

**MINUTES OF THE BENTON HARBOR CITY COMMISSION MEETING
LULA LEE COMMISSION CHAMBERS
JANUARY 4, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Benton Harbor City Commission was called to order by Mayor Marcus Muhammad at 7:01 p.m. Invocation was given by Duane L. Seats II, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call showed the following members present: Commissioners Mary Alice Adams, Ruthie Haralson, Mayor Pro-Tem Sharon Henderson, Commissioners Juanita Henry, C.F. Jones, Bryan Joseph, Duane L. Seats II and Mayor Marcus Muhammad. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Darwin Watson, Acting Public Safety Director Daniel McGinnis and City Clerk Kimberly Thompson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 21, 2015

A motion was made by Commissioner Seats and supported by Commissioner Adams to approve the Regular Minutes of December 21, 2015 with any necessary corrections or deletions. The motion carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

KEY TO THE CITY PRESENTATION – COACH ELLIOT UZELAC AND THE 2015 BENTON HARBOR VARSITY FOOTBALL TEAM

Mayor Muhammad presented a Key to the City to Coach Uzelac and the 2015 Benton Harbor Varsity Football Team for a season of excellence and sportsmanship.

Coach Uzelac thanked the City Commission for this recognition. He acknowledged the efforts of the students and encouraged the community to continue supporting them.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

James F.A. Turner of 217 E. Main thanked Mayor Muhammad for his work with the Benton Harbor Area Schools (BHAS) district. He expressed appreciation for the efforts of Coach Uzelac. He briefly reported on the BHAS board meetings. He gave recognition to Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson for receiving her bachelor's degree.

Jerry Edwards of 159 Catalpa, encouraged everyone to support the youth and the 8th grade basketball team. He wished all a Happy New Year.

Rod Jennings of 959 Pavone wished everyone a Happy New Year. He congratulated the newly elected officials and challenged the entire City Commission to be as one. He expressed concerns with the voter turnout for the City. He encouraged all to be a part of the process.

Jerry Price of 575 E. Britain congratulated newly elected officials and expressed appreciation for the manner in which the past election was conducted. He extended his support to the City Commission.

Lue Buchana thanked Geraldine Morris and Emma Kinnard for their efforts. She urged everyone to help the youth in the community.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following Consent Calendar items were presented by City Manager Watson, moved by Commissioner Adams and supported by Mayor Pro-Tem Henderson carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

RESOLUTIONS:

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR PRO-TEM (DUANE L. SEATS II)

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT TO THE SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY (COMMISSIONER ADAMS AS AN ALTERNATE)

COMMUNICATIONS

City Clerk Thompson announced that there are vacancies that exist on various boards.

Acting Public Safety Director McGinnis stated that Friday is the deadline to apply to be a police and/or fire reserve officer.

City Manager Watson wished everyone a Happy New Year. He congratulated Coach Uzelac on the football season. He briefly spoke on the proposed timeline for filling the Commissioner-at-large vacancy and said to let him know if there are any adjustments needed to be made.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Haralson thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and wished all a Happy New Year.

Commissioner Henry thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting. She expressed opposition to the proposed timeline to fill the Commissioner-at-large vacancy and suggested expediting the process.

Commissioner Jones thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. He expressed appreciation for the manner in which the meeting was conducted and the direction that the City is going. He said that there is more work to be done and encouraged everyone to keep moving forward.

Commissioner Henderson thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and encouraged them to get involved with things happening in the community. She cautioned all to be safe during the winter season.

Commissioner Joseph wished everyone a Happy New Year and stated that he's excited to be back on the City Commission. He congratulated Mayor Pro-Tem Seats and Commissioner Adams on their appointments. He cautioned all to be safe.

Commissioner Adams thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting as well as Coach Uzelac for his efforts. She suggested for the School Board and City Commission to partnership and create a foundation for the public schools. She expressed a need for the My Brother's Keeper initiative and Manchester Bidwell.

Mayor Pro-Tem Seats thanked the City Commission for his appointment. He spoke on the youth and the strength of strong parenting and mentoring. He said that Benton Harbor has unique possibilities and great potential to make things better. He expressed a concern with customer service in the Water Department. He suggested implementing a payment plan and an on-line payment option for water customers as well as the creation of a Leak policy. He thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting and Mayor Muhammad for his efforts.

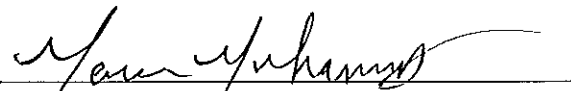
Mayor Muhammad thanked God for making it into 2016. He acknowledged his father, Mr. Johnny Singer. He named the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the standing committees. He thanked everyone for their participation in the food giveaway last month. He said that this City Commission will work in the best interest in serving the people and thanked all for attending tonight's meeting.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.



Kimberly Thompson, City Clerk



Marcus Muhammad, Mayor