

**CITY OF LABELLE**  
**SPECIAL MEETING/WORKSHOP**

Mayor Wilkins called the special meeting to order at 5:19 p.m. A roll call was taken and all members were present.

Mayor Wilkins addressed the topic of yards in the neighborhood that do not get mowed. She stated that the Code Enforcement Officer was not present due to illness. She explained the lengthy process of issuing citations. She suggested a yard assessment for mowing that would take effect in 2023. Attorney Derek Rooney addressed the public and asked for their concern on the ill maintained properties. He then explained the process of liens and debts that occur when the City mows the properties. He also explained the process of assessing the properties on the tax rolls. Commissioner Spratt asked how long it would take to start. Mr. Rooney stated the assessments could to start in 2022 tax year, and that the clean-up could start sooner. He recommended to start the process this year in order to expedite the assessment to get the process started right away.

The Commission agreed to start the assessment process immediately. More discussion was had on the process of getting an assessment.

Nora Ned addressed the Commission to inquire who would be financially responsible for the mowing of the lots until the money can be collected from the property owners. More discussion was had explaining the process, and who would be paying for the mowing.

Dorothy Johnson addressed the commission on the subject of her property at 964 Collier Street. She would like to move a mobile home onto her property. The City owns lots beside her and across the street from her and neither are being mowed. Gary Hull stated he would need a front mounted mower in order to clear the properties. Mayor Wilkins stated that the City would take care of the lots getting mowed.

Mayor Wilkins called upon Mr. Willie Thomas. He addressed the Commission about water quality. He also stated he would like lots mowed around his property. Mr. Rooney inquired on what his address was, Thomas stated it was 695 MLK Blvd. Mr. Rooney suggested having the water lines tested. Rooney asked if it was hot or cold, and Thomas answered it was all of the water. It was decided that his address was the only house with the issue.

Jeannette Smith stated that on July 11, 2019 she spoke at a Commission meeting about her driveway. She stated that her driveway becomes flooded and blocked from rain because of the City's sidewalk elevation difference at 781 W Lincoln. Discussion was had by the Commission about the property. Rooney stated that engineers should look into the drainage issues in the area.

Mrs. Smith addressed the dirt streets in the area of Sunset and Ford Parks that have been dirt for 59 years. Mayor Wilkins stated that there is a plan to work on the roads. Rooney brought up the grants awarded to the City. Discussion was had on the plan and the cost to improve the Ford and Sunset Park roads and infrastructure.

Dorothy Johnson stated that her house was not connected to sewer, but she had water. Gary Hull explained they have to access to the nearest right of way.

Rooney discussed road repairs versus new roads and how it could affect water flow and stormwater drainage. to build systems to anticipate future stormwater issues.

Janet Smith addressed the Commission about the patching of roads, and weight limit signs along Lincoln Avenue to prevent further destruction of the road. Nora Ned that she did not believe that the neighborhood is not a priority for the City and that 59 years was an inexcusable amount of time to not have roads paved and bad roads in their neighborhood. More discussion was had about the roads.

Mayor Wilkins suggested a monthly cleanup for the neighborhood. Discussion was had on dumping and property owners being held accountable for their own trash and properties. Commissioner Spratt inquired if a dumpster was provided would it be used. Commissioner Akin stated that Code Enforcement would have to become more involved.

Rooney asked how many occupied homes were in Sunset and Ford Park. The Pastor stated that around 300 people, and that only about 30% of the lots were built on. Pastor McKenzie asked about a revitalization grant to help provide affordable housing in the area. He stated that home ownership is what is going to change the community. Discussion was had on the subject. Rooney suggested Habitat for Humanity, or a housing authority to manage the new homes after they are built to ensure proper maintenance.

It was stated that dumpster would be beneficial for the neighborhood and that perhaps placing them in different locations throughout the neighborhood would be best.

More discussion was had on road paving. Commissioner Akin asked Rooney how long the process would take to start repairing the roads. Mr. Rooney discussed taxation, grants and suggested that the residents should reach out to the County, and State officials for additional assistance. Pastor McKenzie stated that the County Commissioners would not help out their community because of them being within City limits. Discussion was had on City and County relations. Nora Ned stated that the County works with the City of Clewiston and questioned why the County does not work with the City of LaBelle.

Pastor McKenzie asked how much it costs to overlay a mile of road. Gary Hull stated that for a correct set of plans alone would cost around \$288,000.

Discussion was had on the relationship between the City Commission and residents in that area. Rooney suggested that perhaps the County could change the Ordinance on the SHIP fund for manufactured homes. More discussion was about rehabbing houses in the area.

Mayor Wilkins confirmed that a monthly public dumpster program would be established and that the yard assessment process would begin right away and that Code Enforcement would have a greater presence in the area.

Discussion was had on the current state of Wheeler Groves.

Commissioner Akin brought up the topic of impact fees and it was discussed.

The topic of speed bumps on Martin Luther King Blvd. was discussed.

December 2, 2021

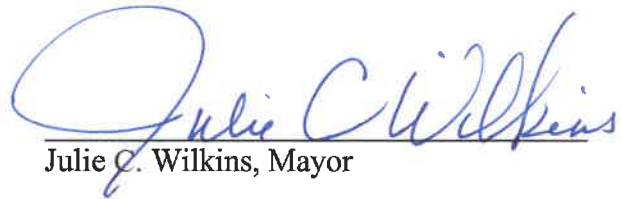
Discussion was had on how to purchase properties owned by the City.

Nora Ned asked if business could be had within the neighborhood. Derek Rooney explained that it would depend on the zoning for a particular address.

More discussion was had on large commercial trucks traveling down Lincoln Avenue.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:01.

**APPROVED:**



Julie C. Wilkins, Mayor

**Attest:**



Thomas A. Smith, Clerk-Commissioner