



**Minutes**  
**Committee on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**  
**Wednesday, August 12, 2020 @ 6:00 P.M.**

Via zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88542907776>; ID: 885 4290 7776; Dial In: (301) 715-8592  
Email comments prior to the meeting to [sherrie.boak@lansingmi.gov](mailto:sherrie.boak@lansingmi.gov)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Spitzley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT via audio/video**

Council Member Spitzley, Chair  
Council Member Dunbar, Vice-Chair  
Council Member Spadafore, Member

**OTHERS PRESENT via audio/video**

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff  
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney  
Lisa Hagen, Assistant City Attorney  
Judy Kehler, Chief Strategy Officer  
David Odom  
Samara Morgan  
Shatina Jones  
Rachel Ochylski  
Michael Lynn  
Kyle Kaminski  
Joe McClure, LPD  
Sam Inglot  
Rachel Diskin  
Daniel Long Hoffman  
Dinah DeWalk  
Zack Whaley  
Jonathon  
Samara Morgan  
Andrea Villaneuva  
Brandon Waddell  
Doug Fleming  
Jazmin Anders  
Jenn tafel  
Jill Kochanek  
Kara Swain  
R. Wilson  
Taylor Moberg  
Shatina Jones  
Wanda Clavon Jones

## **MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER DUNBAR TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 3, 2020 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Council Member Spitzley noted that sign up for public comment will be until 6:15 p.m. and Ms. Boak will announce when it is 6:10 and when sign up ends.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **DISCUSSION – Chief Strategy Officer Report on LPD Budgeting**

Ms. Kehler gave a brief introduction and outlined the practices of the budgeting and then went through her slide on the budget adoption process. Council Member Spitzley briefly spoke about the budget priorities process that Council will be working on in August and September to adopt at the September 21, 2020. The Committee briefly discussed their vision for the budget priorities format. Council Member Spitzley encouraged the Committee to put forward budget items for future planning and recommendations to the Administration. Ms. Kehler then spoke on the slide on the General Fund for FY 21 \$136,692,294, with property tax at 33.4% and in that is 1.5 mills for LPD, 2.0 mills for public service and 1.5 mills for LFD. The remaining amount on the slide represented 23% income tax 23%, 18.3% on return on equity and 12.5% for State Revenues. The LPD but is 34% of the General Fund total at \$49,493,846. Council Member Spadafore asked if the 3.6% in fund balance is spent or in reserve. Ms. Kehler stated it is allocated for this FY to fill the short falls. Council Member Spitzley asked if the 12.5% of State Revenue was covered by COVID, at which Ms. Kehler stated the numbers for August were being released so once it is done she would be able to respond. Mr. McClure presented the power point on the LPD fund expenditures. He noted that on the 3<sup>rd</sup> slide, in the 83.9% of personnel 56% is patrol, 25% is investigation, and 9% detention, it was also noted the \$5 million were in administration spending. Council Member Spadafore asked if non-legacy includes health care, etc. Mr. McClure clarified the legacy is pension, workers compensation, and unemployment all included in the \$16,831,440 on the 4<sup>th</sup> slide. Council Member Spadafore asked why active employees health care is considered legacy, because it would assumed if someone goes off payroll that cost goes away. Mr. McClure stated there is still an obligation and it was confirmed by the Budget Director that is the “definition” of legacy. Mr. McClure noted that legacy cost is 36.2% of the budget. Council Member Spitzley asked if Information Technology is in the \$7,204,474 operating line item, and if so what that entails. Mr. McClure confirmed it was in that line item and the City uses a form based number budget where each department is charged per employee and number of computers. The presentation moved to the Personnel Budget slide where it was noted there are 206 sworn officers with 12 of those Community Police Officers, 41 Civilian, which includes 1 social worker. Council Member Spitzley asked what the cost was for the social worker themselves, and Mr. McClure stated that was embedded in the patrol funds, but there is salary, vehicle and minimal supplies. He estimated the total cost for the social worker would come in at \$110,000. Council Member Spadafore noted in the last budget they did approve \$100,000-\$120,000. Mr. McClure continued with the slide show which represented legacy cost and the breakdown on the operating budget. On these slides it did reflect \$3,186.36/employee and \$3,332.87/computer to an earlier IT question on City wide charges. After a review of the slide on key items in operating, Council Member Spadafore asked what the cost on health care was and Mr. McClure stated he would have to provide that at a later meeting.

Council Member Dunbar stated that she was aware that there is not a lot to consider to reduce in the budget, but what was behind the resolution to defund the police is to reduce the police force. She continued, that personnel is the largest amount and in a discussion on trimming the budget it is not about the money, but about the resources extended to the department and the work that is being done. She stated in her opinion that if they reduce officers and redirect those funds, they will then reduce the budget, because to her keep the same number of officers and

skimming the budget is not the goal. Council Member Dunbar asked to go in the direction of comparing the services provided in other communities the same size, compare operational systems and she did not think more police officers would equal more safety or prevent crime. Council Member Dunbar stated that police respond to crime, show up after and investigate, and her opinion is that the sheer number of police does not create a safer community. Council Member Spitzley was open to the discussion and looking at other communities, but she was not supportive of laying off officers, but support looking at budget. She concluded she believes there is room for savings. Council Member Dunbar clarified that she was not suggesting laying people off, but the issues as she sees it and the call from the community is not to shave budget but to save spending, and redesigning with less patrol officers engaged in the City. She continued stating that the police department cannot prevent a shooting, and she believes that nothing a police officer could do to prevent a shooting but they are event response. Council Member Spitzley agreed with looking at the budget. Council Member Spadafore asked if it takes a MCOLES certified officer to respond to well check, noise complaints and abandoned vehicles. He spoke in support of what the officers do, but would ask if a MCOLES certified that carries a side arm, is need at all calls. The Committee might consider creating a new division of public safety that would include coverage on health and public welfare, to free up some of the calls. Lastly, he questioned the amount of \$130,000 for training, which did not appear to him as enough money for training, or if enough training was being done. Council Member Spitzley noted that the Committee appears to have a path, but the discussion is now how to get to the result. It appeared to her that there is talk about resourcing, reimagining with a community focused and community eccentric. There are community groups out there working with the youth now, and the City should be working with them now. Council Member Dunbar concurred and noted the Committee needs to define "there" and if that is a police department with all divisions and response teams located in it. They still carry the institutional thinking and mentality of "policing" and there are services that are provided in tandem with. In regards to 911, is there a way to create distribution of issues to areas outside of the police department. Council Member Dunbar concluded by stated she believe that there are issues that need to be removed from mix. Council Member Spitzley suggested implementing a policy and procedures to shift funds to change the mind set of what people think the police department is. She encouraged the discussion when the Committee works on the Budget Policies for FY 2021/2022 to envision a new division and go with public safety, and move the social worker there, acquire a director, and start on a strategic plan. She encouraged the Committee to look at Grand Rapids police plan on ideas on how to rethink the structure. Council Member Spitzley noted to the Committee and the public that this Committee was not established to focus just on LPD, they are talking about this because of budget priorities with a deadline of 10/1/2020. This provides them the opportunity to reimagine the budget and provide recommendations to the LPD budget. After that the discussion will not stop.

Ms. Kehler made it clear to the group that in FY2019 there was a conventional budget done department by department and in 2020 they went to program based budgeting, and now in 2021 they are leaning towards priority budgeting. For LPD that will be engagement, judicial support, public safety. Council Member Spitzley asked Ms. Kehler to forward the document she was reading from.

Mr. Smiertka stated for the record that there are no excessive force lawsuits against the police department over the last four years.

Mr. McClure wanted it known that in the past the Chief has stated that there should be one officer/1,000 people and the City is below the national average, and there is a philosophical question to be discussed on if police presences does not reduce crimes.

Council Member Spitzley read statistics that in 2012 the budget for 2013 reduced the LPD by 26% and in 2013 rapes were up 39%, vehicle theft was up 38%, robbery was up 27% and larceny up 6%. This is information she stated that needed to be stated for the best decision, and there is an opportunity to reimagine the department. She asked council staff to contact the Chief to forward an invitation to the social worker to attend the next meeting for her perspective.

Council Member Spadafore stated he was not sure if a headcount of officers was useful, because currently LPD is hard working but the aim is to reduce their workload so they can do their part of enforcement as essential certified officers, and community policing and social worker can do the other work load where an office might not be necessary. Council Member Spitzley suggested at a future meeting speaking to the community groups that already have a network with the youth and partner with them.

### **Public Comments/Listening Session**

#### **Limited to 3 minutes; sign up to speak at public comment will end at 6:15 p.m.**

Mr. Inglot spoke in support of the resolution proposed by Council Members Betz and Dunbar for reallocation of the LPD budget to community programs, asked for an investment in social workers, and proposed when officers quit to replace them with social workers and community organizations.

Ms. Diskin spoke in support of the resolution proposed by Council Members Betz and Dunbar, asked that this committee consider changes to public comment allowing more time to sign up, asked Council Member Spadafore to share the data statistics he mentioned on police calls and lastly stated her opinion that training of officers can only go so far and they need to look at a different way to frame it.

Ms. DeWalk shared a personal experience she had with the LPD, supported comments made earlier by Council Member Spadafore, spoke in support of the resolution proposed by Council Member Betz and Dunbar, and acknowledged the work done by Council Member Spitzley thus far at this Committee.

Mr. Whaley acknowledged the Committee and supported earlier statements from the public, and recommended changes to the formatting of these meetings.

Council Member Spadafore acknowledged the suggestions on the meetings, and would speak to the OCA to see if there are other options that would not violate the OMA. Council Member Spitzley added that each agenda includes an email address comments can be sent to prior to the meeting, and the Committee members email addresses are on the webpage to communicate with as well.

Council Member Dunbar lost audio on the meeting.

Mr. Lynn asked for public sign up to go until 6:45, provided his past experience with the LFD, and in his opinion some people do not want to go against the City. Regarding the LPD he stated his opinion that more police would stop crimes, his belief is that the lack of mentoring makes it worse and more policing is not the answer.

Council Member Spitzley noted to the public that there is not one Committee that has stated there is not racism or institutional racism, and that is part of the reason for the creation of this Committee. Mr. Lynn again asked for less policing. Council Member Spitzley noted that there is talks about partnering with other community groups that already teach violence prevention and diversion activities. Mr. Lynn support that option and opportunities.

Jonathon stated his opinion that all citizens deserve equal protection and he wants the police to uphold equally and anything less that that will be unacceptable. He also stated he did not believe that less police presence is the right thing, but to have another division of public safety for wellness checks and to help the mentally ill. Jonathon suggested working with the State and other agencies to get mental health assistance, learn from other best practices in other communities. Jonathon concluded by suggesting a millage, because in his opinion defunding is

anti-progressive and would not ensure an equitable community. Council Member Dunbar was asked where reducing the police has made a community safer and a better quality of life.

Council Member Spadafore explained that raising a millage is not possible, because with revenue sharing reduction, and the City cap of mills at 20, and they are currently at 19 mills. He added that he was not saying the idea was not a good idea, but the City is limited on the number of mills. Council Member Spitzley asked if there wasn't already a Police Millage at \$3.5 million or 2% of the general fund, and it was confirmed.

Ms. Morgan first noted she is a member of the Mayor's Diversity Council, that they shared the same challenges. The first year of the Council, was filled with confusion and lack of structure, and this current year they have new leadership and was on track until the presentation by the Mayor on Black Lives Matter. Ms. Morgan stated she believed comments that are being made by the Mayor are reactionary. She went on to note that there are now 3 Committees on there is no explanation why so many, and the Diversity Council is now being asked to not hold meetings until a City liaison is available, and they have been reduced to work groups. Ms. Morgan asked for the Committee to listen to what is being said.

Mr. Daniels with EmPowerLansing spoke in opposition to the resolution to defund the police. He went on to state that accountability is oversight, but to take money away would be reckless. Mr. Daniels asked for them to increase accountability and create opportunities to help keep people off the streets and provide options for the youth to be involved and out of the criminal justice system. Mr. Daniels suggested restructuring the budget that exists.

Mr. Hoffman acknowledged the Committee, spoke in support of the proposed resolution by Council Members Betz and Dunbar and asked for a reinvestment into early childhood education and public welfare.

Ms. Gilmore made note that having a conversation focus on budget and numbers distracts from the public safety. The committee was asked to discuss practical matters and discuss aiming to fund root causes on the sources that effect wellbeing. Ms. Gilmore concluded by asking for accountability and for non-government not to replace, but be a layer in the solution.

Council Member Spitzley noted to the Committee that the discussion on accountability can be done here or with the LPD Commission. This Committee is a standing Committee and the first initiative is to address the budget priorities to meet the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, at which they can address LPD in them. Council Member Spadafore noted also that this Committee was not established to address solely the LPD, but regarding the LPD Commission, the Committee could look at the Charter to see if the LPD Commission can be empowered in different ways.

Council Member Spitzley noted to the public that Council Member Dunbar was having issues with her video, but was still in the meeting listening through the audio.

Council Member Spitzley set the next meeting for Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup> from 6pm – 8pm.

**Other:**

**PENDING – RESOLUTION – Invest in the People of Lansing**

No discussion on this topic.

**Adjourn**

Adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Submitted by, Sherrie Boak

Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on August 26, 2020