

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

February 20, 2024
Conference Room #119
6:00 P.M.

Present: Commissioners: Mayor Pro-Tem Robert Coughlin, Betsy Artz, Maurice Groce, David Moore II, Clarkston Morgan, Jessica Ann Tyson and Mayor Stephen Kepley.

Staff present: Buyer Cori Derengowski, Executive Assistant Stephanie Fox, Deputy City Administrator Shay Gallagher, Finance Director Keyla Garcia, DPW Director Chad Griffin, City Assessor Andy Johnson, Purchasing Agent Carla Kane, City Clerk Dan Kasunic, Police Chief Bryan Litwin, Fire Chief Brent Looman, Parks & Recreation Director Val Romeo, Fire Department Administrative Assistant Nancy Shane, City Treasurer Laurie Sheldon, and Sabo Representative Anna Kendall.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

**A. RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION TO APPROVE CITY
POLICY FOR DAMAGED MAILBOX REIMBURSEMENT.**

DPW Director Griffin reviewed the policy implemented in 2014 and amended in 2022 with the focus on transparency and clarity. He stated other questions came up including questions on landscaping, labor, with Mayor Kepley noting there are many who may be violating an ordinance regarding structures in the right-of-way. Director Griffin stated this would identify parts to be replaced within reason, what is eligible, having a time limit of up to one year of purchase. The committee discussed different aspects of the changes.

Motion by Morgan, seconded by Artz, to recommend to the City Commission to approve a resolution to approve a city policy relative to reimbursement for damaged mailbox caused by city snow removal activities.

Motion Carried.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT:

**A. DISCUSSION ON PURCHASING PRACTICES FOR VENDOR
OUTREACH.**

As requested, Purchasing Agent Kane and Buyer Derengowski explained the process they use to be transparent and to provide the largest outreach to vendors for any bids the city is seeking to also have diversity and inclusion in the process.

They explained the platform that is used, and the number of vendors registered on the platform also noting parameters of small businesses.

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT:

A. WALK-ON TO EXPLAIN ASSESSING NOTICE.

City Assessor Johnson was asked to explain the assessing notices that were being sent out so if asked the commission could explain and understand better the numbers and how they are calculated. Assessor Johnson reviewed the assessing form that was sent to all homeowners noting the difference between assessed value and taxable value. He noted the assessed values, taxable values are capped and cannot be raised more than the consumer price index or 5% whichever is less. The State of Michigan determined that the consumer price index for 2023 was 5.1%, therefore taxable values will raise 5% this year. The only times the taxable value can raise more than that is the year following a transfer of ownership or if any additions are made to the property.

Our Residential class is studied annually by the County Equalization department, our starting numbers for the 2024 assessment roll were at 43%, State Law says that Assessors finished roll must be between 49% and 50%. So assessed values need to raise by 6-7%. Because assessed values in the State of Michigan are 50% of true cash value the Assessor needed to raise true cash values in the residential class by 12-13% to be in compliance with the State.

He explained on the form there is confusion by many owners over the increase in taxes and the taxable increase. He noted there is an appeal process if the homeowner does not agree with the numbers of the assessor's Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 P.M.

Dan Kasunic
City Clerk

Robert Coughlin
Mayor Pro-Tem