

**CITY OF OWOSSO  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 19, 2022  
7:30 P.M.  
VIRGINIA TEICH CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** MAYOR ROBERT J. TEICH, JR.

**OPENING PRAYER:** PASTOR KENNETH HERBRUCK  
OWOSSO ASSEMBLY OF GOD

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** MAYOR ROBERT J. TEICH, JR.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Robert J. Teich, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem Susan J. Osika,  
Councilmembers Jerome C. Haber, Daniel A. Law, Emily S.  
Olson, and Nicholas L. Pidek.

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Janae L. Fear.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Mayor Pro-Tem Osika to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion supported by Councilmember Law and concurred in by unanimous vote.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 5, 2022**

Motion by Mayor Pro-Tem Osika to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 5, 2022 as presented.

Motion supported by Councilmember Law and concurred in by unanimous vote.

**PROCLAMATIONS / SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

**Tribute to Mayor Christopher Eveleth**

85<sup>th</sup> District State Representative Ben Frederick and Mayor Robert J. Teich, Jr. presented tributes to immediate past Mayor Christopher T. Eveleth for his years of service to the City.

Representative Frederick, a life-long friend of the former mayor, presented Chris with the following as a framed official tribute signed by himself and 24<sup>th</sup> District State Senator Tom Barrett, honoring him for his service to the City:

**SPECIAL TRIBUTE**

**To**

**CHRISTOPHER T. EVELETH**  
Mayor of Owosso

*LET IT BE KNOWN, That it is a sincere pleasure to join with friends, family and the wider Owosso community in celebrating the honorable service of Mayor Chris Eveleth as he concludes his work on the Owosso City Council.*

*Chris Eveleth has spent the majority of his adult life serving the people of his hometown in various capacities. He began his governmental involvement more than thirteen years ago in his selection as an appointee to the Owosso City Council. He then conducted a surgical grassroots campaign across the city which culminated in his election to the body in 2009. He would go on to win four elections in total and was selected by his fellow councilmembers to serve as mayor pro-tem for three years and, in 2016, for the first of what would be three terms as mayor.*

*Chris extolled a culture of professionalism at city hall and modeled a spirit of volunteerism in his daily activities worthy of the legacies of mentors such as Carl Rossman and former Mayor James Capitan. During his long service on the council, he was most proud of the record infrastructure investments made during his tenure, a successful millage campaign he orchestrated in support of Owosso's parks and historic assets, and the selection of Owosso native Nathan Henne as city manager. In addition to his duties as mayor, Chris helped to cement the Glow Owosso celebration through his early administration of the parade as well as his envisioning of the Ice Queen competition which has raised over one hundred thousand dollars for local charities in the years since. He considered his work administering the EBT Double Up Food Bucks program at the Downtown Owosso Farmer's Market as some of the most fulfilling he undertook. Chris was also*

*involved for several years on the Kiwanis high school scholarship committee, numerous city boards and commissions and a regular volunteer at community events.*

*IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE, Therefore, This document is signed and dedicated to honor and thank Christopher T. Eveleth for his work as Mayor of Owosso. Let it be resolved that we remain grateful for the decision Mayor Eveleth made so long ago to give sacrificially in service to his community over many years and we look forward to celebrating his future service in whatever form it may take. May he begin his next season of life secure in the knowledge that his contributions continue to ripple outward throughout a more vibrant, giving and prudently managed city.*

*The One Hundred and First Legislature  
At Lansing  
Monday, November 21, 2022*

Mayor Robert J. Teich, Jr. continued the honors reading aloud the following proclamation:

**A PROCLAMATION  
OF THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF THE CITY OF OWOSSO, MICHIGAN  
RECOGNIZING THE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE OF  
CHRISTOPHER T. EVELETH**

WHEREAS, Christopher Eveleth was originally appointed to City Council in May of 2009 to fill a vacancy; in November of that year he was then elected by the voters of the City, the only incumbent in that election to retain their seat; he was then elected again in 2011, 2016, and 2018, serving a total of over thirteen years; and

WHEREAS, recognizing his leadership skills, his Council peers selected him to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem in 2013, then promoted him to the office of Mayor in 2016, keeping him in that role in 2018, and once again in 2020; each time by unanimous vote; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his service on City Council, Chris also participated as a Council representative on the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Historical Commission, SATA, and the Main Street/Downtown Development Authority Board; and

WHEREAS, though he held seats on numerous boards, the thirteen-year veteran never relished the idea of spending any extraneous time in a meeting and still proudly holds the record for leading the shortest City Council meeting at 1 minute and 45 seconds; and

WHEREAS, his calm, confident leadership style, coupled with his expertise in meeting facilitation, offered a space for all to be heard, and even disagree; enabling him to guide Council through contentious meetings and difficult decisions until a consensus could be reached by all; and

WHEREAS, despite the serious nature with which Chris took his role, he was not one to miss an opportunity for levity, using his quick wit (and extremely white smile) to harness the power of humor to lighten the mood, bring people together, and grow the bonds of the community; and

WHEREAS, outside of boards and commissions meetings, Chris continued to give back to the community spending significant time helping to establish and grow the Glow Owosso event, including supervising the Glow Parade and co-founding the Ice Queen contest, which raised over \$100,000 for local organizations during his tenure; and

WHEREAS, he also contributed to the success of the re-launched Downtown Owosso Farmers' Market where he could be found on any given Saturday administering the EBT program and chatting with friends and neighbors along Exchange Street, his affable personality making all feel welcome; and

WHEREAS, through the years Chris consistently demonstrated the dedication, resourcefulness and integrity necessary to be an exceptional elected official, and his extensive experience and calm, measured leadership was an asset to both the city and its staff and will be sorely missed; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of this Office that Christopher Eveleth's Honorable and Distinguished Public Service to the City of Owosso be recognized.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that I, Robert J. Teich, Jr., Mayor of the City of Owosso, on behalf of the City Council and the Citizens of Owosso, hereby recognize and thank Chris for his years of dedicated service to the Owosso community and further express our sincere wishes to him as he embarks on the next chapter in his life.

Proclaimed this 19<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2022.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

Shelly Ochodnicki, owner of Downtown Hound on Corunna Avenue, said there is a private group in town, of which two Councilwomen are members, that is actively boycotting her business because of her political beliefs. She pointed to an August 2022 Facebook post from a member of the group as evidence. She said her business is open to everyone and she will not sit back and watch it be destroyed.

Mark Drayton, 116 N. Ball Street, U.S. Army and Marine veteran and member of several veteran's related organizations, said he feels that everyone should stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. He said Councilmember Olson is trying to change the community and he has started the recall process against her. He said he will be present at every City Council meeting and will be her "worst enemy".

Pastor Gary Beal, pastor of the Church of Jubilee and president of the Owosso Ministerial Association, read aloud the letter the Association sent to City Council firmly denouncing the recent threat of violence against a Councilmember. He said the Association is concerned for the safety of everyone in the community and they pray for the City and its residents each day. He ended his comments by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

Cayden Whiteherse, 3409 Krouse Road, said he has spent significant time with Shelly Ochodnicki, she is a wonderful person, and Owosso is her life. He said the boycott is hurting Ms. Ochodnicki's business, her family, and her reputation. He suggested discussion between the parties to help resolve the situation.

Eddie Urban, 601 Glenwood Avenue, gave Councilmember Olson his own personal citation of merit recognizing her service on the City Council. He encouraged everyone to just love one another.

Devin Ackels, 627 Alger Avenue, thanked Councilmember Olson for standing up for "the other" in society. He said people need to step back and examine their own behaviors, as not accepting other speaks volumes about one's own faith.

Rob VanGorder, owner of Grease Rag Customs on Corunna Avenue, said he moved here with his family to get away from a bad environment. He asked why the person armed with a gun that tried to break into The Avenue Bar and Grill is still walking around the community.

Stacey Jameson, 425 N. Water Street, asked for civility as people express their opinions in public. She it was scary for someone to openly threaten a councilmember at a meeting and asked that Councilmembers make a statement asking for civility and acceptance of others.

Councilmember Law said there used to be a time when people could agree to disagree and the whole situation with the boycott of a local business is disappointing and damaging to the families supported by that business. He said Downtown Hound is a good business and the actions of the Fair Mavens are alienating the very people they want to persuade.

Mayor Teich thanked all those that volunteer their time to serve of the City's various boards and commissions. He said he was very appreciative of the over 70 people serving on those boards and helping make Owosso the community that it is. He encouraged anyone interested in serving on a board or commission to contact him.

Responding to Mr. VanGorder's question, Public Safety Director Lenkart indicated that the Michigan State Police are conducting the investigation into the attempted armed break-in referenced.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Pidek to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

**Bid Award - Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)**. Approve bid award and authorize contract with Municipal Emergency Services, Inc. for the purchase of 16 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus units and related equipment for use in the Fire Department in the amount of \$150,300.00, utilizing previously approved American Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA), and further authorize payment to the contractor upon satisfactory delivery of the equipment as follows:

### **RESOLUTION NO. 191-2022**

#### **AUTHORIZING THE PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT WITH MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY SERVICES, INC. FOR SIXTEEN SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS (SCBA) AND RELATED EQUIPMENT**

WHEREAS, the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan operates a fire department requiring the use of SCBA's; and

WHEREAS, the replacement schedule calls for the replacement of these units in 2022-2023 budget year; and

WHEREAS, the City of Owosso sought and received one bid on December 12, 2022, for sixteen (16) SCBA's and related equipment from Municipal Emergency Services Inc., Southbury, Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, the bid has been analyzed to determine it is a responsible and responsive bid that is in the city's best interest.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan that:

FIRST: it has heretofore determined that purchasing sixteen (16) SCBA's and related equipment from Municipal Emergency Services, Inc., is advisable, necessary and in the public interest.

SECOND: the accounts payable department is authorized to submit payment to Municipal Emergency Services, Inc. in the amount of \$150,300.00.

THIRD: the above expense shall be paid from the Fire Division Equipment fund 101-336-978.000 using previously appropriated ARPA funds in the amount of \$150,300.00 upon satisfactory receipt of the equipment.

**Boards and Commissions Appointments.** Approve the following Mayoral Boards and Commissions appointments:

Name	Board/Commission	Term Expires
Mike Selleck*	Board of Review	12-31-2027
Debra Adams*	Owosso Historical Commission	12-30-2025
Janae Fear*	Local Development Finance Authority/ Brownfield Redevelopment Authority	11-21-2026
Robert J. Teich, Jr.*	Zoning Board of Appeals	11-21-2025
Lisa Gallinger	Downtown Historic District Commission	06-30-2025

\* Indicates reappointment

Motion supported by Councilmember Law and concurred in by unanimous vote.

### **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

#### **New Year's Eve Fireworks Permit Request**

City Manager Nathan R. Henne explained that the City is required by law to seek formal approval from the state to hold a fireworks show in the downtown. He also indicated that the City's insurance carrier has requested the following language be inserted into section D of the Contract Agreement with Wolverine Fireworks Display to provide clarity on the types and amount of insurance coverage required:

*D. Professional agrees to provide Sponsor with **proof of Workers Compensation insurance in compliance with all State of Michigan Statutes and Liability Insurance in the amount of \$10,000,000 per occurrence. All individuals/entities listed on the certificate of insurance will be deemed an additional insured per this contract, and coverage will be considered primary to any other insurance held by Sponsor.***

He asked that Council consider approving the application contingent upon the inclusion of the stated language in the contract with Wolverine.

Motion by Councilmember Pidek to approve the request of Owosso Main Street/DDA for permission to hold a public fireworks display operated by Wolverine Fireworks Display, Inc. during the City's annual New Year's Eve event, contingent upon the inclusion of language in the Contract Agreement with Wolverine Fireworks Display clarifying the insurance coverage required, as follows:

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 192-2022**

#### **APPROVING A PUBLIC FIREWORKS DISPLAY PERMIT FOR WOLVERINE FIREWORKS DISPLAY, INC**

WHEREAS, Owosso Main Street / Downtown Development Authority holds an annual New Year's Eve celebration which includes a fireworks display at midnight; and

WHEREAS, as the legislative body of the City of Owosso, the City Council is required by Public Act 256 of 2011 to approve any public fireworks displays within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, an application has been made by the OMS/DDA and operator Wolverine Fireworks Display, Inc. requesting a permit for a public fireworks display to be held during the New Year's Eve event; and said application has been reviewed by staff; and

WHEREAS, this is a budgeted item from 248-705-818.000; and

WHEREAS, the City's insurance carrier has requested that language clarifying the types and amounts of insurance coverage be inserted into the contract with the fireworks vendor and display operator.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan that:

FIRST: it has theretofore determined that it is advisable, necessary and in the public interest to approve a public display fireworks permit for the annual downtown New Year's Eve event, with Wolverine Fireworks Display, Inc. serving as operator, contingent upon the insertion of the following language (noted in bold text) into the Contract Agreement with the display operator clarifying the insurance coverage required:

*D. Professional agrees to provide Sponsor with **proof of Workers Compensation insurance in compliance with all State of Michigan Statutes and Liability Insurance in the amount of \$10,000,000 per occurrence. All individuals/entities listed on the certificate of insurance will be deemed an additional insured per this contract, and coverage will be considered primary to any other insurance held by Sponsor.***

SECOND: the Accounts Payable department is authorized to pay the operator in the amount of \$3,000.00 upon the successful conduct of the display.

THIRD: the above expense shall be paid from Account No. 248-705-818000.

Motion supported by Mayor Pro-Tem Osika.

Roll Call Vote.

AYES: Councilmember Pidek, Mayor Pro-Tem Osika, Councilmembers Haber, Olson, Law, and Mayor Teich.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Fear.

#### **Amendment to Personnel Policy Manual**

City Manager Henne indicated this is the first of several changes staff will be suggesting to the Personnel Policy Manual in the coming months. But, in light of the recent threats of violence to a Councilmember, the proposed amendment to the workplace violence policy has become rather emergent in nature. The proposed changes would specify the definition of "violence in the workplace" and grant the City Manager, or their designee, the authority necessary to remediate acts of violence in the workplace, including the power to remove violators from City property.

Motion by Mayor Pro-Tem Osika to approve the following changes to the Personnel Policy Manual regarding workplace safety, as follows:

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 193-2022**

#### **APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL REGARDING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

WHEREAS, the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan, adopts and maintains the City of Owosso Personnel Policy Manual that sets forth guidelines and general information regarding the treatment, rights, obligations, and relations of people employed by the City of Owosso and those whom it serves and hosts; and

WHEREAS, the Workplace Violence section of the aforementioned Policy has not been updated in many years; and

WHEREAS, recent events have necessitated a clear understanding of the requirements incumbent upon any soul employed, visiting, conducting business with, or representing the City of

Owosso, or of whom are served by the City, pertaining to required conduct and the preclusion of violence, threats, threatening behavior, and violent acts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan that:

FIRST: it has theretofore determined that it is advisable, necessary and in the public interest to amend the Violence in the Workplace provisions of Section F, On-the-Job, of the City's Personnel Policy Manual to address and further define prohibitions against violence on City property as follows:

**Violence in the Workplace**

The City strongly believes that all employees should be treated with dignity and respect. Acts of violence will not be tolerated. Any instances of violence must be reported to the employee's supervisor and/or the Human Resources Department. All complaints will be fully investigated.

The City will promptly respond to any incident or suggestion of violence. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

*It is the City of Owosso's intention to provide a safe and secure environment for its employees and those persons visiting its facilities. The City will not tolerate threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals. Any person who makes threats, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts will be removed from City property and prohibited from returning without authorization of the City Manager.*

SECOND: the City of Owosso Personnel Policy Manual, updated December 19, 2022, is hereby approved and adopted with immediate effect.

Motion supported by Councilmember Haber.

Roll Call Vote.

AYES: Councilmember Olson, Mayor Pro-Tem Osika, Councilmembers Pidek, Haber, Law, and Mayor Teich.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Fear.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy. Michigan Public Policy Survey, December 2022.  
Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. November 2022 Building Department Report.  
Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. November 2022 Code Violations Report.  
Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. November 2022 Inspections Report.  
Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. November 2022 Certificates Issued Report.  
Kevin D. Lenkart, Public Safety Director. November 2022 Fire Report.  
Kevin D. Lenkart, Public Safety Director. November 2022 Police Report.  
Downtown Development Authority/Main Street. Minutes of December 7, 2022.  
Parks & Recreation Commission. Minutes of December 7, 2022.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

Katlyn Gregory, 635 Martin Street, said she heard lots of people say that not standing for the Pledge of Allegiance is disrespectful. She pointed out that 7% of Americans are veterans, yet 13% of homeless people in the U.S. are veterans. She said we could do better.

Mark Drayton, 1116 N. Ball Street, asked that anyone that is aware of a homeless veteran to refer them to the Shiawassee County Veterans Affairs office in Corunna. He then continued his statements objecting to Councilmember Olson's actions during the Pledge of Allegiance and will be "FOIAing" information on all Councilmembers. Lastly, he said he is offering to teach a concealed pistol class for free to anyone that is feeling unsafe, saying everyone deserves to feel safe.

Kara Holmes, employee of Downtown Hound, said that politics is simply not part of the day-to-day operations of the business and all customers are welcome. She said it was hurtful to have someone judge a small business based on the political views of the owner.

Devin Ackels, 627 Alger Avenue, said that if your patriotism depends solely on an oath you need to question your patriotism. He went on to ask if only 1/3 of the city identifies as Christian why does the Council insist on holding prayer?

Jayla Sweeney, employee of Downtown Hound, said the boycott was affecting her family and the families of all of the other employees of Downtown Hound.

Eddie Urban, 601 Glenwood Avenue, did his best to break the tension in the room by announcing he prefers to be free of the restrictions of clothing.

Mayor Pro-Tem Osika encouraged everyone to attend the New Years' Eve Ball Drop event, saying volunteers have been working hard to make it happen.

Mayor Teich announced that City offices will be closed December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> in observance of Christmas and December 30<sup>th</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup> in observance of New Year's Day, and noted the next Council meeting will be Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

**NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, January 03, 2023

**BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OPENINGS**

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority – term expires June 30, 2026  
Building Board of Appeals – Alternate - term expires June 30, 2024  
Building Board of Appeals – Alternate - term expires June 30, 2025  
Downtown Historic District Commission – term expires June 30, 2023  
Downtown Historic District Commission - term expires June 30, 2024  
Downtown Historic District Commission – term expires June 30, 2025  
Owosso Historical Commission – 2 terms expire December 31, 2022  
Owosso Historical Commission – term expires December 31, 2023  
SATA Board of Directors – term expires October 1, 2025

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilmember Haber for adjournment at 8:33 p.m.

Motion supported by Councilmember Law and concurred in by unanimous vote.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert J. Teich, Jr., Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amy K. Kirkland, City Clerk

\*Due to their length, text of marked items is not included in the minutes. Full text of these documents is on file in the Clerk's Office.