

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
CITY COUNCIL  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF ESCANABA, MICHIGAN  
Special Council Meeting  
Thursday, May 9, 2019**

Pursuant to a special meeting notice posted April 30, 2019, the meeting was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Marc D. Tall at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 410 Ludington Street.

Present: Mayor Marc D. Tall, Mayor Pro Tem Ronald J. Beauchamp, Council Members, Michael R. Sattem, and Peggy O. Schumann

Absent: Ralph B. Blasier

Schumann moved, Sattem seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to excuse Council Member Blasier

Planning: Chairperson Kelvin Smyth, Commission Members Christine Williams, James Hellermann, Dominic Benetti, Brian Black, Paul Caswell, and Stephen Davis

Absent: Richard Clerk and Craig Gierke

Also Present: City Manager Patrick S. Jordan, Phil DeMay City Clerk, Planning and Zoning Administrator Blaine DeGrave, and Media and members of the public.

Sattem moved, Schumann seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve the Joint City Council and Planning Commission Agenda as submitted.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION** – None

**PUBLIC HEARING(S)** – None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**UB-1 Discussion: Sidewalk Connectivity.**

The City Council and Planning Commission discussed issues related to the walkability of the community, connectivity of sidewalks, and the enforcement of current related ordinances in efforts to fulfill Master Plan recommendations.

- Planning and Zoning Administrator Blaine DeGrave discussed the Master Plan and connectivity of the sidewalks in the City of Escanaba. Mr. DeGrave and the Planning Commission were looking for direction from City Council to what extent do they want them to enforce the sidewalks and ordinances.

- Council Member Beauchamp discussed his personal experience when he was told he had two weeks to get sidewalks in and the city went ahead and did it and sent him a bill. Mr. Beauchamp said “I am not sure why we haven’t been enforcing this all these years, but we have a lot of ordinances that have been enforced, others that haven’t. Enforce it. Start enforcing it.”
- Vice Chairperson (Planning Commission) Christine Williams spoke about continually improving the ability of people to be mobile in the community will only enhance everyone’s lives within the City of Escanaba.
- Planning Commission Secretary James Hellerman discussed the impact it will make on the people living in older homes that only have three weeks to install a sidewalk. Along with the current utility tax hikes it puts a financial burden on the homeowners. He agrees with putting new sidewalks in, but believes there should be a notice given to the homeowner with enough time.
- Planning Commissioner Stephen Davis suggested we explore more economical ways to implement the enforcement of sidewalks. Mr. Davis suggests pre-casting the sidewalks. You can make them 12 months out of the year in house. This will streamline the process and also be a cost saving solution.
- Planning Commissioner Brian Black discussed the financing option for the homeowners. Mr. Black questioned if the City would be able to withstand the financial burden of the upfront costs associated with financing the sidewalk enforcement.
- City Manager Patrick Jordan felt that increasing the access to sidewalks will be a great benefit to the City of Escanaba. Mr. Jordan feels that working with one contractor will be an economical benefit to the overall costs to the homeowner.
- Mayor Marc Tall suggested that the Planning Commission come up with a plan and a timeline. Then schedule another Joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting and address the plan and implementation.

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

William A. Gasman said “we can come up with all the ordinances we want in the world, but if we don’t have anyone there to enforce them...they’re probably not going to work.” (Zoning Enforcement Administrator) Blaine DeGrave is only one person and he is already being pulled in many different directions. Mr. Gasman feels Blaine needs help in order to enforce these ordinances properly. Mr. Gasman suggests that when we do enforce these jobs that we have someone follow up with the workmanship of the job when completed.

Kelli Van Ginhoven discussed how her family is looking to purchase a home in the City of Escanaba. Kelli feels that it's almost impossible for one person to keep up with sidewalk and blight ordinances, and all the other enforcements, Blaine (DeGrave) needs help. She would like everyone to have to follow the same set of rules when it comes to enforcement.

Helene Tebear suggested a needle exchange, methadone clinic, and a rehab in the City to help with the drug crisis. Mrs. Tebear said "prison doesn't work".

### **COMMISSION/STAFF COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Hearing no further business or public comment, the meeting adjourned at 6: 40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil DeMay  
City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Marc. D. Tall, Mayor