

## CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan  
February 20, 2024

The regular meeting of the Saint Louis City Council was called to order by Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw on Tuesday February 20, 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, Kevin D. Palmer, Elizabeth A. Upton.

Council Members Absent: None

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

Others in Attendance: Max Clever-Spicer Group, Phil Hansen-DDA Director, Keith Risdon-Utilities Director and Adam Musselman.

Mayor Echtenaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Agenda.**

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard to approve the agenda with the addition of a closed session meeting immediately following regarding property acquisition and labor negotiations. All ayes carried the motion.

### **City Council Minutes.**

Moved by Upton, supported by Palmer, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 6, 2024. All ayes carried the motion.

### **Claims & Accounts.**

City Council discussed the Claims & Accounts.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Upton, to approve the Claims & Accounts in the amount of \$540,222.71. All ayes carried the motion.

### **Monthly Board Minutes.**

City Council discussed the January 2024 Monthly Reports.

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

### **Audience Recognition.**

There were no comments.

### **Consent Agenda.**

Mayor Echtenaw requested approval/receipt of Consent Agenda item “a” through “b” as shown below:

- a. Payment to Spicer for Drinking Water Assessment Management.
- b. Payment to OHM for DWSRF Phase 1 Engineering.

Moved by Upton, supported by Azzam, to approve Consent Agenda item “a” through “b”. All ayes carried the motion.

### **Municipal Pool Heater Replacement.**

Manager Giles requested approval of the quote for the pool heater replacement from S&L of Alma in the amount of \$19,600.59, with an amount not to exceed \$21,000.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard, to approve quote for the pool heater replacement from S&L of Alma in the amount of \$19,600.59, with an amount not to exceed \$21,000.

Ayes: Palmer, Leonard, Upton, Echtenaw

Nays: Azzam

### **Resolution 2024-07-Joe Sholtz Memorial Fishing Derby.**

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

**WHEREAS**, Event founder and former Mayor Joe Scholtz began organizing a free fishing derby in 1999 which has been held annually on the second Saturday of June to coincide with free fishing weekend in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, Following Joe Scholtz’ passing in 2011, the annual event was renamed the Joe Scholtz Memorial Free Fishing Derby and his work was continued by volunteer organizers to hold the event nearly every year since that time; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of St. Louis understands Joe Scholtz’ motivation for organizing the event was to raise awareness of the condition of the Pine River and the necessity for the highest quality environmental remediation of the River and adjacent lands in the St. Louis area and to promote outdoor sporting activities, especially among our youth; and

**WHEREAS**, Over the years, the City Council and Staff have been continually supportive of the

free fishing derby and the ideals and goals that Founder Joe Scholtz had when the event was started; and

**WHEREAS**, In recent years, there have been concerns over water quality of the Pine River in and around St. Louis and Alma. E-coli levels have occasionally exceeded the safe threshold for human contact as determined by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services; and

**WHEREAS**, While the St. Louis City Council takes concerns over River water contact very seriously, they also believe members of the public should have appropriate information available to them and make their own decisions regarding participation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED:** The St. Louis City Council supports the implementation of appropriate messaging and signage regarding best practices for use of the Pine River for recreational purposes such as fishing and, since the Pine River is a waterway of the State of Michigan, any posted notice must be issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and/or the Mid-Michigan District Health Department; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of St. Louis is supportive of a decision to continue the Joe Scholtz Memorial Free Fishing Derby including the event which was tentatively scheduled to be held on June 8, 2024.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted as follows:

“Aye:” Azzam, Palmer, Leonard, Echtenaw

“Nay:” Upton

Absent: None

Resolution Declared Adopted

### **White Tail Solar Energy Project Participation.**

Manager Giles requested members to approve the Power Purchase Commitment Authorization Agreement for the White Tail Solar Energy Project.

Motion by Palmer, supported by Azzam to approve the Power Purchase Commitment Authorization Agreement for the White Tail Solar Energy Project.

Ayes: Palmer, Azzam, Leonard, Echtenaw

Nays: Upton

### **City Manager Report.**

Manager Giles reported that Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, there would be a meet and greet at 10:00 a.m. in the Multipurpose room with Representative Jerry Neyer and Senator Roger Hauck for anyone who would like to attend.

Manager Giles reported that Padnos will be holding a recycling drive to raise funds for the Healthy Pine River on April 20<sup>th</sup> in the City Hall parking lot, and the 21<sup>st</sup> would be the annual “Love My City” day.

**City Clerk Report.**

City Clerk Long reminded the council of the Employee Appreciation Dinner on March 20.

**Police Chief Report.**

Nothing to report.

**Council Comments.**

Member Azzam questioned the \$5,000 threshold that is set for purchases without council prior approval.

Member Palmer requested that if another member gives a “nay” on a vote, the member share the reasoning for discussion.

**Public Comments.**

Max Clever from Spicer was available for any questions regarding DWAM. Two hundred and fifty-five home water services out of two hundred eighty have been inspected.

**Closed Session**

Motion by Azzam, supported by Leonard to go into a closed session for regarding property acquisition and strategy for the Police Labor Union contract negotiations at 6:41 p.m.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Azzam, Leonard, Palmer, Upton, Echtenaw

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Return to Open Session.**

Council returned to open session at 7:47 p.m.

**Adjournment.**

Moved by Palmer, supported by Azzam, to adjourn at 7:47 p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, City Clerk