



CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES

FEBRUARY 17, 2025

CALL TO ORDER & Mayor Marzolf at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

LOCATION: Council Chamber, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills MI

ROLL CALL: Present: Council Members Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, and Verbeke

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager Tanghe, Assistant City Manager Skopek, City Attorney Beckerleg, City Clerk Pierce, Chief of Police Gagnon, Lieutenant Stubbs, Asst Fire Chief Robinson, DPW Director Baldante, Director of Recreation & Senior Services Adcock, Asst Director of Community Development Lang, Fieldstone Golf Club Manager Hierlihy, Finance Director/Treasurer Schulz, Assistant to the Mgr Hagge

35 Guests

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4a. City Council Workshop Minutes, February 3, 2025

Moved by Knight, Seconded by Verbeke.

RESOLVED: To approve the City Council Workshop Minutes of February 3, 2025.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke

No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.030

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

4b. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes, February 3, 2025

Moved by Knight, Seconded by Fletcher.

RESOLVED: To approve the City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2025.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke

No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.031

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

5. APPOINTMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5a. Presentation by Michigan Municipal Executives of the 2025 Executive of the Year Award to City Manager Thomas A. Tanghe.

Mr. Tanghe was recognized for receiving the 2025 Executive of the Year Award by the Michigan Municipal Executives Organization which was presented by Mr. Mark Wollenweber. This organization represents professional municipal managers from cities, villages, townships and counties across the state.

5b. Motion – To confirm the reappointment of Michael Kneffel, Ron Moniz, Dr. Cody Eldredge, Paul Gudmundsen, and Anthony Barash to the Tax Increment Finance Authority.

Moved by Hawkins, Seconded by McDaniel.

RESOLVED: To confirm the reappointment of Michael Kneffel, Ron Moniz, Dr. Cody Eldredge, Paul Gudmundsen, and Anthony Barash to the Tax Increment Finance Authority for a term ending February 28, 2029.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke
No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.032

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. CONSENT AGENDA

7a. Board and Commission Minutes

7a1. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, January 21, 2025.

7a2. Planning Commission, February 5, 2025.

RESOLVED: To receive and file the Board and Commission Minutes.

7b. Motion – To approve a budget amendment for utility relocation cost associated with the Parking Deck Extension.

RESOLVED: To approve 2025 budget amendments increasing appropriations by \$132,765 in the Water/Sewer fund and increasing appropriations by \$95,300 in the General Fund Capital Improvement department.

7c. Motion – To approve the MOU’s for Police Patrol and Police Detective Units.

RESOLVED: To authorize the City Manager to execute the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Auburn Hills and Police Officers Labor Council/Patrol, as well as between the City of Auburn Hills and Police Officers Labor Council/Detectives, as written. Both take effect on April 5, 2025, and are subject to first being signed by the authorized representative of the Union indicated within each MOU.

7d. Motion – To receive and file the encumbrance 2025 budget amendment increasing the 2025 budget for encumbered goods or services not yet received as of 12/31/2024.

RESOLVED: To receive and file the encumbrance 2025 budget amendment increasing the 2025 budget for encumbered goods and/or services not yet received as of 12/31/2024.

7e. Motion – To approve a budget amendment for tree maintenance at Fieldstone Golf Club.

RESOLVED: To award the Fieldstone Golf Club Winter Tree Work Project to Amezola Tree Service in an amount not to exceed \$19,500. Furthermore, authorize a budget amendment to increase appropriations by \$19,500 in the FY2025 Fieldstone Golf Club fund.

7f. Motion – To approve the 2025 Concrete Maintenance Scope of Engineering Services.

RESOLVED: To approve the OHM Advisors scope of engineering services for the 2025 Concrete Maintenance project in the not-to-exceed amount of \$45,000.

7g. Motion – To approve a proposal for traffic signal mast arm fabrication review by SME for M-24 Improvements.

RESOLVED: To approve SME’s proposal for Traffic Signal Mast Arm Fabrication Review for the M-24 Improvements in the amount of \$32,125.00, and amend the major roads fund by \$32,125.00. This approval is subject to the city being reimbursed for this expense by Schostak.

Moved by Verbeke, Seconded by Fletcher.

RESOLVED: To approve the Consent Agenda.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke
No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.033

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. NEW BUSINESS

9a. Public Hearing/Motion to consider non-renewal of the hotel license for Suburban Studios – 1180 Doris Rd.

Ms. Pierce presented a background on the ordinance and hotels being considered for non-renewal.

Chief Gagnon shared the Suburban Studio violation report which involved numerous calls for service, numerous violations comprising of not properly documenting guests including minors, occupancy limits exceeded in rooms, motor vehicles not registered, length of stay violations and the front desk not staffed 24 hours a day. Chief Gagnon commented that letters were sent to this location as well as the corporate location notifying them of the violations.

Chief Gagnon reported that a reinspection was conducted on February 7, 2025, and the previous violations, except for the length of stay, have been rectified by the hotel. Through various meetings, it was discovered that a nonprofit organization that works with the unhoused has rented a block of rooms. It is this area of the hotel that is in violation of the length of stay.

Mr. Lang explained that there were violations concerning life safety issues which have been repaired. The hotel has been remediating the cited violations and are currently updating appliances, painting and installing new carpet which will help the hotel in the long run.

Mr. Golsh, representative for Suburban Studios, agreed with the report that has been provided by Chief Gagnon and Mr. Lang. He shared that they are new operators and acquired the property in a state of disrepair at the end of 2023. He stated that once they were made aware of the severity of the issues they began to correct them. He mentioned that there are code violations that are weather dependent and cannot be handled until the weather is better.

Mayor Marzolf opened the Public Hearing at 7:22 PM.

Ms. Bishop Yanke, founder of Kids Empowered on the Move and volunteer chair of the Oakland County Task Force on Poverty and Homelessness, stated that they currently have 30 rooms at this location and a few rooms at Baymont. She shared that this organization takes families in crisis and trauma and house them during difficult situations. She stated that these families have no place to go and that the General Manager of Suburban Studios has worked with them.

Spencer Verhagen, Community Engagement representative for Oakland County on behalf of Commissioner Johnson, shared that revoking this license would have a huge impact on those that are more vulnerable and who depend on the hotels.

Council Members questioned the level of involvement the County is providing to aid those in need. Mr. Verhagen shared that there are resources available such as the Housing Resource Centers Emergency support programs as wells as Unlocking Doors. He will help connect the city with these resources.

Mr. Ferguson asked Ms. Bishop Yanke if she was familiar with the programs that were mentioned by the representative from Oakland County. She stated that there is a lack of understanding about what is happening with the unhoused in Oakland County and that there are several hundred homeless families in the hotels.

Ms. Virginia Patrick, resident of Oakland Township and Mr. Charles Waterhouse of Rochester, advocated for the families that are in the hotels.

Dr. Fletcher commented that she is 100% in support of helping helpless families. She stated her concerns are with the owners of the hotels and the need to have the hotels up to standard. She commented that it is not enough to just put people somewhere to say they are no longer homeless, where they are staying must be safe as well. The owners have to take responsibility and bring the facilities up to code.

Mr. Knight stated that hotels should not be the long-term solution to housing. City Council is not trying to close hotels. The City has a broad spectrum of housing and hotels are meant to be hotels.

Paul Burouki of 3053 Carly Court asked the council to consider creative ways to address the problems with the hotels while upholding our laws and respecting the human lives that hang in the balance.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Marzolf closed the Public Hearing at 7:48 PM.

Moved by Hawkins, Seconded by Ferguson.

RESOLVED: To grant Suburban Studios, 1180 Doris Rd, a 120-day extension to comply with the length of stay requirement and a sixty-day extension to allow the hotel additional time to address each violation as stated in the staff reports. Further, if the violations have not been fully addressed, the hotel representative is required to report back to City Council at the April 21, 2025, City Council Meeting.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke

No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.034

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

9b. Public Hearing/Motion to consider non-renewal of the hotel license for MainStay Suites Detroit Auburn Hills – 1650 N. Opdyke Rd.

Chief Gagnon shared the violation report which included vehicles and guests not being properly documented, length of stay violations and various other items. Chief Gagnon commented that a reinspection was conducted, and all the items were brought into compliance with the ordinance. It was noted that there are fire doors that are still not working properly.

Mr. Lang shared that the hotel has made substantial progress on the interior of the building with the exception of the exterior doors which are being remedied with a contractor. The exterior items are weather dependent so they will be addressed once the weather is warmer.

Ms. Shannon Sterling, District Manager of the hotel, shared that every violation will be addressed as soon as they possibly can. She commented that she was unaware of doors not latching and asked to be informed as to which ones those were.

Mayor Marzolf opened the Public Hearing at Open Public Hearing 7:56 PM.

Charles Waterhouse, Rochester Democratic Club, sought clarification regarding occupancy. Chief Gagnon clarified that the occupancy concerns have been corrected.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Marzolf closed the Public Hearing at 8:03 PM.

Ms. Verbeke commented that when people visit Auburn Hills, the goal is to show them that this is a World Class Community. By having hotel issues, this is not happening. She hopes that the people in charge of the hotels would address the issues, so that when people come to Auburn Hills, they are not afraid because the police are being called during their stay at the hotel.

Moved by Hawkins, Seconded by Ferguson.

RESOLVED: To grant MainStay Suites Detroit Auburn Hills, 1650 N. Opdyke Rd, a sixty-day extension to allow the hotel additional time to address each violation as stated in the staff reports. Further, if the violations have not been fully addressed, the hotel representative is required to report back to City Council at the April 21, 2025, City Council Meeting.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke

No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.035

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

9c. Public Hearing/Motion to consider non-renewal of the hotel license for Baymont Inn – 2100 Featherstone Rd.

Chief Gagnon shared the violation report which included vehicles and length of stay not properly documented as well as other violations. Chief Gagnon commented that the hotel has been working on the violations and the Police Department violations have been corrected, even the length of stay. He noted that during the transition of ownership, the new owners were locked out of the camera systems, and they are currently working to correct this.

Mr. Lang noted that there are several violations that have not been corrected, however the owners and contractor submitted a \$2 million renovation project for the property. The Community Development department anticipates that the violations will be corrected at that time.

Mr. Julian Jarbo, owner of this hotel stated that he owns and operates three hotels in Auburn Hills and has been in the industry for 13 years. He bought this facility in August 2024 and plans is to completely remodel the hotel and ensure that all the items will be taken care of. Mr. Jarbo stated that he hopes to get the camera system issue resolved quickly.

Mayor Marzolf opened the Public Hearing at Open Public Hearing 8:15 PM.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Marzolf closed the Public Hearing at 8:16 PM.

Moved by McDaniel, Seconded by Hawkins.

RESOLVED: To grant Baymont Inn, 2100 Featherstone Rd, a sixty-day extension to allow the hotel additional time to address each violation as stated in the staff reports. Further, if the violations have not been fully addressed, the hotel representative is required to report back to City Council at the April 21, 2025, City Council Meeting.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke
No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.036

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

9d. Public Hearing/Motion to consider non-renewal of the hotel license for Red Roof (Auburn Fields Hotel, Inc.) – 1294 N. Opdyke Rd.

Chief Gagnon shared the violation report and noted that the vehicles were not properly documented. A reinspection was conducted and this was corrected. The fire doors that were not latching properly was corrected.

Mr. Lang stated that there are numerous issues that have not been addressed, several of which are regarding life and safety in nature; open electrical, non-working HVAC system with open and exposed units causing hazards. The ownership confirmed that an electrician is on site and addressing the issues.

Mr. Patrick Butler, attorney for Auburn Fields, stated that they are diligently working to correct the problems.

Mayor Marzolf opened the Public Hearing at Open Public Hearing 8:22 PM.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Marzolf closed the Public Hearing at 8:23 PM.

Moved by Hawkins, Seconded by Verbeke.

RESOLVED: To grant Red Roof (Auburn Fields Hotel, Inc.), 1294 N. Opdyke Rd, a sixty-day extension to allow the hotel additional time to address each violation as stated in the staff reports. Further, if the violations have not been fully addressed, the hotel representative is required to report back to City Council at the April 21, 2025, City Council Meeting.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke
No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.037

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

9e. Motion – To approve a contract for engineering design services for a traffic signal at N. Squirrel Road and Shimmons Road.

Mr. Baldante shared that a traffic signal warrant analysis was performed at Shimmons and Squirrel Roads which showed that a traffic signal is warranted. This new signal will improve traffic operations as well as pedestrian and vehicular safety in the area. The intention is to have this project completed before the school year starts.

Assistant Scout Master of Troop 125 out of Rochester thanked City Council for considering this.

Moved by Fletcher, Seconded by McDaniel.

RESOLVED: To approve a contract with OHM Advisors for engineering and design services in the amount of \$38,000 and G2 Consulting for geotechnical services in the amount of \$8,000 in account number 202-452-973.020 as part of the addition of a new traffic signal at N. Squirrel Road and Shimmons Road.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke
No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.038

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

10. COMMENTS AND MOTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Mr. Knight thanked DPW for keeping the roads clear and commented that the roads have been handled well this winter.

Ms. Verbeke asked if the Road Commission of Oakland County had staff cuts as she has received many complaints regarding the road conditions. Mr. Baldante shared that there is a practice of waiting until the storm is over before taking action.

Dr. Fletcher commented that she has been pleased with the Oakland County roads compared to other counties.

Mr. Ferguson encouraged everyone to contact their County and State Representatives to help to ensure people are being taken care of.

Mr. Hawkins commended Ms. Bishop Yanke for the job she is doing with her organization.

Mayor Marzolf congratulated Mr. Tanghe on his award. He also thanked DPW for handling the snow removal.

11. CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

12. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Tanghe thanked staff for all the effort that went into the hotels and the unhoused issue and shared that he is pleased with the outcome as well as with the ordinance that was put in place. He feels the ordinance holds people accountable for the conditions people are living in.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Knight, Seconded by Ferguson.

RESOLVED: To adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Yes: Ferguson, Fletcher, Hawkins, Knight, Marzolf, McDaniel, Verbeke

No: None

Resolution No. 25.02.039

Motion Carried (7 - 0)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Brian W. Marzolf, Mayor

Laura M. Pierce, City Clerk