

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

Monday, June 12, 2023

PRESENT: Council Members: Georgia Boggs, Gretchen Bertschy, Amanda Dunnem, Timothy Rogers, William Weimer, John DiCostanzo, and Mayor Nick Shelton

ABSENT: Charlie McAfee, Michael Thompson

STAFF: Huff, Landgraf, Bergman

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular Niles City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Shelton at 6:00 p.m. June 12, 2023. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Nick Shelton.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

ROLL CALL: YEA: DiCostanzo, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, Weimer,

NAY: None **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: (PUBLIC COMMENTS)

Justin Flagel of 1526 Clarendon, was in support of the Pride Event and specifically the family friendly drag show.

Christina Arseneau, Historic Center Director, shared the celebratory event for the 25th Anniversary of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeology Project held at the Grand LV on July 12th.

Marry Ellen Drolet President of Support the Fort, gave the history of the Support the Fort and stated that they were funding the dinner for the Fort St. Joseph Archaeology celebration.

Tammy Stelter of 1213 N 13th St., stated that she finds the drag show offensive and opposes it.

Larry Barrett of 2471 Lilac Ave., opposes Council of approving the drag show and asked for a NO vote.

Michelle Funkhouser of 820 Totomee Ln., requested that Council vote unanimously NO to the pride event and asked that events be self-funded.

Dan Vandenheede of 639 N 13th St., said that he was in favor of the drag show and those in opposition, don't go. Dan's main reason for speaking was to speak in favor of a single trash haul.

Hailey Colpitts Pride Event coordinator, gave an explanation why she chose to hold the festival.

Salisa Hebard of 1718 Howard St., gave reasons why she was in favor of the event.

Garik Nasstrom Program Director of OutCenter of Southwest Michigan was in support of the Pride Event.

Andrea Anderson of 2726 S. 13th St., spoke against the event and the need to protect the innocence of children.

Jessica Nelson of 546 Grant St., shared that she is non-binary and supports the event and asked Council to vote YES.

Dean Lietz of 68597 Frantz Ct., spoke against the event. He asked that the event applications being considered are good, wholesome and family friendly.

Steve Gargis of 1325 Sheffield Ave., supported the event and stated that his 11-year-old son was excited to support members of his community with love and friendship.

Suzette Kennedy of 118 N. Philip Rd., spoke against the festival and quoted Romans 1:18.

Marla Shortman of 202 Carol Ave., spoke against the event as it should not be held in the park. She felt that it was not considered family friendly and asked that Council take a stand for what is right.

Jennifer Scally of 1531 Superior St., spoke in favor of the event and stated that pride is accepting people for who they are.

Marie Weimer of 418 Michigan St., commented that Council always does a good job.

Sara Dunnem of 422 N. 10th St., spoke in favor of the event adding that pride is acceptance and love, not hate.

Keith Stelter of 1213 N 13th St., against the event and felt that it is not family friendly.

Kathy Zeider of 1157 Fort St., spoke against the event. She stated that we need to protect children's innocence. This should be kept private, not public.

Samantha Vandenburg of 1610 Eagle St., supports the event. Religious beliefs shouldn't be a part of the decision.

PRESENTATIONS:

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Consideration of approving the minutes of May 22, 2023.
2. Consideration of approving the list of bills dated June 6, 2023.

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

ROLL CALL: YEA: Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, Weimer, DiCostanzo

NAY: None **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Introduction of Items for Discussion

Items for Council Action

3. Consideration of authorizing a donation in the amount of \$2,500.00 to the Fort St. Joseph Archaeology Open House, with the expense being charged to Council Community Promotions.
Councilmember Bertschy moved, **Councilmember Boggs** seconded to authorize a donation in the amount of \$2,500.00 to the Fort St. Joseph Archaeology Open House, with the expense being charged to Council Community Promotions.
ROLL CALL: YEA: Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, Weimer, DiCostanzo, Boggs
NAY: None **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**
4. Consideration of approving the 2023 Tax Rate Request and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the L-4029 certification.
Councilmember DiCostanzo moved, **Councilmember Bertschy** seconded to approve the 2023 Tax Rate Request and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the L-4029 certification.
ROLL CALL: YEA: Dunnem, Rogers, Weimer, DiCostanzo, Boggs, Bertschy
NAY: None **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**
5. Consideration of approving the design and placement of a mural in the 2nd Street parking lot, at a cost of \$1200.00 to be paid for by Niles Main Street DDA and completed prior to the November 30, 2023 expiration date.
Councilmember Bertschy moved, **Councilmember Dunnem** seconded to approve the design and placement of a mural in the 2nd Street parking lot, at a cost of \$1200.00 to be paid for by Niles Main Street DDA and completed prior to the November 30, 2023 expiration date.
ROLL CALL: YEA: Rogers, Weimer, DiCostanzo, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem
NAY: None **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**
6. Consideration of approving the design and placement of a mural in Riverfront Park North pending funding approval and completion prior to the November, 2023 expiration date.
Councilmember Rogers moved, **Councilmember Bertschy** seconded to approve the design and placement of a mural in Riverfront Park North pending funding approval and completion prior to the November, 2023 expiration date.
ROLL CALL: YEA: DiCostanzo, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers
NAY: Weimer **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**
7. Consideration of approving the request of the Niles Pride Committee to host Niles Pride 2023 on June 17, 2023 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Amphitheater.
Councilmember Dunnem moved, **Councilmember Bertschy** seconded to approve the request of the Niles Pride Committee to host Niles Pride 2023 on June 17, 2023 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Amphitheater.
ROLL CALL: YEA: DiCostanzo, Boggs, Bertschy, Dunnem, Rogers, Weimer
NAY: None **ABSENT:** McAfee, Thompson **MOTION CARRIED**

APPOINTMENTS:

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

COUNCILMEMBER'S REPORT:

Councilmember DiCostanzo moved, **Councilmember Bertschy** supported to excuse Councilmember Thompson from tonight's meeting.

AYES: 6 NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

Councilmember DiCostanzo thanked the public for coming out and sharing their views and having good, respectful dialogue.

Councilmember Bertschy compared discussing the Fort St. Joseph to discussing the Pride Event. To think this was the hardest night that Niles has had in the last 280 years since the Fort. Although speaking of this today, it has been going on a long time and there will be something else tomorrow.

MAYORS REPORT:

Mayor Shelton commented that downtown looks awesome, thanks to River Essence, Joe Ray and City Administrator Huff. He attended the Remarkable's fundraiser on Saturday. He thanked the public for speaking and being cordial.

CLOSED SESSION:

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Weimer moved to adjourn at 7:22 p.m.



Tina Bergman
Niles City Clerk



Date