

**MINUTES OF THE BENTON HARBOR CITY COMMISSION MEETING
LULA LEE COMMISSION CHAMBERS
MAY 2, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Benton Harbor City Commission was called to order by Mayor Muhammad at 7:03 p.m. Invocation was given by Reverend Willie T. Burton of New Paradise Baptist Church, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call showed the following members present: Commissioners Adams, Haralson, Henderson, Henry, Isom, Mayor Pro-Tem Seats, Commissioner Singleton and Mayor Muhammad. Members Absent: Commissioner Jones. Also present: City Manager Watson, Acting Public Safety Director McGinnis and City Clerk Thompson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Adams and supported by Commissioner Haralson to remove Consent Calendar Items (ORD-ADOPT AN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 44 UTILITIES & ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE HONORARY STREET NAME CHANGE OF RIVERVIEW DRIVE IN HONOR OF JAMES "BABE" COUVELIS) from the Consent Calendar and entertaining them separately carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 18, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Singleton and supported by Commissioner Adams to approve the Regular Minutes of April 18, 2016 with any necessary corrections or deletions. The motion carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Dorothy Pinkney of 1940 Union gave an update on her husband, Reverend Edward Pinkney's incarceration. She announced that his case will be heard in the Court of Appeals on Wednesday, May 11th and encouraged all to attend.

Pati Heinz of 1452 E. Downing expressed support for Reverend Pinkney.

Emma Kinnard of 270 E. May Street expressed support for Reverend Pinkney. She encouraged everyone to participate at the rallies for justice on the second Tuesday of each month. She also expressed a need for the City to clean the alleys.

Reverend Willie T. Burton of 837 Broadway commended the City Commission for the work being done. He agreed that the City should clean the alleys and ticket others thereafter for additional trash.

Ralph Crenshaw, Chairman of the Benton Harbor Housing Commission, thanked Commissioner Adams for attending the board meeting and briefly spoke on its accomplishments. He said that the Housing Commission wants to continue working with the City to address issues. He commended the City Commission for its efforts and offered his assistance if needed.

Abisayo Muhammad of 453 Cherry acknowledged justice for Reverend Pinkney. She presented an initiative called Free Kite Flying with Families and encouraged all to participate at the event scheduled for May 14th.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

RESOLUTIONS:

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION (RICKY HILL)

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF REVIEW (RICKY HILL)

SEPARATED RESOLUTIONS

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Seats and supported by Commissioner Adams to **ADOPT AN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 44 UTILITIES**. After discussion, a motion made by Commissioner Adams and supported by Commissioner Henderson **to table this item and send it back to committee for further review carried** unanimously on the roll call vote.

After discussion, a motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Seats and supported by Commissioner Adams to **ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE HONORARY STREET NAME CHANGE OF RIVERVIEW DRIVE IN HONOR OF JAMES "BABE" COUVELIS** **carried** unanimously on the roll call vote.

The family of James "Babe" Couvelis thanked everyone for this honor.

COMMUNICATIONS

Acting Public Safety Director McGinnis gave an update on things happening in the Public Safety Department and stated that a comprehensive plan to address various issues will be forthcoming. He also spoke on the bicycle program for officers.

City Clerk Thompson announced a Planning Commission training session scheduled for Thursday, May 5, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

City Manager Watson informed everyone of the recent passing of Johnie "Foots" Williams and extended condolences to his family. He commended the Public Safety Department for its innovativeness ways to do things. He acknowledged Peter Colovos and Nate of Bud Distributing for donating to the bicycle/bike control initiative.

Nate stated that he's honored to be a part of this and extended his willingness to help.

Peter Colovos commended Acting Public Safety Director McGinnis for his efforts. He expressed support for bicycling patrols in the community.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Haralson thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting to see their local government in action.

Commissioner Henry thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting and urged them to let the City Commission know of things happening. She encouraged participation at the standing committee meetings.

Commissioner Henderson thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting and those that donated to the bicycle program. She suggested doing walks in the wards during the summer so that residents are able to identify their representatives as well as public safety officers. She encouraged everyone to get involved.

Commissioner Singleton thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting. He commended First Lady Muhammad for her efforts. He agreed that the City should clean public alleys and stated that trash left on properties is the owner's responsibility. He reported on the Communications/Public Relations Committee meeting and encouraged everyone to participate at committee meetings.

Commissioner Isom thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting to address their issues and concerns. He commended Mayor Muhammad for conducting a great Citizens Business Forum and Tina Miller for her successful event held last Saturday. He spoke on the urban policy workgroup and thanked members of the City Commission for attending the event in Lansing. He informed everyone that after his follow-up, the street lights in the City has been on consistently for the past two (2) weeks. He thanked Acting Public Safety Director McGinnis for addressing issues in the community. He congratulated Ricky Hill on his appointment to the boards.

Commissioner Adams thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting to see their local elected officials in action. She commended First Lady Muhammad for the initiative that was brought forth. She expressed appreciation to the officers being in the community at a close range to the residents. She expressed support for Reverend Edward and Dorothy Pinkney and extended prayers to them. She also expressed appreciation to the coming together of African American communities and stated that she wished this was being done all across America.

Mayor Pro-Tem Seats thanked Reverend Willie T. Burton for his prayer this evening. He congratulated Ricky Hill on his appointment to various boards. He commended City Manager Watson and Acting Public Safety Director McGinnis for their efforts as well as Mayor Muhammad for his leadership in Lansing. He suggested giving incentives to police officers to purchase homes in the City. He said that Benton Harbor is a great place to reside; however, we must be our brother's keeper. He extended prayers to Reverend Pinkney and stated that there is a greater judge when people are done wrong.

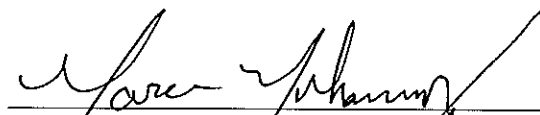
Mayor Muhammad thanked his wife for her efforts with the kite initiative and stated that the youth need to know that the City of Benton Harbor is 62% owner of the airport. He extended prayers to Mrs. Pinkney and stated that Reverend Pinkney has served in the community with both popularity and unpopularity. He continued that with the final analysis, Reverend Pinkney will be brought forth and vindicated. He commended Tina Miller on her event and stated that the media should have covered it. He also congratulated Ricky Hill on his appointment to serve again.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.



Kimberly Thompson, City Clerk



Marcus Muhammad, Mayor