

**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES COUNCIL CHAMBERS,  
1345 E. Main Street City of Niles, Michigan**

**Monday, April 08, 2024**

**PRESENT:** Council Members: Georgia Boggs, Gretchen Bertschy, Amanda Dunnem, Timothy Rogers, Charlie McAfee, William Weimer, Michael Thompson, and Mayor Nick Shelton

**ABSENT:** John DiCostanzo

**STAFF:** Bergman, Landgraf, Arseneau, McCauslin, Ray, Stump, Young

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

The regular Niles City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Shelton at 6:30 p.m. April 8, 2024. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Nick Shelton.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Councilmember Rogers** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the agenda as submitted.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Weimer, Bertschy, Dunnem, McAfee

**NAY:** Thompson, Boggs, Rogers    **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo    **MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: (PUBLIC COMMENTS)**

**Justin Flagel** of 1526 Clarendon, Chair of Niles Main Street, spoke in favor of closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street for The FORGE. He asked for Council's support.

**Nancy Hart** of 207 ½ N 2<sup>nd</sup> St., spoke against closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street as she is concerned for safety, and questioned if she needed an ambulance in the middle of the night, who was going to move the barricades?

**Joel Rogers** of 830 Kensington, spoke against closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street for reasons of public safety and traffic flow.

**Jim Morris** of 220 E Main St., owns a business and lives on Main St. He spoke in favor of closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street as this offers a central location and beneficial to the downtown businesses.

**Carrie Nyenhuis**, owner of Wolfshead Productions LLC, asked for Council approval for the Niles Renaissance Faire.

**Madeline Crocker** of 1285 S 13<sup>th</sup> St., shared comments from her Facebook page of others not in favor of closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street along with herself.

**Marie Weimer** asked for Council members to use their microphones when speaking as some are not able to hear them otherwise.

**Brian Crespo** of Industrial Dr., shared that not only are they a part of the Social Equity Program, the CRA chose them for the All-Star Program. NMR was the only one in Southwest Michigan that was chosen for the All-Star Grant. A tentative open date for their Microbusiness Class A is April 19, 2024, pending a few details with the State.

**Lisa Croteau** addressed questions presented by City Council and the public.

**Tracy Wagner** an executive at Modineer and a DDA Board member, stated that he is in full support of this project. Modineer has hired over 60 college graduates over the last 3 years. Niles needs a gathering space to attract young people to this area.

**Linda Casperson** of 312 Broadway is a resident, a business owner, and a member of the DDA. She is in favor of closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Linda stated that she spent time at the NODE and encouraged Council to vote yes.

**Ann Borne** of 520 Springfield Circle, spoke in favor of the FORGE. She brought others from surrounding areas to frequent the downtown businesses and spent time at the NODE. People need a reason to come to Niles.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

1. Consideration of approving the minutes of March 25, 2024.
2. Consideration of approving the list of bills dated April 4, 2024.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the consent agenda as submitted.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Thompson, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee, Weimer

**NAY:** None **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

**Introduction of Items for Discussion**  
**Items for Council Action**

3. Consideration of approving the purchase of a video intercom system from FSS Technologies of Ypsilanti, Michigan at a cost of \$3,600.00 for use on third floor of City Hall, with the expense charged to City Hall Building Expenses, and authorize the City Administrator to sign purchase documents.

**Councilmember Rogers** moved, **Councilmember Bertschy** seconded to approve the purchase of a video intercom system from FSS Technologies of Ypsilanti, Michigan at a cost of \$3,600.00 for use on third floor of City Hall, with the expense charged to City Hall Building Expenses, and authorize the City Administrator to sign purchase documents.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee, Weimer, Thompson

**NAY:** None **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

4. Consideration of approving the purchase of a ViewSonic collaboration TV from Adams Remco of South Bend, Indiana at a cost of \$3,481.01 for use at the Police Department's Emergency Operations Center, and charge the expense to the Police Department Computer Equipment budget.

**Councilmember Rogers** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the purchase of a ViewSonic collaboration TV from Adams Remco of South Bend, Indiana at a cost of \$3,481.01 for use at the Police Department's Emergency Operations Center, and charge the expense to the Police Department Computer Equipment budget.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee, Weimer, Thompson, Boggs

**NAY:** None **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

5. Consideration of approving the purchase of fifteen (15) Getac tablets, with accessories, for use at the Police Department and a laptop, with accessories, for use by the Utilities Manager, from SHI of Somerset, New Jersey at a total cost of \$44,157.79. \$39,110.70 of the expense will be allocated to the Police Department, Computer Equipment budget and \$5,047.09 will be allocated to the Utilities Divisions Computer Budget.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Boggs** seconded to approve the purchase of fifteen (15) Getac tablets, with accessories, for use at the Police Department and a laptop, with accessories, for use by the Utilities Manager, from SHI of Somerset, New Jersey at a total cost of \$44,157.79. \$39,110.70 of the expense will be allocated to the Police Department, Computer Equipment budget and \$5,047.09 will be allocated to the Utilities Divisions Computer Budget.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee, Weimer, Thompson, Boggs, Bertschy  
**NAY:** None **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

6. Consideration of approving the purchase of a replacement condenser/coil and head unit from A-1 Refrigeration of Kalamazoo, Michigan in the amount of \$5,926.50 for use in the City Hall server room and charge the expense to Building Maintenance.

**Councilmember Thompson** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the purchase of a replacement condenser/coil and head unit from A-1 Refrigeration of Kalamazoo, Michigan in the amount of \$5,926.50 for use in the City Hall server room and charge the expense to Building Maintenance.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Rogers, McAfee, Weimer, Thompson, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem  
**NAY:** None **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

7. Consideration of approving the request of LifePlan to conduct the Hero Run on April 20, 2024, including related requests, as amended by staff recommendations.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Rogers** seconded to approve the request of LifePlan to conduct the Hero Run on April 20, 2024, including related requests, as amended by staff recommendations.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** McAfee, Weimer, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers  
**NAY:** Thompson **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

8. Consideration of approving the request of Niles Burn Run, Inc. to conduct their annual event July 26 – 28, 2024, including related requests, as amended by staff recommendations.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the request of Niles Burn Run, Inc. to conduct their annual event July 26 – 28, 2024, including related requests, as amended by staff recommendations.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Weimer, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee  
**NAY:** Thompson **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

9. Consideration of approving the Niles Renaissance Faire to be held on May 18-19, 2024, as submitted.

**Councilmember Thompson** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the Niles Renaissance Faire to be held on May 18-19, 2024, as submitted.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Thompson, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee, Weimer  
**NAY:** None **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo **MOTION CARRIED**

10. Consideration of approving the request of Niles DDA to close a portion of N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street for creation of the Forge.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the request of Niles DDA to close a portion of N. 2nd Street for creation of the Forge.

**ROLL CALL: YEA:** Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, McAfee, Weimer

**NAY:** Boggs, Thompson      **ABSENT:** DiCostanzo      **MOTION CARRIED**

**APPOINTMENTS:**

11. Consideration of confirming the appointment of Ruth Slater to a three-year term on the Niles Public Art Commission.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to confirm the appointment of Ruth Slater to a three-year on the Niles Public Art Commission.

**AYES:** 7      **NAYS:** 0      **MOTION CARRIED**

12. Consideration of confirming the appointment of Jamie Bennett to a three-year term on the Planning Commission.

**Councilmember Bertschy** moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to confirm the appointment of Jamie Bennett to a three-year on the Planning Commission.

**AYES:** 7      **NAYS:** 0      **MOTION CARRIED**

**CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT:**

**COUNCILMEMBER’S REPORT:**

**Councilmember Thompson** stated that there were still books available in the lobby on personal finance.

**Councilmember Boggs** thanked everyone that came out and voiced their opinion. In the end, everyone in this community wants to make it a success.

**Councilmember Bertschy** spoke with Christina Arseneau regarding the history of Niles. She learned that there have been road closures in the past due to building the High School and the YMCA. There have been other streets closed as well. After a period of time, these are no longer talked about. She added that she’s sure that there will be more in the future.

**Council McAfee** explained that each member is not on Council to get their own agenda across, but to get the constituents’ across. They are to be the voice of the people.

**MAYOR’S REPORT:**

**Mayor Shelton** attended the Niles vs. Brandywine charity basketball event raising \$2,000 for Ferry Street Resource. The Mayor thanked everyone for the discussions and hard work over the past 4 years to help make Niles a better place. He encouraged everyone to volunteer and commit to serving on the FORGE committee that will help to make that space the best space it can be.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Weimer moved to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

Tina Bergman, Niles City Clerk

Approved by City Council April 22, 2024.