

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan
February 8, 2023

The regular meeting of the Saint Louis City Council was called to order by Mayor Thomas L. Reed on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Council Members Present: Mayor Thomas L. Reed, George T. Kubin, William R. Leonard, Elizabeth A. Upton

Council Members Absent: Roger L. Collison (excused)

City Manager: Kurt Giles
City Clerk: Jamie Long
Police Officer: Sergeant Forshee

Others in Attendance:
Jan Bunting-Gratiot County Commissioner, Ralph Echtinaw – St. Louis Sentinel, Keith Risdon – Public Services Director.

Mayor Tom Reed led the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Council Minutes.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Upton, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 17, 2023. All ayes carried the motion.

Moved by Kubin, supported by Leonard, to approve the minutes of the goal setting session January 25, 2023. All ayes carried the motion.

Claims & Accounts.

City Council discussed the Claims & Accounts.

Moved by Kubin, supported by Upton, to approve the Claims & Accounts in the amount of \$547,283.93. All ayes carried the motion.

Monthly Board Minutes.

City Council discussed the January 2023 Monthly Board Minutes.

Moved by Upton, supported by Leonard, to receive the January, 2023 Monthly Board Minutes and place on file. All ayes carried the motion.

Audience Recognition.

Jan Bunting informed the board of changes happening.
-Michigan Works funding being cut by 11%.
-Food Banks funding being cut by \$1.3 million.
-Assessments have all gone up due to inflation.
-There is a lack of Parapros/Educators in our schools.

Consent Agenda.

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

- a. Change Order No. 3 from Ward’s Excavating-Well Abandonment.
- b. Payment to BS&A for Annual Service/Support.
- c. Payment to Tri-Terra-110 West Jackson Demo.
- d. Payment to Dice Excavation-Salt Shed Demo.
- e. Payment to Ward’s Excavating-Well Abandonment Project.
- f. Payment to Spicer Group-Orchard Hills Well Water Disconnect.

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

New Business.

Manager Giles requested members adopt Resolution 2023-3-Banking.

Resolution 2023-3-Banking

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Louis maintains a number of bank accounts with a number of financial institutions, and

WHEREAS, this Council believes it best practice for the City to have multiple persons authorized to sign banking transactions; however, each transaction would require two signatures to authorize and validate opening, closing, withdrawal, draft, check or wire of or from a demand account of any financial institution with which the City does business under Employer #38-6004592, and

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, the City of St. Louis by filing with the foregoing banking institutions a copy of this resolution the City of Saint Louis hereby institutes the above best practice and authorizes signatures of any two of the following persons occupying the following offices are authorized to transact business on its bank demand accounts:

Mayor
Mayor Pro-Tem
Finance Director/Treasurer

City Clerk
City Manager

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the persons currently holding said offices are:

Thomas L. Reed, Mayor
Kurt R. Giles, City Manager
Bobbie J. Marr, Finance Director/Treasurer

Roger L. Collison, Mayor Pro Tem
Jamie Long, City Clerk

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager be authorized to access any and all information regarding any account held under Employer #38-6004592.

Moved by Kubin, supported by Upton to adopt **Resolution 2023-3-Banking**.

Ayes: Kubin, Leonard, Upton, Reed

Nays: None

Absent: Collison

Resolution Declared Adopted.

Manager Giles requested members adopt Resolution 2023-4-Poverty Exemption.

Resolution 2023-4-Poverty Exemption

Whereas, the adoption of guidelines for poverty exemptions is required of the City of St. Louis Council; and

Whereas, the principle residence of persons, who the Assessor and Board of Review determines by reasons of poverty to be unable to contribute to the public charge, is eligible for exemption in whole or part from taxation under Public Act 390, 1994 (MCL211.7u); and

Whereas, pursuant to PA 390, 1994, City of Saint Louis, Gratiot County, Michigan adopts the following guidelines for the Board of Review to implement. The guidelines shall include but not be limited to the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and all persons residing in the household, including any property tax credit returns, filed in the current or immediately preceding year;

To be eligible, a person shall do all of the following on an annual basis:

- 1) Be an owner or and occupy as a homestead property for which an exemption is requested.
- 2) File Form 5737 Application for MCL 211.7u Poverty Exemption.
- 3) File Form 5739 Affirmation of Ownership and Occupancy to Remain Exempt by Reason of Poverty.
- 4) File all required additional documentation (such as federal/state income tax returns, including any property tax credit returns filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year, with the assessor or board of review, or a signed State Tax Commission Form 4988, Poverty Exemption Affidavit.
- 5) Produce a valid drivers' license or other form of identification if requested.
- 6) Produce a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property for which an exemption is requested if requested.
- 7) Meet the federal poverty income standards as defined annually by the United States Office of Management and Budget.

- 8) The application for an exemption shall be filed after January 1, but before the day prior to the last day of the board of review.
- 9) The property in question contains enough acreage that at least one or more buildable lots could be split from the main parcel under the land division act, the township will count the value of any additional parcel that could be split when calculating the applicant's total assets
- 10) Total assets shall not be more than \$2,000.00.
- 11) Fixed assets shall be limited to one house and one vehicle for the claimant and no house and one vehicle for each adult person residing with claimant.

The following are the federal poverty income guidelines which are updated annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The annual allowable income includes income for all persons residing in the principal residence.

Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2023 Assessments

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$13,590
2	\$18,310
3	\$23,030
4	\$27,750
5	\$32,470
6	\$37,190
7	\$41,910
8	\$46,630
For each additional Person	\$4,720

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the assessor and Board of Review shall follow the above stated policy and federal guidelines in granting or denying an exemption.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Upton, to approve **Resolution 2023-4 Poverty Exemption.**

Ayes: Kubin, Leonard, Upton, Reed

Nays: None

Absent: Collison

Resolution Declared Adopted

Assessor's Office Accessibility Policy

Manager Giles requested members approve the Assessor's Office Accessibility Policy.

Assessor's Office Accessibility Policy pursuant to PA 660 of 2018

MCL 211.10g(1)(c)

- The City of St. Louis and the City of Alma have a shared assessing agreement for assessing services.
- The Assessing Department has two full-time and one part-time team members to assist taxpayers. Katherine Roslund, Assessor (MMAO), Hannah Post, Property Appraiser (MCAO), and Grace Catlin, Assessing Clerk (MCAT).
- The Assessing Department business hours are Monday – Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. Please see City holiday schedule for other closings that may impact office hours.
- A taxpayer may submit inquiries directly to Assessor Katherine Roslund at assessor@stlouismi.com or by phone 989-463-9514 or Hannah Post at hpost@myalma.org, or by phone 989-463-9515. The estimated response time to inquires is less than three (3) business days.
- A taxpayer may arrange a meeting with an Assessing Department team member for the purpose of discussing an inquiry in-person by calling 989-463-9515.
- A taxpayer request for inspection or production of records maintained by the Assessing Department may be made by calling 989-463-9515. Information may be subject to the statutory requirements of FOIA.
- Assessment records may be obtained, free of charge, on BS&A and can be accessed on the City's website www.stlouismi.com.
 1. Go to www.stlouismi.com
 2. Click the "Government" drop-down and select "Assessor."
 3. Scroll down to the right of **Documents** and find the link to "Property Data, Assessing & Tax Information." Click link.

Search by address/parcel number in the search box to locate information.

Moved by Upton, supported by Leonard to approve the **Assessor's Office Accessibility Policy**.
All ayes carried the motion.

Manager Giles requested members approve Procedures for Granting and Removing Real Property Exemption Policy.

Procedures for Granting and Removing Real Property Exemptions

City of St. Louis, Gratiot County is abiding by the recommendations made by the State Tax Commission in Bulletin 26 of 2017 when granting and removing real property exemptions.

Initial Request

Tax payers who wish to apply for a real property exemption must first complete and submit an application adopted by the Office of the City Assessor. The completed application will be scanned and retained on file and will include all documents submitted by the taxpayer to support the request for exemption. The City Assessor shall review the application and either approve or deny the application. Written notice shall be provided to the taxpayer.

Existing Exemptions

Existing exemptions shall be reviewed annually by visiting a property and reviewing the exemption file. Adjustments to the status of the exemption may be made by the Assessor upon review. The Assessor may request that a new application be completed as part of the review process if it is believed that the exemption status of an applicant has changed.

Removing Exemptions

If the Assessor has sufficient evidence that the taxpayer no longer qualifies for the real property exemption, they need to immediately remove the exemption and send proper notification to the taxpayer outlining their appeal rights. If the Assessor does not receive sufficient supporting documentation accompanying the application the Assessor should also send the taxpayer denial information along with their appeal rights.

Assessors do not have the authority to grant/approve exemptions that are not complete. Applications that are submitted without proper documentation are incomplete.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Kubin to approve the **Procedures for Granting and Removing Real Property Exemptions**. All ayes carried the motion.

Manager Giles requested members adopt **Resolution 2023-05-MDOT Category B**.

Resolution 2023-05-MDOT Category B

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, CONTRACT No. 23-5029, Control Section EDB 29000, Job Number 218151CON by and between the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of St. Louis is hereby accepted and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following Official(s) is/are authorized to sign the said contract:

Kurt Giles, City Manager

Keith Risdon, Public Services Director

Moved by Kubin, support by Upton to approve **Resolution 2023-05-MDOT Category B**.

Ayes: Kubin, Leonard, Upton, Reed

Nays: None

Absent: Collison

Resolution declared adopted.

Employee Appreciation Dinner.

Manager Giles asked members if they are available a Thursday evening in March at 6:00 p.m. to attend the Employee Appreciation Dinner. It was the consensus of the Council to proceed with planning the Employee Appreciation Dinner.

Members agreed to March 2, or March 9, 2023, with River Rock to cater again this year. Jamie Long, will contact River Rock for availability.

Consider Contract for Liquid Biosolids and Land Application

Manager Giles requested members approve the contract for Biosolids and Land Application from Michigan Agribusiness for 2023-2025 for an estimated cost of \$150,000-\$200,000 over three years. Discussion was held. Member Kubin questioned the wide range of fees, with Keith Risdon-Public Services Director clarifying that the fuel charge fluctuation causes the wide range of costs.

Moved by Kubin, supported by Leonard to approve the contract for Biosolids and Land application from Michigan Agribusiness, as outlined in their proposal, in the estimated amount of \$150,000-\$200,000 over three years. All ayes carried the motion.

City Manager Report.

Manager Giles updated members on the excellent response from applicants for the Accounts Payable position, with no internal applicants.

Manager Giles informed members of the MML Conference 04/18/23-04/19/23. Member Kubin would be interested in attending with a group.

Manager Giles informed members of the Heroes Center Grand Opening February 25, 2023.

Manager Giles updated members on the status of the police patrol car, it is scheduled to be done very soon.

Manager Giles gave each member a copy of the "If I Were a Lineman" book, that was purchased through the MMEA. The plan is to get copies out to the schools along with visitors at City Hall.

City Clerk Report.

Nothing to report.

Police Report.

Sergeant Forshee updated members that Kyle Eisenberger is doing well at the Police Academy.

Council Comments.

Member Upton informed members she had been contacted by the Moose Lodge, showing interest in doing a motorcycle show during our July celebration.

Mayor Reed questioned when the contamination will be hauled out, at the former plant site. Keith Risdon-Public Services Director stated it is planned to be done right after frost laws lift.

Member Leonard asked if all boards and employees will receive invitations to the Employee Appreciation dinner. Manager Giles said it would be the same as in the past, with all boards and employees receiving the invites.

Member Kubin informed members he will be gone March 21, 2023.

Mayor Reed informed members he will be gone February 21, 2023.

Public Comments.

There were no comments.

Adjournment.

Moved by Leonard supported by Upton, to adjourn at 6:36 p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, City Clerk