

**MINUTES OF THE BENTON HARBOR CITY COMMISSION MEETING
LULA LEE COMMISSION CHAMBERS
NOVEMBER 16, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Benton Harbor City Commission was called to order by Mayor Hightower at 7:01 p.m. Invocation was given by Ruthie Haralson, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call showed the following members present: Commissioners Adams, Haralson, Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson, Commissioners Henry, Isom, Muhammad and Mayor Hightower. Members Absent: Commissioners Jones (arrived at 7:14 p.m.) and Seats (arrived at 7:15 p.m.). Also present: City Manager Watson and City Clerk Thompson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson and supported by Commissioner Muhammad to approve the agenda as presented carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 2, 2015

A motion was made by Commissioner Haralson and supported by Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson to approve the Regular Minutes of November 2, 2015 with any necessary corrections or deletions. The motion carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

UPDATE – COUNTY COMMISSIONER YARBROUGH

County Commissioner Yarbrough invited all to attend the Holiday Lighting Celebration on Friday, November 20th. She spoke on the Berrien County boards and said that participation is needed on them. She provided a list of demolitions from the Land Bank. She informed everyone that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners accepted its annual budget for 2016 and briefly reported on the various millages.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Emma Kinnard congratulated the winners of the past election. She informed all that her grandson traveled to Australia and won the World's Boxing Championship. She reported on a successful community garden and stated that there is more to come in the upcoming year. She said that she's working on short stories for the youth.

Rod Jennings thanked Ms. Kinnard for all of her efforts and everyone that supported the Benton Harbor football team. He congratulated all of the General Election candidates and expressed his support to the winners.

James Duncan congratulated the winners of the past election. He expressed a concern with the clearing of sidewalks for the youth during the winter season and asked for the plan in doing so.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following Consent Calendar items were presented by City Manager Watson, moved by Commissioner Muhammad and supported by Commissioner Haralson carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

RESOLUTIONS:

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT FOR PARCEL ID #11-53-6180-0026-00-4 (NOAH'S ARK DAY CARE)

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PROCLAMATION OF NOVEMBER 2015 AS NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH

COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager Watson announced the upcoming holiday events. He clarified that it was a water service line repaired on Cherry and Pipestone and not a busted water main. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Adams thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting to see their local elected officials in action. She briefly spoke on the Right to Die and said that people are able to do what they want. She said that hopefully the contractor repaired the interrupted water service line at no cost to the City. She said that it would be nice to help the elderly residents during the winter season as well as get the necessary machinery to clear out the sidewalks.

Commissioner Henry thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting. She said that she's glad the election is over and things will be moving forward in a fast pace. She encouraged citizens to get involved on various boards.

Commissioner Seats thanked citizens for the outstanding turnout at the last election and congratulated those that were victorious. He said that hopefully, Benton Harbor as a City could move forward in a positive direction for the betterment of all. He thanked Noah's Ark Day Care for the service provided to citizens. He spoke on hospice and cautioned everyone to really look into it. He said that 2016 will be a great year for the community.

Commissioner Jones thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. He reported on the veterans that are committing suicide daily. He reflected on the past election and thanked citizens for going out to vote.

Commissioner Muhammad congratulated the Noah's Ark Day Care service providers. He thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting to see their local government in action. He said that there is much reflection that should be done on 2015 and efforts made towards working together for a greater 2016. He spoke on individuals that we loss during the year and encouraged all to be mindful of the importance of life. He congratulated everyone that participated in the democratic process. He urged all to keep the City Council in prayer as everyone comes together to move the City forward.

Commissioner Haralson thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting to see the local government in action and County Commissioner Yarbrough for her updates. She congratulated all elected officials and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Isom thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and congratulated the Noah's Ark Day Care. He said that he doesn't feel like he loss as a result of the election because he gained a lot of knowledge since his tenure on the City Commission. He expressed concerns with illegal activity going on in his neighborhood. He encouraged all to take pride in their community.

Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and Noah's Ark Day Care for providing a service in the City of Benton Harbor. She congratulated all of the participants for taking part in the democratic process and encouraged everyone to continue to get involved in various ways. She spoke on hospice and the services that it provides to comfort families.

Mayor Hightower thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting as well as County Commissioner Yarbrough for her updates. He congratulated Noah's Ark Daycare on its expansion. He stated that it was good to see the hospice and palliative care resolution because of the services that it provides to those in need. He expressed support for the purchase of new trucks and snowplows for the winter. He congratulated everyone in the past election. He briefly reported on his tenure on the City Commission and said that the City is in a better place than it's been in years.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Muhammad and supported by Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson to go into Closed Session to deal with matters related to pending litigation and settlement discussions carried unanimously on the roll call vote.


The regular meeting recessed to go into Closed Session at 7:45 p.m. and reconvened at 8:39 p.m. There was no action as a result of the Closed Session.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.



Kimberly Thompson, City Clerk



James Hightower, Mayor