

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes October 11, 2022

Commissioners Present

Robert Wesley, Chair Carol-Anne Blower, Vice-Chair Lynn Sorenson, Secretary Harry Ryan Leora Campbell Robert Jewell

Staff Present

Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development William Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator Joanne Gurley, Assistant City Attorney Jonathon Mateen, Planner I Max Lester, Planner I

Absent:

April Cook-Hawkins

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wesley called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was held both in-person in the Council Chambers and via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

Roll Call: Commissioner Ryan: appearing in-person Commissioner Campbell: appearing virtually from Flint, MI Commissioner Blower: appearing in-person

Commissioner Jewell: appearing in-person Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent Commissioner Sorenson: appearing in-person Chairperson Wesley: appearing in-person

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Wesley asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Sorenson motioned to accept the agenda as amended. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion.

M/S – Sorenson/Campbell Unanimously carried by voice vote



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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Commissioner Sorenson noted a spelling error on Page 5.

Commissioner Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes of October 11, 2022 as corrected. Commissioner Sorenson supported this motion.

Roll Call: Commissioner Ryan: yes Commissioner Campbell: yes Commissioner Blower: yes Commissioner Jewell: yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent Commissioner Sorenson: yes Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Campbell/Sorenson 6 yes – 0 no – 1 absent *The motion carried.*

PUBLIC FORUM:

Beverly Brown spoke in opposition of Holistic Vibes Flint, LLC at 2849 Miller Rd. Ms. Brown voiced concerns of the proximity of the location to multiple schools as well as the number of existing marihuana retail in the area. Ms. Brown stated that she believes a marihuana dispensary at this location would disrupt the neighborhood and be a bad influence for the kids that live and go to school there.

Robert Brown spoke about concerns of property that he purchased changing zoning classifications to 'green zones' and made inquiry about rezoning the properties. Mr. Brown stated his desire to use these properties for businesses. Mr. Brown asked that the two properties maintain their current zoning while he files for rezoning.

Kristen Owen spoke on Holistic Vibes Flint, LLC at 2849 Miller Rd. Ms. Owen expressed frustration that the matter will be postponed. Ms. Owen asked for more information on the status of the case and the reason for postponing. Chairperson Wesley stated that it was not postponed, and action will be taken. Ms. Owen stated she received an email from Suzanne Wilcox that the case would be postponed and that she relayed this information to fifteen people that were planning on appearing at the meeting. Ms. Wilcox responded that it was her understanding the case was to be postponed and an administrative hearing set sometime in December. Chairperson Wesley confirmed this is correct. Ms. Owen stated that she believed the case had already been under an administrative hearing and asked what that means. Chairperson Wesley answered that an administrative hearing is like court proceedings where the license holder can bring witnesses in support of their position and that there has not yet been an administrative hearing. Ms. Wilcox added that she is not sure the letters regarding Holistic Vibes that were in the commissioners' packets are fully compiled. Chairperson Wesley responded that they just need to be included in the packet for the meeting of the administrative hearing.



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Loyst Fletcher spoke in opposition to Holistic Vibes Flint, LLC at 2849 Miller Rd., Mr. Fletcher stated it does not make sense to have a marihuana dispensary in the Woodcroft Estate area. Mr. Fletcher said it is destructive to their properties and asked the application to be rejected.

Commissioner Jewell speaking to Chairperson Wesley, stated that it is his understanding that there is no application pending for Holistic Vibes Flint, LLC and the case reviews and administrative hearing are a measure of review of what already exists.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

PC 22-14: ORP, LLC requests a Group F Class A Special Regulated Use Permit for a medical marihuana grow facility at 2905 Davison Rd. (PID # 41-04-352-019).

Mr. Vandercook read the staff report and recommended approval.

Chairperson Wesley asked if the applicant was present. Mr. Vandercook answered that the applicant is stuck in traffic and in the meantime Debora Best was present. Commissioner Jewell expressed the requirement for a notarized letter be provided for a designated individual speaking on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Vandercook recommended delaying the case until later in the meeting. Chairperson Wesley moved the case down the agenda.

This case resumed following SPRs.

Mr. Vandercook asked if he should read the recommendation again. Commissioner Jewell suggested that Mr. Vandercook reread the recommendation. Mr. Vandercook read the recommendation from the staff report.

Jacob Best spoke for ORP, LLC, stating that they are requesting a Class A Medical Grow license for 500 plants, noting plans to expand as the company grows.

Commissioner Blower asked which building is being looked at specifically. Mr. Best answered that it is the middle building between the bank and the epoxy center. Commissioner Blower asked if it is the main PrintComm building. Mr. Best answered that it was not, their building is the small building in the parking lot.

Commissioner Blower noted that with the understanding that all locational standards have been met, the area is highly residential. Commissioner Blower asked what would or would not be done in respect of the residents who walk in the area regarding visibility and security measures. Mr. Best answered that they would have minimal signage identifying the building, the operations are all indoors, and a security firm has been contracted to provide guards on-site during off-peak hours when staff is not in the building. Mr. Best added that they will not have any customer traffic because the product will be



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sold wholesale.

Commissioner Jewell asked for an explanation of the building and layout. Mr. Best described the layout of the building, discussing where locked doors, the vault, access hallway, the wet wall, decontamination area, grow rooms, trimming room, drying room, and vegetation rooms are located. Mr. Best added that the back half of the property was being used as a garage for auto repair and has high ceilings and will be Phase 2 of their plan. For the time being the garage area is an exit hallway.

Commissioner Jewell asked for an explanation of staffing. Mr. Best stated they currently have himself and his two business partners as well as a hired botanist. Mr. Best stated he and his business partners will maintain and trim the plants, with plans to hire additional trimmers if the help is needed.

Commissioner Jewell asked about any outreach for neighbors be they nearby businesses or residents. Mr. Best answered that they worked with the neighboring bank to repair the fence that was on the bank's property. Mr. Best said that they are working with the owners of the PrintComm building whom they purchased the property from, to keep the lot cleared of snow, adding that landscaping is relatively simple as there is not much green space. Mr. Best stated there is no one across the street and they have not had cause to talk to the larger company behind them.

Commissioner Ryan asked if there are any residential buildings near the property. Mr. Best stated that he believed there were residences on the other side of Dort Hwy. On the other side of the PrintComm building there is another driveway, then a set of railroad tracks, and then residences start appearing. Commissioner Ryan asked if they have talked to the residents. Mr. Best said they have not.

Commissioner Ryan asked if they knew what type of ventilation system they would use. Mr. Best answered that they have a meeting with their architects Thursday to finalize the HVAC system, adding that they have two plans in place with different budgets. Mr. Best stated that the system the architect is recommending is self-sustaining and uses UV light to clean air both in and out of the rooms.

Commissioner Ryan asked about heat control procedures. Mr. Best answered that the HVAC system is supposed to accommodate an even room temperature, adding that they will use LED lights which will assist in heat control.

Commissioner Jewell said that some of the questions may pertain more to the Site Plan Review but are helpful for ensuring all aspects are addressed. Commissioner Jewell added that including rendering of any proposed signage in the site plan would be helpful.

Commissioner Blower added that her concern for nearby residents was for those on the other side of the railroad tracks who walk to businesses along Dort Hwy.

Commissioner Campbell asked if the bank Mr. Best is referring to is the Dort Financial Credit Union. Mr. Best answered that it is, and he was using the terms interchangeably. Commissioner Campbell also



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asked about odor mitigation. Mr. Best answered that they have plans to have air scrubbers in each of the rooms filter odors in addition to the HVAC cleaning systems.

Mr. Vandercook added that any complaints of odors should be directed to EGLE.

Commissioner Blower asked if the application is for a medical marihuana facility, Mr. Best confirmed. Chairperson Wesley asked if it was for 500 plants, Mr. Best confirmed.

Jonathon Mateen read a question from Attorney Gurley asking Mr. Vandercook if ORP properly labeled the disabled parking spaces on their diagram. Mr. Vandercook confirmed they did, it is located near the entrance of the building. Mr. Vandercook added that once this comes to Site Plan Review the site plans provided to commissioners will be much larger and easier to read.

Chairperson Wesley asked if there was anyone in the public wishing to speak in opposition of **PC 22-14:** ORP, LLC requests a Group F Class A Special Regulated Use Permit for a medical marihuana grow facility at 2905 Davison Rd. (PID # 41-04-352-019).

Kristen Owen stated she is against a marihuana facility of that sort being so close to a residential area, adding concerns of odor and the number of dispensaries in the city.

Beverly Brown spoke in opposition, agreeing with the previous speaker that there are too many dispensaries in the city already.

Chairperson Wesley asked if there was anyone in the public wishing to speak in favor of **PC 22-14**: ORP, LLC requests a Group F Class A Special Regulated Use Permit for a medical marihuana grow facility at 2905 Davison Rd. (PID # 41-04-352-019). No one spoke.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there have been any other communications, emails, phone calls, or inquiries to staff regarding this request. Mr. Vandercook answered that there have been no other communications.

Commissioner Blower made a motion to approve **PC 22-14:** ORP, LLC requests a Group F Class A Special Regulated Use Permit for a medical marihuana grow facility at 2905 Davison Rd. (PID # 41-04-352-019) due to the fact the applicant has met the locational standards and questions asked tonight. Commissioner Ryan supported the motion.

Chairperson Wesley asked if there was any more discussion.

Commissioner Blower replied that she believed the Commission will have more questions at the Site Plan Review process.

Commissioner Jewell said he is in support of the motion; the locational requirements of the ordinance



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have been met and the presentation given by the owner satisfied his concerns. Chairperson Wesley added that this will go to City Council for approval as well.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: yes Commissioner Campbell: yes Commissioner Blower: yes Commissioner Jewell: yes Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent Commissioner Sorenson: yes Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Blower/Ryan 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent *The motion carried.*

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

SPR 22-011: Karam Shango requests a Site Plan Review at 2102 S. Dort Hwy., Flint MI 48507 (PID # 41-20-226-041).

Mr. Vandercook read the staff report and recommended approval.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there were any additional clarifications. Mr. Vandercook stated on page C6 there is a rendering of the canopy. Commissioner Jewell asked if the building would remain the same. Mr. Vandercook confirmed.

Rade Beslac spoke on behalf of the applicant.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there was confirmation from the applicant regarding the presentation. Mr. Vandercook stated he spoke with the applicant that day who asked for Mr. Beslac to speak due to illness.

Mr. Beslac explained that a company of gas stations are working with liquor store owners to collocate and offset new competition from party stores. Mr. Beslac stated they wanted to add four gas pumps and a canopy as well as a fresh coat of paint on the building. Mr. Beslac also stated they wish to close off a driveway on Dort Hwy, adding that the project is expected to take 6-8 months to complete.

Chairperson Wesley asked if the canopy would be facing Dort Hwy. Mr. Beslac stated it would be tucked into the corner near the intersection.

Mr. Vandercook stated the closed entrance was required by the City Engineer due to limited sight distance. Mr. Vandercook added that cars cannot spill over onto City property due to Fire Code and if this occurs in the future it may be an issue for the property owner. Mr. Vandercook added that this is not a problem now, but it should be noted.



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Chairperson Wesley asked where customers coming inside for liquor or chicken are meant to park. Mr. Beslac stated on the North or East sides of the building.

Commissioner Ryan asked about the other entrances to the site. Mr. Beslac stated the laundromat has their own entrance in addition to another entrance that will remain on Dort Hwy to the site. Additionally, the laundromat and the liquor store both have an entrance on Lippincott Blvd.

Commissioner Jewell asked for lighting details on the site. Mr. Beslac mentioned the recessed lights in the rendering, adding that they kept them to a maximum of ten as they are at the corner of the intersection. On the building the existing lights are planned to be removed and replaced with lights that closer match the canopy.

Commissioner Jewell asked about landscaping on the site. Mr. Beslac answered that they do not have much green space along Dort Hwy., but they do along Lippincott Blvd., adding that landscaping was clustered here and it also acts as a screen for residential districts further down Lippincott Blvd.

Commissioner Blower made a motion to approve SPR 22-011: Karam Shango requests a Site Plan Review at 2102 S. Dort Hwy., Flint MI 48507 (PID # 41-20-226-041). Commissioner Ryan supported the motion.

Roll Call: Commissioner Ryan: yes Commissioner Campbell: yes Commissioner Blower: yes Commissioner Jewell: yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent Commissioner Sorenson: yes Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Blower/Ryan 6 yes, 0 no, 1 absent *The motion carried.*

<u>CASE REVIEW:</u> Applicant Case Review

Operation Grow, dba butter – 1110 Tower St.

Mr. Vandercook stated the four medical grow licenses that were to be administratively approved are still waiting on two notarized documents to be sent as requested by legal. The five adult-use grow licenses are waiting on the four medical grow licenses to be approved. Chairperson Wesley postponed this case to the next regular meeting.



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Green Buddha III, LLC – 408 S. Center Rd.

Mr. Vandercook stated this case is still under review. Chairperson Wesley postponed this case to the next regular meeting.

Holistic Vibes Flint, LLC - 2849 Miller Rd.

Chairperson Wesley stated there have been some alleged violations and read P. Denial and Revocation from §50-183 Marihuana Facilities Opt-In Ordinance. Chairperson Wesley said the administrative hearing is being set for December 13, 2022.

Commissioner Jewell asked if the purpose of the administrative hearing is to determine if the alleged violations exist. Chairperson Wesley confirmed. Commissioner Jewell said that they were not reviewing any application but reviewing the present status of the license and determining accordingly. Chairperson Wesley confirmed.

City Council Action on Planning Commission Recommendations, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Ms. Wilcox said that there have been no new City Council actions on Planning Commission recommendations since the last meeting. Ms. Wilcox shared that the next item is an update on the zoning code and said she could move forward with that.

Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Update

Mr. Mateen said there are no new updates for the Zoning Board of Appeals, adding that later this month there will be a ZBA Special Meeting on October 27 which will be for a development that will appear before the Planning Commission if they gain approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

REPORTS:

Status of draft Zoning Ordinance, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Ms. Wilcox said that she believes things will be ready for the enactment of the new zoning code on October 29th. ROWE is working on preparing new documents, stating all forms are done and are being edited.

Commissioner Jewell asked when the Planning Commission would receive copies of the new forms, stating these have been requested in past meetings. Mr. Vandercook said it was his understanding that staff would have the final versions by now to be presented at the next meeting. Commissioner Jewell said that in presentations for Redevelopment Ready Communities there has been references to these forms and reiterated that these forms have been requested numerous times. Ms. Wilcox said it is the intent to get the forms to the Planning Commission to be ready for the new zoning ordinance. Ms. Wilcox said these forms will be ready for the next meeting and they can be provided to commissioners earlier. Commissioner Jewell stated that his notes indicate they had talked about the processes, procedures, and forms to be utilized on the enactment of the October 29th new zoning ordinance and being presented these documents.



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Status of Permanent Marihuana Ordinance, JoAnne Gurley, Assistant City Attorney

Attorney Gurley said that City Council approved the Permanent Marihuana Ordinance which will be in alignment with the new zoning codes to be enacted on October 29th. Attorney Gurley added that the last step is the notice of approval has to be published within seven days of approval and she will be working with the Clerk's Office to make sure it is published. Additionally, a copy of everything must go to the airport manager. Chairperson Wesley asked why it must be sent to the airport manager. Attorney Gurley stated that is what is listed in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

Commissioner Jewell expressed thanks to all involved and to the Chairperson.

American Rescue Plan/Capital Improvement Plans, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Ms. Wilcox spoke of the plan given by the mayor to City Council, which is the plan the City Administration is moving forward with and a NOFO is nearly finalized. Ms. Wilcox added that she believed there is a special City Council meeting that has been scheduled to discuss ARPA.

Commissioner Jewell asked when the Planning Commission would receive a briefing on the Master Plan designated focuses and the CIP in relation to the ARP funding. Commissioner Jewell added that over the past several months they have been informed of meetings with both CFOs and that the Master Plan and Capital Improvement Plan will be an integral part of the funding from ARPA and that he has not seen information on this yet. Ms. Wilcox said that she knows with the last CFO this was discussed and information was presented about the Master Plan. Ms. Wilcox added that she understands working with Ernst & Young there was a letter by the Planning Commission to the Finance Department who is coordinating this effort, stating she will reach out to the current CFO and ask for this information. Ms. Wilcox said the CIP is incorporated into the ARP only in as much have been outlined in the CIP, saying this work is underway and is being worked on by ROWE with staff. Individual department meetings are being held to ensure everything is correct. The last CIP is being amended to include new projects and identifying completed projects. Ms. Wilcox said she believes many of the projects have been incorporated into ARPA funding but has not been incorporated into an official CIP as required by the Enabling Act.

Commissioner Jewell reiterated that he does not have information on the Master Plan and CIP and how they tie into ARPA funding.

Planning Commission Vacancies and Expired Terms, Bill Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator

Mr. Vandercook said that staff has met with the City Clerk's office multiple times and have requested an updated ward map but has not yet received one. Mr. Vandercook suggested a letter be drafted to the mayor regarding the vacancies. Ms. Wilcox added that she had a conversation with the Ward 2 councilperson about this vacancy and reported the councilmember was working on identifying an individual and speaking with the mayor about an appointment being made.



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Commissioner Jewell said the Planning Commission is a duly designated governmental body according to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Commissioner Jewell stated that it is the responsibility of the administration to make appointments and that it is his hope that staff has informed the administration of the present status of the Planning Commission, adding that he is not sure if it is appropriate for commissioners to individually say that the Commission needs members. Commissioner Jewell asked what the status is of informing the administration and the mayor of the Planning Commission expired terms and vacancies and what actions they will be taking. Commissioner Jewell shared that people have asked him about the status of the Planning Commission.

Website Update, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Ms. Wilcox said she has been in contact with the website designer, and they were to have a meeting with the Economic Development Department who has been coordinating with the designer and the meeting was cancelled. Ms. Wilcox said they were trying to reschedule for that week. Ms. Wilcox said some documents were added but there are still missing minutes from several years ago. Chairperson Wesley said that he understood the website is not easy to negotiate right now too. Ms. Wilcox said the layout is more difficult to navigate and she is looking to ask if there is a different layout option with easier to read buttons that could be made.

Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC), Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development Ms. Wilcox said she was not sure if Jason Ball was in the meeting tonight, but that he provided a memorandum that she hoped answered questions raised by the Commission. Ms. Wilcox said she could provide some background on the program but anything specific would be better directed to Mr. Ball. Ms. Wilcox said RRC was an agreement the City entered into with the State in 2015 and is a best practices designation that once cities meet several outlined thresholds the designation is received. Being a Redevelopment Ready Community opens doors in potential funding opportunities, technical assistance, etc. and the City of Flint has been close to meeting the thresholds apart from the updated zoning codes. Ms. Wilcox said there is a series of tables and categories of items that are reviewed and if Mr. Ball had not shared that with the Commission it can be made available. Ms. Wilcox said most items are complete aside from a few things like the CIP and the enactment of the new zoning ordinance. Ms. Wilcox said Mr. Ball expects the CIP to be complete by the end of October and the new zoning ordinance will be in effect October 29. The goal is to have a manual of systems, processes, and procedures that is available to Commissioners as well as the public. Ms. Wilcox shared that Mr. Ball believes the City could receive RRC designation by the end of December. Ms. Wilcox said she would defer to Mr. Ball on whether the forms and procedures need to be approved by the Commission, but she expects that the Commission should at least see them and give input.

Commissioner Campbell asked work on RRC has been happening since 2014, adding that she does not remember seeing information on or knowing about the RRC since 2014. Commissioner Campbell asked if her understanding that the Planning Commission is just now being involved in the process is correct. Ms. Wilcox said she could not speak on what happened in 2014 or 2015 when the agreement was signed between Mayor Walling and the MEDC. Ms. Wilcox said that in Planning and Development when she was appointed Director in 2016 there was work underway, but she does not



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know if these were ever presented to the Planning Commission. Ms. Wilcox added that much of the time lapsed was due to items being put on hold pending adoption of the new zoning code. Commissioner Campbell asked if the Planning Commission needed to approve items and who prepared the documents. Ms. Wilcox answered that ROWE prepared the documents in cooperation with the City staff from Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, Ms. Wilcox, and Roy Lash the Lead Planner. Ms. Wilcox said she would defer to Mr. Ball on whether the Commission needs to approve items.

Commissioner Jewell said that the Commission was first brought this information in August where an overview of the RRC program and the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Commission are in this process. Material was presented in the last meeting in September as an add on where material was presented again which mentioned it was requested to be approved by the Commission. In the September meeting it was recommended a presentation be done of an overview of the RRC program, which was given tonight, but also of the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Commission. The memo provided with the documents for this meeting gave links to other resources which can be an information overload. The memo also again makes reference to approval of items by the Planning Commission. Commissioner Jewell expressed the need for general overview including the who, what, how, when, and where as well as the specifics. Commissioner Jewell expressed thanks to Ms. Wilcox for mentioning that there are a cross-section of people working on this process, but from his perspective of August and September is "well this is what we have and do you like it or not like it." Commissioner Jewell noted a comment in the memorandum that says two items awaiting approval were discussed by the Planning Commission and no changes were requested, adding that the reason no changes were requested is because the Commission had asked for additional information on their roles and responsibilities and for an overview. Commissioner Jewell posed why the Planning Commission or a representative was not involved. Commissioner Jewell also posed to planning staff and the Zoning Coordinator if they had input on the process since July. Mr. Vandercook said there had been some meetings with MEDC on an overview of the program and ROWE on the forms and procedures. Commissioner Jewell expressed that typically staff writes a report with a recommendation and that he is at a loss as to why this is coming from Mr. Ball instead. Commissioner Jewell said that he has reviewed these items and that while he believes they are important and need to be done and implemented, ensuring that these procedures are implemented and enforced is a concern.

Chairperson Wesley stated he would be in contact with the Zoning Coordinator to get a date set for Mr. Ball to answer questions on the RRC program.

Educational Update: Rowe Educational Training Session

Mr. Vandercook shared that ROWE has an upcoming presentation. Chairperson Wesley asked to be signed up for the presentation. Commissioner Jewell asked for more information on the presentation. Chairperson Wesley stated the topics deal with appointments to commissions and boards and their responsibilities and the Open Meetings Act. Commissioner Jewell and Commissioner Campbell asked to be registered. Mr. Mateen clarified that the presentation will be on October 19th from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.



RESOLUTIONS:

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT: *M/S – Blower/Campbell Unanimously carried by voice vote.* Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

CITY OF FLINT

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