

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2024 AT 9:00 A.M.**

Mayor Fischer called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mayor Fischer, Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Council Members Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Staudt*, Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Victor Cardenas, City Manager
Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager
Thomas Schultz, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

CM 23-12-153 Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

To approve the Agenda as amended.

Roll call vote on CM 23-12-153 **Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith,
Thomas, Fischer**
Nays: None
Absent: Staudt

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Joe Bertera, 130 Rexton, said he noticed all the honoring of past politicians in the City. He said that was great, but he was trying to figure out why they don't honor what the leaders did in 1986 when the Lakefront Protection ordinance was passed. He said Mr. Fried, the attorney at the time, stated this ordinance does not have any application to existing subdivisions, or multiple dwellings. He said this ordinance was meant for future development. He said somehow the city is now using this lakefront protection ordinance to sue one person in his neighborhood to get their dock out of the water because of a complaining neighbor. He said if you honor people and run a campaign based on your history in Novi, but you're saying the history from 37 years ago saying this ordinance doesn't apply to existing subdivisions is being ignored. HE said you can't pick what history to honor and what not to honor. He said they want to segregate his neighborhood and it's not fair. He said this world lately is about inclusion, but what they're doing is tearing apart his neighborhood over a boat doat.

*Member Staudt arrived at 9:04 a.m.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. Outline and framing of the day – Victor Cardenas and Jaymes Vettrano

City Manager Cardenas said they have a packed agenda with a lot to discuss. He said staff is present to provide support. He introduced Mr. Vettrano who will help facilitate the day's events.

Mr. Vettraiño said he has a small consulting firm and helps cities with facilitation and recruitment. He explained that this was a goal setting session, and it was important to honor people's opportunity to share ideas about short- and long-term goals. He spoke about how the City Manager – Council form of government and what is within Council's responsibility and what is staff's responsibility. As you're thinking about goals and priorities, think about the high-level things. He said he will keep them on track and reminded Council that they were not looking at vision and purpose during this meeting. He said they would be focused on strategic goals and some priority action items that were predefined. He said to make sure that the goals are narrow in scope and clearly understood, as well as measurable and time based. He explained that even though something may become a lower priority for Council, it doesn't mean that it's lost. He said priority is what was most important and for them to express the things they are most concerned about for the next 12 months and beyond. He said they have the guidelines for the day, and they will be strategic goals and priority planning.

2. Initial City Council Member Roundtable Thoughts – Mayor Fischer

Mayor Fischer explained they were moving into the initial roundtable thoughts and thanked City Manager Cardenas and Mr. Vettraiño. He said he remembered sitting down with City Manager Cardenas and thinking about what goal setting would look like and there were two main reasons he wanted to have it on a Saturday and have a longer discussion. He said one is because they have a relatively new Council. He thought having a long session would give everyone the opportunity to have some dialogue and think through the goal setting process. He felt it was more appropriate given the makeup of Council. He said the other piece is that they are going to talk about transformative projects, which is a new moniker. He said the idea was that they've talked about things like ITC expansion, redoing ITC, Beck Road, senior centers, senior housing, recreation centers, fire stations, police stations and they have a lot of ideas out there. He said they are probably talking about \$50 to \$150 million in projects. He said they need to start thinking, as a Council, about narrowing that down and prioritizing. He said they don't want staff feeling like they're aimlessly wandering or spinning their wheels. He said they weren't making decisions on those things today, but it will give an opportunity for Council to have one-on-one discussions with staff members and the subject matter experts. He explained they've been given a plethora of data, hundreds of pages on these topics. He said it's time to start advancing those and give prioritization and clear direction. He said on the flip side, he would like staff to give them direction as they talk about goals, economic development, and safety, which of those they think are also going to accomplish. It needs to be a two-way discussion.

Mayor Fischer said moving into the goal setting piece, his initial thoughts were that they used to have seven buckets of short and long term and he found that to be overwhelming. He said a few years ago they went to the NOVI moniker with short and long term, which was eight buckets. He said today they were trying something different and narrowing the buckets down to 3 and looking at it from a short- and long-term basis. He viewed it as a working document, as a working process, and they need to continue

to have these discussions. He asked City Manager Cardenas to continue to keep them updated.

Mayor Fischer said thinking about the goals he's put forth and the goals he would support, there are three things he wanted to mention. He said he's looking for things that are realistic and attainable. We've done things in the past, like acquiring 50 acres of wetlands in a year. He said if you think about it, it would've been \$2.5 to \$5 million in purchases in a year. He said he's never met a resident that would have wanted to spend that much money on just preserving wetlands. He said given budget constraints, he was looking for realistic and attainable goals. Second, he was looking for a unifying goal that would get the majority of Council member's support. He said they've done a good job in the first two months of working together, compromising, and trying to move things forward. He wanted to continue that, and he thought the goals should represent things they can all support. Last, he said he was looking at value proposition. He said they can't be everything to everyone. He spoke about the concept of what is a core city service, what is something we can do tangentially for quality of life. There are a lot of other entities, like the county and state, that have a lot more money than we have, more resources than we do, and maybe we leave some things to them. He said he's looking for things that he thinks the residents of Novi want us taking our limited staff resources and limited budget resources and doing. He said for his parting comments, especially for the newer Council members, was that not everything has to be a goal to be advanced. Even if something is a good idea, they can still fit it in the budget discussions or Mayor and Council Issues. Just because something doesn't become a goal, doesn't mean we can't continue to have discussions about it. He said he looked forward to good discussions.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey thanked the Mayor, City Manager Cardenas, and Assistant City Manager Mahoney for recognizing that they need to have this process and they need to take it seriously. They need to be having the conversation so they can start moving the city forward. There's a lot of work to be done. She said the Mayor mentioned accountability and she didn't feel that Council and City Administration have held themselves accountable to meeting the goals. They have provided long lists of goals and sometimes they don't get done for various reasons, but they don't talk about that. She said she was looking forward to getting quarterly updates from the administration about what they talk about at the table and understand what's being done and what's not being done, and why. She said there are probably very valid reasons why things don't get done. She said she's looking for that measure of accountability where they look at each other and hold themselves and staff accountable. She thanked the city team for presenting ideas and brainstorming for them and provided an employee survey. She appreciated hearing from the staff and getting their perspective on how things are working in the city as an employee. She said there are things they may be able to address as a Council and there are things that will be on administration to address. She thanked her colleagues in advance because she knew they took a lot of time to do this. She said she looked forward to being overwhelmed by the number of ideas that they would see and the conversation they would have. She said what was new this year was the idea of talking about transformative projects. She said she spoke to a lot of residents about these projects, and they have a lot of work ahead of them. There are a lot of big

ideas that have been talked about and then nothing ever happened. She explained the piece of this transformative project that she was eager to make sure they incorporate is understanding how we might start engaging our residents in seeking their prioritization. She said there are some big numbers, and they need to understand how the residents want them to prioritize. They can't do all \$150 to \$250 million worth of work tomorrow or even the next year. They need to prioritize what gets done first, and when. She said she really looked forward to understanding what kind of person, what kind of survey, what kind of focus groups, what kind of open houses, we can have to hear from residents to get their perspective on how they might prioritize getting the work done. She said it's incumbent upon them to understand in what order they need to get them done.

Member Thomas thanked everyone who put the schedule together and she was happy to have the opportunity to discuss these goals. She said they have a lot of information and it's hard to comprehend all the many different things that must be understood in detail. She said as she entered goals, she did so with the thought of what the community needs, and things she heard in talking to residents. Also keeping in mind, the businesses that make Novi their home and how important these things are for everyone. She said she felt goals should be measured. She said she was hoping for feedback from staff about what might be achievable. Sometimes goals are wonderful but not achievable. She said she would like to get feedback from residents and know if they were willing to take the tradeoff for certain things. She said she wanted an open discussion with feedback that if the goal is not achievable, what compromises can be made. She said there are so many things she wants for the community to keep Novi a world class community in reach.

Member Heintz said he was excited to be there and have the opportunity to help contribute and brainstorm. He asked how we differentiate long term and short-term goals because sometimes it's easy to implement something, but we want to maintain it as well. He said it's a blend of easy, short term to get going, but also the long-term continuity and maintenance of that item. He said he was excited to have the discussion and looked forward to learning from everyone and contributing ideas. He said he liked how a previous member said just because it might not be a defined goal, doesn't mean they can't work on and continue to make progress with it. He said he appreciated that being acknowledged because they will be limited to so many goals and can still make progress in other areas.

Member Gurumurthy said she was looking forward to learning, listening, and contributing as much as she could. She thanked staff for onboarding her so quickly and providing all of the information. She said she appreciated the surveys that were conducted, and the reports shared. She based most of her goals on the survey data. She said one key thing she wanted to bring forward is seeing that goals are backed up by data, facts, etc. She said she appreciated Member Casey bringing up tracking the goal, but also wanted to make it available for citizens to easily track the progress they make. She said some of the goal may be easier to measure and some of the goals they may need to set measurable targets like percentages or such. She said was looking forward to contributing and learning from this.

Member Smith said he thought this would be a great session. He said they talk internally about what the goals are and then we see if those goals meet the reality of what the customers need and it's a constant feedback process. He said they need to make sure they are not only setting goals but tracking them and making sure they continue in the right direction. He said he was excited, and it was going to be a good day and they will do some good work for the residents of Novi.

Member Staudt said years ago when they had goal setting sessions, the idea was to provide staff some ability to understand what Council's priorities were prior to putting a budget together. He said as time went on; it became a meeting that was planning the survival of the city. The years 2009 to 2011 were full of unbelievable challenges and difficult decisions. Goal setting back then was a preamble to providing the City Manager with an opportunity to understand what Council expected to cut during budget time. He said we are now into 2023-2034 and we are a vibrant city and things are going well. He didn't think we would see an economic tsunami coming. We have some high-ticket things that we have to consider, and it will be interesting to talk about the transformative projects because they're all important and we can't afford them all. He said a previous Council member said we need to talk about our needs, not our wants, and he disagreed with her. He said now there are a lot of needs that need to be considered. He wanted to impart some wisdom as being the old timer. Don't worry about whether we can pay for good ideas. If we had done that, we wouldn't have the ITC Trail or a lot of things we ended up getting. They had no idea when they made those goals how they were going to pay for them, they were just good ideas. They were something they needed time to figure out how we were going to pay for them but it's not their job to do the goals of staff. The City Manager provides his staff with goals. He said a lot of the time they think they need to tell the City Manager or his staff what their goals are, but they need to provide vision and innovation. He said they don't need to tell them what they need to do within their jobs. He said let's step outside the box and do things that are big picture, exciting, visionary but if it has to do with somebody's job within the city, let the City Manager give them that goal and hold them accountable. He said Council doesn't hold individual department heads accountable, they hold the City Manager accountable. He said he was looking forward to hearing the ideas. He said he has one important goal down the road and that is figuring out how we can improve our city in a way that we can afford.

3. Early Budget Input (Short- and Long-term Exercises) – Victor Cardenas & Jaymes Vettrano

City Manager Cardenas said he appreciated all the remarks. He said they resonate with him and summarize why they are all present and what the goal is. He said most importantly, this was for staff to receive Council's input and feedback on what they want to see in the annual budget. He said they already summarized it, but he was looking for clear direction that staff will take and report back with whether we can do it or not. He said as we look into some of the goals that were populated, there are a lot of things that we've worked on in the past. He reiterated that we have a fantastic and dedicated staff, but their resources and time are not unlimited. There are limits to all of that and we need to be able to prioritize. He said we have done a lot of work on these different issues and

there is a ton of data that can be provided about Public Safety, infrastructure, sanitary, wetlands, woodlands, and all of that. He said they are using a platform to input goals.

Mayor Fischer said to summarize, they will go through "Operate" short term and Council will be able to see all the goals that have been put in and can change them or add more. Then they will move to the next bucket and so on. Then they will take a break from the process and move into some different discussions while the goals are reviewed and grouped if similar. City Manager Cardenas confirmed that was correct.

There was discussion of both long- and short-term goals for each of the categories: Operate, Build, and Invest.

4. Transformative Project Introduction and Financing Questions – Jaymes Vettrains

Mr. Vettrains said the goal is to take some time outside of this space to talk about those transformative projects that the city has had on it's agenda for several years. It also gives the City Manager and Assistant City Manager time to go through the goals. He said this is one of the most important activities they will do throughout the budget process. He said they will move into those transformative projects. They will have the opportunity to sit with the subject matter experts to ask questions or to better understand the prioritization or difficulty. He said it was important to take time to directly engage elected officials with the talented employees the city has. He explained there were five projects: Beck Road, ITC reconfiguration, older adult needs, public safety building needs. He said there will be 5 tables in the atrium and they will be able to visit each to talk with the subject matter experts to ask questions and staff can provide information. There will be a note taker at each to take notes and keep track of any outstanding questions Council members may have.

City Manager Cardenas said Finance Director Johnson was available to speak about the funding piece in terms of process or a financing mechanism if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Break – Small Group Discussions

5. Goal Setting Discussion and Voting – Cardenas and Mahoney

Mr. Vettrains said the next exercise is the early budget input exercise and the transformative projects. He complimented staff and Council members for being prepared and asking great questions.

City Manager Cardenas said they went through the goals and moved some into more accurate buckets and grouped goals. He went through goals they grouped to ensure Council agreed. There was discussion of both long- and short-term goals for each of the three categories. The Council then ranked the top goals (see *attached*).

Mayor Fischer said the next steps would be for these goals to be brought back to Council for final review and approval. He said they also expect "red box" updates in the admin packets and a presentation from the City Manager potentially in six months.

City Manager Cardenas said they will have a component on the website that would track the goals and progress of goals as well.

6. Transformative Project Priority and Funding

Mr. Vettraiino said they are looking for a temperature check on the transformative projects. City Manager Cardenas had sent them an email with a link to transformative ranking to provide a comment on each project. He said the goal is to provide staff with direction on each of the five projects in terms of whether it's something to continue to invest staff time in as a top priority or possibly it's not a top priority. He said this is a ton of money being discussed but they should remember it requires a lot of staff time. That, by nature, means other things won't get invested in by staff. He said to use that as a discerning mechanism so staff can prioritize their time based on this temperature check. He said this will help staff think about these projects appropriately in planning. The Council then ranked the transformative projects.

Mr. Vettraiino said the City Manager and Assistant City Manager will review that feedback and provide a summary back to them.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 12:59 P.M.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Justin Fischer, Mayor

Transcribed by Deborah S. Aubry

Date approved: January 22, 2024



City Council Early Input Budget Session Results
 Saturday, January 6, 2023

Build a desirable and vibrant community for residents and businesses

Idea	Votes
SHORT-TERM	
DTE Matters	7
Woodlands and Wetlands Ordinance Reivew	6
Assess & create a Novi Downtown Vibrancy Strategy that is organized under four pillars: Downtown as a home – (e.g. create outdoor space for people to gather?) Downtown as an economic center (e.g. entice retailers to remain in and open downtown) Downtown as a destination (e.g. bring diverse business/restaurants/specialty shops/international festival/international taste fest/ farmers market, street performers to enhance the brand of Novi as a diverse community) Downtown as a safe, welcoming place e.g. Encourage inclusive, connected, walkable streets) - PG	5
Broadband- Create a broadband master plan- ET	5
Develop proposals for council action to address entry/college age and older adult housing for new and redevelopment.	4
Identify areas and build trails throughout Novi for Pocket Parks	4
Develop a policy/strategy for the Tree Fund -- both revenue and expense - JF	4
Acquire and obtain control of Shawood Lake and study rehabilitation	3
Develop and manage a list of companies that can help seniors who need to get work done around their home (lawn maintenance, snow maintenance, etc.) with a goal of identifying high quality companies who may offer discounted rates for seniors. - LC	2
More community festivals - 50s Fest is out of date, but similar community events more frequently during the year. Acknowledge the diversity in our community - BS	2
Expand scope of neighborhood sign program. (e.g. is per sign dollar amount still sufficient to be an incentive, can we promote other worthy beautification efforts within subdivisions); Is there a similar program to encourage beautification of businesses, etc? - JF	1
Identify traffic sidewalk section (~2 miles) and place benches along it. - BS	1
Develop an assistance program for people in dire need address ordinance violations (grass cutting, etc) — not meant to be a continuous program (e.g. limited to one "assistance" every 5 years or the like) - JF	1
Support the implementation of the Novi Public Library Strategic Plan (e.g funding, space) - PG (MOVED FROM INVEST)	1
Winter outdoor skating rink/summer farmers market or other use (Farmington Hills, Sterling Heights examples) - BS	1
Work with Northville to connect trails/paths/sidewalks between cities at Center, Taft, Novi, Griswold - BS	1

LONG-TERM	
Construct a Facility that serves and connects ALL of our residents	5
Develop walkable 'Pocket Parks' in areas of city where there are no walkable parks - BS	5
Pursue partnership with Northvillefor Trail connection from Novi-Northville, possibly near the railroad bridge on 8 mile (e.g. presentation at Walkable Novi) - JF	4
Work with neighboring communities to complete connections through Novi to local trail systems (Airline/Huron Valley, Hines Drive, I-275 when complete). Make Novi businesses an appealing rest stop for cyclists using the trails - BS	4
Transform the Novi Downtown and create a brand as a gathering space for diverse communities - PG	2

Continue to pursue and purchase of strategic properties in Novi to help preserve community character (e.g. recent Beck Road properties). This goal does not set specific acres or dollar amount; strategic purchases are only made if/when they make sense - JF	1
As we move toward build-out/middle age city...Support re-development by evaluating and updating City codes and policies to eliminate barriers and incentivize commercial redevelopment in aging areas - JF	0

Operate a world-class sustainable local government.

SHORT-TERM	
Revamp Boards/Commissions	7
Establish a Environmental Sustainability Committee	6
Outreach/Engage with Diverse Populations	6
Long-term Planning 2024	4
Explore further service consolidation and joint opportunities with NCSD (i.e., programs and building use) -	4
Intercity Relationships	3
Update strategy to attract and retain employees	3
Re-engage with CLAIR to promote enrich relationship with Japan - JF (moved from LT)	3
Develop a study and determine where to install EV charging stations at city properties with a parking lot - BS	3
Schedule Council Coffee Hours or Council Connections - MH	2
Do an evaluation of the work being done by employees at all level; is there additional staffing required for 2024-2025 budget? At same bring back start, stop, continue process to streamline city operations and increase efficiencies to reduce workload - JF	2
Expand the user of solar power on city buildings with a goal of adding solar power to at least 2 city buildings. - BS	2
Reduce plastic waste - MH	2
Goals should be made available to the public in an easier format that includes the goal description, percent complete and expected completion (quarter). Each goal should have measurable targets and should be used to consider the goal successfully completed. This information should be added to our current website for easy access & progress update. - PG	1
Evaluate geothermal heat pump installation for one Novi city building - BS	1
LONG-TERM	
Develop plan to renew the CIP millage and get it on the ballot in advance of expiration - JF	5
Prioritize and Implement the top 3 Action Plans from the "Environment & Climate Action Plan". Showing Progress in numbers against the goals established through the Sustainability Plan - PG	5
Continue efforts to reduce unfunded and long-term liabilities by pursuing strategy of Defined Contribution retirement plans (or Hybrid DB/DC where appropriate) - JF	4
Master plan 2040 approved, pillars confirmed, key initiatives prioritized for Novi city sustainability & growth relative to industry growth (Environment, Mobility, Autonomous etc)	2
Implement initiatives to help with Recruit & Retain top class talent to make Novi the best-in-class public sector employer for citizens - PG	2
MI Green Communities Challenge action items and metrics https://migreencommunities.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/MGC-Action-Items-Current.pdf maintain Gold rating and increase number of action items completed - BS	2
Invest properly in being a Safe Community at all times for all people.	
SHORT-TERM	
Develop plan to capitalize on inclusion in SMART to ensure utilization of the tax dollars we provide to the system - JF	6
Yard Waste Collection	5

Revisit the implementation and policy on sidewalk maintenance and repairs with a goal of evaluating all sidewalks in the city over the next 5 years and repairing those that exceed the conditions required for repair - JF	5
Work with Northville, Northville Township, Wayne County to get 8 Mile between Novi and Haggerty fixed - BS	4
In 2022 the percentage of our roads in poor condition was 32%. Decrease the number of roads with a PASER score of poor condition (1-4) for roads to less than 30 percent. - ET	4
Review the Active Mobility Plan 2023, identify the top 3 impactful projects & create proposal for the same - PG	3
Complete connectors 1-5 and 12 per non-motorized master plan - BS (MOVED FROM OPERATE)	2
Fully staff our combination fire department with goal of 0 station closures - JF	2
Identify and place solar panels on at least one new building. - ET	2
Agree on the future public safety facility needs. - DS	1
Integrate a Blue Zone approach into all policies for a healthier Novi - MH	1
LONG-TERM	
Develop plan to ensure senior transit is financially sustainable given growth in senior and requests to add service times, routes, etc - JF	4
Continue to support accreditation (or re-accreditation) of Police, Fire, Dispatch, etc. - JF	4
In 2022 the percentage of our roads in poor condition was 32%. Decrease the number of roads with a PASER score of poor condition (1-4) for roads to less than 20 percent. - ET	3
Establish & communicate key KPIs for City Public Service Performance in compared to other similar communities nation wide & within the state - PG	2

seen as a destination place and something for people, businesses and community members, because a lot of people will rent it for birthday parties, retirement parties, things like that, and utilize the space. She said it was great to have them in the building. Teen space visits had a 314% increase. The students are back, this year especially. She mentioned her January e-newsletter that led with an article about the usage of the library and how busy it was just after school time from about 2:45 to 5:30pm Monday through Friday. They see wonderful numbers of students coming over from the high school. There's about 2000 students in the high school and they probably see about 10%. So about 200 kids walk over and utilize the space. In her article, she shared that they wanted to warn people of how busy it is during that time period of 2:45 to 5:30pm, and that there could be a potential for no seats in the building because of how busy it is. When they knew that teenagers were coming over with the new building, they provided a new program, which is not new now. But it's been very successful, called Teen space. It is the large meeting room which started with just one side of it but is now being used for the whole room after school being dedicated to teenagers and having a place to hang out and socialize. The teens do come over. They've been in school all day. She said they've been sitting seven hours, they've been studying hard at school, when they get out of school right in that first hour or so they're not necessarily ready to settle back down and study again, they need a break. They do come over to the library they get very good use of the cafe and having that partnership with the school district. We provided teen space to give them a space to hang out and socialize. There's a ping pong table, there's games, they can do homework, there is an adult monitor in the room to provide some guidance. They use it as a potential place maybe because they're waiting for a sport or a club to go to after school. Or maybe they just need that space for a little bit and then they move on into the building to go study and meet with study groups and some of their other friends, some colleagues that they're studying with. So, this year those freshmen and sophomores specifically have found us and they are using us on a regular basis. She encouraged Council to go over and see that timeframe of 2:45 to 3:30 – 4 o'clock when there is that activity going on, coming over from the high school. She said she appreciates them. She knows that people sometimes share concern, because it's a lot of people, a lot of kids, traffic and stuff happening at that time. But truly, she sees them our young, using our library, and then committing to the community and being part of the community. They have been very diligent with working with them and wanting to give them, even with it being a public space, a safer space that they could be in during that timeframe after school. So that space alone has seen a major attendance rise, because they are going in, they're interacting with the staff person that's there, and they're using the space when they're wanting to be in the building, but maybe not necessarily, it's not a study time for that timeframe. There were big numbers on that, and she can't wait to see next year's numbers, because just from the fall from just September this year, it's even larger, so it's great usage. Next was summer reading, a summer reading program and books that were read, they had a 12% increase in that as well. This year was 42,314 and a year ago, it was 37,695. So again, the summer reading program was back up. She also wanted to hit on our Friends of the Novi Public Library. They are huge supporters, they are the 501c3 of the library. They're an arm of the Library, a separate entity, but definitely doing a lot of fundraising and advocating for them. She provided a breakdown of the amount of gifts that they gave over the year. They provided wonderful performances and programs that

help sustain some things that they don't necessarily do with the general budget. She wanted to point out those things. They really had a great year. She gave Council an introduction to their strategic plan. They are working on some of the goals that will go with that. Since they got the plan in place, she has been meeting with her staff over the last few months, and they will have even more information for Council in the future. She said that she would be happy to entertain any questions.

Mayor Fischer said that they always enjoy having her there. He didn't have any questions at that time. He said that they were set to meet next week to go through some of these items. He added that they all know that the library is one of the gems of this community. He thanked her and all her hard-working staff, and of course, the library board and what they provide, the guidance of working with you as well. He thanked her for coming that night and thanked the whole team over there. He would turn it over to his colleagues to see if they had any questions. Member Gurumurthy said she wanted to appreciate everything that they do as a staff, the library board and Julie herself being on the board. She saw everything that happens behind the scenes. She said thank you so much. The annual report speaks about it. So, she appreciated it. Director Farkas thanked her for having been on the committee. Mayor Fischer said that he apologized for stealing some of her board members, to which Director Farkas said she knew, and they would talk about that.

MANAGER/STAFF REPORT:

City Manager Cardenas wanted to let the Mayor and Council know that there were reports that we're going to have some snow coming into the area starting that night and then possibly another storm hitting later in the week. The crews are ready to tackle this. We haven't really had a good snow. Today we have a lot of salt we need to use, so we'll be heavily salting the areas when we do get some snow, so stay tuned.

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Katie Chuba said her address wasn't in Novi. She is the new president at the Novi Chamber of Commerce. She wanted to introduce herself to the Council as well as the City. She was super excited to take on this position. She was six weeks in already stirring the pot pro-business. The chamber office is in process of moving, on her first day on the job she was thrown the keys. It was really exciting. They are turning their office space into an epicenter of business for their members to collaborate and educate themselves. They will do presentations there and have other opportunities to use the space. She will be introducing some educational series for businesses, trying to collaborate with the City and other business partners, to push business forward and help their members and help businesses in the area thrive and prosper. She said again, she just wanted to introduce herself and say thank you so much. Mayor Fischer said thank you for the introducing, and we look forward to working with you too. He then asked if there was anyone else in the

audience who wished to make comment? State your name and address and your three minutes will begin.

Duglass Young, of 216 Wainwright, wanted to bring attention to the board, looking at some options of remediation on the busy street that they live on. Right now, on the street of Wainwright with the adjacent as well, there's a public concern about accessing streets from an emergency standpoint. Right now, the street itself is known that it's 20 feet wide, and in typical residential areas around the 27-foot mark. Their concern was what was the opportunity to look at widening the street, it is obviously a larger challenge. But there are some options, potentially, to look at to help remediate some of those obstructions that are in the roadway adjacent to the race properties. In addition to Wainwright, the street that is Paramount is even a graver, narrower Street, those flanked the two. Accessing that street is even greater because it's a single roadway as well. They pulled up some photos that they had submitted for presentation. They continued by saying that what they were looking at is, they brought to their attention back in the fall of 2022 ahead of the spring work that was done in the street itself. They know that there's not an opportunity to really do a lot of widening on the street, but there may be an opportunity to look at some signage or something to identify parking on one side of the street, potentially the hydrant side, that would give a little bit of a fire lane, because the concern is actually the fire lane itself is not existent in that roadway. In addition to just supporting documentation, they did have a letter from one additional resident to help support the overall concern. Looking at the quick fixes or what opportunities exist, maybe signage is one, they also have a greater concern that there is an abandoned vehicle on the street itself, that has not been removed. They know that the city has taken action to try and put stickers on it and to try and remove it but there's no ordinance set to help support that being actually removed. They feel at this point, one of the quick fixes would be to remove the obstacles that are on that street, impeding the traffic itself with accessibility, want to be removing the vehicle itself, that's not tagged correctly, it's not able to be removed. It's been there for at least two years now. They said that officer Tillman was involved as well as Sergeant Boody was also aware of the situation.

Joe Bertera of 130 Rexton in North Novi. He said he was trying to figure out why the city was coming after his neighborhood so hard about their lakefront lot. He said he thought they spent like a half million dollars suing one resident in his neighborhood. Why can't that money be better spent, like, on the fire stations that he read about in the posts or maybe the homeless people at 96 and Beck. He said that they just want to keep coming after Novi residents in his neighborhood and the neighborhood spent an exorbitant amount of money to fight off their own city. He said that he was not involved in the lawsuit. It was another neighbor. He said the city's whole plan was to sue one neighbor on a bunch of frivolous accusations. He doesn't own the land. He's not running a marina. But now they are trying to basically black bow the entire neighborhood into this lawsuit. He said it was like you're saying, oh, we need the whole neighborhood in here. And you're only seeing one person and the basis for the whole lawsuit is that the lakefront protection ordinance which he has shown time and time again, what they said in 1986, about this ordinance, it doesn't apply to existing subdivisions, right. It was for future development, which made sense in 1986. He said they just keep bearing down on the neighborhood, basically

tearing apart his neighborhood. He has been there 23 years, and said you guys are plowing through this neighborhood, tearing apart relationships, friendships, property values, which is a huge deal. Everybody bought in the neighborhood to have access to the lake, and you guys just want to rip it out. That takes 100 grand off his house. He is a realtor. All his neighbors are going to lose value of their homes. But you guys just want to keep hammering down on suing us over something that's been there for 100 years. It doesn't make any sense. He said he was sorry this is kind of all over the place. He was doing his best with the situation. He emailed Council earlier that day, and he promised to show a photo. The woman in the photo here is Laurie McLean. She lives on the side of our lake access lot; he was sure none of Council had been to their neighborhood because we're on the top end of Novi at Novi and Walled Lake. This is the woman that gave all the complaints, and a bunch of lies about the whole neighborhood. He said you can see my neighbors here just talking. He has the whole video of it. She walked up to the deck. They said go home, go home three times four times. We're just trying to get a fair proposal. You want control of the lot. You want to have some governance there. He was just asking for some consideration. He said this lakefront protection ordinance, Mr. Schultz said in 2007 it doesn't apply to existing neighborhoods, and you're still doing it.

Miral Dakhllallah of 144879 Stockton Drive asked for Council to introduce a ceasefire resolution for the ongoing genocide in Gaza. At least 23,000 civilians have died in Gaza so far. The cities of Ypsilanti and Canton have called for a ceasefire resolution so far. Speaking as a proud Novi high school graduate and US resident of the city of Novi, she was asking to consider the Palestinian residents in Novi. There are women giving birth with no anesthesia. There are kids getting limbs amputated without any medicine, no after care. There are men going through the rubble and grabbing their families under the Israeli airstrikes that have been happening for 95 days now. She asked for their voices to be heard in the community.

Areej Younis, 25825 Sierra Drive in Novi asked for the Novi City members to introduce a ceasefire resolution in accordance to the ongoing genocide war that is occurring in Gaza. This was echoed for many neighbors, people in Novi who would like the city to set a resolution just to just put a stop, to be on record asking as Novi residents that we are demanding a ceasefire, and we are not standing silent when people are being killed in Gaza.

Farah Ramadan said she lives here in Novi on Spring Lake Boulevard. She wanted to thank the two members of the Novi Community who had already gotten up and spoken about this, she didn't know them, but it was nice to see that this had also struck a chord with so many members of the community. She said that she saw that Detroit has done it, Dearborn has done it. Dearborn heights has done it. Canton has done it. Ypsilanti's done it. She would take a lot of pride in knowing that Novi also has those values and cares about the members of its community, especially since we are, you know, in a city that's right outside of somewhere with the greatest population of Arabs in the US or Muslims in the US. She said it is something that's very personal for a lot of us. She is not Palestinian; she is an Arab. She's American, She lives here in Novi, but does have Arab roots. It's heartbreaking to see what's happening. And while she understood that we don't have

much federal control, she knew, with all due respect, Council probably couldn't do very much about federal budgeting or what happens with that money, it would be nice to just have that symbolic stance and to know that at least the members of the City Council and the members of the community stand with the people of Palestine and against the killings that are happening unjustly. She didn't think that there's anything discriminatory about that. She said she had nothing but love and respect for all members of our community, She thought that it would be nice to have that solidarity there. To have that symbolic stance that we don't stand with what's happening. Thank you to those who spoke about it before and maybe those will step up now and talk about it too.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

Mayor Fischer removed item E.

CM 24-01-03 Moved by Casey, seconded by Staudt; MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

To approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

- A. Approve Minutes of:
December 18, 2023 - Regular Meeting
- B. Approval of a Street Lighting Purchase Agreement with Detroit Edison Company for the installation and ongoing operation cost of two (2) decorative streetlights located at each entrance of the Ballantyne Subdivision and approval of an agreement with Pulte Homes of Michigan, LLC for the sharing of installation and ongoing operation costs per the City's Street Lighting Policy.
- C. Approval of Text Amendment 18.303 to amend Section 7.1, Nonconformities, of the Zoning Ordinance to provide the option for expanding a nonconforming use through a Special Land Use to be considered and potentially approved by Planning Commission after a public hearing. **SECOND READING**
- D. Approval of a resolution to renew the Older Adult Needs Committee.
- E. Approval of a resolution to renew the Public Safety Building Needs Committee.
REMOVED/LATER APPROVED
- F. Enter Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting of January 8, 2024, in the Council Annex for confidential written correspondence from legal counsel and to discuss union negotiations.
- G. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1147

Roll call vote on CM 24-01-03

**Yeas: Gulumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Staudt,
Fischer, Casey
Nays: None**

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:

1. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Mayor Fischer said that there was a ballot for full City Council appointments, and asked Clerk Hanson to read the results of that. She said that for the Beautification Commission there were no applicants therefore no appointments. For Election Commission, Bob Copes was reappointed. For Historical Commission, Debbie Wrobel was reappointed, however, neither of the other candidates received enough votes to be appointed. Mayor Fischer said that they would revisit that at the next meeting.

CM 24-01-04 Moved by Staudt, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Approval to re-appoint Jeff Wainright to the Corridor Improvement Authority.

Roll call vote on CM 24-01-04

Yeas: Smith, Staudt, Thomas, Fischer, Casey, Heintz
Nays: None

Mayor Fischer said that he would have the opportunity to meet with Director Farkas later in the week, so he would hold off on making appointments for the three full terms at that point. There was a partial term due to the appointment of Member Gurumurthy.

CM 24-01-05 Moved by Staudt, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED: 5-1

Approval to appoint Lori Burke to a partial term on the Library Board.

Roll call vote on CM 24-01-05

Yeas: Smith, Staudt, Thomas, Fischer, Casey
Nays: Heintz

2. Consideration of approval to award the construction contract to True North Asphalt, the low bidder, for the Lakeshore Park Parking Lot Reconstruction project, in the amount of \$270,115.90.

City Manager Cardenas advised that this was for the parking lot at the southern part of the Lakeshore park that houses a lot of activities for the Motor City Mountain Biking Association. This came in under budget, which was extremely exciting. This is in collaboration with the Mountain Biking Association for their construction of a changing station in that same area. We are looking to really enhance that area. This has been in the works for a long time, and again, it's under budget. He said that they were excited to get it underway.

CM 24-01-06 Moved by Staudt, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Approval to award the construction contract to True North Asphalt,

the low bidder, for the Lakeshore Park Parking Lot Reconstruction project, in the amount of \$270,115.90.

Roll call vote on CM 24-01-06

Yeas: Staudt, Thomas, Fischer, Casey, Heintz, Smith

Nays: None

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS:

Mayor Fischer said that reason he removed item E was that it was the resolution renewing the public safety building needs committee. In the effort of this committee and the older adults committee, he was of the impression and belief that these committees should continue in general form as they have during the past year. In order to accomplish that, he would like to see former Mayor Bob Gatt on that committee. This resolution would need to be amended to change paragraph two to say that it would have eight total members instead of seven, including three city council members and five members of the public. He then asked that someone make a motion with those changes.

CM 24-01-07 Moved by Staudt, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Approval of a resolution to renew the Public Safety Building Needs Committee and to add an additional resident member to bring the total number of members to eight, including three City Council members and five members of the public.

Roll call vote on CM 24-01-06

Yeas: Staudt, Thomas, Fischer, Casey, Heintz, Smith

Nays: None

AUDIENCE COMMENT:

Joe Bertera of 130 Rexton, said he says North Novi because they have zero representation out there. He said he thinks all of you live within a mile of this city hall. The Lakefront protection ordinance with the whole lawsuit started and Bob Gatt was still Mayor. He was just trying to figure out why some of these questions weren't asked. It's been 37 years, 38 years since the ordinance was made. Why was it never enforced? Why was it never enforced for 37 years? Why didn't the city back then go around to everybody around the lake and say that dock has to come out. They never did anything like that 38 years ago. Why? Because it was like he said earlier, it was for future development. He said they promised the residents of that time that it didn't apply to them. He already talked about Laurie McLean. She went after you guys for 10 years, threatened to sue the city. I know Schultz sent out a bunch of demand letters, just demanding things happen, but it's a unique situation. We have a fully buildable lot that we use to get to the lake. So why can't Novi say this is kind of unique, has been there for 100 years, maybe we should have some kind of quorum with the residents. That never happened, but then there's a Lilly Pond on the south side of the lake that was built in 99. They had eight boats out there and they have a dock and it was after the ordinance was enacted and you're still letting it happen.

He asked why wasn't it asked how much is this going to cost taxpayers? He said he has friends that live on the water and pay high property taxes for lakefront property. They are not happy that the city is spending taxpayer dollars on this lawsuit. And you've only mentioned this Saturday, you've only sued one person and probably spent a half million dollars. There are 40 other houses in our neighborhood. Does the city really want to spend \$20 million on a dock? That is like 2% of the boats on the lake. There's 400 plus boats on Walled Lake. We are such a small percentage, but why is this money being spent. He said he didn't understand the logic of spending all this taxpayer money when it can be used somewhere else.

Marian Mahoney, 24108 Westmont Drive, said she was sure everybody here and our entire city sees that the public library really is a gem. It's really a gift to the community. The library board plays a really, really important role in advising and advocating for that, that resource. At the last meeting, a number of us came and listened to the interviews for the candidates who would like to serve our community really exciting. She was thrilled to see all of those new faces, new, young, young, energetic people, and honestly, she was super excited to hear who was going to get that appointment. She understood that the Mayor needed to give great consideration and meet with a director and understand what her needs were before he make some of those really important decisions, but she was really stunned to hear the name that had been appointed tonight that number one was not on the list of candidates certainly didn't interview, and I am sure did not interview. Maybe she was missing something. She said it's really discouraging to people that took the time to apply to prepare for an interview and have great opportunities to contribute. She was personally disappointed to hear about that appointment that did not include any of those new people and people who took the time to apply and to interview.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES:

1. Appointments to Council Committees

Mayor Fischer made his appointments to Council Committees. The new assignments are as follows:

Capital Improvement Program: Members Fischer, Casey, and Staudt.

Consultant Review Committee: Members Casey, Staudt, and Heintz.

Ordinance Review Committee: Members Fischer, Casey, and Staudt, with Member Gurumurthy as an alternate.

Rules Committee: Members Fischer, Casey, Staudt.

Youth Council Review Committee: Members Thomas, Heintz, Casey.

Youth Council Liaison: Member Heintz, with Member Thomas as an alternate.

PRCS Grant Citizen Advisory Committee: Members Smith and Thomas.

Walkable Novi: Members Smith and Thomas

SEMCOG Liaison: Member Smith, with Member Heintz as an alternate.

Public Safety Committee: Members Fischer, Staudt, and Gurumurthy.

Older Adult Needs Committee: Members Casey, Smith, and Thomas.

Mayor Fischer said they were entering into Executive Session at 7:38 P.M. and they did not expect to return to Regular Session that evening.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 P.M.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Justin Fischer, Mayor

Transcribed by Melissa Morris

Date approved: January 22, 2024