

City of Plainwell



“The Island City”

Brad Keeler, Mayor
Lori Steele, Mayor Pro Tem
Todd Overhuel, Council Member
Roger Keeney, Council Member
Randy Wisnaski, Council Member

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Agenda

Planning Commission City Hall Council Chambers March 15, 2023, 6:30 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of Minutes: 01/18/2023
5. Chairman’s Report
6. Public Comment
7. New Business: Master Plan Workshop
 - a. Review Economic Development Strategy
 - b. Review Implementation Matrix
8. Old Business: None
11. Reports and Communications: 01/23/23 and 02/13/2023 Council Minutes
12. Public Comments
13. Staff Comments
14. Commissioners/Council Comments
15. Adjournment

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**CITY OF PLAINWELL
MINUTES
Planning Commission
Wednesday, January 18, 2023**

1. Call to Order at 6:30 pm by Colingsworth
2. Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present.
3. Roll Call: Present: Rachel Colingsworth, Lori Steele, Stephen Bennett, Jay Lawson, Jim Higgs, David Collard 6:50 pm
Excused: Gary Sausaman
4. Approval of Minutes – 12/07/2023
motion to approve minutes was made by Lawson and seconded by Higgs. All in favor to approve minutes and placing them on file.
5. Chairperson’s Report: - None
6. Public Comments- None
7. Public Hearing:
6:32 Higgs motioned to close the Planning Meeting, seconded by Bennett and open the Public Hearing.
Public Hearing regarding CBD Sandwich Board Sign Amendment/Additions.
Additions to include: clarifying that signs are 4ft in height; can have 2 signs if they have 2 entrances one in front and one in back; must be constructed with durable, weatherproof materials.
The public hearing closed at 6:46 p.m. with a motion by Higgs seconded by Lawson.
Higgs motion to accept the amendments additions for the CBD Sandwich Board Signs, seconded by Steele, and move forward to City Council for final approval. All in favor vote. Motion Passed
8. New Business: None
9. Old Business: None
10. Reports and Communications: 12/12/2022; 12/27/22 were reviewed and placed on file.
11. Public Comments – None
12. Staff Comments: - Business updates given re: number of businesses in downtown; 4 properties for sale; update on the Clark Gas Station
13. Commissioner Comments:
Higgs – commented that the Planning Commission should consider revisiting the chicken ordinance.
14. Adjournment: Colingsworth adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Denise Siegel, Community Development Manager



2019

Economic Development Strategy



*Liz Agne
Photography*

City of Plainwell

1/1/2019

Introduction and Overview

Introduction and Overview

The City of Plainwell strives for the overall increase in quality of life and prosperity of its residents and business owners. Through improvements to its physical infrastructure, image and commitment to support local businesses, the goal of Plainwell economic development strategy is to support and embrace policies and practices to improve the overall economic welfare of the city. This document outlines the economic development strategies embraced by the city.

This strategy was developed collaboratively between the City Council and the Planning Commission. Further, this strategy is based on the 2016 City of Plainwell Master Plan update and builds upon the information, goals and principles of that effort. This strategy is a refinement of the economic development and redevelopment framework established in the Master Plan.

Background

The City of Plainwell was incorporated as a village in 1869 and as a city in 1934. The Mill Race was dug in 1856 in a natural depression of land along the Kalamazoo River. The race encouraged many new businesses and settlers to relocate to Plainwell. These new businesses included a grist mill built by Mr. Henry J. Cushman in 1858. The first saw mill was built by Mr. Brigham then G.B. Force and O.D. Dunham established a rake factory. In 1860, they also opened a factory. Soon thereafter, three steel bridges were erected to cross the Mill Race at Allegan (M-89), Bridge and Main Street. In 1886, a group of local businessmen met and soon thereafter, in 1890, the Michigan Paper Company opened on the site of the Lyons and Page Mill which was built in 1872 as a manufacturer of newsprint. In 2006, the City of Plainwell purchased the former paper mill and by 2014 City Hall relocated to a portion of the now historic mill.

Population

Plainwell's reported population from the 2010 US Census was 3,804, but was estimated to have decreased marginally (0.1%) to 3,798 in 2014 according to the US Census Bureau's Five-Year American Community Survey Estimates.

Incomes, Labor Force and Unemployment

The median household income in Plainwell has not kept pace with the economy, affecting the community broadly. In 1999, Plainwell's median household income was \$45,625; by 2014 it had decreased to an estimated \$41,417. In other words, real household incomes in Plainwell have not only failed to grow, but have actually declined (far below that which is necessary to keep pace with inflationary factors affecting the overall economy). This is especially troubling as the economy in the state of Michigan has begun to rebound, incomes have not returned to pre-recession levels. A decline in median family income is a harbinger of tough decisions to come for the community regarding municipal services and programs, economic development, and capital expenditures.

Housing

There are approximately 1,593 housing units in the City of Plainwell. The majority of households are located in the immediate area surrounding the Central Business District.

Industry

The sectors of manufacturing, education, and healthcare employ the largest number of workers in City of Plainwell.

Opportunities and Challenges

City Opportunities and Strengths

Plainwell is well positioned for growth and development as a result of the following:

- Existing buildings that can be redeveloped and adapted for new use
- Plainwell sits along the Kalamazoo River and the Mill Race, surrounding our downtown to form the “Island City.”
- Easy access to US-131 and sits 15 miles north of Kalamazoo and 35 miles south of Grand Rapids
- Non-motorized Riverwalk that connects four of the seven parks in Plainwell
- Two year round parks that include an ice skating rink, sledding hill and Dog Park
- City owned and managed water and sewer services with capacity for growth
- The city owns the former Plainwell Paper Mill, 36 acres along the Kalamazoo River and seeking redevelopment of the mill site for condos, townhouse and service/retail businesses
- Plainwell Paper Mill is on the National Historic Registry list
- Certified Industrial Park housing 34 businesses

City Challenges

The city will need to address the following local and regional changes:

- Lack of land for any type of expansion or new housing developments
- Education and training for labor related jobs
- Lack of quality starter housing (especially important for younger adults), the lack of quality higher density residential (that may be especially appealing to that age group), and housing choices for an aging population that wishes to remain in Plainwell. Very little new housing has been developed in the City in the last two decades exacerbating the issue around quality and choice of housing
- Owning a superfund site and the slow pace of progression for redevelopment

Economic Strategy

For an economic development strategy to follow best practices put forth by the Redevelopment Ready Communities program the individual objectives must tie back to one or more of the local goals and goals identified in the regional context. Each of the goals put forth in this strategy meets the criteria.

The Economic Development Strategy is a direct reflection of the input of residents, business owners and other stakeholders through the master planning process and general goal-setting meetings.

Key Focus Areas and Strategies				
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Complete
1. Review zoning ordinance to see if it inhibits master plan implementation; make necessary changes.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year	1	On going
2. Adopt new zoning requirements to implement plan, including new mixed use and form-based districts, flexible regulations for industrial park, revised commercial design standards and appropriate density changes that reflect desired community character.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year	1	In process
3. Prepare economic development plan that: -Identifies potential employers and lists requirements for each category. -Is done in conjunction with public schools, establishing a program to provide necessary public infrastructure and public services (such as education and training) secure jobs. -Promotes development and creates a business climate to attract positive economic development and maintains competitiveness.	Staff, Planning Commission, School Board, City Council	As needed	2	
4. Review and revise master plan in response to changing needs and priorities.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Annually and as needed	2	Master Plan update 2021
5. Update Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize plan elements, projects and identify funding options.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year and annually	1	On going
6. Develop and implement a rental housing inspection program.	Staff, City Council	Within 1 year	2	
7. Continue to vigorously enforce building and maintenance codes.	Staff	Now	1	On going

Key Focus Areas and Strategies				
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Complete
8. Complete, fund, and implement a streetscape program for downtown and gateways – including a streetscape master plan to “green” community entrances, especially M-89 between US-131 and downtown.	Staff, City Council, Community	1 – 3 years	2	In process
9. Complete, fund and implement a sign plan for way-finding.	Staff, City Council, DDA	1 – 5 years	3	
10. Develop and implement a plan to expand trails, enhance access and create a public gathering space along the Kalamazoo River.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Mill Developer	1 – 5 years	1	In process
11. Update DDA plan - prepare a more detailed plan for the downtown based on plan recommendations, including: design and configuration of downtown streets, streetscape improvements, façade enhancements, concepts for specific development sites, more detailed market assessment and recommendations, incentives to encourage building and site improvements.	Staff, DDA, Chamber of Commerce, City Council	1 – 2 years	2	
12. Implement policies to encourage community cleanup efforts and provide incentives to clean up and improve property.	Staff, Plainwell Schools, Chamber of Commerce, City Council	Within 1 year	1	
13. Work with the Plainwell School District and area youth organizations to create a “youth cabinet,” who will advise Plainwell on policies affecting area youth.	Staff, City Council, Plainwell Schools, Area Youth Organizations	1-2 years	3	
14. Aggressively market Plainwell’s restaurants, businesses, and water-front as a unique destination between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. Publications, Social Media etc.	Staff, DDA, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Businesses	Now	1	On going
15. Implement policies for ecologically sensitive design and maintenance practices for all public facilities, parks, and utility systems. Determine a comprehensive strategy for monitoring water quality and a plan for implementing water quality improvements.	Staff, City Council, Planning Commission, Parks & Trees Committee, County and State Agencies	1 – 5 years	2	
16. Promote opportunities for “lifecycle” housing, including independent living units, assisted living and continual care.	Staff, City Council, Planning Commission, Area Senior Advocacy Agencies	1 – 5 years	2	

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Key Focus Areas and Strategies				
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Complete
17. Develop and implement policies that serve to protect existing trees, woodlots and street trees in Plainwell.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Parks & Trees	1 – 3 years	2	
18. Require new development to inter-connect with existing streets, side-walks, and other infrastructure.	Staff, Planning Commission via Site Plan Standards and Review, City Council	1 – 2 years	1	
19. Continue and build on programs that encourage building renovation and improvements.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, DDA	Now	1	On going
20. Prepare and implement access management measures that control the number, location and design of access points along all major road corridors.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-5 years	2	
21. Work with MDOT, Allegan County Road Commission and West Michigan Regional Planning Commission to resolve congestion and safety issues on M-89; include developing a fully directional interchange at US-131/106th Avenue.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-2 years	2	
22. Undertake a study that explores another road connection from the industrial park north to Miller Road.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-3 years	3	
23. Support other forms of transportation by interconnecting sidewalks, streets, bike lanes, and trails. In cooperation with surrounding jurisdictions prepare and implement a plan for an inter-connected, non-motorized trail/bike path system. Explore using the former inter-urban line and consider connections across US-131, to schools and parks, and to other key destinations like downtown and the industrial park.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Neighboring Communities, State and County Agencies	1-5 years	3	In progress
24. Prepare and implement a plan that addresses congestion and yet is sensitive to the context of the M-89 corridor and at the M-89/Main/Bridge intersection.	Staff, Planning Commission	1-2 years	1	

Key Focus Areas and Strategies				
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Complete
25. Evaluate current travel patterns, volumes and street widths relative to their land use context. Develop a new street classification policy that employs traffic calming measures and also considers “road diets” to reduce street widths, while maintaining safe and acceptable traffic volumes.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-3 years	1	
26. Continue to market and expand Plainwell’s current industrial park.	City Council, Planning Commission	When available	3	
27. Continue to support the conversion of the former paper mill and site to mixed development that includes employment based land uses.	Staff, City Council,	Within 1 year	1	In progress

MEMORANDUM

To: City of Plainwell Planning Commission
Date: March 10, 2023
From: Nathan Mehmed, AICP
RE: **Master Plan Workshop Meeting #3: Implementation and Economic Development Strategy**

Overview. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a general overview of Master Plan Workshop Meeting #3. For reference, the focus of this workshop is to review the implementation matrix in *Chapter 5: Implementation* of the Master Plan and the existing standalone Economic Development Strategy published in 2019. It should be noted that while we offer and provide recommendations through our professional review of the Master Plan, the Planning Commission should carefully review Chapter 5 and the Economic Development Strategy to ensure that local preferences, knowledge, and vision are reflected.

Implementation Matrix. Chapter 5 contains the policies of the Plan (reviewed in Workshop #1) as well as project priorities and an implementation matrix. The implementation matrix is intended to provide a list of actions by priority (one through three), with the responsible party, timing, funding, and status included. It is created as a reference guide and checklist for the Planning Commission, City Council, and staff to work from while implementing the Master Plan. It is also a Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) best practice. Our review of the implementation matrix provides the following comments:

- Action 3 has been accomplished and could be updated to state “Routinely review and update an economic development strategy that...”
- An action could be added that indicates that the City will maintain and routinely update a list of redevelopment ready sites.
- An action could be added that that indicates that the City will routinely communicate with RRC to ensure that the City is employing the leading best practices and maintaining certification.

Economic Development Strategy. The City of Plainwell developed an Economic Development Strategy in 2019. A requirement of RRC Certified communities, an economic development strategy is intended to help communities “leverage their strengths and address their challenges in a competitive market for talent and investment.” In accordance with RRC best practices, an economic development strategy must do the following:

- The economic development strategy identifies the economic opportunities and challenges of the community.

- The strategy addresses activities related to key economic development initiatives including business and talent attraction/retention, education, and infrastructure.
- The economic development strategy defines specific goals, actions, timelines, and responsible parties for implementation.
- The economic development strategy coordinates with a regional development strategy.
- The economic development strategy is accessible online.
- Progress on the economic development strategy is reported annually to the governing body.

We will update the strategy for compliance with RRC best practices and requirements; however, we will need your help reviewing the contents and identifying goals. Please see questions and considerations below.

Questions and Considerations of the Planning Commission. The following are questions that the Planning Commission should consider when reviewing the packet and preparing for the meeting. We will discuss these with you at the meeting.

Regarding the implementation matrix:

- Review the implementation matrix. Does it still effectively implement the goals and land use policies of the City?
- Are there actions that could be omitted? Expanded upon? Included? Are there any actions that have been completed?
- Do the programmed parties responsible for each action still make sense?
- Does the programmed timing for each action still make sense?
- Does the programmed priority for each action still make sense?

Regarding the Economic Development Strategy:

- While many actions in the Economic Development Strategy are similar to the Master Plan, are there actions that stand out as being particularly important to the City for economic development purposes? Are there any that should be added or omitted?
- Does the City have a list of major employers and sectors that are important to the local economy?
- Is the City still focused on marketing and expanding the City's industrial park?
- Is there a recently developed county or regional economic development strategy that the City aligns with?
- What economic development goals is the City currently working on? We know that redevelopment of the mill is front and center; is there anything else?

- The City currently briefly discusses placemaking in the Master Plan; is the City currently actively engaged in placemaking? What should the City focus on that makes it unique?
- Are there any local business leaders or stakeholders that we should talk to regarding development or redevelopment in the City?

Next Steps. We will gather input from you at the March 15th meeting and continue to develop the updated draft Master Plan. The next meeting will be a review of the draft plan in its entirety.

As always, please let us know if you have any questions.

character and appeal by promoting the programs and amenities already in place that make it a charming and special place.

6. Residential Neighborhoods

To preserve, protect and enhance its residential neighborhoods, Plainwell seeks to:

- 6.1. **Support the quality and character of its neighborhoods by continuing to vigorously enforce residential building and maintenance codes.**
- 6.2. **Support opportunities for “lifecycle” housing, including independent living units, assisted living, and continual care.**

7. Non-residential Areas

To enhance the character of its unique downtown, commercial corridors and waterfront, and to provide future opportunities for employment, Plainwell will:

- 7.1. **Support the quality and character of its commercial and employment areas by continuing to vigorously enforce building and maintenance codes and building on programs that encourage building renovation and improvements.**

Project Priorities

The actions are listed with a “priority number” as follows:

Priority 1 projects are those that should be given immediate and concentrated effort. These are the first projects that should be commenced after this Master Plan Update has been adopted. Any preliminary steps that must be taken to implement the action (such as seeking funding, changes in local ordinances, etc.) should be commenced immediately. Those Priority 1 projects that have a longer time horizon should be revisited on an as-needed basis, and should be incorporated into other applicable long-term planning programs, such as a capital improvements plan.

Priority 2 projects are those that are necessary to implement the plan, but either depend upon commencement or completion of Priority 1 projects, or do not have the same immediacy of Priority 1 projects. Once commenced, however, these projects should be considered important and should be pursued until completion.

Priority 3 projects are those that implement elements of this plan, but are not urgent and can be delayed for a longer period of time. These projects are more susceptible to budgetary constraints.

Some projects within the matrix do not have a specified timing period because they are based on less predictable factors such

as funding sources, etc. The timing for these projects is explained within the matrix.

Implementation Matrix

<i>Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies</i>					
<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Funding</i>	<i>Status</i>
1. Review zoning ordinance processes and procedures to see if it inhibits master plan implementation; make necessary changes.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year	I		On-going
2. Adopt new zoning requirements that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implements the plan, including establishes new mixed-use and form-based districts for the downtown and surrounding commercial areas. ▪ Creates flexible regulations for the industrial park and revised commercial design standards and appropriate density changes that reflect desired community character. ▪ Protects those features in residential neighborhoods that make them special places and requires new development to follow suit. ▪ Support varied housing options that are compatible with neighborhood character. 	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year	I		On-going (as need arises)

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Funding	Status
3. Prepare an economic development plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies potential employers and lists requirements for each category. ▪ Is done in conjunction with public schools, establishing a program to provide necessary public infrastructure and public services (such as education and training) to secure jobs. ▪ Promotes development and creates a business climate to attract positive economic development and maintains competitiveness. 	Staff, Planning Commission, School Board, City Council	As needed	2		In progress
4. Review and revise master plan in response to changing needs and priorities. Ensure consistency with Master Plan.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Annually and as needed	2		In progress (Update process underway; changing needs and priorities to be addressed)
5. Update Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize plan elements, projects and identify funding options. Review the annual capital improvement plan against the goals and objectives of the Master Plan to ensure compatibility.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year and annually	1		In progress
6. Develop and implement a rental housing inspection program.	Staff, City Council	Within 1 year	2		In progress
7. Complete, fund, and implement a streetscape program for gateways.	Staff, City Council	1 – 3 years	2	A, D, E, L	In progress
8. Complete, fund and implement a sign plan for wayfinding.	Staff, City Council, DDA	1 – 5 years	3	E, L	Incomplete; funding unavailable at this time

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Funding	Status
9. Develop and implement a plan to expand trails, the Riverwalk, enhance access and create a public gathering space along the Kalamazoo River.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Mill Developer, Local Citizens Bicycle Group	1 – 5 years	1	A, D, E, J, L	Attending meetings as part of the West Michigan Trailways. Added bike lanes on N & S Main St.
10. Update DDA plan - prepare a more detailed plan for the downtown based on plan recommendations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ design and configuration of downtown streets, ▪ streetscape improvements, ▪ façade enhancements, ▪ concepts for specific development sites, ▪ more detailed market assessment and recommendations, ▪ incentives to encourage building and site improvements. 	Staff, DDA, Chamber of Commerce, City Council	1 – 2 years	2	M	In progress

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Funding	Status
<p>11. Implement low-impact design and green infrastructure development practices by conducting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create LID requirements for site plan review. ▪ Undertake a campaign to educate the community about current water quality issues and environmentally friendly practices. ▪ Determine a comprehensive strategy for monitoring water quality and a plan for implementing water quality improvements. ▪ Provide incentives for waterfront property owners to create vegetative buffers, rain gardens, and other low-impact solutions to address the quality of storm-water runoff. ▪ Implement policies for ecologically sensitive design and maintenance practices for all public facilities, parks, and utility systems. 	Staff, City Council, Planning Commission, County and State Agencies	1 – 5 years	2		On-going; implemented well-head protection ordinance
12. Assess and update zoning ordinance to allow “missing middle” housing types and allow affordable housing choices at either end of the market; for the young and for empty nesters.	Staff, City Council, Planning Commission, Area Senior Advocacy Agencies	1 – 5 years	2	F	On-going

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Funding	Status
13. Update zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to require new development to inter-connect with existing streets, sidewalks, and other infrastructure.	Staff, Planning Commission via Site Plan Standards and Review, City Council	1 – 2 years	1		On-going
14. Update zoning code to prepare and implement access management measures that control the number, location, and design of access points along all major road corridors.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1 – 5 years	2		No progress
15. Undertake a study that explores another road connection from the industrial park north to Miller Road.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-3 years	3		In progress
16. In cooperation with surrounding jurisdictions prepare and implement a plan for an interconnected, non-motorized trail/bike path system. Plan, design, and implement a regional trail from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids traversing through Plainwell using the former interurban line and consider connections across US-131, to schools and parks, and to other key destinations like downtown and the industrial park.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Neighboring Communities, State and County Agencies, Local Citizens Bicycle Group	1-5 years	3	E, J, L	Committee with surrounding jurisdictions is formed and a plan is being worked on. Bike facilities have been added to N. & S. Main St.

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority	Funding	Status
17. Evaluate current travel patterns, volumes and street widths relative to their land use context. Develop a new street classification policy that employs traffic calming measures and also considers “road diets” to reduce street widths, while maintaining safe and acceptable traffic volumes. Implement context sensitive street design solutions.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-3 years	I		LSL: Recommend removing this action
18. Convert the former Paper Mill and site to mixed development that includes employment based land uses.	Staff, City Council	Within 1 year	I	A, B, C, D, E, F, I, J, K, L, M	In-progress. Notes: Paper mill site houses City hall and an environmental engineering company. Some of the property is now for sale.
19. Conduct annual review of the master plan to determine progress of completing actions.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Annual			
20. Develop and implement streetscape master plans to “green” community entrances; include exploring a boulevard on M-89 between US-131 and the downtown.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies				
21. Work with business owners to cross promote businesses and attractions in the community (e.g., provide coupons for other businesses, promotional material for attractions, etc.)					

<i>Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies</i>					
<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Funding</i>	<i>Status</i>
22. Employ CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles) when evaluating new development.					LSL: Recommend removing this action item.
23. Develop a location for a Farmers Market					In Progress
24. Adopt site and building design standards as part of the zoning ordinance to help ensure future development and redevelopment near the M-89/US-131 interchange reflects a positive community image.					

MINUTES
Plainwell City Council
January 23, 2023

1. Mayor Keeler called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers.
2. The invocation was given by Terry Steele.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present.
4. Roll Call: Present: Mayor Keeler, Mayor Pro Tem Steele, Councilmember Overhuel, Councilmember Keeney and Councilmember Wisnaski. Absent: None.
5. Approval of Minutes:
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept and place on file the Council Minutes of the 01/09/2023 regular meeting. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
6. Public Comment: None.
7. County Commissioner Report: Commissioner Dugan thanked the City Council for their time and noted that he appreciated being able to give these reports. He reported on 2 meetings and provided an update on the courthouse/county services building project, the organization meeting and committee/commission assignments for each County Commissioner, and noted that a third judge which would be elected in 2024 had been approved by the governor.
8. Agenda Amendments: None.
9. Mayor's Report: None.
10. Recommendations and Reports:
 - A. Community Development Manager Siegel reported the Planning Commission had held a public hearing regarding the proposed amendments to the sign ordinance on January 18, 2023, and had recommended the proposed ordinance amendment be sent to City Council for approval. She noted that the proposed ordinance amendment would establish more clear guidelines for sandwich signs in front of downtown businesses. She also reported that this was part of the effort to clean up ordinances and make the language more clear.
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to set a public hearing for 7:00pm on February 27, 2023 for the purpose of allowing interested parties to comment on proposed sign ordinance amendments. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
 - B. Community Development Manager Siegel reported that the recreation plan had been approved at the last meeting and the resolution was the final step to be approved before sending the plan in to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
A motion by Overhuel, seconded by Steele, to approve Resolution 2023-07 Adoption of Five Year Recreation Plan. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

C. Clerk Fenger reported that the City Assessor regularly reviews the poverty exemption guidelines from the federal government and recommended updating the guidelines adopted by the City. She noted that this was mainly a housekeeping item for the Assessor and the poverty exemption applied to a very small number of people, but it was something the City should be updating regularly.

A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, to adopt Resolution 2023-08 Guidelines for Poverty Exemptions. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

11. Communications:

A. **A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept and place on file the December Water Renewal Report, the draft 1/12/2023 Parks & Trees meeting minutes, the draft 1/10/2023 DDA/BRA/TIFA meeting minutes and the draft 1/18/2023 Planning meeting minutes. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

12. Accounts Payable:

A motion by Keeney, seconded by Wisnaski, that the bills be allowed and orders drawn in the amount of \$526,666.70 for payment of same. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

13. Public Comments: None.

14. Staff Comments:

Treasurer/Finance Director Kelley reported that Winter Property Taxes are due February 14, 2023. He also reported that Julie Saukas, Utility Billing Clerk, has found another opportunity and her last day will be February 1, 2023, and that they were working on finding a replacement for her role. He noted that he was working on the budget and meeting with department heads regarding their budgets, and monitoring pending legislation for any changes that would affect the City.

Community Development Manager Siegel reported submitting a grant for an outdoor fitness park through Priority Health, which would allow for a 38x39ft outdoor fitness court in one of the parks if selected. She also reported working on upcoming events in February and March, and that a pay request for the rental rehab project would be coming soon.

Superintendent Pond reported that the heat exchanger project was completed and had reduced the gas bill as hoped.

Director Callahan introduced Michael Bruce and reported that he had recently completed a weeklong Field Training Officer program in order to be able to train new officers. He also reported that the Allegan County Tech Center had reached out about participating in their work-based learning program, and he would be working with them to have students participating in the program spend time at DPS.

Clerk Fenger reported working with Julie Saukas on learning some of her job functions related to training. She also noted that she would be attending an Allegan County Clerk's Association meeting this week, and had enrolled in the mentor/mentee program they offered.

Manager Wilson reported that EGLE was petitioning to be able to remove the gas from the Clark Station because LARA had tagged them and no one could touch the tanks until that was resolved. He also reported that he had shown the William Crispe House to another interested party, and had a meeting with the new project manager out of Chicago for the Plainwell Dam Removal project. He also noted that the State of Michigan wants more PFAS sampling which has thrown a curveball in the river clean up project.

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15. Council Comments: None.

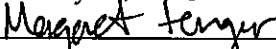
16. Adjournment:

A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 PM. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes respectfully
Submitted by,
Margaret Fenger
City Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL

February 13, 2023



Margaret Fenger, City Clerk

MINUTES
Plainwell City Council
February 13, 2023

1. Mayor Keeler called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers.
2. The invocation was given by Brian Warren of Lighthouse Baptist Church.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present.
4. Roll Call: Present: Mayor Keeler, Mayor Pro Tem Steele, Councilmember Overhuel, Councilmember Keeney and Councilmember Wisnaski. Absent: None.
5. Approval of Minutes:
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept and place on file the Council Minutes of the 01/23/2023 regular meeting. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
6. Public Comment: None.
7. County Commissioner Report: None.
8. Agenda Amendments: None.
9. Mayor's Report: Mayor Keeler reported that the retired Honorable George Corsiglia had passed away.
10. Recommendations and Reports:
 - A. Community Development Manager Siegel reported on the rental rehab project and detailed the work that had been done. She noted that the current pay requests would be paid out of a combination of grant funds and private funds from the property owner.
A motion by Keeney, seconded by Wisnaski, to approve all spending and contracts associated with the CDBG Funds / Rental Rehab Project at 112 North Main Street. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
 - B. Community Development Manager Siegel reported that the project at the Warnement Building included an outdoor garden, tasting room and bakery as part of the Phase 1 plan. She noted that part of the application process for a tasting room liquor license required the local government to approve the tasting room. She recommended that the Council approve the application.
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to approve the request for a new On-Premises Tasting Room Permit application for the distillery at 119 W. Bridge Street and 111 W. Chart Street. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
 - C. Manager Wilson reported that Community Development Manager Siegel had been taking the lead on this project, and so while he had initially been named the certifying officer, he felt that naming Community Development Manager Siegel as the certifying officer made more sense for the grant process.
A motion by Overhuel, seconded by Steele, to adopt Resolution 2023-09 A Resolution Designating the Certifying Officer for the Rental Rehabilitation Project. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

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- D. Superintendent Nieuwenhuis reported that DPW had been using Zeinstra's Greenhouse for the annual flower purchase for several years and they were happy with the results. He noted that the Flower Committee had worked to identify perennials that could be used instead of planting new flowers each year. He also noted that due to the anticipated bridge work on North Main Street, bridge baskets had not been ordered for that bridge. He reported that the extra cost of the perennials balanced out the decreased cost of the bridge baskets, so the order total stayed roughly the same this year. He did note that he expected the prices to increase next year, as the cost of everything has been increasing.
A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, to approve the annual flower purchase from Zeinstra's Greenhouse in the amount of \$8,473.00. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
- E. Superintendent Nieuwenhuis reported that well #6, located near well #5, was never put in service and recommended abandoning it. He noted that with well #5 capped and abandoned, there was also no reason to use well #6, and capping and abandoning the well would leave the property cleaned up and more usable.
A motion by Keeney, seconded by Steele, to approve a contract with Peerless Midwest to abandon well #6 in the amount of \$10,250.00. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
- F. Superintendent Nieuwenhuis reported that the existing "I" beam at the 12th Street Lift Station needed to be replaced in order to install the new pumps correctly. He noted that he had received 2 quotes, and recommended W Soule as the contractor for the job.
A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Overhuel, to approve a contract with W Soule to replace the existing "I" beam at the 12th Street Lift Station in the amount of \$4,575.00. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
- G. Director Callahan reported that in 2022, Executive Order 14074 had been passed which established law enforcement standards for state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies and tied agency accreditation to federal funding. He noted that the Department of Public Safety currently participates in the Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership, which uses federal funds. He detailed the accreditation process, and noted that the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police would oversee the process.
A motion by Keeney, seconded by Overhuel, to authorize the Department of Public Safety to begin the process of agency accreditation and approve the purchases with the Michigan Association of the Chiefs of Police in the amount of \$1,500.00 and PowerDMS in the amount of \$550.00 as part of the process. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
- H. Director Callahan reported that the 2018 Ford Interceptor SUV had approximately 13,000 engine hours on it, which is the equivalent of 600,000 miles. He noted that the 2023 Chevy Tahoe would be purchased in the next fiscal year, however due to delays in the order process, the order needed to be placed during the current fiscal year in order to ensure timely delivery.
A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, to approve the purchase of a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe patrol vehicle through Berger Chevrolet of Grand Rapids using the MiDEAL program in the amount of \$41,000.00 for the vehicle and \$15,000.00 for vehicle upfitting. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
- I. Manager Wilson reported the lead abatement project was the final piece of the mill demolition project to be completed in order to be able to remove the fence and allow the public to access the property. He noted that the EGLE loan funds would cover the projected cost of the project, with the exception of the historic architect cost. Young's Environmental would perform the lead paint abatement work, with testing &

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certification by Analytical Testing & Consulting Services, and oversight provided by Nelson Nave to ensure the historic aspects of the building aren't damaged during the abatement process. Manager Wilson noted that the project will include cleaning up any lead paint flakes that fall to the ground and completely removing the flakes from the property in barrels to be taken for disposal.

A motion by Overhuel, seconded by Steele, to approve the lead abatement project with Young's Environmental, Analytical Testing & Consulting Services and Nelson Nave in the amount of \$82,450.00. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

- J. Treasurer/Finance Director Kelley reported that the City has provided a monthly recycling and bulk trash pick up to residents, which has been funded as an assessment on winter property taxes. He noted that the contract approved in July 2022 with Republic Services increased the cost, which meant the assessment no longer covered the cost of the service. Treasurer/Finance Director Kelley reported that this resolution was the first step in the process to notify the public and create a new special assessment for the recycling and bulk trash service.

A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, to adopt Resolution 2023-10 City of Plainwell Special Assessment District No. 23-01 Directing the City Clerk to Cause to be Prepared Preliminary Plans and Specifications Regarding Certain Public Improvements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

- K. Treasurer/Finance Director Kelley reported that during the audit, the auditors discovered that the OPEB contributions were behind by a year, with the previous year amounts used instead of the current year. He noted that in order to correct the error, a budget amendment in the amount of \$5,767.00 to the OPEB Fund would allow for a contribution of \$15,528.00 to the OPEB Trust, which would put the City back on track for the OPEB requirements.

A motion by Steele, seconded by Wisnaski, to approve a budget amendment of \$5,767.00 into the OPEB Fund and a contribution of \$15,528.00 to the OPEB Trust. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

11. Communications:

- A. **A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept and place on file the January 2023 Investment and Fund Balance reports and the January DPS report. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

12. Accounts Payable:

A motion by Keeney, seconded by Wisnaski, that the bills be allowed and orders drawn in the amount of \$719,699.16 for payment of same. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

13. Public Comments: Corey Redder, Plainwell resident, asked for more information regarding the funding of the rental rehabilitation project. Community Development Manager Siegel explained the grant process and how the city is a pass through for the funding for the project, not spending city funds.

14. Staff Comments:

Treasurer/Finance Director Kelley reported that winter property taxes are due February 14, 2023. He also noted he had been doing a lot of utility billing work, with the utility billing clerk job being posted, questionnaires sent to candidates and interviews planned for the following week or two.

Superintendent Nieuwenhuis reported that DPW had been doing a lot of work with the wells lately, including removing the building at well #5, and working on changing well #4 from chlorine gas to liquid chlorine. He

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estimated that project would be completed sometime next week. He also reported that the state required a lot of reports around this time of year, and one report involved the number of backflow preventers in the city and whether they had been inspected. He noted that around 35 businesses and residences had not completed the required inspections, and he would be sending them a letter reminding them of the need for those inspections to be done.

Community Development Manager Siegel reported the City had been selected as a Priority Health grant recipient for an outdoor fitness park. She reported the grant amount was \$40,000, and an additional \$135,000 was needed to fully fund the fitness park. She reported that she was looking for more grants and funding, including potentially applying for the DNR Passport Grant. She also reported that the Chocolate Stroll this past Saturday was great, with a large amount of people attending and shopping both downtown and at the indoor market.

Superintendent Pond reported the price of ferric chloride, a chemical used in the treatment process to aid settling, had tripled and was currently approximately \$12,000 per shipment. He reported that he was looking into alternatives that might bring the overall cost down, but needed water samples and testing done to determine if the alternatives were viable.

Director Callahan reported that three new firefighters were in the process of being hired, pending the results of background checks. He also reported that he had submitted an application for the assistance to firefighters grant program through FEMA, for the replacement of air canisters and backpacks.

Clerk Fenger reported that she had recently been offered an opportunity to take a new position as a research coordinator for the political arm of a private company, and she had accepted. She thanked everyone and stated that she had enjoyed her time at the City, but this was a great opportunity that she couldn't pass up.

The Councilmembers all congratulated Clerk Fenger and thanked her for her work during her time with the City.

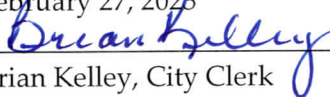
Manager Wilson thanked Clerk Fenger for her work during her time with the City. He also reported that the public meeting for the dam removal and restoration project would happen in mid-March, possibly March 13, depending on scheduling. He also noted that POLC negotiations would start March 10.

15. Council Comments: None.

16. Adjournment:

A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes respectfully
Submitted by,
Margaret Fenger
Former City Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL
February 27, 2023


Brian Kelley, City Clerk