

MINUTES OF WORK SESSION OF EAST TAWAS CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 20, 2009

Work session called to order by Mayor Bruce Bolen at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the East Tawas City Hall.

Members Present: B. Bolen, L. Bolen, Freel, Klenow, Look and McMurray.
Members Absent: Cano.
Staff Present: City Manager Leslie and Clerk/Treasurer Baker.

Each of the items prioritized by the Council for goals for 2009 were discussed.

Streetscape Project - The project will be finished in late Spring or early Summer. TIFA would like to get the project finished as soon as possible so the interference with downtown businesses is limited. Concerns that need to be addressed include revamping of the ADA ramps and parking in Sawyer Street parking lot. The Authority will be asked to put its plans for completing the project in writing so they can be reviewed by the City Council.

Housing Commission Rehabilitation Project - City Manager Leslie reported that the project is moving forward step by step but he is not sure when implementation will occur.

Economic Development - City Manager Leslie indicated that other entities in the county are working on this issue including Develop Iosco, Inc. and the Chamber of Commerce. Council members did not have any specific ideas but requested that City Manager Leslie keep consideration of economic development in the forefront of all activities. Councilman Freel indicated that he felt that wind energy and other renewable energy sources are interrelated with Economic Development as is the City website. Councilwoman Bolen asked that City Manager Leslie expand his horizons in Economic Development.

Norman's - Working toward a resolution of all of the issues involved with the Norman's Store is a goal for the City Manager and the Council.

Health/Savings Plan - City Manager Leslie will work on options to present to City Council.

Overtime/Scheduling - City Manager Leslie requested that the Mayor appoint a committee to work with him on options.

U.S. 23 Enhancement Project - A preliminary plan was developed by M.C. Smith Associates but the Walkability Audit that was conducted by Dan Burden last Fall brought other designs to light. The possible Infrastructure Stimulus package proposed by President Obama could create an opportunity for redesign of the U.S. 23 corridor from Alabaster to Oscoda. The possibility of a three lane highway would allow for more on-street parking, beautification and increased walkability. A meeting is being scheduled with representatives of all communities from Alabaster Township to Oscoda Township to discuss improvement plans for U.S. 23. City Manager Leslie indicated that it is important to have a design in place for the TEA program in the Fall.

Recycling Program - Work is progressing to get a recycling program underway as soon as possible.

Sanitary Sewer System Planning- Planning is currently underway and will continue to be a topic of discussion at Council meetings.

Snow Removal Policy- City Manager Leslie indicated that based on the amount of snow received so far this winter, the City may need to rethink the whole snow removal process. Questions raised included how much snow do we pick up and from what streets, do we continue to pick up snow from private parking lots and how do we deal with snow and ice on downtown sidewalks. City Manager Leslie was asked to put the current practices for snow removal in writing and indicate his areas of concern. Council members would also like a map of where snow is currently picked up, the cost for snow removal over the past five years and alternatives for what can be done if the snow is not picked up.

Library - Discussion about the library has been put on the back burner. The City will need to look at improvements to the existing library if plans are not made to build a new library. The possibility of a joint library with Tawas City was also raised.

Wind Energy - The City will continue to work on implementing the proper planning and zoning for wind energy and other forms of renewable energy.

Re-evaluation of TIFA - U.S. 23 enhancement would be the next project for TIFA although TIFA funds are very limited.

Website - Councilwoman Bolen suggested that the City check with Tawas Area Schools to see if there are any students who might be willing to make improvements to the City's website.

Mayor Exchange - Council members expressed some interest in making arrangements for a Mayor Exchange this year. Beaverton, Manistee and Essexville have all expressed interest in exchanging with East Tawas.

Sand Pile - Mayor Bolen indicated that the plan is to leave the sand pile at the Community Center site and use the sand as needed.

Work session adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Blinda A. Baker
Clerk/Treasurer