

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan
January 21, 2025

The regular meeting of the Saint Louis City Council was called to order by Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw on Tuesday January 21, 2025, at 6:02 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

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

Council Members Absent: None

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

Others in Attendance: Brian Buysse-resident, John Pavlik, Bobbie Marr-Finance Director, Josh Leppien-Administrative Intern, Ken Berthiaume-Berthiaume & Company, Lenore Worden, LeAnn Slates-resident, Tim Denman, and Michael Bessert.

Mayor Echtenaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Palmer to approve the agenda for January 21, 2025 with the movement of item #12- closed session meeting to the end, after item # 17-public comments . All ayes carried the motion.

Audit Presentation-Ken Berthiaume.

Ken Berthiaume reported on fiscal year end June 30, 2024 audit findings with the council.

Ken reviewed several points in the audit documents with the Council, commenting on the great job done by Bobbie Marr and the accounting staff. Ken thanked members for his work as City Auditor.

City Council Minutes.

Moved by Azzam supported by Upton, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 7, 2025. 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 \$1,125,204.26. All ayes carried the motion.

Monthly Reports.

City Council discussed the December 2024 Monthly Reports.

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

Audience Recognition.

There were no comments.

Consent Agenda.

Mayor Echinaw requested approval/receipt of Consent Agenda items “a” through “f” as shown below:

- a. Payment to Spicer Group for Drinking Water Asset Management.
- b. Payment to Spicer Group for Engineering Services for Kayak Launch.
- c. Payment to OHM for Consultant Construction Engineering Services for the DWSRF Project I Phase II.
- d. Payment to Border States for Victorian Lights Street Lamp Expansion.
- e. Payment to Malley Construction, Inc. for DWSRF Project.
- f. Receive MPPA 2024 Business and Credit Risk Assessment.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Azzam, to approve Consent Agenda items “a” through “f.” All ayes carried the motion.

Appointment of Melissa Castle to the DDA Board.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the appointment of Melissa Castle to the DDA Board.

Discussion was held. Mayor Echinaw suggested looking into hiring Castle’s local band for the July Celebration.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the appointment of Melissa Castle to the DDA Board. All ayes carried the motion.

Correction of January 7, 2025 Payables.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the correction of the January 7, 2025 payables in the amount of \$50. The check for the Gratiot County Clerk was written in the amount of \$1,345.64 and should have been in the amount of \$1295.64, lowering the January 7, 2025 payables by \$50.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the correction of January 7, 2025 payables in the amount of \$50. All ayes carried the motion.

Proposal for Equipment Rental for Riverbank Cleanup in 2025.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the proposal from Contractors Rental Corp. for excavating equipment for riverbank cleanup in 2025, in the amount of \$17,757.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Upton, and motion was not supported to approve the proposal from Contractors Rental Corp. for excavating equipment for riverbank cleanup in 2025, in the amount of \$17,757. Motion Failed.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard to table the proposal from Contractors Rental Corp. for excavating equipment for riverbank cleanup in 2025, in the amount of \$17,757 until a later date and more research has been completed. All ayes carried the motion.

Sale of 413 South Mill, 216 South East Street and Olive Road Vacant Lots.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the sale agreement for the vacant lots located at 413 South Mill, in the amount of \$6,000, 216 South East Street in the amount of \$6,500 and Olive Road in the amount of \$5,000 and to authorize the City Clerk, Jamie Long, and City Manager Kurt Giles to sign closing documents on the city's behalf.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Upton, supported by Leonard, to approve the sale agreements for the vacant lots located at 413 South Mill, in the amount of \$6,000, 216 South East Street in the amount of \$6,500 and Olive Road in the amount of \$5,000 and to authorize the City Clerk and City Manager to sign closing documents on the city's behalf. All ayes carried the motion.

John Pavlik spoke about a verbal offer of \$2,000 for the property at 403 South Clinton and suggested a counteroffer would be appropriate.

Moved by Leonard and supported by Azzam to authorize a counteroffer of \$4,750 for the property located at 403 South Clinton. All ayes carried the motion.

Contribution Agreement for Healthy Pine River Activities.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the agreement with Healthy Pine River for a contribution in the amount of \$2,500.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard, to approve the agreement with Healthy Pine River for a contribution in the amount of \$2,500. All ayes carried the motion.

Adoption of 2025-2045 Renewable Energy Plan.

Manager Giles requested members to adopt the following 2025-2045 Renewable Energy Plan:

**2025-2045 MUNICIPAL UTILITY
PA 235 RENEWABLE ENERGY PLAN SUMMARY**

ST. LOUIS

Row #		2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045
1	Sales and Requirement Calculation											
2	Method: Weather Normalized or 3 Year Average											
3	If Selected Weather Normalized:											
4	Current Year Sales to Retail Customers											
5	Less Number of Megawatt Hours Sold from Michigan Nuclear Energy											
6	Current Year Weather Normalization Factor											
7	Less VGP Sales											
8	Less Outflow from DG Customers											
9	Current Year Weather Normalized Sales											
10	If Selected 3 Year Average:											
11	Current Year Retail Sales to Retail Customers	32,537	32,445	32,257	32,077	31,954	31,793	31,617	31,474	31,290	31,185	31,064
12	Less Number of Megawatt Hours Sold from Michigan Nuclear Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Less VGP Sales	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Less Outflow from DG Customers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	3 Year Average of Retail Sales	32,665	32,617	32,532	32,413	32,260	32,096	31,941	31,788	31,628	31,460	31,316
16	RECs Reported to Provider Subject to Section 29(4)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	MWh Electricity Sold for PA-235 Compliance Requirement (Row 15 - 13 - 14 - 16)	32,665	32,617	32,532	32,413	32,260	32,096	31,941	31,788	31,628	31,460	31,316
18	RPS Required Energy Credits (Row 17 * Compliance Factor) (Compliance Factors: 2025-2029 = 15%, 2030-2034 = 50%, 2035+ = 60%)	19,599	19,570	19,519	19,448	19,356	19,258	19,165	19,073	18,977	18,876	18,790
19	Energy Credits											
20	Energy Credit Beginning Balance	47,392	47,919	44,985	43,996	43,040	42,136	40,595	39,089	39,266	39,492	39,714
21	Energy Credits Obtained Through Generation/BOT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	Energy Credits Obtained Through PPA	16,664	16,636	18,531	18,491	18,452	17,716	17,659	19,250	19,203	19,098	18,670
23	Energy Credits Obtained Through REC Purchases	3,462	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	Plus: Energy Credits Obtained (Row 21 + 22 + 23)	20,125	16,636	18,531	18,491	18,452	17,716	17,659	19,250	19,203	19,098	18,670
25	Less: Energy Credits Sold	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	Available Energy Credits (Row 20 + 24 - 25)	67,518	64,555	63,515	62,488	61,492	59,852	58,254	58,339	58,469	58,590	58,384
27	Compliance Requirement (Row 18)	19,599	19,570	19,519	19,448	19,356	19,258	19,165	19,073	18,977	18,876	18,790
28	Less: Energy Credit Expiration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	Energy Credit Ending Balance (Row 26 - 27 - 28)	47,919	44,985	43,996	43,040	42,136	40,595	39,089	39,266	39,492	39,714	39,594

**2025-2045 MUNICIPAL UTILITY
PA 235 RENEWABLE ENERGY PLAN SUMMARY**

ST. LOUIS

Row #		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
1	Sales and Requirement Calculation										
2	Method: Weather Normalized or 3 Year Average										
3	If Selected Weather Normalized:										
4	Current Year Sales to Retail Customers										
5	Less Number of Megawatt Hours Sold from Michigan Nuclear Energy										
6	Current Year Weather Normalization Factor										
7	Less VGP Sales										
8	Less Outflow from DG Customers										
9	Current Year Weather Normalized Sales										
10	If Selected 3 Year Average:										
11	Current Year Retail Sales to Retail Customers	33,025	33,059	32,864	32,676	32,730	32,705	32,622	32,680	32,701	32,614
12	Less Number of Megawatt Hours Sold from Michigan Nuclear Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Less VGP Sales	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Less Outflow from DG Customers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	3 Year Average of Retail Sales	36,240	35,052	34,393	32,983	32,866	32,757	32,704	32,686	32,669	32,668
16	RECs Reported to Provider Subject to Section 29(4)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	MWh Electricity Sold for PA-235 Compliance Requirement (Row 15 - 13 - 14 - 16)	36,240	35,052	34,393	32,983	32,866	32,757	32,704	32,686	32,669	32,668
18	RPS Required Energy Credits (Row 17 * Compliance Factor) (Compliance Factors: 2025-2029 = 15%, 2030-2034 = 50%, 2035+ = 60%)	5,436	5,258	5,159	4,947	4,930	16,378	16,352	16,343	16,335	16,334
19	Energy Credits										
20	Energy Credit Beginning Balance	9,726	14,069	19,077	28,144	36,929	45,706	43,013	43,830	43,760	45,601
21	Energy Credits Obtained Through Generation/BOT	483	483	483	483	483	483	483	-	-	-
22	Energy Credits Obtained Through PPA	9,297	9,783	10,282	9,788	9,763	9,741	13,225	12,812	14,714	14,663
23	Energy Credits Obtained Through REC Purchases	309	309	3,751	3,523	3,523	3,523	3,523	3,523	3,523	3,503
24	Plus: Energy Credits Obtained (Row 21 + 22 + 23)	10,088	10,574	14,515	13,794	13,769	13,747	17,231	16,335	18,237	18,166
25	Less: Energy Credits Sold	309	309	289	62	62	62	62	62	62	41
26	Available Energy Credits (Row 20 + 24 - 25)	19,505	24,335	33,303	41,876	50,636	59,392	60,182	60,103	61,936	63,726
27	Compliance Requirement (Row 18)	5,436	5,258	5,159	4,947	4,930	16,378	16,352	16,343	16,335	16,334
28	Less: Energy Credit Expiration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	Energy Credit Ending Balance (Row 26 - 27 - 28)	14,069	19,077	28,144	36,929	45,706	43,013	43,830	43,760	45,601	47,392

Discussion was held.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Palmer, to adopt the 2025-2045 Renewable Energy Plan. All ayes carried the motion.

City Manager Report.

Manager Giles reported that planning for the 2025 Employee Appreciation Dinner has begun, with two potential dates, February 20th or February 27th. Feedback from the council showed that those dates would be acceptable.

City Clerk Report.

Nothing to report.

Police Chief Report.

Chief Ramereiz reported that Officer Scott Clarke and Officer Jon Szafranski are finishing their second week of field training and after next week they should be in the normal rotation, with Clarke on the day shift and Szafranski taking the night shift. Ramereiz reports that with these new full-time officers, Sergeant Forshee can return to her detective position. Ramereiz also reported that Officer Tim Kirby is progressing well and will continue in his field training.

Council Comments.

Member Palmer mentioned sidewalk trip hazards and asked about repairs.

Public Comments.

Lenore Worden-former St. Louis business owner, asked why the city allowed the former bank building to get to this condition and why are building owners not being held accountable? Worden also asked why these businesses are not forced to have their buildings inspected and forced to be up to code? Worden commented on several businesses and buildings that are in poor condition, including the old Peter's Hardware and the Sunshine Store.

Manager Giles reported that these are private properties and owners have rights as well and these inspections only occur on rentals.

Michael Bessert-former St. Louis business owner also commented on enforcement concerns. Bessert stated he saw a car on blocks, a house on the corner of Pine and Saginaw with remnants of a started and never finished addition and many downtown buildings in poor condition, including the Sunshine Store and the old bank building. Bessert feels the city is allowing these conditions and that the city can do a better job of enforcement.

Leann Slates-resident reported her concerns with the safety of the buildings attached to the former bank building.

Tim Denman-St. Louis property owner reported he has rentals in the city and has redone several older houses and has received code enforcement notices. Denman feels that the inspectors do their jobs in that area. Denman

states he came this evening to see what was happening with the former bank building.

Brian Buysse-resident, stated that he felt encouraged by the participation and comments on the former bank building. Buysse reported he wanted to clarify the comments he made at the previous meeting regarding tasers.

Buysse stated he is not for or against the purchase of new tasers, his issue is with the approval process. Buysse reported that the council did not need to rush in to approve until the council had all the facts.

Buysse reported that the meeting minutes provided by the clerk do not show mood or nonverbal cues.

John Pavlik stated that his company had the former bank building listed for over 1 ½ years and at one point the city did have a purchase agreement to buy and repair with the help of grant money, however the bank building is beyond repair.

Closed Session-Former Bank Building at 137 North Mill.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard to go to closed session for discussion regarding the acquisition of the Former Bank Building at 137 North Mill at 7:40 p.m.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Palmer, Leonard, Azzam, Upton, Echtenaw

Nays: None

Motion Carried

Return to Open Session:

Council returned to open session at 8:04 p.m.

Adjournment.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to adjourn 8:05 p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, Clerk