

The regular meeting of the Clare City Commission was called to order by Mayor Pat Humphrey in the Commission Chambers, at 6:00 p.m., who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were: Commissioners Bill Horwood, Pat Humphrey, John Koch, and Tom Koch. Absent: Jean McConnell. Also present were Ken Hibl, City Manager; and Sarah Schumacher, Deputy City Clerk.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

Moved by Commissioner John Koch second by Commissioner Bill Horwood to approve the items listed with an asterisk (*) that are considered to be routine by the City Commission (Minutes, Agenda, Communications, Department Reports, Approval of Bills). Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bill Horwood, Pat Humphrey, John Koch, and Tom Koch. Nays: None. Absent: Jean McConnell. *Motion Approved.*

3. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Consent Agenda Approval.

4. *APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Consent Agenda Approval.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT: - None.

6. OLD BUSINESS/UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES EXEMPTION APPLICATION-INTEGRITY PRINTING.

Motion by Commissioner Bill Horwood second by Commissioner John Koch to open the Public Hearing. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bill Horwood, Pat Humphrey, John Koch, and Tom Koch. Nays: None. Absent: Jean McConnell. *Motion Approved.*

Motion by Commissioner Bill Horwood second by Commissioner John Koch to close the Public Hearing. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bill Horwood, Pat Humphrey, John Koch, and Tom Koch. Nays: None. Absent: Jean McConnell. *Motion Approved.*

Kirk Smith provided the Commission with a brief history of Integrity Printing, as well as current and future plans for expansion.

Motion by Commissioner John Koch second by Commissioner Tom Koch to approve the application for the Exemption Certificate by adoption of Resolution 2009-119 and approve the related Agreement with Integrity Printing by adoption of Resolution 2009-120. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bill Horwood, Pat Humphrey, John Koch, and Tom Koch. Nays: None. Absent: Jean McConnell. *Motion Approved.*

B. POLICY FOR TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP-CHERRY GROVE CEMETERY UNUSED BURIAL SPACES.

Motion by Commissioner Bill Horwood second by Commissioner John Koch to approve the proposed transfer of ownership policy for unused burial spaces recommended by the Cherry Grove Cemetery Advisory Board by adoption of Resolution 2009-121. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bill Horwood, Pat Humphrey, John Koch, and Tom Koch. Nays: None. Absent: Jean McConnell. *Motion Approved.*

8. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer was unavailable to provide his report. City Manager reported that the audit is complete and the City received a "clean bill of health". December is the tentative date for the final audit report.

9. *DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Consent Agenda Approval.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

November 11th Planning Commission. The City Planning Commission met on November 11th; primary agenda topics included adoption of an amendment to the City's Master Plan updating the Future Land Use Map to include the properties of the Grant Township/City of Clare Urban Cooperation Agreement area; continued discussion related to off-premise signs; and further discussion related to the Clare Railroad Depot.

11. Thanksgiving Holiday Office Closure. City offices will be closed on Thursday and Friday, November 26th and 27th, in commemoration of the Thanksgiving Holiday.
12. USDA Loan Update. We have finalized the maximum amount of our USDA loan amount for sanitary sewer improvements and sewer debt refinancing at \$3.08M; we had originally set this figure at a maximum of \$3.5M. Sewer Fund debt refinancing of \$750K is included in the loan request; we estimate that we will save approximately \$200K in interest payments if we refinance the debt at the current RD rate of 2.5%. The request has been submitted to Washington, and we anticipate that USDA Caro office will receive authority to obligate the funds for us not later than December. I offer to the City Commission that this \$3.08M is a maximum amount; we will not know the actual amount of the loan until we actually solicit bids for the project work, which we will do after the funds are obligated and we close on the loan. On the current schedule, we expect to be able to commence work on the needed sanitary sewer system improvements prior to April 1, 2010, which will allow us to meet the MDEQ mandate.
13. City Assessor Services. Approximately six years ago, the city managers of Ithaca, Greenville, and Clare attempted to craft an agreement for assessing services wherein one of the three municipalities would hire Mr. Dan Kirwin, who is an employee of BS&A Software and concurrently was the assessor of record of all three municipalities, and the other two municipalities would then contract with the hiring municipality. We believed that the attempted arrangement would allow all of us to have far greater control of Dan's services for our respective municipalities and concurrently allow us to equally share in potential cost-savings for Dan's assessing services. Dan agreed in principle to the proposed agreement, but when he attempted to provide BS&A notice that he would be leaving their employment, BS&A offered Dan an increase in compensation he couldn't refuse. Consequently, our attempted agreement was set aside, and we continued the contractual arrangement we presently enjoy with BS&A for Dan's assessing services. Earlier this year, we (this time the municipalities of Big Rapids, Clare, and Greenville) again initiated a conversation with Dan in an attempt to renew our original proposed agreement. Dan again concurred in principle. This time we went so far as to draft an inter-local agreement that provided that Big Rapids would hire Dan as an employee and Greenville and Clare would contract with Big Rapids for Dan's assessing services. Our estimate of annual cost savings for Clare's resultant assessing services was approximately \$7K, and we felt we would have far greater control over Dan's actual time spent in Clare vice having him called to provide service to other Michigan communities by BS&A on short notice (as frequently occurs). The Big Rapids Council approved the agreement, and I had placed it on the November 2nd agenda for the City Commission's consideration but removed it when Dan again informed us that he was obliged to decline our renewed offer due to another increase in compensation BS&A offered him and the loyalty he owed to that company.

I continue to have the absolute highest confidence and respect for Dan's abilities as our assessor; in fact I regard him to be one of the best assessors in Michigan. But I would feel far more comfortable with a contractual arrangement for assessing services with Greenville and Big Rapids than I do with our current arrangement. And it is for that reason that unless directed to go in a different direction by the City Commission, I intend to pursue the proposed arrangement outlined in the aforementioned inter-local agreement with my fellow city managers of Big Rapids and Greenville – but we will attempt to collectively find an assessor we can mutually agree on other than Dan. If we can find such a qualified individual, we would then proceed with actions necessary to execute the proposed three-city agreement for assessing services.

14. Main Street Visit. Lori Schuh, Main Street Manager and Ken Hibl, City Manager will host a contingent from Hart, Michigan, on Thursday, November 19th who are interested in the Main Street Program.

15. City Employee Christmas Party. The employee Christmas party is scheduled for December 4th; more details to follow.

16. *COMMUNICATIONS:

Consent Agenda Approval.

*MDOT Correspondence. The City received a letter from MDOT outlining recommendations pertaining to a request/suggestion that the City install 3-way stop controls at an intersection in the vicinity of Clare Public Schools; based on this recommendation, the City's Traffic & Safety Committee denied the request.

*Cancellation of Liquor License Application. We received informational correspondence from the Liquor Control Commission.

*Thank You Note. Sheila Bissonnette sent a thank you note addressed to the City Commission and City Staff for their consideration and support following the recent loss of Sheila's grandmother.

*MDNR Correspondence. We received correspondence (along with corresponding funds) from the DNR related to our rail-trail acquisition grant.

*USDA Correspondence. The City received the two letters from USDA regarding our pending loan application for sanitary sewer system improvements.

*MMDC Correspondence. The latest editions of weekly *MMDC Bullets* are attached for the Commission's information.

17. EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: None

18. COMMISSION DISCUSSION TOPIC: None

10. *APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Consent Agenda Approval.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Commissioner Bill Horwood second by Commissioner John Koch to adjourn. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Jean McConnell. *Motion Approved.*

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Pat Humphrey, Mayor

Diane Schmidt, City Clerk