



# The City of Auburn Hills

## City Council Meeting

### Minutes

January 21, 2013

**CALL TO ORDER:** by Mayor McDonald at 7:00 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** City Council Chamber, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326  
**Present:** Mayor McDonald, Mayor Pro Tem Hammond, Council Members Doyle, Kittle, Knight, Verbeke  
**Also Present:** City Manager Auger, Assistant City Manager Tanghe, Director Olko, City Clerk Kowal, City Attorney Beckerleg, City Engineer Juidici  
14 Guests

#### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4a. Regular City Council Meeting – December 17, 2012

**Moved by Verbeke; Seconded by Knight.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the December 17, 2012 City Council minutes.**

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.005**

4b. Regular City Council Meeting – January 7, 2013

**Moved by Knight; Seconded by Doyle.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the January 7, 2013 City Council minutes.**

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.006**

4c. City Council Workshop Meeting – January 7, 2013

**Moved by Doyle; Seconded by Verbeke.**

With regards to the open burning policy, Ms. Doyle requested the discussion noting the importance of having town hall meetings with residents be added to the minutes.

Mayor McDonald noted he will be appointing a committee this evening and will include the necessity of having public meetings on the topic as was done with the single trash hauler issue.

**RESOLVED: To approve the December 17, 2012 City Council workshop minutes as amended.**

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.007**

#### 5. APPOINTMENTS and PRESENTATIONS

5a. Proclamation in Honor of Stryker, Michigan State Police Canine

Director Olko stated she is pleased to honor a most reliable resource partner. With high-profile residents as the Palace, Chrysler and Great Lakes Crossing, the State Police are many times involved in helping to keep the community safe.

Director Olko introduced State Trooper Dawn Zonka and recently retired Striker, noting both have attended many of the City's Night Out events. Continuing, Director Olko explained Trooper Zonka has demonstrated how Striker works tracking and how explosives are found. Striker, who lives with Trooper Zonka, has now retired to lying on the couch, noting there are new dogs in training to take up where Striker left off. Director Olko continued, reading the Proclamation honoring Striker (attachment A).

5b. Reappointment – Frank Schoenbaechler to the Board of Review for a term ending December 31, 2017.

Mayor McDonald explained it is possible that not all Council members know Board and Commission appointees, therefore, that is why all reappointments as well as new appointments are requested to attend the Council meeting.

Ms. Doyle asked Mr. Schoenbaechler if there is anything he would like to share regarding the time he has spent on the Board of Review.

Mr. Schoenbaechler noted prior to being on the Board, he wasn't aware of how much he didn't know about the City; the many neighborhoods and various businesses. He wasn't aware of what a big chunk of the budget is property taxes and is pleased that the Board of Review does its best to make sure that taxes are levied fairly.

Responding to Ms. Doyle, Mr. Schoenbaechler stated the past four or five years he has been on the Board and he has gained experience by listening to the needs of individual residents as well as businesses and balancing them against the needs of the City.

**Moved by Verbeke; Seconded by Kittle.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the Reappointment of Frank Schoenbaechler to the Board of Review for a term ending December 31, 2017**

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.008**

5c. Appointment – Thomas Coolman to the Public Safety Advisory Committee for a term ending November 30, 2013.

Mr. Coolman noted he has lived in the City for 36 years and has raised his family here. He has volunteered at local schools as well as at church and is ready to contribute time to the City.

Mayor McDonald confirmed Mr. Coolman will be fulfilling the term of Stan Torres.

**Moved by McDaniel: Seconded by Hammond.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the Appointment of Thomas Coolman to the Public Safety Advisory Committee for a term ending November 30, 2013.**

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.009**

5d. Appointment – Barry Thornton to the Elected Officials Compensation Commission for a term ending July 31, 2017.

Mayor McDonald noted Mr. Thornton was the insurance agent for the City and moved to Auburn Hills when he retired.

Mr. Thornton noted he lived in Auburn Hills in the 1970's and has since moved back. In the past he was the president of the Auburn Heights Jaycees and has been a past president of the Optimists Club. For the last three years he has been volunteering at Fieldstone Golf Club two days a week.

Ms. Doyle noted she has known Mr. Thornton from being her neighbor as well as being active in the Heritage of the Hills community and asked what his particular interest is in this committee.

Mr. Thornton explained he and Mayor McDonald briefly discussed the function of the commission, but until he has more than just basic information he really can't give an honest statement. He will do his best for the City, as he has always done being the insurance agent for 26 years.

Mayor McDonald noted this Commission meets in the odd years; Council election years.

Mr. McDaniel asked Mr. Thornton how he would describe the function of this Commission.

Mr. Thornton understands the Compensation Commission reviews Council's compensation and insurance plans.

Mr. McDaniel noted his concern is the benefits disparage between elected officials and full-time employees. This issue comes up every two years and it is important that committee appointments reflect the expectations of Council to make the right and proper decisions.

Mr. McDaniel asked Mr. Thornton his views on providing better health care benefits to Council members than to current City employees.

Mr. Thornton stated without reviewing current policies, not knowing what each Council member receives, he isn't able to make a determination. He was the insurance agent for property and casualty insurance for the City, not health care.

Mr. McDaniel appreciated Mr. Thornton's position, and for clarification noted there are a few Council members who have better benefits than full-time employees, specifically, paying no out-of-pocket expenses or lower co-pay expense vs. a full-time employee with out-of-pocket expenses and higher co-payments.

Mr. McDaniel asked Mr. Thornton if he would be a Commissioner who would support the status quo or if would he make elected officials benefits more in line with full time employees.

Mr. Thornton stated he would have to look at both sides before he could make a decision; he would have to learn the background and other pertinent information. He cannot make a commitment one-way or the other.

Mr. McDaniel noted he isn't asking for a policy driven question; only personally what Mr. Thornton feels regarding equality and right from wrong. Since Mr. Thornton can't answer that question, Mr. McDaniel cannot support this appointment.

Ms. Doyle asked Mr. Thornton if he will be able make an independent decision after learning and hearing all the information.

Mr. Thornton assured her and Council he can make an independent decision after analyzing the information and that he has always been fair. With his background and working for the City in the past, he will do what is in the best interest of the City.

**Moved by Doyle: Seconded by Verbeke.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the Appointment of Barry Thornton to the Elected Officials Compensation Commission for a term ending July 31, 2017.**

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: McDaniel**

**Motion Carried (6-1)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.010**

5e. Reappointment – Joseph Iacobelli to the Tax Incentive Review Committee for a term ending July 31, 2016.

Mayor McDonald explained Mr. Iacobelli isn't able to attend the Council meeting. Continuing, Mayor McDonald stated for Mr. Kittle, whom he wasn't able to contact, that he has touched base with each Council member and there isn't any opposition to Mr. Iacobelli's reappointment.

Mr. Kittle noted, he currently sits on this Committee and wouldn't change any of the appointed members; everyone works very well together.

**Moved by Kittle: Seconded by McDaniel.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the Reappointment of Joseph Iacobelli to the Tax Incentive Review Committee for a term ending July 31, 2016.**

Ms. Doyle noted she will support this reappointment even though she has not met Mr. Iacobelli or had the opportunity to ask him any questions; she appreciates Mayor McDonald talking with her about Mr. Iacobelli and why he isn't able to attend the Council meeting.

**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.011**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT - none**

**7. CONSENT AGENDA - none**

**8. OLD BUSINESS - none**

**9. NEW BUSINESS - none**

**10. COMMENTS AND MOTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

Mr. McDaniel:

- Apologized for not being present at the last Council meeting and appreciates being appointed to the open burning committee, thanking Council for their consideration.

Mr. Kittle:

- He met with Mr. Tanghe regarding the Fieldstone food and beverage proposal, and the proposal likened the golf course operations to a three legged stool; food & beverage, the maintenance contract and golf itself. The brainstorming session resulted in realizing a few elements are out of sequence; the maintenance bid has already been opened, the Council workshop session for Fieldstone doesn't take place until March, the food & beverage proposal (thinking it would be pushed through quickly because of timing, being driven by health care reform and the spring season beginning April 1 or April 15th) is being prepared. One alternative suggested is extending the Davey maintenance contract for one year and review all the pieces of running the golf course. This would allow Council to look at all the possibilities; from the way things are currently run to the other end of the spectrum of outsourcing all aspects of the operation. In the end what does it matter who runs the golf course, it is a City asset that can act as an open space for the residents, as part of the Parks and Recreation system (though it isn't in their budget or

treated that way) and also to be a flood plain for the City. Concluding, it was determined to proceed with the maintenance contract as bid (if approved by Council at the February 4<sup>th</sup> meeting), the food and beverage proposal as set and continue as they have been. He doesn't feel his participation with this group is needed any longer. He is disappointed with this decision since the Fieldstone budget was one of the first Open Issues Log items, dating back to August 2011.

Ms. Doyle asked Mr. Kittle if he felt it necessary to discuss Fieldstone at the March workshop.

Mr. Kittle stated there is a savings with the new five-year contract, but he doesn't believe adequate 'due diligence' has been done by Council; and doesn't feel he has had the support or interest to make any changes. The initial golf course debt will be paid off within the next couple of years, but he doesn't believe the public understands everything that is associated with the golf course including additional debt, beyond the original debt. He has the need for efficiency and to save money at every turn and felt this was an opportunity to investigate options and learn more. It is possible the same conclusion would have been reached; however, there could have also been opportunities to do things more efficiently and creatively. At this point the workshop in March is probably a moot point. The maintenance contract is for five-years, one year beyond the debt being paid off and no changes in sight.

Mayor McDonald disagreed with Mr. Kittles' statement that due diligence was not done by Council. Staff has always brought the proposals to Council for approval and has answered questions asked by Council. Mayor McDonald noted there is a fine line between cutting costs and losing revenue.

Mr. Kittle stated he has always said to have the operation perform better, which doesn't necessarily mean cutting costs, sometimes it may mean increasing revenue or both.

Mayor McDonald believes due diligence has been done by Council, and for those that haven't been following the ins-and-outs of the golf course, there isn't a need for red flags when there aren't any.

Mr. Kittle stated then maybe *better* due diligence is more accurate.

Mr. Knight believes the workshop should proceed as scheduled; he would like to see a strategic overview of what will be happening with the golf course over the next five years. He understands Mr. Kittles' concerns, but he would like to see the scope of people being served by the golf course. He would like a brief overview, including how to proceed once the bonds are paid off and if there should be any changes moving forward.

Regarding due diligence, Mr. Kittle stated he is interested in learning the reason behind the new bid being \$40,000 less than the previous bid; and if the decrease is due to the price of fuel. In the last contract, the price of oil was \$140 per barrel at the beginning of the contract and dropped substantially by the end of the contract. Without the fuel escalator, as there is with the trash hauler, there was quite the windfall for the company. There are many small pieces that add up when doing an extended contract, and to him, that is due diligence.

- Asked if there would be an update on the dustbowl.

Ms. Hammond:

- Asked Director Olko to express her gratitude to the Officers responding to her call, for their quick, efficient and courteous response.

Ms. Doyle:

- Noted she spoke with Ms. Carroll this afternoon and was informed almost all downtown business owners had been talked with and there was strong support for the music to be included with the lighting system.

Mr. Auger noted there are still two or three business owners they are waiting to hear from.

- Acknowledged Oakland University women's basketball coach, Beckie Francis, who was very active by spending many hours and days in Lansing helping to get Erin's Law passed in Michigan. Erin's Law will allow schools to educate kindergarten through fifth grade students about sexual abuse with age appropriate materials.

Ms. Verbeke:

- Asked who at the City would a resident contact regarding financial assistance with their trash bill.

Mr. Auger stated the resident could contact Mr. Keenan in Community Development as well as the Treasurer's Office.

- Asked Director Olko if City patrol officers have the capability to do paperwork in their squad cars, as is being done in Macomb County. Macomb County officers park in school parking lots to do paperwork, making their presence known.

Director Olko stated yes, they have had that capability and Officers file their reports at a convenient time and place. She will raise the ideas of being at the schools; Brian Chubb is the City's School Resource Officer who visits all the public and private schools located within the City.

- With the recent shootings at police stations, asked if there been any thought of bullet proof glass to protect both the police and fire personnel.

Director Olko stated money is budgeted to conduct a study to improve the workflow of the lobby as well as the security. Auburn Hills is a safe community and installing bullet proof glass is uncertain; the intent is for anyone coming into the building is to feel safe.

Ms. Verbeke noted bad things happen everywhere; she is not only concerned about the front desk, but the ability of someone leaping through the open windowed space of the offices.

Director Olko noted both those issues will be evaluated and any recommendations will be brought before Council.

Mr. Knight:

- Acknowledged the excellent write-up of Ms. Doyle's book by Tom Watkin.
- Questioned if the late distribution of the City calendar was due to late submissions of meeting dates by the City.

Mr. Auger stated no.

Mr. Knight stated how disappointed he is that the calendar wasn't ready and available sooner.

- Suggested the Open Issues Log be reformatted indicating the issue, a brief description of the issue, periodic updates noting monthly progress and what that progress is. Also, as with the Golf Dome, there have been no updates; he suggested the Log should indicate at the end of each month if there have been no complaints or action, then it should be noted. Also, there aren't any notations regarding the dust problem on Dutton Road.

Mr. Kittle agreed the Log needs to be kept up to date; there are two issues still open since 2011. The dust issue is very recent, that's why there aren't any notations.

- Mr. Knight noted he had requested language be included in Council's Procedures stating City contracts include the federal language of hiring only legal U.S. citizens.

Mr. Beckerleg stated he would have a response ready for the next Council meeting.

Mayor McDonald:

- Would like to appoint Council Members Kittle and McDaniel as well as residents Michelle Hawley, recently appointed to the Brownfield Authority and Patty Ormsbee of the Beautification Advisory Commission to study the open burning issue. Each of the women is passionate about their opposite views.

A minimum of two public meetings should be held to give and receive information; and Ms. Carroll will be the staff liaison.

Mr. McDaniel suggested the possibility of having another resident representative that has no view one-way or the other.

Mayor McDonald asked if Mr. McDaniel knew of someone, because he has found everyone has an opinion.

Responding to Ms. Verbeke, Mayor McDonald stated he had not asked the resident who came before Council complaining of the burning for health reasons; he didn't want two residents from the same neighborhood to be on the committee.

Mayor McDonald stated if a middle-ground resident is found and would like to be part of the committee, that option is available. Also, there is no scheduled time for a determination to be made.

**Moved by McDaniel; Seconded by Knight.**

**RESOLVED:** To appoint Councilman Kittle, Councilman McDaniel, Michelle Hawley, and Patricia Ormsbee to the Committee to Study Open Burning, with at least two public meetings, and to report their recommendation back to Council.

**VOTE:** Yes: Doyle, Hammond, Kittle, Knight, McDaniel, McDonald, Verbeke

No: None

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**Resolution No. 13.01.012**

**11. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT** – none.

**12. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Noted the Dutton Road construction has been suspended until spring, and if the dust becomes a problem again the City will address the issue.
- He will be having lunch next week with another company that was visited while in Italy and who will be in town to consider locating in Auburn Hills.
- Representing the City, he attended Keeper of the Dream scholarship function at Oakland University; the turnout was very good and there was a great guest speaker.
- Last week he attended an event at the auto show in which Mr. Marchionne was the main speaker; as well as the Big Four function with representatives from the four counties and the City of Detroit.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

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James D. McDonald, Mayor

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Terri Kowal, City Clerk

*The City of Auburn Hills*

PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF  
Michigan State Police Canine **Striker**

*Whereas, Canine Striker* has served with the Michigan State Police since October, 2004; and

*Whereas, Canine Striker* served with Trooper Dawn Zonca, K-9-21; and

*Whereas, Trooper Zonca and Canine Striker* have assisted the City of Auburn Hills Police Department on many occasions; sweeping for explosives at Palace events such as Piston games and concerts for artists such as Brittany Spears, Paul McCartney, Barbara Streisand and numerous others; and

*Whereas, Trooper Zonca and Canine Striker* have attended our National Night Out for many years doing demonstrations for the crowds and playing with the children; and

*Whereas, Canine Striker* has assisted several Police Departments in locating, apprehending and detaining suspects;

*Now, therefore, be it known* that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Auburn Hills recognizes and acknowledges

**Michigan State Police Canine Striker**

At the occasion of his retirement on December 7, 2012, and wish him years of long walks, naps in the sun and tummy rubs in return for his excellent service to the City of Auburn Hills Police Department and residents.

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James D. McDonald, Mayor