

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON  
CITY COUNCIL  
APRIL 9, 2018  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Call To Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers by Mayor Tammy Gilroy, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. Roll Call:**

Mayor Tammy Gilroy, Mayor Pro-tem Sandy Whelton, Council Members Daniel Rhines, John Bisard, Noah Belanger, Jeffrey Weiss, and Kent Hall. Absent: None.

Also Present: Interim City Manager/City Treasurer Rachel Piner, City Clerk Holly Thompson, City Attorney Timothy Perrone, Police Chief Bob Young, JFM Productions, Farmers' Market Manager Marlene Epley, and citizens Leo Sheets, Jeff Gorsline, Kate VanAllsburg, Jane Reagan, Eric Hansor, Ed Brown, Emilee Marks, Mary O'Reiley, Ross Maynard, Linda McKenzie, Tammy Scott, Jackie Cosner, Dawn Fyrckiak, and other members of the public.

**4. Approval of Agenda:**

Motion by **Weiss**, second by **Rhines**, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**5. Audience Participation:**

Mayor Gilroy called for public comments at this time and there were none.

**6. Council Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2018 and Special Council Minutes of March 7, 8, & 22, 2018:**

Motion by **Belanger**, second by **Hall**, to approve the March 26, 2018 Council minutes and the March 7, 8, and 22, 2018 minutes as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

**7. Accounts Payable:**

The accounts payables totaled \$95,933.30 with reference #'s 70096-70145.

Motion by **Belanger**, second by **Hall**, to approve the accounts payables as presented, reference #'s 70096-70145 for a total of \$95,933.30. Yes: Rhines, Gilroy, Whelton, Hall, Bisard, Belanger, Weiss. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8. Action Items**

**8a. Consideration to Waive Fees for Bandshell Use:**

Motion by **Bisard**, second by **Whelton**, to waive the bandshell and concession stand use fees for the Williamston Area Beautification Fund for ArtFest. Yes: Rhines, Gilroy, Whelton, Hall, Bisard, Belanger, Weiss. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8b. Farmers' Market Ad Hoc Committee:**

Motion by **Weiss**, second by **Whelton**, to extend the Farmers Market Ad Hoc Committee until May 23, 2019 and to continue to support the committee by waiving the fees for the parking lot status quo as has been done in the past. Yes: Gilroy, Whelton, Hall, Bisard, Belanger, Weiss, Rhines. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8c. Farmers' Market Manager Contract:**

Motion by **Hall**, second by **Rhines**, to terminate the employment of Marlene Epley effective 14 calendar days from today, April 9, 2018. Yes: Hall, Bisard, Belanger, Weiss, Rhines, Gilroy. No: Whelton. **Motion passed.**

**8d. Farmers' Market Request for Permission to have Alcohol in McCormick Park:**

Motion by **Bisard**, second by **Rhines**, to indefinitely postpone agenda items 8d. and 8e. until a future meeting. Yes: Hall, Bisard, Belanger, Weiss, Rhines, Gilroy, Whelton. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8e. Farmers' Market Liquor Control Commission Resolution:**

Action taken during item 8d.

**8f. City Manager Contract:**

Motion by **Bisard**, second by **Hall**, to approve the City Manager contract as presented. Yes: Belanger, Weiss, Rhines, Gilroy, Whelton, Hall, Bisard. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8g. Schedule 2018/2019 Fiscal Year Budget Public Hearing for Tuesday, May 29, 2018 at 7:05 p.m.:**

Motion by **Belanger**, second by **Weiss**, to schedule a budget public hearing for the 2018/2019 fiscal year budget on Tuesday, May 29, 2018 at 7:05 p.m. Yes: Weiss, Rhines, Gilroy, Whelton, Hall, Bisard, Belanger. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**8h. 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Reduce the Zoning Board of Appeals:**

Motion by **Weiss**, second by **Bisard**, to approve the first reading of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment to reduce the Zoning Board of Appeals to five members. Yes: Rhines, Gilroy, Whelton, Hall, Bisard, Belanger, Weiss. No: None. **Motion passed.**

**11. Department Head Reports**

**11a. Interim City Manager:**

Interim City Manager Piner submitted a written report for Council review. She reminded Council there is a budget work session scheduled for Wednesday at 5pm.

**11b. Police Chief:**

No report.

**11c. Treasurer:**

Treasurer Piner submitted a written report for Council review and also gave kudos to the City Hall office staff for their work during the collection of taxes. The tax payments balanced to the penny while collecting 6.7 million dollars and that points to an amazing office staff.

**11d. Building Department:**

A written report was submitted for Council review.

**12. Audience Participation:**

Linda McKenzie asked what the perception will be for the public if the Health Department shuts the farmers' market even one time.

Jane Reagan is disappointed in the decision tonight with no discussion, and no rationale for terminating an employee. She invited everyone to the Farmers' Market Ad Hoc Committee meeting on Tuesday at 1pm at the NIESA building.

A vendor believes Marlene has done a fantastic job. He is stunned as to why this has happened and feels a little in the dark about why this occurred.

Mary Ellen O'Reiley is curious as to who is going to be an interim director. She felt Council should be ashamed of themselves.

Eric Hansor would like to understand why Marlene is being terminated with the committee being extended for a year. He said he talked to the Mayor personally and she said she loved the market and this was without cause.

Marlene Epley commented she just got fired without cause and without explanation. The City doesn't have anyone to run the nutrition assistance programs and they are now done. There is no one trained to do the required cottage food policing or anyone trained to do anything. She graciously accepts Council firing her without cause and without notice and feels they clearly met before the meeting which destroys their transparency.

Paul Bostrom commented he has friends on both sides and feels Council is jumping into something without a plan. He thought this was a farm based community. A lot of changes are being made in Williamston that people don't like. He feels the Farmers' Market is a big thing for Marlene and it is in her heart.

**13. Council Member Comments:**

Councilman Hall commented that sometimes Council has to make decisions and actions have consequences.

Mayor Gilroy thanked Council for their work on the City Manager selection and their approval of the new City Manager's contract.

**14. Adjournment:**

Mayor Gilroy adjourned the Council meeting at 7:31 p.m.

**\*Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

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Holly M. Thompson, City Clerk

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Tammy Gilroy, Mayor

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_