



## CITY COUNCIL

June 21, 2021

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey City Council was held from virtual locations on Monday, June 21, 2021. This meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.; then, after a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, a roll call then determined that the following were

Present: John Murphy, Mayor, Creal Springs Township, Johnson County, IL  
Kate Marshall, City Councilmember, Petoskey, Emmet County, MI  
Derek Shiels, City Councilmember, Harbor Springs, Emmet County, MI  
Brian Wagner, City Councilmember, Petoskey, Emmet County, MI  
Lindsey Walker, City Councilmember, Petoskey, Emmet County, MI

Absent: None

Also in attendance were City Manager Rob Straebel, Clerk-Treasurer Alan Terry, City Planner Amy Tweeten and Executive Assistant Sarah Bek.

### **Hear Voices Without Borders Founders Proclamation**

Mayor Murphy recognized Jack and Sara Kukuk, founders of Voices Without Borders, and read aloud the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, Voices Without Borders, a non-profit 501(c)3, was founded in Petoskey in 2009 and its mission is to promote, support, and sponsor choral music, dance and other related activities for young people in our schools and communities throughout greater Northern Michigan and to offer similar opportunities for children from around the world; and

WHEREAS, Jack and Sara Kukuk, Voices Without Borders founders, are retiring after many years of meaningful work with Voices Without Borders and have made an impact in Northern Michigan; and

WHEREAS, The Kukuk's are committed to the arts, providing opportunities for children in the Northern Michigan area to participate in life-changing musical and dance experiences; and

WHEREAS, The Kukuk's provided arts education and educational opportunities to youth in Northern Michigan and around the world, many of whom would otherwise not have had access to them; and

WHEREAS, The Kukuk's initiated the Great Lakes Youth & Treble Choirs (formerly the Little Traverse Youth & Treble Choirs) for the greater Northern Michigan area children ages 7-19; and

WHEREAS, their vision to bring children's choir and dance groups from around the world to Northern Michigan since 2009 has enhanced our international experiences by presenting the international Children of the World in Harmony Festivals and also provided participants and host families an opportunity to share in each other's cultures; and

WHEREAS, their vision to provide touring opportunities for the Great Lakes Youth Choirs – touring in various parts of Michigan, Canada, Scotland and Ireland to see our youth choirs serve as musical ambassadors for Michigan and the USA; and

WHEREAS, The Kukuk's designed and provided multiple opportunities for training via audition workshops as well as vocal Master Classes with such Broadway stars as Franc d'Ambrosio; and

WHEREAS, The Kukuk's strengthened collaborations with several respected arts organizations including the Little Traverse Choral Society, the Great Lakes Chamber Orchestra, the Northern Michigan Chorale, Great Lakes Center for the Performing Arts and the Cheboygan Opera House:

NOW THEREFORE, I, John Murphy, Mayor of the City of Petoskey, on behalf of the City Council and all Petoskey citizens take this opportunity to proclaim and express sincere and grateful appreciation, and hereby extend to Jack and Sara Kukuk, our congratulations on their well-earned retirement, and our best wishes to them for continued success, happiness and good health in the years to come.

#### **Consent Agenda - Resolution No. 19554**

Following introduction of the consent agenda for this meeting of June 21, 2021, City Councilmember Marshall moved that, seconded by City Councilmember Walker adoption of the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council does and hereby confirms that the draft minutes of the June 7, 2021 regular session City Council meeting be and are hereby approved as amended; and

BE IT RESOLVED that receipt by the City Council of a report concerning all checks that had been issued since June 7, 2021 for contract and vendor claims at \$508,228.12, intergovernmental claims at \$4,060.06, and the June 10 payroll at \$224,534.48, for a total of \$736,822.66 be and is hereby acknowledged.

Said resolution was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Marshall, Shiels, Wagner, Walker, Murphy (5)

NAYS: None (0)

#### **Hear Public Comment**

Mayor Murphy asked for public comments and there were no comments.

#### **Hear City Manager Updates**

The City Manager reviewed requirements for changing the speed limit on a state trunk line, specifically on US-31 through the Little Traverse Wheelway and that changing a regulatory speed limit requires a traffic engineering study be completed by MDOT and the Michigan State Police; that based on MDOT, MSP officials and the Public Safety Department it does not seem likely the speed limit would be lowered and staff does not recommend the City request a speed limit study; reported that as part of the American Rescue Plan of 2021 funding, the Michigan Department of Treasury calculated the City will receive \$602,472 in two installments and the City will need to apply for the funds and encumber the funds by December 31, 2026 and reviewed eligible uses; that the local emergency order allowing for virtual meetings is set to expire June 30, 2021 and City Council and all other City boards and commissions will need to meet in-person starting July 1 unless there is an absence due to military duty, a health condition or reinstatement of a local or state emergency; that the City will continue to broadcast meetings via Zoom with City Hall open for meeting attendees in-person; that the City Hall solar system is up and running and generating renewable energy with a monitor in the lobby of City Hall showing solar output from the panels; that Ward and City Conventions are scheduled for 8:00 P.M. on July 12 and July 14 and reviewed locations; that after 28 years of service with the City, Clerk-Treasurer Al Terry is retiring on October 15, 2021 and thanked him for his many years with the City and wished him the best in his well-deserved retirement and that staff will begin recruitment process this week advertising for the position; provided an update on street resurfacing and reconstruction projects and that Greenwood Road Street reconstruction project from Charlevoix Avenue to West Sheridan Street will begin mid-to-late July and be completed by October 8; and that there has been substantial progress on the Bear River Iron Belle Bridge the last two weeks which will provide a much safer route to the North Country Trail.

City Councilmembers discussed the process involved in requesting a change in the speed limit on US-31 through the Little Traverse Wheelway detour area; inquired about a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Iron Belle Bridge; and how citizens can access the bridge through North Central Michigan college property and that there should be community awareness and education on bridge accessibility.

The City Manager noted there most likely would be a ribbon cutting ceremony once the bridge is completed.

#### **Approve Housing North Contract to Fund a Housing Director – Resolution No. 19555**

The City Manager reviewed this is a third discussion of partially funding a full-time Housing Director position through Housing North; reviewed other municipalities' financial contributions for funding the position for one year; that the Housing Director would be an employee of Housing North; that the City would contribute \$5,000 in 2021 and 2022 if approved by Council which would amount to roughly 11.76% of funding for the one-year position; that the contract has been fully reviewed by the City Attorney; and funding the position is consistent with Goal Six of the City's adopted Action Plan.

City Councilmembers reviewed the terms of the agreement and changes to it and discussed Little Traverse Bay Housing Partnership's involvement, scope of work and where the director will spend their time.

Scott Smith, Little Traverse Bay Housing Partnership representative, reviewed scope of work and continued efforts to obtain additional financial support.

Mayor Murphy asked for public comments and heard from Carlin Smith, Little Traverse Bay Housing Partnership representative, that the Housing North Board of Directors has expressed that the director would be focused on Emmet County.

City Councilmember Walker moved that, seconded by City Councilmember Shiels to approve the contractual agreement between Housing North and the City of Petoskey to partially fund a full-time Housing Director position.

Said motion was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Shiels, Wagner, Walker, Murphy (4)

NAYS: Marshall (1)

#### **Approve Support for the Homes for Our Future Campaign and Housing North Deed Restriction Program – Resolution No. 19556**

The City Manager reviewed that City Council discussed a deed restriction program spearheaded by Housing North at their June 7 meeting; that the program is designed to encourage year-round housing to help address the increased number of properties being converted to seasonal housing; and based on input from the City Attorney, Council decided to move forward with a resolution of support for the program rather than be listed as a program partner on the deed document and supported the Housing North Homes for Our Future Campaign.

City Councilmembers discussed the process and whether support should be expressed through a proclamation vs. resolution and discussed the pros and cons of the program.

Steve Schnell, Charlevoix County Housing Director, commented that the program is focused on year-round living.

Mayor Murphy asked for public comments and heard a comment that it seems as if owners that spend very little time in Petoskey would be worse than short-term rentals.

City Councilmember Shiels moved that, seconded by City Councilmember Walker adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Housing North was organized in 2018 by a cross-sector group of regional housing partners to overcome the communications, policy, and financial barriers that stand in the way of housing solutions; and

WHEREAS, national studies have shown development and housing supply to be constrained by rising construction costs, changes in the market, and a labor shortage; and

WHEREAS, Housing North commissioned an update to a 2014 Housing Target Market Analysis in 2019 that indicates a potential demand in the City of Petoskey for 621 dwelling units; and

WHEREAS, the imbalance between supply and demand is impacting our community's ability to provide housing for young families, seniors, and the workforce, which is affecting the sustainability and growth opportunities of local businesses and schools; and

WHEREAS, the lack of adequate, safe housing has been shown to have serious impacts on the health, access to opportunity, and achievement levels of individuals, particularly vulnerable populations like children and seniors; and

WHEREAS, Housing North is advancing a campaign called Homes for our Future to raise awareness and support for housing solutions such as the consideration and adoption of common-sense local policies and practices that will increase the supply of housing in our community, and advancement at the state level of policies that expand and improve access to housing resources for all communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Petoskey Livable Petoskey Master Plan identifies many of these methods as means to creating neighborhoods for all; and

WHEREAS, Housing North is exploring a voluntary deed restriction program as one method to protect year-round housing from being converted to seasonal housing; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Petoskey endorses the Homes for Our Future Campaign and expresses our support for efforts to create new housing options that ensure our communities remain places where all people can live, work, raise families and thrive, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City supports Housing North's efforts to create a voluntary deed restriction program to promote year-round housing in the City of Petoskey, but retains the right to discontinue said support.

Said resolution was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Shiels, Wagner, Walker, Murphy (4)

NAYS: Marshall (1)

#### **Approve Surplus City Properties and Request for Proposals – Resolution No. 19557**

The City Planner reviewed the draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for the disposal of three identified surplus properties for the purpose of housing construction; that the draft RFP is based on what was previously distributed for 219 Washington Street, but had not had legal review; that the properties have varying levels of development/construction issues due to topography, soil conditions, existing easements or utility availability; that the three properties were listed in order of construction ease with 209 Washington Street being the most attractive site, 1219 Clarion Avenue is restricted by utility easement and drop off, 1458 and 1522 Clarion Avenue are wooded lots and may have springs, being the most expensive to develop; reviewed process; and that staff was looking for direction on whether Council would consider a lower purchase price for a more experienced bidder, if there was a preference for proposals to acquire multiple parcels and if there was a preferred timeline for construction.

City Councilmembers discussed the three parcels and whether to sell each of the three parcels and reviewed proposal evaluation criteria and requirements.

City Councilmember Wagner moved that, seconded by City Councilmember Marshall to approve three identified surplus City properties on Washington Street and Clarion Avenue and directed staff to seek bids through a Request for Proposals process.

Said motion was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Marshall, Shiels, Wagner, Walker, Murphy (5)

NAYS: None (0)

**Approve Health Care Savings Program for Public Safety Officers – Resolution No. 19558**

The City Manager reviewed that the recently approved collective bargaining agreement with the Public Safety Officers provides for a Health Care Savings Program administered by the Michigan Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS); that the program requires all officers to participate and to make mandatory contributions in the amount of 3% of their wages and there are no employer contributions; that MERS will manage investments for the account and upon leaving employment with the City, officers will be able to access funds for eligible medical expenses; and that MERS requires a Health Care Savings Program Participation Agreement approved by City Council to establish the plan and plan provisions.

City Councilmember Marshall moved that, seconded by City Councilmember Shiels adoption of a resolution approving the Health Care Savings Program agreement with Michigan Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS).

Said resolution was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Marshall, Shiels, Wagner, Walker, Murphy (5)

NAYS: None (0)

**Council Comments**

Mayor Murphy asked for City Council comments and City Councilmember Marshall commented she had received a citizen complaint concerning fireworks and asked whom residents should call when there is an issue. The City Manager responded that citizens should call 911 indicating a non-emergency and Public Safety will be contacted if issue is within the City limits. City Councilmember Shiels applauded local leaders for going forward with plans that may include risk. City Councilmember Wagner commented he had received concerns about electric bicycles and their excessive speed on the Little Traverse Wheelway and thanked the Petoskey Garden Club and Parks and Recreation Department for making the City beautiful. Mayor Murphy commented he is looking forward to going back to in-person meetings.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, this June 21, 2021, meeting of the City Council adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

John Murphy, Mayor

Alan Terry, Clerk-Treasurer