

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.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
Kristin Kolb, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Fischer stated that Item H on the consent agenda needed to be revised to say, "Enter executive session immediately following the regular meeting of March 4th, to discuss City Assessor Performance and confidential communications from the City's Legal Counsel. Member Staudt added that he would like to add "Council Review - PRO" to the Mayor and Council issues.

CM 24-02-28 Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the Agenda as amended.

Roll call vote on CM 24-02-28 **Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith,
Staudt, Thomas, Fischer**
Nays: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

PRESENTATIONS:

I-96 Flex Route - Brian Travis of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

Brian Travis, Project Manager and Construction Engineer at the Michigan Department of Transportation, said he was at the meeting to talk about the upcoming work on I-96. He said that this is year number three and that the end of the construction is in sight. He said this year's proposed work would begin around March 23rd, 2024, with restriping of the eastbound lanes. He said the impact of the configuration will be felt in mid-April. He said this year all 12 miles of westbound pavement will be reconstructed, and last year, eastbound and most of the median barrier walls were reconstructed. He said the westbound side is what is left and will include all ramps. He said that at the end of the year both bounds will be back open and repaved, all ramps will be open, and the flex lanes will be operational. He said that there would be several overhead gantries with LED lane assignment signs, and the flex lanes would be open directionally during peak hours; so, eastbound in the morning, and westbound in the afternoon. He said the traffic impact will be two lanes in each direction all on the eastbound side from Kent Lake to I-275, all on new pavement, with a variable width shoulder to give room for disabled or first responder access. He said they have standing meetings with first responders every month

for ease of access when things change. He said the biggest ramp impacts to Novi are going to be the Westbound Novi entrance ramps. He said the northbound and southbound ramps will close from about mid-April to mid-September. He said the detour this year will be much easier. The eastbound detour would take traffic to Grand River to either Beck or Wixom. He said Beck and Wixom don't close for long and that the closures don't overlap. He said the southbound M-5 ramp to westbound I-96 also closes from mid-April to mid-September. So, that takes traffic southbound M-5 to Grand River, back to northbound M-5, to westbound I-96. He said the eastbound ramps stay open except for the eastbound back entrance ramp which stays closed all season. He said in the coming weeks they will get some information about what is closing and when to try to get ahead of it. He said the impact on the public is typical as there will be dust, noise, trucks, and work hours from 6:00 am – 6:00 pm. He added that if it is too hot to pave, they may have to work outside of the work hours but try to minimize noise from 7:00 am – 7:00 pm. However, there are times when they have to saw cut after hours or start-up concrete plants or trucks earlier in the morning. There will be two concrete batch plants this year, one at Beck Road and one at the M-5 and 12-mile Northwest Quadrant, going in most likely in a week. He said if there are any specific questions, the Engineering team has his contact information. He added that if a member of the public has questions there is a project phone number and a dedicated ombudsman that takes and returns all calls.

Mayor Fischer asked what the benefit of a flex lane is, and what we are trying to accomplish with flex routes. Mr. Travis responded that they alleviate the congestion problem that is specific in Metro Detroit. He said it helps to improve our travel time reliability. He said the reason it can not be open all the time is that it is a shoulder. If it was a full-time lane, it would not meet design standards. The flex lane is right up next to the barrier wall, so you have no shoulder, but it is allowed to be run at certain times of the day. Mayor Fischer added that another question he gets is about the Beck Road eastbound ramp, and why it cannot be operational at certain times but is shut down completely through the whole project. Mr. Travis explained that there must be a taper distance of 990 feet, but there is only about 700 feet at that location and that becomes a safety concern. He also noted that there is a batch plant there for contractor operations. He said if you keep that ramp open, you don't have proper merge distance which will create congestion, rear-end crashes, and more. Mayor Fischer clarified that it has been contemplated and studied. Mr. Travis added that people may ask why Novi and Wixom can stay open, but they have a dedicated merge lane there between the two ramps.

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Anna Greg, 226 Linhart Street, said she was there to speak about the ordinance to stop parking in the subdivision. She said she read the proposal, complaint, and petition. She said the majority of the people who signed the petition are on Wayne Wright and are retirees or older couples who don't have children in their houses any longer or have a one-person residence, and that is not the case on Linhart St. She said the majority of

people on Linhart are families with two or more kids and multiple vehicles. She said that most of the houses on Linhart don't have driveways that can accommodate three, four, and five vehicles, which is the reason that they park on the street. She said other than the day-to-day impact the ordinance will have, she is struggling to understand what they should do for holidays, gatherings, barbecues, or any other kind of family get-together. She asked if the plan was to have families park in the city parking lot. She said she is assuming she will have to tell her 95-year-old dad and 90-year-old mom that they will have to walk half of a mile to her house in the snow, ice, rain, and mud, and hope that they do not get hurt in the process. She asked if she should be the shuttle service for the guests to come to her home. She also asked if she just shouldn't have guests at their home. Ms. Greg said this ordinance is a major inconvenience and makes the neighborhood unlivable. She added that the narrowness of the streets is the City's fault because the City develops the plans and approves them. She added that there was an opportunity to rectify the issue in the summer when the roads were redone, but instead, they were made to be narrower. She said that the City took small ditches with no drainage issues and turned them into four and five-foot trenches with standing water. Ms. Greg said instead of punishing all the residents for the actions of one person on Wainwright, and the mistake for the roads, she would propose that the money taken from developments around them be used for the betterment of the community such as coverage of drainage ditches, road expansion and curbs.

Brian Cartwright, 246 Wayne Wright, said both roads are narrow. He said this started over a dispute of someone parking their car in front of another person's driveway, so they couldn't get out. He said he believed the proposed solution was way out of line with the issue that was at hand. He said he could see restricting parking on one side of the street or the other, but parking being totally restricted on all the streets when there are too many people with multiple cars, is a nightmare. He asked if they were to have family over where they were to park. He said it is a solution that needs to be thought of a little more carefully because there will be a lot more complaints after the ordinance is implemented if it is not thought out.

Steve Angus, 145 Linhart, said his neighborhood has been through a lot over the last five years with constant construction. He said that when 80-year-old parents come over, they need a place to park. He said he only has a single-file driveway and no way to make his driveway bigger. He explained many houses were not built as two-lane driveways, and many folks have to park on the street. He said there is no other place to park. Mr. Angus added that many of the homes were built in the 1980s and that people with single driveways used to drive right in their front yards. He said that passing the ordinance forces people to do that or create new driveways. He said that the residents there have already been through enough. To him, this is an individual issue on Wainwright Street that needs to be addressed. He added that the ordinance proposed is a disservice to all of them. He said he is completely opposed to the ordinance and that it should be thrown out. He asked if the police had addressed the one individual issue on Wainwright. Mr. Angus stated not to force them to follow some edict that would make their lives even more miserable. He added that the construction that has been going on for the past four or five years has been enough for most of them. He said that the residents there have gone

through water issues and torn-up streets and it has been a long five years. He asked the Council not to make this any worse. He said he loves Novi, but if they have to go through something like this proposed ordinance, it will give him a very negative view. He said to please just leave them alone.

Donald Lapan, 176 Wainwright, stated most people on that street have single driveways and a single garage. He said that they cannot accommodate four or five cars to park. He said he understands the situation with emergency vehicles, but thinks it is a little extreme to shut down parking on all the streets. Mr. Lapan said that the city is going to cut down everyone that parks on their street for the 4th of July for the park, which they have been trying to cut down, but not eliminate for emergency vehicles to get through. He said that this instance this is going to totally shut down parking is not the way to go. There has to be another way of addressing the issue of parking on the streets. He said they have to be able to park. Mr. Lapan asked if they had a family function would they take up the parking at the park across the street. He said there has got to be another way to address the problem. He stated that the emergency vehicles don't need 17 feet, all they need is enough to put the outriggers out on the side of the street that it may be used. So, at best they need 12 to 15 feet. He said they have 20-foot streets and could just park on one side of them. He also stated that stripes could be put down on the width that you need for an emergency vehicle and let the people in front of those houses decide what they want to do. He added that expanded his parking in front of his home himself with a retaining wall and rock to make a parking space for his vehicle. He said there has to be another way rather than just banning parking.

Audra Racicot, 177 Linhart, said she has lived at that address for over 30 years. She stated that when you buy a home here, you know that you have parking in the street. She said it has been that way for over 40 years, and that her neighborhood is not some 'fancy new neighborhood'. She asked the council what they were thinking. She asked if they were to do this, then where they suggested people park. Ms. Racicot stated that they have a two-car driveway, and three to four cars. She said if their middle son is home from school, and they do not have a garage, then what is the plan to park. She asked what the city was going to do. She asked if they were going to make larger driveways or pay for that to be done. She stated that their driveway now couldn't be made into a double drive because the fire hydrant in their yard was moved from the corner of their yard to the front of their yard next to the driveway. She asked what they were to do as far as emergency vehicles on the road. She said her husband has driven for the Fire Department and Ambulances for over 30 years. He comes through the neighborhood a few times a week to honk. She said that getting through the neighborhood had never been an issue until the city created Pavilion Park. She stated there is not enough parking for the park, and in return, people park on both sides of their streets and take the available spots. She stated that it is not residents parking on the roads it is park users that park there. She said she suggests signage that says for residents only. Ms. Racicot added that her husband could not be at the meeting, but wanted to ask what the Council would do if this was at their house. She asked if they would be expected to park at a city park and walk through storms, rain, and snow, and that it is ridiculous. She stated it is not just an inconvenience that would last a few months, but that would become there

forever, every day. She mentioned that they should take care of the single car that started the issue. She asked again where she would have to park, and if she would get a ticket for parking at her own home. She stated that if she gets a ticket, she will not pay to park at her own home.

Kazi Afzal, 48160 Andover Dr., stated he has been a resident for over five and a half years. He thanked the people who spent time at the open house at the Novi Mosque that Sunday afternoon. He said people came from Novi, Northville, and Lansing. He stated the intention was to share information on what Muslims believe in, what Islam is, and who Muslims are. He said Muslims are regular people who, like others, love, peace, care for others, care for justice, and care for all creations. He said they are working-class people who like to help others and their neighbors and deserve peace. He stated that he came in February to both City Council Meetings and others came before in January. He said that despite listening to so many of the Novi residents who are active in the community, the Council has ignored the call for a ceasefire resolution. He said that Northville found a way to support its people by issuing a ceasefire proclamation. Afzal stated that the war in Gaza and now in Rafah is hitting home hard. He asked the Council what was stopping them from putting a ceasefire resolution into motion. He referenced the media slides he provided to the Council. He stated they show proof of torture and humiliation to an unprecedented level, endless death, and destruction of innocent people, and the ultimate example of sacrifice and protest and kills carried out by a former U.S. intelligence officer. He said that they are bombing homes without knowing how many children are inside, they are picking for maximum destruction and killing. He said not only killing is enough by the bombing and snipers, but now it is hunger. He said active serviceman Aaron Bushnell paid the ultimate price for protesting by self-emulation against what was being carried out. He has no connection to the people of Palestine or the Middle East. However, his morals did not allow him to stay silent about what was happening to the innocent people in Gaza. He added that the slides he provided were not allowed to be displayed, because they were too horrific. He said to think of the people who have been living under these circumstances as a daily event. He urged the Council to be human, activate their consciousness, and call for a ceasefire now.

Sarah Ansari stated she is a sophomore at Novi High School. She said thank you to the people who attended the open house at the Novi Mosque the previous Sunday. She explained that she stood before the Council with a heavy heart burdened by the ongoing conflict in Palestine. She said it is time for us to raise our voices and advocate for a ceasefire for the sake of humanity, compassion, and the pursuit of a peaceful resolution. She said the statistics surrounding the plight of Palestinian people are alarming and heartbreaking. Ms. Ansari continued that Palestinian children have been cut short due to the conflict and it is disgusting. She said it is our collective responsibility to speak out against any actions that lead to the death of innocent children. She said every child deserves the chance to grow up in an environment free from fear and violence beyond the loss of life. She said the Palestinian population is facing dire circumstances including the issue of starvation. The blockade and restrictions on movement have severely impacted the availability of essential resources leaving many struggling to meet their basic needs. She said this is a human rights violation and an impediment to the possibility

of a prosperous and stable future for the people of Palestine. Ms. Ansari said advocating for a ceasefire is not a political stance, it is a plea for humanity, and a call to recognize the shared pain and suffering of individuals on all sides of the conflict. She said compassion knows no borders and the pursuit of peace should be our common goal. She explained that it is crucial for the international community to come together and pressure both sides to engage in constructive dialogue. A ceasefire is the first step towards establishing an environment where negotiations can take place, grievances can be addressed, and a lasting resolution can be achieved. She said let us stand united in our commitment to ending the cycle of violence in Palestine. Together we can amplify the call for a ceasefire and advocate for the protection of innocent lives.

Radia Zaman said she will be speaking about why the people want a ceasefire resolution from the local government. She said the people know that if Novi passes the ceasefire resolution, a ceasefire will not immediately stop in the other region. However, it would create pressure on the federal government from the ground up. Every day people are contacting representatives and senators and there has been little action from them, and there has not been a call for a ceasefire, and some do not even respond. She is hopeful that if the City of Novi calls for a ceasefire, the representatives will see that that is what their constituents want. She said another reason is to show that the Council listens to their constituents. She and many other people in the community will take into consideration whether the Council is on the side of humanity or not. She said passing a ceasefire resolution will cement Novi as well as other neighboring communities on the right side of history. She explained we are watching a man-made humanitarian catastrophe on unprecedented levels. These cities, that pass a ceasefire, are not silent when witnessing children without limbs, families in freezing tents, and mothers giving birth with no anesthesia. Ms. Zaman said the war can escalate and become a wider regional war or the world may be sleepwalking into 'World War III'. She said a ceasefire would save the world from potential disaster. She requested that the City of Novi pass a ceasefire resolution calling for a ceasefire in Palestine.

Amna Husain, 22360 Barclay Dr., said she is speaking to the Council to bring attention to the humanitarian crisis that Palestinians are facing today in Gaza. She said this is not a political issue and asked the Council to look at it from a humanitarian viewpoint. She said there is a humanitarian catastrophe unfolding right now. She said all major media outlets have reported that the military campaign by Israel in Gaza has already killed more than 30,000 Palestinian people. She said the numbers are not only from citizen journalists but from the Ministry of Health in Palestine. She states the numbers are confirmed, because the New York Times, Washington Post, and CNN have all reported and confirmed these numbers. She said there are more than 70,000 injured. She said just Novi passing a ceasefire will not push President Biden to call for a ceasefire, but more than 70 cities have called for either a permanent or temporary ceasefire. She explained she is asking for a simple and permanent resolution to show support for a ceasefire in Gaza. She said there is a blockade on the strip by Israel, causing people to starve to death. She said not only are people being exterminated under the bombardment with very little aid. Ms. Husain referenced other cities such as Chicago, San Francisco, Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Northville which have issued a mayor's proclamation. She said that some of the Mayors did ask for

a bilateral ceasefire, and they are working on getting the Council to approve the resolution. She said she would ask the Council to reconsider adopting a simple resolution, asking for a permanent end to the ongoing violence in Gaza.

Amira, a second-grade elementary student, said she is asking the City Council to pass a ceasefire resolution. She said she is very worried about the kids in Gaza; they have lost everything. She said some have lost their mommies and daddies, and they're dying of starvation. She said they do not have a school either. She asked, "How would you feel if you were there right now?" She said to treat others the way you want to be treated. She states she thinks everyone forgot about that.

Farahnaz Ashtiani, 43145 Emerson Way, said she feels the need and responsibility to speak from the heart and as a person about the ceasefire. She said she is not Palestinian and is just speaking from a humanitarian perspective. She said she has had three children who have all gone to schools in Novi. She said she is an immigrant who sacrificed a lot with her family but wanted to bring them to a country that they thought was supportive, humanitarian, and believed in human rights. She said she would like to show her children that she made the right choice. They are not living in a country where they can see children and civilians being killed and bombed and are silent. She reiterated that a ceasefire in Novi would not bring an immediate ceasefire in Palestine. However, she wants to know in our conscience, but being a good example for her children, that she has done the right thing as a mother. She said every morning when she wakes up to have a cup of coffee, she thinks about how the people in Gaza have nothing to eat and how mothers cannot feed their children. She said as a parent, if your child is sick, you are desperate to take all the pain and illness and put it on your own body. She said this is a war of governments and they are asking for a ceasefire as humans of this country and citizens of Novi to show that they care for humanity. She said if people come to this country, we want to show that their voices are heard. Ms. Ashtiani said that they are requesting a ceasefire because they are humans and cannot see so much, and so many families being killed and suffering.

A member of the audience said the deafening silence emanating from the Council is nothing short of disgraceful and reprehensible. He said over the past two sessions residents spanning from the youth to the respective seniors have implored the Council to pass a resolution for a ceasefire. He urged the Council to take a moment and survey the room, to recognize the evolving demographics of the city. He explained it is crucial to listen to the community sentiments, and failing to do so may impact the successful fulfillment of the Council's responsibilities, and that the residents of Novi will bear this in mind in future elections. He said he would like to quote the reverend Munther Issac, a pastor in Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus and the ground zero of genocide. He states that Gaza today has become the moral compass of the world. He asked if we should be surprised by the continued silence. He said if you are not appalled and shaken to the core by the atrocities unfolding in Gaza, there is something fundamentally wrong with your humanity. He said as Christians, they cannot afford to be complacent in the face of genocide that's weaponized by the bible. He said it is a horror to those who have not called for a ceasefire and that he feels bad for them. He explained despite the immense

blow they have endured; Palestinians will rise again from the mind and the midst of destruction. He asked how those who are complicit will recover from the murders. He said the City of Novi is not a military hierarchy, but a body entrusted by the community. He stated if the Mayor hesitates to make the right decision today, then others representing the City must stand up and demand a vote on the ceasefire resolution. He stated that as someone who refuses to be complicit, he implores each Council Member to do the right thing.

Timothy Hasse, 23873 Pheasant Run, said he grew up in Northville and is now a resident of Novi. He said he worked closely with the Northville Mayor in the Mayoral proclamation pushing the City Council for a ceasefire resolution, thinking that would be better. But the Mayor talked with him about how they can make a bilateral ceasefire, calling for peace about figuring out how to come together and deal with the rising hate and violence that is going on in our world and local communities. He said there is a rise in antisemitism, islamophobia, and hate crimes. He explained that we all need to come together and cannot do that with violence and war. He said you can not tell kids to solve problems with words and not to fight at school, but they turn on a TV as they are growing up and see people dying from bombs coming from their country. He said this needs to be inclusive and about peace, that this is a humanitarian catastrophe. He said he would call this an ethnic cleansing that goes back 75 years and there are 2 million people in jeopardy of being starved to death. He said children have started dying of starvation and malnutrition. He said this is also bad for Israel. The only hostages that have been exchanged were during the humanitarian pause during the ceasefire. He added that more hostages have been killed by friendly fire from bombs or while trying to wave white flags. He said you have someone in power who is just carrying out this war to stay out of jail, facing bribery charges and being protested by hundreds of thousands. He said this is bad for our county and for our U.S. Troops. One of them just set themselves on fire, three were killed in Jordan, and they have been attacked hundreds of times by drone strikes from rebel groups that are holdovers from Yemen that have been bombed. He stated this is about finding a new way and coming together in our local communities for our country, as well as for the people of Gaza.

Mubashir Fazil, Cheltenham Estates, said he appreciates all of the Novi Council members who attended the open house at the Novi Mosque. He said that members of the audience have been here for the past three meetings and while they can surely see that they are heard, it appeared as though the Council is not really listening to them. The silence from the City Council is deafening. He said everything that they had heard, and all of the facts had been laid before the Council. He said that in personal chats, a Council Member may have expressed frustration about what was happening in Gaza, but the inaction from the Council as a whole is deafening and saddening. He said he would like to highlight that recent developments with the uncommitted movement during the recent presidential elections showed the reality of how the waters are feeling about the events happening in Gaza. He said he would assure you this is not ending here as the voters of Novi are watching how the City Council is acting and the response to this will be loud and clear. He said he requested that one of the City Council Members call for a

ceasefire in Gaza and table it. He said he would like to see how they vote as individuals as it is important to know where they stand.

Alia Malik, 47530 Alpine Dr., said the Council had received some of the most horrific images coming out of Gaza. There were kids as young as a few months old, trembling with fear, some with their heads and legs dangling out of the rubble, and some with brains, intestines, and other vital organs flowing out of their bodies. She explained that as a result of the white phosphorous bombs that were dropped on the civilian population, parents were forced to write their children's names on their hands and their legs. The bomb is so forceful and so massive that limbs are torn and blown meters away from bodies. She said the pictures show children becoming orphans, parents burying their children, a woman who had tried to conceive and then lost her child and husband, a man who was sniped while looking for food for his family, and countless amputations. She said there are 10 amputations per day. A child had her leg amputated on the kitchen table with a kitchen knife because the Israeli forces had seized her home and were not allowed to go to the hospital five minutes away. She said Gaza's streets once pulsated with life and is now flowing with blood, bodies, and mass graves. She said the northern part of the region is being starved, and occupying forces are not allowing in any humanitarian aid. Ms. Malik said there are images of a boy drinking sewage water, and families eating bread made of animal feed and grass. She stated that 15 children as of right now have died due to starvation. She said one of the images is of Aaron Bushnell, an active Air Force serviceman who echoed what all of them are feeling. Malik stated that the scale of human slaughter that we are seeing in Gaza does not give us an option to stay silent. She said this is why he engaged in one of the most violent forms of protest, self-emulation in front of the Israeli embassy on Sunday, February 25th. She said the genocide in Gaza is a humanitarian cause, that should be number one on the agenda. She said it is all about the common humanity and love between all people regardless of race, religion, identity, political opinions, gender, and age.

Rania Masri, a Novi resident, said she grew up in Michigan. She said she stood before the Council as a mother, Muslim, and Arab American who is deeply concerned for the safety of her family and community. She said that for the past six months, her neighbors, friends, and community members have been living in fear for their loved ones in Gaza. She said they are traumatized by the pictures and videos and are grieving for the loss of countless family members. She said there were 112 Palestinians killed after waiting for flour to feed their children, and that hits close to home. She said her son was scrolling through the names of children killed and counted the instances he saw his own name. A child has been killed in Gaza every 10 minutes since then, and the list is over 12,501. She stated children are dying of starvation with trucks filled with aid waiting at the border for weeks due to the blockading of food, water, and medical supplies. She said in her home, they talk about how they should not waste food while Palestinians are running out of animal feed and bird seed to feed their children. She said that her sense of security was further shaken when a man in Farmington Hills was arrested for planning violence against Arabs. She said that learning about a Palestinian boy, the same age as her son, who was stabbed in his own home, and the deadly attack against three young men wearing keffiyehs has heightened their fears. She said this is a local issue. As a result, at her child's

school with a significant number of Arab Americans, there was a security audit conducted and private security was hired. She said that parents are questioning the safety of their children playing outside. She said that advocating for a bilateral ceasefire and a stand against hate and discrimination is a reassurance to the community that their safety and inclusion are valued. She said people in Michigan voted uncommitted as part of a protest against the attack on Gaza, including residents of Novi. She explained that this resolution is a call for peace, and there is no time to waste in getting it passed. She urged the Council to consider this resolution not as a political choice, but as a moral imperative and necessary step towards ensuring that everyone in the community feels safe and included. She said the actions of the Council will echo in our community's history.

Kenneth Duke, Novi resident, said that he has less of a speech and more of a proposal for the City. He said that in his time living here, there was a gap in protection when it came to racial discrimination within the city. He said his proposal is for a human rights commission. He stated that there are examples in Lansing and Detroit, but not in Novi. He explained there are ordinances as well that protect against racial discrimination that do not exist in Novi. He said that local law enforcement isn't prepared to properly address these things. He said that one would have to go to them for some type of support, but that the support is very lacking. He said he doesn't know what the process is to potentially partner with the city or for the city to implement something of this nature. He offered he would like to utilize his experience, unfortunately, a poor one, to keep this from happening to anyone else in the future. He asked how we are to address any other egregious grievances if they can't be addressed in the immediate vicinity. He asked how the Council members know that they can address these individual matters. He said if you don't know what your blind spots are those commissions and ordinances would help fill those gaps. He stated that the least you can do is educate yourself in the best way possible. He said the quality of the materials you have to educate yourself determines how well you can do your job right. You can educate yourself only so much if you don't have what's necessary in front of you. He asked if there were plans to implement a human rights commission or ordinances for racial discrimination, and if not, how does one go about doing that. Mayor Fischer reminded Mr. Duke that the Council's public comment forum is not a question-and-answer format but offered for Mr. Duke to reach out to the City Manager's office for directions on how to pursue different opportunities. Mr. Duke thanked Mayor Fischer for the response and said he had already reached out to the City Manager's office, and their direction was to go to the Council meeting and speak to the Council. He said that it's unfortunate this is the way that in larger society, the feedback loops run. He said you are sent from one place to another to address a thing and to get protection and safety and therefore you're pointed in another direction. He said that the Manager's office sent him to the Council and the Council is sending him to the Manager's office. He added that the Manager's office is supposed to be following up with the Police, but he goes to the Police, and nobody has answers. He said therefore he is required to endure being slammed up against police cars, suffocated, and brutally assaulted, which is usually deemed racial discrimination.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

CM 24-02-29 Moved by Casey, seconded by Thomas; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

- A. Approve Minutes of:
February 12, 2024 - Regular Meeting
- B. Approval of the final payment to Fonson Company, Inc. for the Lakeshore Park Pedestrian Tunnel Replacement project, in the amount of \$30,134.74, plus interest earned on retainage.
- C. Consideration of approval to award engineering services to OHM Advisors for the preparation of Novi Ice Arena HVAC Replacement Project, in the amount of \$44,000.
- D. Approval to award engineering design services to AECOM for the design of 13 Mile Road Rehabilitation from Meadowbrook Rd to M-5, in the amount of \$53,853.92
- E. Approval to purchase a 2024 Intimidator 15XP wood chipper from Bandit Industries, Inc. through the MIDeal Contract, in the amount of \$55,810 and a 2024 14' Poynette Chipper Body from Truck and Trailer Specialties, Inc. through the Rochester Hills RFP, in the amount of \$17,705.
- F. Approval of the final payment to Springline Excavating, LLC. for the 12 Mile Paving (Medina to City Limits) project, in the amount of \$98,799.28, plus interest earned on retainage.
- G. Approval of participating in the Opioid Litigation settlements with McKinsey & Company, Approving the Bankruptcy organization of opioid manufacturer Endo International plc, and authorizing acceptance of additional opioid settlements and plans.
- H. Enter Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting of March 4, 2024, to discuss City Assessor Performance and confidential communications from the City's Legal Counsel.
- I. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1151

Roll call vote on CM 24-02-29

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

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:

- 1. Consideration of approval to award a unit price contract to Scodeller Construction, Inc., the sole bidder, for a Concrete Joint Repair Program, in an estimated annual amount of \$400,000, for a term of one year with three one-year renewal options.**

CM 24-02-30 Moved by Smith, seconded by Thomas: MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Approval to award a unit price contract to Scodeller Construction, Inc., the sole bidder, for a Concrete Joint Repair Program, in an estimated annual amount of \$400,000, for a term of one year with three one-year renewal options.

Roll call vote on CM 24-02-30

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

Nays: None

2. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

City Clerk Hanson provided the results of the ballots. Mary Angela Winter was appointed, full term, to the beatification commission. Peter Winter was appointed, an alternate position, to the Board of Review. Lee Mamola was reappointed, full term, to the Construction Board of Appeals.

- 3. Approval of Traffic Control Orders 24-01 through 24-04 for No Parking signs restricting parking on both sides of Wainwright Street, Linhart Street, Martin Avenue, and Paramount Street.**

City Manager Cardenas said in November of last year, a Novi Police Sergeant was working on a situation on Linhart. After handling some of the concerns, the sergeant recommended that the City of Novi prohibit on-street parking on both sides of the above-mentioned streets. City Manager Cardenas cited that the streets have inadequate room for on-street parking and vehicles are forced to park completely in unapproved travel lanes. On-street parking severely hinders public safety response, especially by the fire department in January. He said residents communicated, both in the meeting and via written correspondence, with the City Council last month requesting parking be limited due to public safety concerns. He added that this matter is completely up to the Council's discretion. City Manager Cardenas said that if there is a want for having parking on one side of the street or the other, that is an option as well. He stated the residents expressing concern were mainly from Wainwright, but this is an issue on Linhart as well. He said there is currently parking on both sides of the roads, and there is very limited spacing. He said it is very condensed for someone to get through there.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked Chief Zinser to please approach for a question. She said that the City Manager mentioned that what they are reacting to and where this is coming from, are the requests that they have received from the residents on Wainwright looking to add a fire lane. With parking on both sides, challenges are getting equipment and

specifically public safety equipment down. She said one of the challenges they have heard from residents is many of them have narrow driveways and need on-street parking at some level. Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked Chief Zinser if we would still be able to meet some of the public safety needs that we have to be able to get our equipment down the streets if parking was enabled on one side and restricted parking on the opposite side. She asked if that would help with getting equipment down and getting the space they need for fire trucks.

Chief Zinser said we need to first understand how we got here. He said he believes this is more of a neighbor issue between two neighbors on Wainwright Street, and that it is something they have been dealing with for quite some time now. He added that the situation has gone in many different directions, some of which cannot be discussed at the Council meeting due to privacy concerns. Chief Zinser replied that parking on one side of the street would certainly leave ample room for emergency vehicles to get through. He said now, the question is which side of the street do you put the signs on. He said that would have to be looked at further. Chief Zinser said to answer the question, yes, parking on one side of the street would certainly allow more room for emergency vehicles to get through.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey thanked Chief Zinser for his answer. She said she recognizes that this has been an issue that has been ongoing for some time, and there is a conversation for the one residence specifically. She said what she was really looking at was the fact that the Council did get a request from residents on Wainwright to look at adding a fire lane. She referenced the photo displayed and said it shows someone parking on their lawn. She said she wants to make sure her understanding is correct that even if they put in a 'no parking lane' people can still park on their own lawn. Chief Zinser said that is correct, people could still park on their own lawns. Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she has gone back and forth in her mind on this issue because the request came from one street, Wainwright, but she appreciates that the staff looked at all of the streets in that neighborhood. The staff reported the roads in the neighborhood all fall under the same opportunities and restrictions as they are all narrow roads. She said if they are going to look at making public improvements and public safety for the one road, they should be looking at doing that for all. She added that she wasn't sure if some of the residents knew that this was happening, because there is no requirement for us to do any kind of public notice other than putting out the agenda. She said she would like to make sure that there is a chance to get feedback from the residents on some of those other streets to make sure the Council understands their perspective. She stated she believes we need to do something to make sure that those roads are passable to vehicles. She does not believe there needs to be no parking on both sides. She said she respects the opinion of the sergeant and the opinion of the staff but wants to recognize that residents do need on-street parking. She said she would be more in favor of seeing a proposal come back with a recommendation to put a fire lane on one side or no parking on one side but enable parking on the opposite side. She said, her initial reaction was that the no-parking zone should be on the same side as the fire hydrants. Then she heard someone say it would block the mailboxes. She said that wasn't necessarily a consideration she had in her mind, and now it is something she is going to be asking staff to go back and give the right

recommendation on if the Council decides to move forward with honoring a request to put a fire lane or no parking on one side of the road. She stated she would like to know which side of the road is best served for residents from a public safety perspective. She would be interested in understanding from staff if the recommendation is that they put 'No Parking' signs up. She said she would like to understand what the opportunities are to stripe the roads, to paint the roads to have a big 'No Parking' on the roads. She said when there are visitors to the parks, or someone is going to miss the 'No Parking' sign. Once the first person misses the no parking sign, all of the other cars are going to think it must be okay to park on this side of the road, and this will defeat the purpose of having a fire lane. She said she would like to understand if we can stripe the road and paint 'No Parking' in the no parking zone so that people are aware that it truly is a no parking zone. Versus, just hoping and trusting that people are going to see the signs. She explained otherwise, you will have officers responding and ticketing because there are people parked in a no-parking zone. She said she would like to make sure that they have a really good plan for communication with the residents in the neighborhood, so they understand what is happening, what the Council has talked about, and what is being considered, and open the opportunity for feedback.

CM 24-02-31 Moved by Casey, seconded by Fischer: MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Motion to postpone to a future meeting to enable staff to give feedback and recommendations.

Member Thomas said she had a few questions. She stated that the neighborhood and the roads have been there for a very long time. She asked if there is any information on responses that have happened in the past where we couldn't get an emergency vehicle where they needed to be due to a parking situation. She asked if we had any in actuality that were occurring. She stated she was not aware of any issues responding to that area. She also stated that she noticed the streets are varied widths. She said most of them are 20 feet or more, and Paramount Street is only 13 feet wide. She explained that what might be appropriate for Paramount Street might not be appropriate for the other streets, because there is more space available to them. She said you have to be able to have guests over, and you have to be able to support the space for your family. Otherwise, it creates a tremendous burden to the people who live in that neighborhood if you don't give them some of the street parking that they have had for all of this time. Member Thomas said she would also like to know what the least restrictive option is that would serve the community and be able to give them what they need but also be able to solve the problem at hand and make sure that our safety department needs are met, and personnel have what they need to be able to navigate through that community safely while accounting for the differences on the other roads. She added the point that the parking for the parks may need to be reevaluated. She said if people can't park in the street, they also can't necessarily use the lot when the lots are getting overfilled. She said whether there is enough parking for the park is something that needs to be considered to get more people off the roads. She also said another consideration is that the lot could be made such that residents and guests of residents are the people who are allowed to

park there, and if you do not belong in that community, then you do not belong there. She reiterated that she would like to look at whatever solution is the least restrictive with the problems at hand.

Member Staudt asked if there was an ordinance about parking campers on the street and if there was a time limit for that. Chief Zinser said he is sure there is but would need to research it. Member Staudt said he finds it ironic that the photo example used had a camper in the street. He stated that if the camper has been there for a week, month, two months, or permanently, he is sure there are City ordinances to deal with it. He said that he read the packet regarding the vehicle that brought this whole conversation up, and if we enforced our current ordinances then the streets would stay clear, and this discussion would not be needed. He said it is up to us as a City to make sure that the cars on the roads are not sitting there for two months. He said if we don't have an ordinance that says that, then we need to get one, because those are the types of things that resolve these kinds of situations. He said if the Council decides to postpone this item, then great. He said we need to have some kind of a consistent pattern of parking in this development. He explained that the more he sees and the more he hears, it makes him think we need to figure out if we are enforcing our ordinances, and if these steps are really necessary. He asked if it was more of a government overreach that the City goes into neighborhoods and tells people how to live.

Member Heintz said that as a person who lived in Chicago for eight years, he understands the struggles that come with trying to find street parking and the idea that someone shuffles out of a spot and puts out a cherry, and we don't want anything close to that here. He added he would just be generally curious as to if other areas or anywhere else in Novi has the potential to be identified as being a narrow road, and if it would need to be assessed in a similar fashion. He said you would want to be proactive rather than reactive if something bad happens. He said he is supporting the potential need for that if there is a potential risk. He said the simple question would be is this something that needs to be evaluated in other areas. Chief Zinser responded that if the Council is talking about changing an ordinance or implementing 'No Parking' in one particular area, it should be looked at for all of the narrower streets in the city to determine if there is a potential problem and get in front of it. Member Heintz asked if there are currently areas of Novi where that are specific to those residents. Chief Zinser responded that he would have to look deeper into the question of what streets that may apply to.

City Manager Cardenas added that there is not currently an available program that is required for only residents and is publicly held. He said there might be private properties that have that kind of restriction. However, there is nothing on our public streets that only caters to the residents of that area. He added that he could look further into that to confirm it for the City Council.

Mayor Fischer asked Kristin Kolb, City Attorney for her opinion on the matter. He said he doesn't know if they can decipher who can and cannot park on a public road. He said he doesn't see how that can be legal. She responded that it is probably not legal, and it would also be very difficult to enforce. She asked if the plan of action would be to knock

on every door and ask to see ID. Mayor Fischer asked to please include that in any information. He said trying to go through public streets and determine which people can park there and who can't, he cannot imagine the City Attorney would find that legal.

Member Smith said he would like to amplify what Member Thomas said about parking from the parks. He said we need to study that, so we are not using the neighborhood as overflow for our parks. He said he would like to see some information on the number of parking spaces at Pavilion Shore Park, and if there is a way to determine how much overflow is going into the neighborhood.

Member Gurumurthy said she is in agreement with what she is hearing, especially with the less restrictive option, and not introducing something when the problem was just one-fold and trying to expand this over multiple streets. She said she also heard that there was some kind of road work that was done across these streets and that was also a moment when there could have been some kind of evaluation and expansion for the width. She said she would like to understand the details of when we do projects like that and if there is also some kind of assessment about whether it needs expanding. City Manager Cardenas said they always look at the whole situation they have at hand, but in terms of creating a whole new stormwater system where there were curbs and gutters and lowering the street, that was considered. He said the ditches were improved to be able to improve the flow of the whole area. He said there is a possibility of covering all of the ditches and creating a culvert or piping to provide a little more space on the other side, but you are not gaining that much. He said they are also considering the right-of-way, so that prohibits how much right-of-way we have. He said we cannot really gain more of that in terms of expanding the roads, because we just don't own that. He added that going from house to house would be prohibitive. City Manager Cardenas confirmed with Construction Engineer, Aaron Staup if there was anything additional, and there was not.

Roll call vote on CM 24-02-31

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

Nays: None

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS: None

AUDIENCE COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said the committee met on the 13th of February, per the normal process, where they meet in advance of the budget work getting done that will come to Council in April. She said there are no significant changes to the CIP Plan that has been in place. The suggestion is to send it to the planning committee for review. She said if they get feedback, and if approved by the planning committee, then it will get included in the budget and as a Council, they will see it updated in April.

2. Older Adult Needs Committee

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said the Older Adult Needs Committee met last Monday. They had fielded a survey two weeks prior using FlashVote. She said they were trying to understand from some of our residents what their interests were. She explained she pulled some of the needs related to a senior center or multigenerational center. She said the results are available if you signed up for FlashVote. They are working to make sure the results get posted on the Older Adults Needs Committee's page on the city website, so that everyone can see them. She said they may have follow-up questions that they field in the not-too-distant future. The next meeting is March 11th at 5:30 PM in the Police Training Center.

3. Rules Committee

Mayor Fischer said the Rules Committee has also met and continues to move along, mostly rolling into their goal-type sessions. He said hopefully they would meet one more time and get the rules in front of the Council soon thereafter.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES:

1. Council Review – PRO

Member Staudt stated in a decision they made regarding a recent development; it became clear that the overlays that are out there circumvent the PRO process. He suggested that the Council send the Ordinance Review Committee to add overlays to the early review process. Mayor Fischer asked if this would be to look at other zonings that would then follow similarly to the PRO where they get early input as a Council. Member Staudt said yes. He explained that in that recent development situation that had gone on for months, and then it came to them, and they decided; he thinks they would have found it to be much fairer if they were able to weigh in early in the process.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 P.M.

/s/

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

/s/

Justin Fischer, Mayor

/s/

Transcribed by Alyssa Craigie,
Administrative Assistant

Date approved: March 18, 2024