

**MINUTES OF THE BENTON HARBOR CITY COMMISSION MEETING
LULA LEE COMMISSION CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 6, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Benton Harbor City Commission was called to order by Mayor Muhammad at 7:02 p.m. Invocation was given by Deacon Carl Varrie, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call showed the following members present: Commissioners Adams, Haralson, Henderson, Isom, Jones, Singleton and Mayor Muhammad. Members Absent: Commissioner Henry (arrived at 7:06 p.m.) and Mayor Pro-Tem Seats (arrived at 7:23 p.m.). Also present: City Manager Watson and City Clerk Thompson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Adams and supported by Commissioner Haralson to remove Consent Calendar Items (ADOPT RESOLUTIONS APPROVING AN EASEMENT FOR MICHIGAN GAS UTILITY FOR INSTALLATION OF A GAS REGULATOR; THE BERRIEN COUNTY DEMOLITION LIST AND ROOF MASONRY WORK (D.C. BYERS) from the Consent Calendar and entertaining them as separate resolutions carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 15, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Henderson and supported by Commissioner Isom to approve the Regular Minutes of August 15, 2016 with any necessary corrections or deletions. The motion carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 29, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Henderson and supported by Commissioner Adams to approve the Zoning Board of Appeals Minutes of August 29, 2016 with any necessary corrections or deletions. The motion carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Emma Kinnard expressed displeasure in the elected officials' demeanor during the last meeting. She urged the City Commission to be a voice for the residents. She also expressed concerns with the current state of Benton Harbor Area Schools.

Pati Heinz spoke on incidents involving the MacDoo family and other injustices occurring throughout the community.

James Duncan requested for the City to help address issues that he's encountered with boats while fishing.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following Consent Calendar items were presented by City Manager Watson, moved by Commissioner Singleton and supported by Commissioner Henderson carried on the following roll call vote. Yeas: Commissioners Jones, Haralson, Henderson, Isom, Adams, Singleton and Mayor Muhammad. Nays: Commissioner Henry. Members Abstain: None. Members Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Seats.

RESOLUTION:

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CONVEYANCE OF 250 COLFAX

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE HONORARY STREET NAME CHANGE OF MAIN STREET IN HONOR OF REVEREND EMERY MACK VARRIE I

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE RE-APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF REVIEW (VERA SINGLETON)

ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION (RICHARD HENSEL)

SEPARATED RESOLUTIONS

After lengthy discussion, a motion made by Commissioner Henderson and supported by Commissioner Haralson to **ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN EASEMENT FOR MICHIGAN GAS UTILITY FOR INSTALLATION OF A GAS REGULATOR** failed on the following roll call vote. Yeas: Commissioners Haralson and Henderson. Nays: Commissioners Henry, Singleton, Isom, Jones, Mayor Pro-Tem Seats, Commissioner Adams and Mayor Muhammad. Members Abstain: None. Members Absent: None.

A motion was made by Commissioner Adams and supported by Commissioner Henderson to **ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE BERRIEN COUNTY DEMOLITION LIST**. After lengthy discussion, a motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Seats and supported by Commissioner Adams to amend the motion to **ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE BERRIEN COUNTY DEMOLITION LIST WITH THE EXCEPTION OF 352 LINCOLN, 1003 MCALLISTER AND 1026 SUPERIOR** carried unanimously on the roll call vote.

After discussion, a motion made by Commissioner Adams and supported by Commissioner Henry to **ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ROOF MASONRY WORK (D.C. BYERS)** carried on the following roll call vote. Yeas: Commissioner Singleton,

Mayor Pro-Tem Seats, Commissioners Haralson, Isom, Henderson and Mayor Muhammad. Nays: Commissioners Henry, Adams and Jones. Members Abstain: None. Members Absent: None.

COMMUNICATIONS - NONE

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Haralson thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting. She echoed the sentiments of Ms. Kinnard and stated that the City Commission needs to do more for residents. She said that she cares about what's happening in the community. She further stated that the police should show more presence in the City and address issues with loud music.

Commissioner Henry thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting to see their local government in action. She encouraged citizens to serve on committees. She said that the city manager needs to be at committee meetings to provide information and answer all questions now that other staff members are no longer attending these meetings.

Commissioner Jones thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Henderson thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. She welcomed the passion that is displayed by residents and stated that there is always two sides to every story. She encouraged citizens to get involved in the political process and serve on committees.

Commissioner Singleton thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. He said that the City Commission feels the passion from residents; however, stated that there are limits to what elected officials are able to do. He reported on the Communications/Public Relations Committee. He stressed the importance of getting information out to residents and communicating with them. He spoke highly of Reverend Varrie and expressed appreciation for honoring him. He assured everyone that things are happening and it won't be business as usual.

Commissioner Isom thanked citizens for attending tonight's meeting. He expressed concerns with rotten trees falling in the neighborhoods. He reported on a compliment received by a resident. He said that he tries to come to every meeting to get information that's needed on things being voted on. He said that sometimes you have to express yourself in a certain manner to show that you care.

Commissioner Adams thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting. She said that she's addressed Mr. Duncan's issues with the St. Joseph/Benton Harbor River Authority and mentioned that he may also work through his County Commissioner.

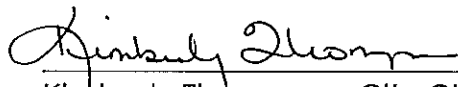
She stated that there is always two sides to a story; however, she will continue to stand for justice and truth. She spoke on tragic incidents that resulted in pain. She expressed the need to preserve historical landmarks in the City. She expressed a concern with police officers frequenting a home in her neighborhood.

Mayor Pro-Tem Seats stated that there are still traces of discrimination against race and gender. He recited various quotes. He spoke on the honoring of Reverend Varrie. He congratulated R.E.A.D.Y. Taekwondo for getting the building to continue providing a service to the youth. He expressed a need to bridge the relationship with the police, City Commission and the community.

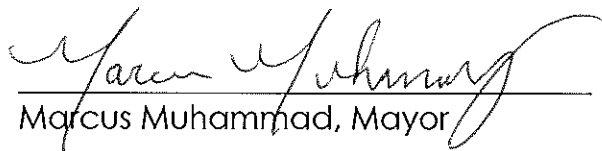
Mayor Muhammad thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting. He spoke on Reverend Varrie and his leadership in the community. He gave an overview of the measures taken to convey property over to R.E.A.D.Y. Taekwondo. He also spoke on his tenure as Mayor thus far and assured all that he will continue to lead with or without opposition.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.



Kimberly Thompson, City Clerk



Marcus Muhammad, Mayor