



# MINUTES

## REGULAR COUNCIL Meeting

6:30 PM - Tuesday, February 7, 2023  
Council Chambers

The REGULAR COUNCIL of the City of Ypsilanti was called to order on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, at 6:30 PM, in the Council Chambers, with the following members present:

**PRESENT:** Council Member Jennifer Symanns (6:37), Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon, Mayor Nicole Brown, Council Member Desirae Simmons, Council Member Evan Sweet (6:34), Council Member Roland Tooson, and Council Member Michelle King

**ABSENT:** None

### I CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm

### II ROLL CALL

### III PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- a) I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### IV AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as amended

Change: Council Member King moved, seconded by Council Member Simmons to reconsider Resolution No. 2023-011B.

### V CLOSED SESSION - 6:30 - 7:00 PM

- a) Closed Session to discuss negotiations of a collective bargaining unit - MCL 15.268 (c)

**Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon moved, seconded by Council Member Roland Tooson, to adjourn to Closed Session at 6:33 pm**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Roland Tooson
<b>AYES:</b>	Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Jennifer Symanns and Evan Sweet

- b) **Council member Simmons moved, seconded by Council Member Symanns to reconvene the meeting at 7:21 pm.  
On a voice vote, the motion carried.**

## **VI PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES)**

Two members of the public spoke.

## **VII PRESENTATIONS**

- a) Audit Presentation - Dan Merritt and Daniel Clark, Rehmann

## **VIII RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS**

- a) Resolution No. 2023-013, approving stated policy and federal guidelines for the Tax Board of Review in granting or denying exemptions.

### **RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

***WHEREAS*** the adoption of guidelines for poverty exemptions is required of the City Council; and

***WHEREAS*** the principal residence of persons, who the Assessor and Board of Review determines by reason of poverty to be unable to contribute to the public charge, is eligible for exemption in part from taxation under Public Act 390 of 1994 (MCL 211.7u); and

***WHEREAS***, pursuant to PA 390 of 1994, the City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County adopts the following guidelines for the Board of Review to implement.

**The Board of Review shall use the following guidelines to determine if a property owner qualifies for a poverty exemption from property taxes:**

**Exemptions will be granted to owners of homesteads only. Property must be granted at least a 50% homestead exemption from the State of Michigan.**

**Per, MCL 211.7u(3), the application for consideration must be received by the Assessor's Office at least one day prior to the last session of the Board of Review. The application can be made by mail, if received one day prior to the last session of the Board of Review.**

**All applicants must file a claim with the Board of Review on a form prescribed by the State Tax Commission. The application must be filled out in its entirety and all requested documentation must be attached. If an area does not apply to the applicant, "N/A" must be used. If the application is not complete or requested documentation is not included, the Board of Review will deny the exemption. All pages included with this application must be returned when the application is submitted for review.**

**Per MCL 211.7u(7), a person who files a claim for Poverty exemption IS NOT prohibited from also appealing the assessment on the property to the Board of Review in the same year.**

**The poverty threshold for eligibility for a poverty exemption is a figure which is equal to the U.S. Department of HUD State of Michigan for the previous calendar year. To be eligible for a poverty exemption from property taxes, the income of the property owner (household) must be less than the poverty threshold for the number of persons within the household.**

**All income and assets for persons in the household are reported in accordance with a form prescribed by the State Tax Commission.**

- a. **Per MCL 211.7u(2)(b), federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence must be included with the application including any property tax credit returns. The tax returns may be from the current or preceding tax year.**

**A completed signed copy of each of the following should be submitted:**

1. **The most recent Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit (MI 1040 CR).**
  2. **The most recent Federal Income Tax Return (1040) if you are required to file federal income tax.**
  3. **The most recent Federal Income Tax Return (1040) for all other occupants of your home.**
- a. **If any person in the household is not required to file federal or state tax returns, the included affidavit, form 4988, must be completed by each person that does not file taxes.**
  - b. **The most recent statement for all bank accounts, investments, IRAs, CDs, 401Ks, money market, annuities, etc. The statement submitted must be complete with no missing pages and submitted for all persons residing in the home.**
  - c. **Proof of income/assets from the Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration, Medicare, Medicaid, Bridge Card, and any College/University scholarships for all persons residing in the home.**
  - d. **The most recent mortgage statement of the primary residence under review, including any reverse mortgages.**
  - e. **If primary residence being sought for exemption was purchased within the past two years of this application, homeowner's closing statements must be submitted with application.**
  - f. **Maximum total allowed assets, including amounts in banking/investment accounts may not exceed the amount of the federal poverty guideline for the number of persons in the household. ~~Maximum total allowed liquid assets, specifically amounts in banking/investment accounts may not exceed the amount of projected 2023 taxes PLUS 50% for the entire household.~~ The Asset Level does not include the primary residence for which exemption is being sought. It does include, but is not limited to:**
  - g. **A second home, additional land not associated with the primary residence, or other buildings other than the primary residence being sought for exemption.**
  - h. **Vehicles and other recreational vehicles such as motor homes, campers, ATVs, boats, and motorcycles. Exclude standard mode of transportation.**
  - i. **Jewelry, antiques, artwork, equipment, and other personal property of value.**

- j. **Bank accounts, stocks, bonds, and investments. This also includes the money received from the sale of stocks, bonds, investments, cars, and houses unless a person is in the specific business of selling such property.**
- k. **Withdrawals of bank accounts and borrowed money.**
- l. **Gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, and one-time insurance payments.**
- m. **Food or housing received in lieu of wages and the value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms.**
- n. **Federal non-cash benefits programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and school lunches.**
- o. **The total interest income in all accounts (checking, savings, CDs, IRAs, 401Ks, money market, annuities, etc.)**
- p. **The applicant shall not have ownership interest in any real estate other than the primary residence being considered for exemption.**
- q. **Applicants that meet the income and asset qualifications will have the taxable value reduced by 50% for the current year.**
- r. **Poverty exemptions shall be granted for one year only. The property owner must apply every year to receive an exemption.**

<b>Number In Household</b>	<b>Home Income Limits</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>\$ <del>24,750</del><u>20,000</u></b>
<b>2</b>	<b>\$ <del>28,300</del><u>20,000</u></b>
<b>3</b>	<b>\$ <del>31,850</del><u>23,030</u></b>
<b>4</b>	<b>\$ <del>35,350</del><u>27,750</u></b>
<b>5</b>	<b>\$ <del>38,200</del><u>32,470</u></b>
<b>6</b>	<b>\$ <del>41,050</del><u>37,190</u></b>
<b>7</b>	<b>\$ <del>43,850</del><u>41,910</u></b>
<b>8</b>	<b>\$ <del>46,700</del><u>46,630</u></b>
<b><u>per each additional person</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 4,720</u></b>

**The City of Ypsilanti Poverty Exemption Guidelines and Application will be updated annually with the current year Poverty Income Guidelines as established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services without further resolutions. If alternative guidelines are adopted by this governing body a new resolution will be required.**

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED* that the Board of Review shall follow the above stated policy and federal guidelines in granting or denying an exemption.**

**Council Member Evan Sweet moved, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon, to amend Resolution No. 2023-013, by removing the cap, or any**

**amount of liquid assets and add standard mode of transportation to exclusions.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Evan Sweet
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

**Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon moved, seconded by Council Member Evan Sweet, to amend Resolution No. 2023-013 by set the asset value for one and two person households at \$20,000 and set three person through eight person households at the federal guidelines.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Evan Sweet
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

**Council Member Jennifer Symanns moved, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon, to approve Resolution No. 2023-013 as amended**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Jennifer Symanns
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

- b) Resolution No. 2023-014, approving the minutes of January 24, 2023.

**Council Member Roland Tooson moved, seconded by Council Member Jennifer Symanns, to approve Resolution No. 2023-014  
RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

**THAT the minutes of January 24, 2023 City Council Meeting be approved.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Roland Tooson
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Jennifer Symanns
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

- c) Resolution No. 2023-015, rescinding Resolution No. 2022-001A, requiring face masks be worn at all public meetings.

**Council Member Jennifer Symanns moved, seconded by Council Member Roland Tooson, to approve Resolution No. 2023-015  
RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

**Whereas, public entities returned to in-person meetings beginning on January 1, 2022; and**

**Whereas, at that time the Delta variant, a very contagious form of COVID-19, was widely spreading throughout Washtenaw County; and**

**Whereas, in the attempt to hold meetings as safely as possible, City Council continued to provide a virtual presence for its meetings and for all city boards and commissions, as well as approving Resolution No. 2022-001A, which required facemasks for all those in attendance; and**

**Whereas, the CDC currently rates Washtenaw County's Community Level at low risk of infection of COVID-19, and cases have been minimal in the county since July of this past year; and**

**Whereas, widely available vaccines and boosters combat the risk of transmission of COVID-19, and are the greatest defense against exposure.**

**Now Therefor Be it Resolved, that the City Council of the City of Ypsilanti, hereby rescind Resolution No. 2022-001A and remove the mask requirement for public meetings.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Jennifer Symanns
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Roland Tooson
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

d) Resolution No. 2023-016, approving the City Council Goals for Fiscal Year 23-24.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon moved, seconded by Council Member Michelle King, to approve Resolution No. 2023-016**

**RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

**WHEREAS, in January of 2023, the city council engaged in goal setting and budget prioritization exercises with the valuable assistance from facilitator Sharonda Simmons and city administration; and**

**WHEREAS, Ms. Simmons prepared five strategic goals which outlines the results of the city council's goal setting sessions; and**

**WHEREAS, during the three goal session meetings; City Council, City Administration, and the facilitator developed five strategic goals:**

**Strategic Goal 1: Retain and Attract Staff**

***Retain and attract staff by ensuring they have the tools necessary to do their jobs well and by providing performance incentives***

**Strategic Goal 2: Community Mental Health**

***Identify community partnerships to achieve the goal of a regional non-emergency response plan and facilitate the creation of a response team***

**Strategic Goal 3: Community Engagement**

**Engage our residents through commissions, neighborhood hubs, communications, outreach tools, events and activities to sustain our community**

**Strategic Goal 4: Invest in Infrastructure**

*Invest in infrastructure to enhance community pride and ensure those that live, play, and work may do so safely*

**Strategic Goal 5: Revenue Generation and Housing**

*Generate revenue to provide adequate city services and examine different housing opportunities to meet a multigenerational need and economic need equitably.*

**WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 5.02 of the Ypsilanti city charter, the city council desires to adopt goals, objectives, and budget priorities for 2022-2023 to provide the necessary direction to the City Manager for allocation of resources for FY 2022-2023 proposed budgets.**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF YPSILANTI that the Ypsilanti city council does hereby adopt the Ypsilanti City Council 2022-2023 Goal-Setting Report as the city council's goals, objectives, and budget priorities for FY 2022-2023.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Ypsilanti city council does hereby direct the City Manager to consider these adopted goals and objectives as priorities during the preparation of the FY 2022-2023 budget in accordance with Section 5.02 of the Ypsilanti city charter.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Michelle King
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

- e) Resolution No. 2023-017, approving the purchase of packer truck for the environmental services division of DPS.

**Council Member Evan Sweet moved, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon, to approve Resolution No. 2023-017**

**RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

**Whereas, the collection of curbside recycling and yard waste is an ongoing and important service offered to residents in the City of Ypsilanti; and,**

**Whereas, an environmental dump truck is vital to the necessary to collect recycling and yard waste; and,**

**Whereas, the City Council of the City of Ypsilanti had allocated funds in the FY 2019-2020 budget for this purchase; and,**

**Whereas, the purchase price of the vehicle is more than the originally budgeted amount;**

**Whereas, the remainder of the purchase price can be drawn from current year environmental motorpool capital;**

**Now therefore be it resolved that that the City of Ypsilanti approves the purchase from Wolverine Freightliner Eastside, Inc. in the amount totaling \$355,845.00 to be expended from the appropriate environmental motorpool capital accounts, with any change orders to be approved by the City Manager.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Evan Sweet
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

- f) Resolution No. 2023-018, approving an amendment to the YDDA Administrative Services Contract of 2022.

**Council Member Roland Tooson moved, seconded by Council Member Jennifer Symanns, to approve Resolution No 2023-018  
RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

**WHEREAS, The City seeks to provide Executive Director and administrative services to the Ypsilanti DDA; and**

**WHEREAS, the Ypsilanti DDA seeks to enter into an Administrative Services Contract  
for the services of the City; and**

**WHEREAS, The City of Ypsilanti approves of the use of City staff for a 24 month  
contract for services to the Ypsilanti DDA with compensation; and**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ypsilanti City Council directs the Mayor  
and City Clerk to enter the Administrative Services Contract as provided for 24 months to staff the Executive Director and administrative services of the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Roland Tooson
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Jennifer Symanns
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

- g) Reconsider Resolution No. 2023-011B, approving a salary increase for the City Manager. (added)

**RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:**

**WHEREAS, the City Council has evaluated the City Manager for their performance; and**



**WHEREAS, the employee was rated highly in their performance review; and**

**WHEREAS, the employee's salary will increase by ~~3%~~2%.**

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council approve the above salary increase effective retroactively to the date of employee evaluation.**

**Council Member Michelle King moved, seconded by Council Member Desirae Simmons, to reconsider Resolution No. 2023-2023-011B**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Michelle King
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Desirae Simmons
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King

**Council Member Desirae Simmons moved, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon, to amend Resolution No. 2023-011B, by decrease the salary increase to 2%**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Desirae Simmons
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro-Tem Steven Wilcoxon
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, and Michelle King
<b>NAYS:</b>	Nicole Brown and Roland Tooson

**Council Member Michelle King moved, seconded by Council Member Desirae Simmons, to approve Resolution No. 2023-001B as amended**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Michelle King
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Desirae Simmons
<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King
<b>NAYS:</b>	Steven Wilcoxon

## **IX BOARD AND COMMISSION - NOMINATIONS**

### **a) Arts Commission - (Reappointment)**

Aaron Seagraves - (Exp. 2/1/2026)  
913 N Congress  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**Council Member Evan Sweet moved, seconded by Council Member Jennifer Symanns, to suspend Council Rules and immediately reappoint the applicant**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CARRIED.</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Council Member Evan Sweet
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Council Member Jennifer Symanns

<b>AYES:</b>	Jennifer Symanns, Steven Wilcoxon, Nicole Brown, Desirae Simmons, Evan Sweet, Roland Tooson, and Michelle King
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## **X BOARD AND COMMISSION - LIAISON REPORTS**

1. Police Advisory Commission. - None
2. Human Relations Commission. - None
3. Arts Commission. - Council Member Sweet stated that he has met with the Commission Chair and looks forward in participating in his first meeting.
4. Parks and Recreation Commission. - None
5. Sustainability Commission. - Council Member Simmons stated she met with the chair about the potential of the city applying for a grant.
6. Historic District Commission. - None
7. Planning Commission. - None
8. Zoning Board of Appeals - None

## **XI LIAISON REPORTS**

1. SEMCOG Update - None
2. Washtenaw Area Transportation Study - None
3. Urban County - Mayor Brown stated that she went through the new member training, and discussed potential programs for HVAC for residents of the county.
4. Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority - Mayor Brown stated that Council just approved the administrative services contract and the next meeting the aboard will discuss landscape agreement and the judging of the storefront competition.
5. Friends of Rutherford Pool - Mayor Pro-Tem Wilcoxon stated the Friends group is still trying to secure a grant to resurface the pool, and ran into an issue with the vendor raising their fees.
6. Bicentennial Committee - Council Member sweet stated the Committee discussed the creation of a book for the bicentennial. The Committee also discussed logistics and proposals that will be coming to Council.

## **XII COUNCIL PROPOSED BUSINESS**

### **a) Tooson**

1. Acknowledged Black History Month.

### **b) Syamns**

1. None

### **c) Sweet**

1. Stated the county provides a weatherization program, and is amending the income thresholds. He will forward this information to Council to share with the public.
2. Thanked Human Resources Director DuJuan Fisher for his service and wished him well on his future endeavors.

### **d) Wilcoxon**

1. Stated he toured the DPS Yard and saw many things that need to be addressed. He stated Council tries to address things to ensure public safety, but also need to do more to ensure employee safety.

e) **Simmons**

1. The daytime warming center is having issues with the Housing Access for Washtenaw County (HAWC) call center, which is not user friendly and people are often disconnected prior to receiving needed information. She asked for an update from staff, and if there is a way to know how many people haven't received services as a result.
2. She asked for clarification on the mapping proposed for the public to check on permit statuses and enforcement.
3. Stated that police ticketing had increased in the month of January and asked for information as to why.
4. She provided accolades for the Department of Public Services for their quickness in removing the snow during the recent storm.
5. Her first Ward meeting went well, and she received some great information from the public.
6. She expressed general appreciation for all of city staff.
7. She will be bringing forward resolutions regarding unions during the meeting on the 21st.
8. She stated there is some tenant rights issues occurring in the city, and mentioned there is potential funding the city could apply for to support right to counsel efforts.
9. She asked who would be interested in assisting her in designing a community resource fair.

f) **King**

1. Thanked Mr. Osler and remembers hearing his father's song and will work to see that it is recognized.
2. She asked how the city recognizes Black History Month.
3. Read allowed a proclamation for former City Council Member Kittie Wilson.

**XIII COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

1. Stated the the Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra will have their next performance at Lincoln Consolidated Schools and recommended people attend.

**XIV COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

1. The City Manager stated that there was seven denials for marijuana facilities based of Chapter 7, and five appealed. The date of the appeal will be February 28, 2023.

**XV COMMUNICATIONS**

**XVI PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES)**

**None**

**XVII REMARKS FROM THE MAYOR**

**XVIII ADJOURNMENT**

- a) Resolution No. 2023-019, adjourning the City Council Meeting.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:47 pm**

- b)** Please click [here](#) to access the City Council Contact Form. This form can be used to submit any comments/concerns you might have about this agenda.