AND PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS INSOFAR AS THEY CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS RESOLUTION ARE HEREBY RESCINDED.

The Resolution was introduced by Member Azzam and supported by Member Upton . The Resolution declared adopted by the following roll call:

YEAS: Azzam, Upton, Leonard, Echtenaw

NAYS: None

Resolution approved for adoption on this 17th day of September, 2024.

DWSRF Draft Discussion.

Utility Director, Keith Risdon, gave a brief breakdown of the DWSRF Draft. This draft included a \$5.15 million grant with \$8 million in loans at 1% for up to 40 years. The state plans will be out October 1 and the state needs to be informed whether the City of St. Louis would like to continue the process. Risdon said by agreeing to continue on in the process, the city is not locked in to any contracts, it merely keeps the city on the list for eligible grant funds.

CWSRF Draft Discussion.

Manager Giles informed the council that EGLE will give the city a \$7 million grant for CWSRF, however the city would have to borrow an additional \$30 million to complete the projects. This loan would cause 50%-70% increases per customer to fund these projects. Giles recommended the council decline the grants and loans.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Upton, supported by Azzam to decline the grants and loans for the CWSRF project. All ayes carried the motion.

Addition to Agenda-Wine Tasting at the October 31, 2024 Farmers Market.

Sara Piaskowski informed the council that she would like to partner with VandeMark Farm & Vineyard and the Historical Society to have a wine tasting event at the last Farmers Market of the year on October 31, 2024. Piaskowski will apply for the one-time liquor license and start advertising for the event, once the council approves her plans.

Discussion was held.

Motion by Upton, supported by Leonard to hold a wine tasting event at the Farmers Market with VandeMark Farm and Vineyard along with the Historical Society on October 31, 2024. All ayes carried the motion.

City Manager Report.

Nothing to report.

City Clerk Report.

Nothing to report.

Police Chief Report.

Nothing to report.

Council Comments.

Member Upton reported that the valve box cover on Hebron Street, near Prospect Street, keeps coming off.

Member Azzam reported that when he got a haircut downtown, he was asked why our internet service in the city is so poor.

Mayor Echtenaw reported that Leslie Needham reached out to him regarding excessive noise from large trucks coming in and out of the city, specifically a red Bebow Farms truck.

Public Comments.

There were none.

Adjournment.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Upton to adjourn at 7:06 p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, Clerk