



MINUTES
Committee on Public Safety
Thursday, April 18, 2019 @ 3:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Member Carol Wood, Chair
Council Member Patricia Spitzley, Vice Chair
Council Member Adam Hussain, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Joseph Abood, Chief Deputy City Attorney
Scott Sanford, Code Compliance
Rina Risper
Jodi Lebombard, Ingham County Animal Control Director
Elaine Womboldt
Paula Simon

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 11, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

RESOLUTION – Set Show Cause Hearing: 840 Maple Hill Avenue

Scott Sanford went through the details of the case stating it was red tagged on 8/15/18, went to the demolition board on 1/24/2019, had an SEV at \$26,500 with estimated repair cost of \$93,499.50. He confirmed that as of the date of this meeting there were no permits and no contact has been made from the owner. His office is requesting 60 days make safe or demolish. Council Member Hussain asked how they determine the estimate cost of repairs, and Mr. Sanford noted they use the building code estimated cost and determine the value.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE SHOW CAUSE HEARING FOR APRIL 29, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 3-0

Council Member Wood asked about the cleanup for public health and safety if it comes to the City doing the demolition. Mr. Sanford acknowledged they can clean up some of the outside items and can hire an outside contractor to do some pest abatement outside. Mr. Abood

noted that the neighbors themselves can take private action on anything that is infringing on them. Council Member Wood agreed, but also noted that as the City they should take part of the responsibility to make sure things are done to help the property owners. Council Member Wood asked Mr. Sanford and staff, in the future, to check to see if any of the make safe or demolish properties have tax debt. Council Member Spitzley asked if the owner walked away or if it was a rental. Mr. Sanford stated it was a rental.

Ms. Womboldt spoke in support of the Committee's decision.

Discussion- Ingham County Animal Control

Council Member Wood welcomed Ms. Lebombard and acknowledged the City does have a leash law, but the City has had issues with aggressive dogs, recently at 1135 Dakin.

Ms. Womboldt spoke about an incident she was aware of from an earlier meeting via telephone from Ms. Hansen.

Council Member Wood continued by explaining she had a discussion with City Attorney Smiertka who stated if the OCA gets a complaint, if there is enough information they would have the complainant sign off on the complaint and they will follow through on the next steps including a letter. Ms. Lebombard was asked if her office ever gets letters from the City Attorney Office, and she acknowledged she has not gotten any letters. Council Member Wood asked Law to look into if those letters were being generated. Council Member Spitzley asked Ms. Lebombard what procedures they following on the weekend and after hours. Ms. Lebombard confirmed it would depend on the LPD, and if they let Animal Control know what occurred so on Monday they can follow up.

Ms. Simon asked for confirmation what number to call on the weekends. Ms. Lebombard stated it would depend on the situation, and was told it would be a barking dog. Ms. Lebombard stated that would be LPD for the City ordinance, even during the weekdays; Council Member Wood said they should call the LPD non-emergency number.

Ms. Womboldt spoke on incidents she had heard of with dogs crossing property lines, barking dogs and unsecured dogs.

Ms. Lebombard acknowledged that her department would never tell anyone to call LPD other than if it was a barking complaint or after hours for immediate response. They would always expect to follow up and be the enforcement if it is something they can address.

Ms. Womboldt stated her frustration with what she believed was a lack of communication, with the LPD, Animal Control and dispatch.

Council Member Spitzley asked for public service announcements to be put out with summer coming.

Council Member Wood asked the OCA to provide data on how many letters have been sent out the OCA on the leash law and barking dogs. In addition they need to start looking at a procedure, and coordination when a letter goes out, and providing Animal Control a copy of the letter, even by email if necessary. Council Member Hussain asked when a letter would be generated from the LPD or OCA, and why no ticket on a loose dog. Council Member Wood stated that a report is not generated from the first call with LPD, they provide a warning. There is no system in place that allows for the warnings to be flagged, so if they get called again dispatch would know how many times they have been there. This would be a question for the LPD Chief at a future meeting. If a complaint is received and sent to the OCA, then letters are

generated. These would be loose dogs and barking dogs. Ms. Lebombard was asked what her office would need on repetitive complaints to take the case to court. She stated any information should be turned over to them, and they take a strong stance and have a complaint system, document every situation in house, and at their office every time there is disciplinary action they letters, and in some cases can criminally prosecute, and seize the animals. Council Member Wood asked her where she thought the disconnect was coming at with Ingham County dispatch, and she was not sure, noting her office does get reports from police. Ms. Lebombard was asked if she would meet with dispatch about any calls they get on loose dogs and barking dogs and have those turned over to the OCA, and she stated it would be a possibility.

The Committee consensus was to have dispatch present at a future meeting and invite Ms. Lebombard back for that meeting as well. The Committee also agreed to public service announcements and Council Member Wood stated she would contact City TV.

City Attorney Updates

Future of a Police Sub Station at Walnut Park

Mr. Abood confirmed that he LPD Chief and the owners of Walnut Park, Whitsett Group, are talking and working together. He suggested to them that he would need an answer to report to the Committee on May 2, 2019. Council Member Hussain asked if there were any discussions on who was paying, and Mr. Abood state he thought it was Whitsett.

Ms. Risper spoke in support of the substation in the development, noting that the owner claimed to be putting in a community sharing park that was never built.

Council Member Spitzley reiterated that it is important to get development agreements for when developers promise something during the approval process, and make it a legally enforceable document. Council Member Wood pointed out that in this case the City did not own the property so they could not have done an agreement with them.

Mr. Abood acknowledged that his understanding was that the owners do want a substation, but need to work with the LPD on the police standards. He also noted that in his conversations with LPD, the Chief believes there is a strong LPD presence in the area.

3801 Walton

Mr. Abood stated there are no updates and he would hope to have more updates at the May 2, 2019 meeting.

OTHER

Council Member Hussain asked the Committee to consider looking at the budget for spending on critical issues similar to these. Council Member Spitzley noted that the return from BWL has gone up, and asked where those additional dollars were going. She has an interest in the spending of the funds to improve neighborhoods. Council Member Wood pointed out that currently the LPD non-supervisory union is in negotiations and if the contract is not what the officers expect for retirees, there is the potential of 20 officers making a decision to stay of retiree. Regarding the BWL return, she would ask the Internal Auditor about the utility billing, because even though the City is seeing a higher return, they are still paying a large utility bill, so once that payment is taken out, what would the return be.

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Submitted by Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary Lansing City Council

Approved as presented: May 2, 2019