

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

**Regular Meeting Held February 19, 2024**

Mayor Favale called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at the East Grand Rapids Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Commissioners Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, and Mayor Favale.

Absent: Commissioners Schulz and Wessely.

Also Present: City Manager Charles; City Attorney Huff; Finance Director Seath; Parks & Recreation Director Melville; Zoning Administrator Gianotti; Public Safety Captain Ric Buikema; City Clerk Parmenter.

2024-30. The agenda was approved.

2024-31. Public comment: None.

2024-32. Mayor and City Commission comments, including committee liaison reports.

City Manager Charles thanked DPW for the snow removal the previous week.

2024-33. Consider the second reading and vote for amendments to Sections 5.7, 5.27, 5.61, 5.68, and 5.70 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding the development of Accessory Dwelling Units.

Zoning Administrator Gianotti reviewed the amendments, gave a PowerPoint presentation and noted that if approved, the amendments would be effective March 1, 2024.

Commissioner Schwartz asked about accessory buildings that currently have living spaces in them. Zoning Administrator Gianotti stated that they would be a legal nonconforming use.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak questioned if listing resident types would lead to issues. Zoning Administrator Gianotti stated that he didn't think it would and that we are not excluding anyone from occupying an ADU.

Commissioner Hunter questioned if the square footage varied between types of ADU's. Zoning Administrator stated that it was the same for all.

City Manager Charles noted that the permit can be revoked if the ADU is used for something other than intended.

Mayor Favale questioned if the design standards were addressed in the permit process. Zoning Administrator Gianotti stated that it was.

Joe Rizqallah, 2730 Maplewood Dr., believes that ADU's are a good thing in general but is concerned about the parking.

Margaret O'Bryne, 2721 Reeds Lake Blvd., questioned if the ADU's were built by the homeowner and wondered if a new homeowner could tear down an existing ADU. City Manager Charles stated that the homeowner built the ADU's and if the property is sold, the new owner could tear down the ADU.

Jennifer Metz, 303 Briarwood Ave., said that she was in favor of ADU's. She can't do this in her yard but is in favor of additional types of housing being available.

Mary Mapes, 2405 Elmwood Dr., is on the Planning Commission and noted the timeframe it took for this ordinance.

Paul McCarthy, 554 Lovett Ave., is in favor of this and appreciates the evaluation of the Master Plan while doing this. He said that this is a great option for families with aging parents, kids with disabilities, etc.

2024-033-A. Burdick-Groff-Blaszak. To approve the amendments to Sections 5.7, 5.27, 5.61, 5.68, and 5.70 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding the development of Accessory Dwelling Units.

City Manager Charles stated that adjustments can be made at a later time if needed.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak is excited about this and having more affordable housing options and thanked the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Burdick thanked the Planning Commission for their work on this and is excited for it.

Mayor Favale echoed what Commissioner Burdick said.

Commissioner Hunter feels that this ordinance will still keep housing in line with the area.

Commissioner Schwartz thanked the Planning Commission for the work on this and thanked the citizens for their comments and concerns.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, and Favale – 5  
Nays: None.

2024-34. Consider approval of a new vacation accrual for employees who move to or from part-time and full-time to give credit for all years worked.

Finance Director Seath highlighted the request.

2024-034-A. Schwartz-Burdick. To approve a new vacation accrual for employees who move to or from part-time and full-time to give credit for all years worked.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz and Favale – 5

Nays: None.

2024-35. Consider approval of the updated Employee Handbook.

Finance Director Seath highlighted the request.

City Manager Charles noted that previously any starting wage over 10% had to go to the Commission for approval.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak asked if any gender reference could be removed and replaced with gender neutral references. Finance Director Seath is going to make any necessary changes regarding gender references.

2024-035-A. Hunter-Groff-Blaszak. To approve the updated Employee Handbook.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz and Favale – 5

Nays: None.

2024-36. Consider approving the appointment of Commissioner Ryan Burdick to the Board of Review to replace Commissioner Marc Schulz.

City Manager Charles reviewed the request.

2024-036-A. Schwartz-Hunter. To approve the appointment of Commissioner Ryan Burdick to the Board of Review to replace Commissioner Marc Schulz.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz and Favale – 5

Nays: None.

2024-37. Quarterly financial report.

Finance Director Seath reviewed the report.

2024-38. Consider approving the attached resolution amending the FY 2023-24 budget.

Finance Director Seath reviewed the request.

2024-038-A. Groff-Blaszak-Burdick. To approve the attached resolution amending the FY 2023-24 budget.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz and Favale – 5  
Nays: None.

2024-39. Consider rescheduling the April City Commission meetings from Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> & Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup> to Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

City Manager Charles reviewed the request.

Commissioner Burdick can't make the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak asked why we don't schedule around this when we set the schedule. City Manager Charles noted that we try to work with the schools, so we don't schedule a meeting on a night when the School Board is meeting.

2024-039-A. Burdick-Hunter. To approve rescheduling the April City Commission meetings from Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> & Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup> to Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, and Favale – 5  
Nays: None.

2024-40. Schwartz-Groff-Blaszak. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2024-040-A. Minutes of the regular meeting held February 5, 2024.

2024-040-B. Disbursement of funds: payroll disbursements of \$ 292,235.82; county and school disbursements of \$343,953.30, and total remaining disbursements of \$334,459.82

2024-040-C. FY2024-25 Meeting Calendar.

Yeas: Arendshorst, Burdick, Hamrick, Schwartz and Favale – 5  
Nays: None.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until March 4, 2024.

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Lori A Parmenter, City Clerk