

**Approved  
March 17, 2008**

**REGULAR MEETING  
(CONDUCTED AS A COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE)  
OF THE COUNCIL  
CITY OF SOUTHFIELD  
March 3, 2008**

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MINUTES

The meeting of the Council convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Conference Room of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan, with Council President Joan Seymour in the Chair. PRESENT: Council Members: Donald Fracassi, Myron Frasier, Sylvia Jordan, Sidney Lantz, Bill Lattimore, Joan Seymour and Kenson Siver. ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Nancy Banks, City Administrator James Scharret and City Attorney Jack Beras. There being a quorum, Council was in session.

The presentation by Robert Kachadourian was moved down on the agenda as the Mayor had not yet arrived.

The first item on the agenda was a Liquor License Request from ISSA Japanese Restaurant, LLC.

City Clerk Nancy Banks stated that ISSA Japanese Restaurant, LLC has requested the transfer of a Class C Liquor License with Entertainment Permit from Shanghai Café, Inc. located at 29555 Northwestern Highway. All the necessary documents and approvals have been received from the various City departments. The applicant Seiichiro (Sean) Imai was present to answer questions.

Councilman Lattimore asked where the restaurant is located. Mr. Imai responded that the restaurant was located in the LaMirage Shopping Center next to the Park West Gallery.

Councilman Frasier asked what the hours of operation would be. Mr. Imai replied that the restaurant would be opened 5:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Councilman Fracassi recommended that the matter be referred to the Regular Meeting on March 17, 2008 for formal approval.

The consensus was to put the matter on the March 17, 2008 agenda.

Next was the Liquor License request of Zhou & Sun, Inc. d/b/a Hunan Garden.

Ms. Banks explained that this was a request to transfer a Class C Liquor License from Zhou & Jiang, Inc. to Zhou & Sun, Inc., located at 24480 Ten Mile Road. The father owned the business and he has decided to turn the restaurant over to his children including the liquor license. All the necessary documents and approvals have been received from the various City departments. The applicants Charles Zhou and Li Sun were present to answer questions.

The consensus of Council was to refer the matter to the Regular Meeting of March 17, 2008 for formal approval.

Next was the presentation by Robert Kachadourian.

Robert Kachadourian, 3048 High Point, Bloomfield Hills, stated that he had approached the Mayor about Southfield participating in the Sister City project and becoming a Sister City with Dilijan, Armenia. Southfield has the only school or Armenian descent and more cultural activities than any other in Michigan.

Councilman Siver voiced his support of the idea. He asked if it would involve any fiscal responsibility on the part of the City. Mr. Kachadourian replied there would not be any financial responsibility. The Sister City project would provide the two cultures an opportunity to learn more about each other. It would be a great project for the young people to be involved in and be exposed to a new culture and language.

Councilwoman Jordan asked what would be facilitated between the two cities. Mr. Kachadourian replied exchanging of students, government officials, teachers or chamber of commerce officials is a possibility.

Council President asked if Southfield would be the only sister city relationship for Dilijan, Armenia. Mr. Kachadourian replied that it would be a one on one relationship. Much can be done through the internet and pictorially. Travel between the two cities is not required.

Councilman Frasier noted that there is already a lot of cross culture with the Armenian community. He questioned how the Sister City project would improve that. Mr. Kachadourian replied that the Sister City project would involve building a relationship with Armenians outside of Southfield.

Councilman Lattimore asked the City Clerk where this idea started. Ms. Banks replied that it was given to her by the Mayor.

Mr. Kachadourian replied that he saw the Mayor at an event at St. John's and made mention of it to her. Mayor Lawrence directed him to Marty Williams. Mr. Williams suggested that he present the idea to Council.

Councilman Lattimore asked what benefit Southfield would get from forming a sister city relationship. Mr. Kachadourian replied that it would be for Council to decide as the charter is written. He would serve as the intermediary.

Council President stated that the next step would be to determine if the Council is interested in having the City participate. If so, then Council must decide what the relationship would be.

Councilwoman Jordan asked for the current status of the other sister city relationships. Mr. Beras responded that the City does not have any official sister city relationship. No contract has ever been signed. There is an annual dues be part of the Sister City project. The amount is based on population. Southfield's dues would be approximately \$600.00. According to protocol, both councils would have to approve the contract and the mayors would sign the contract. The contract would define the relationship.

Councilman Fracassi recommended deferring the matter until Council can have a more thorough discussion on whether this is something worth pursuing.

Mayor Lawrence stated that Southfield is one of the few cities without a sister city. The sister city relationship is usually driven by the communities. The cities can share cultures over the internet. She also suggested pen pals. With Southfield being so multi-cultural, the City can have ties into many countries. The Sister City project is pushed by the NLC and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Council President Seymour stated that the issue would not be resolved right then. A separate discussion is needed. She suggested that possibly one of the Council Committees or an ad-hoc committee could look into it further.

Mayor Lawrence recommended having someone from the NLC, U.S. Conference of Mayors or the City of Farmington Hills, which is very active, come and educate Council on sister cities.

Next was a presentation on the City's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Nimrod Rosenthal, Community Relations Director, showed a brief slide presentation on the Winter Fest and the Fire & Ice Gala and briefly reviewed each event. The Winter Fest was on February 17<sup>th</sup>. The response was tremendous, despite the rain. An estimated 1200 people came to the festival. The fireworks were postponed due to the rain. The fireworks have been rescheduled for the Community Wide Celebration on May 4<sup>th</sup>. There were many families with young children in attendance. Ice carving, arts and crafts, petting farm and dog sledding were some of the activities available. It was a great team effort between Parks & Recreation and Community Relations.

The Fire & Ice Gala took place on January 26<sup>th</sup> at the Plum Hollow Country Club. The event was sold out. Many businesses bought tables, as did some of the neighborhood associations.

Mr. Rosenthal indicated that many people suggested that the Winter Fest and the Fire & Ice Gala should become annual events.

Two additional events are in the planning stages. On Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, a special reception will be held for the business community. Invites will be sent to all businesses. Special acknowledgement will be made of those companies celebrating 50 years in the community. When the businesses R.S.V.P. they will be asked to indicate how many years they have been in Southfield. The Community Wide Celebration will take place on May 4<sup>th</sup> in the Pavilion. There will be a large cake and musical performances. There will also be an open house for City departments that deal directly with the public. Each department will have a table in the Pavilion at which they will provide information about what their department does. Special passports will be given to residents. Departments will stamp the passports of those who stop at their table. Gifts will be given to those who fill up their passport. International groups will perform on stage.

Starbucks has agreed to sponsor the City's plans to break the Guinness World Record for the largest coffee mug. The City Centre Advisory Board has also agreed to help out. The event will take place on June 19<sup>th</sup> on the plaza.

Mr. Rosenthal stated that they would like to add one additional event, a music festival on September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, to conclude the City's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. Shahida Mausi, runs events at Chene Park. Her company, Rights Productions, would produce the music festival.

Shahida Mausi stated that she has been in business for 12 years. It is a family run business. Her son, Malik, was also at the meeting. Their company ran the Winter Blast for the first two year and since 1999 has provided entertainment and production services for the MGM and Greektown Casinos. The music festival would be for two day, September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. It would be held on the front lawn. It would feature a diverse talent base in order to attract a diverse audience and reflect the rich diversity of the City of Southfield.

Two radio stations, WNIC and WMXD have agreed to partner with them. WNIC and WMXD attract a large following from the 35-54 age group. WNIC attracts large Caucasian listening audience and WMXD attracts a large black listening audience. Some of the groups being considered include: Roberta Flack, Bryan Adams, Patti LaBelle, Sheryl Crow and Brian McKnight. Right Productions would handle production, talent, marketing, hospitality, concessions, parking and janitorial service. They would work with the Police Department regarding public safety. Sponsors would be solicited in tandem with the City of Southfield. The weekend would focus regional attention on the City. She looks forward to launching the musical celebration.

Mr. Rosenthal stated that the arrangement would be similar to the Jazz Fest. Council approval is needed for use of the front lawn. He needed a consensus on whether Council would like to move forward with this proposal.

Council President Seymour stated it is her understanding that Right Productions would be taking all the risk. Funds would be raised sponsors and advertising. Ticket proceeds would go to Right Productions. Mr. Rosenthal stated that was correct. There is no risk to the City.

Councilman Lattimore stated that he saw nothing adverse with the idea. It is a good way to wind up the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. Artists would reflect the diversity of the community. He gave his support for the proposal.

Councilwoman Jordan asked if the City would receive any of the ticket proceeds. Mr. Rosenthal replied that the City would not receive any proceeds because the production company is taking all the risk. Public safety costs would be reimbursed by the production company. WNIC and WMXD are very excited to come here because of the central location and the diversity of the community.

Councilman Frasier asked if the Jazz Fest would still take place. Mr. Rosenthal responded that the Jazz Fest would take place.

Councilwoman Jordan commented that at some point the City needs to start charging for use of the parking lot. A good source of revenue is being lost. Ms. Mausi responded that her company has a contract with Ticketmaster. When patrons purchase tickets for events at Chene Park they are given the option to purchase a parking ticket at the same time.

Mayor Lawrence stated that she assumes the City would have some input on the type of music being featured. Local organizations should be given the opportunity to sell concessions at the event. Mr. Rosenthal replied that he would work with Ms. Mausi on incorporating that into the event.

Councilwoman Jordan asked if there was a rain date. Ms. Mausi answered that at this point there is not. The company will focus on working with the community and involving the community.

Councilman Fracassi stated that he was enthused by the presentation. He has some concern that some are trying to plan the event, instead of allowing the production company to do the planning. The finale should be very classy. The City should not tie the hands of the production company by forcing the use of local organizations.

The consensus of Council was to move forward with plans for the music finale.

Mr. Beras stated that the formal contract would be brought back to Council for formal approval.

Next on the agenda was the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan.

Mr. Scharret stated that staff had spent considerable time on coordinating the CDBG Action Plan. Over the past five years funding has been reduced by \$146,231.00. Reduced CDBG funding coupled with decreases in state shared revenues as resulted in the City being increasingly on its own when it comes to funding for programs to meet the City's needs. One of the City's major priorities has been the function and appearance of City roadways. The City is recommending flat funding levels for existing outside programs and a capital improvement component for an essential CDBG qualified road project. The outside programs have merit and therefore the City is absorbing the reduction in funding. The capital improvement project is the reconstruction of six-tenths (6/10) of a mile of Franklin Road, from American Drive to Eleven Mile Road. Reprogrammed CDBG funds and money from the SmartZone TIF will be used to finance the project. The reprogrammed funds were originally allocated for the renovation of the Parks House.

Erica Williams, CDBG Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the funding recommendations for 2008. The recommendations are as follows:

SHIP	\$200,000 (Revolving Fund)
Rebuilding Together	\$ 10,000 (Revolving Fund)
CHORE	\$150,000
Southfield Parks & Garden Club	\$ 1,000
Franklin Road	\$444,286
Serving Our Seniors (S.O.S.)	Not Recommended
Southfield Rapid Response Team	\$ 10,000
Silver Maple Assisted Living	Not Recommended
Bright Spot Senior Co-op	Funded by P & R
Emergency Relief	\$30,000
TOSS	\$35,000
SYA	\$24,000
HAVEN	\$ 6,529
Accounting Aid Society	\$ 6,000
Common Ground Sanctuary	\$ 3,000
Positive Peer Influence	Not Recommended
The Pocket	\$ 2,000
Fair Housing	\$ 2,000
Administration	\$140,954

Ms. Williams stated that the proposal from Serving Our Seniors was sketchy. They need to provide more information before the City can enter into a partnership with them. The Positive Peer Influence organization partners with Marygrove College. Their funding request is beyond the scope of CDBG. She recommended that they collaborate with the Schools and SYA. Silver Maple Assisted Living plans to build a transitional housing facility. However, no site plan has been submitted.

Councilman Siver asked if Fair Housing Center still had an office in Oakland County. Ms. Williams replied that the Oakland County office had indicated they would be applying for funding but their application was never received.

Councilman Siver commended Ms. Williams for all her hard work putting the plan together.

Councilman Frasier asked if the Action Plan is advertised in the paper. Ms. Williams replied that if Council agrees with the recommendations presented, the proposed plan will be advertised. Southfield always has two meetings regarding the CDBG Action Plan. Most communities only hold a public hearing.

Councilman Frasier asked if any services provided to the residents at Woodbridge. Nicole Messina, Senior Adult Coordinator, responded that transportation is provided. The Woodridge Board runs their programs and activities. Mr. Beras added that Woodbridge was run by the Southfield Non-Profit Housing Commission.

Mayor Lawrence expressed concern that not enough money was being allocated to the Emergency Relief Fund. She questioned the use of money previously designated for the Parks House being reprogrammed for reconstructing Franklin Road. Mr. Scharret responded that HUD has stated that the money must be reallocated on work on the Parks House must begin within the next year.

Mayor Lawrence asked if the Emergency Relief Fund is supplemented by any other funding. Susan Cuevas, Human Services Director, replied that there is tremendous need for help. The CDBG funds are equally divided among the twelve months of the year so that those that are evicted get treated equally throughout the year. The maximum amount anyone person can receive is \$300.00. Individuals are given the names and numbers of other organizations to call for financial assistance. After a person has funding in place from the other agencies, then the City gives them the \$300.00. An individual can only apply once every 24 months. The City can not afford to pay the full cost of an eviction, which runs between \$1,200.00 and \$1,500.00. Other options are explored if an individual does not qualify for CDBG funds.

Council President Seymour asked if there were any organizations in the audience that wished to be heard.

Ms. Williams replied that representatives from Positive Peer Influence (PPI) would like to address Council.

Councilman Fracassi noted that PPI is requesting \$143,000, which is more than the entire amount available for allocation.

Louis Colson and Anita Covington spoke on behalf of PPI.

Mr. Colson apologized for the amount of the request. He was not aware of the cap for funding of outside programs. They currently operate out of Mumford High School. They work with repeat offenders and teach them social skills to help them make better decisions. There are challenges they would like to help Southfield address. They are very willing to work with the SYA and Human Services.

Ms. Covington thanked Council for the opportunity to speak. They also operate a GED program in Southfield. She has found that some of the young people who have dropped out of school have nothing to do.

Councilman Fracassi replied that he appreciates what they are doing, however, CDBG funding keeps getting cut. The Federal Government does not seem to be addressing the issue.

Mr. Colson responded that he appreciates what Councilman Fracassi is saying. It is better to spend the money on prevention rather than incarceration. He would like to work with the City. Perhaps at some point they could tap into the drug forfeiture funds.

Councilman Fracassi stated that he hopes that their request being denied does not stop them from trying again in the future. He would like to continue a relationship with their program.

Councilwoman Jordan stated that she was surprised to hear the mention of drug forfeiture funds. Mr. Colson replied that legislation allows 20% of drug forfeiture funds to be used for prevention and education.

Councilman Lantz asked Mr. Colson to email him a copy of the legislation.

Councilman Frasier asked that he email the information to the City Clerk for forwarding to everyone.

Councilman Lattimore commented that the Police Department has used the funds for their own purposes in the past. He asked if PPI had an alternate figure that they could present in next year's request. Mr. Colson replied that it costs \$225 per student. One hundred students would be approximately \$22,000; 50 students would be approximately \$11,000.

Councilman Frasier stated that some of what PPI does interlaces with the work done by the SYA. There is a lot of duplication of volunteer services. Perhaps if two groups worked together the money would go further.

Mr. Colson stated that he is dedicated to prevention programs. The sub-culture is teaching the young people negative behavior.

Council President Seymour commented that PPI was on the right track. She wished there was more money to go around. She thanked them for their presentation.

The consensus of Council was to refer the CDBG Annual Action Plan to a Regular Meeting for a public hearing on the matter.

Councilman Siver stated that he had been contacted by Stuart Rosenblatt regarding a resolution he would like Council to consider. It has been adopted by other communities regarding foreclosures and calling for devaluation of assets. He asked that the matter be referred to the Legislative Committee and City Attorney. Council President referred the matter as requested.

Councilman Fracassi stated that Lahser Road between Eleven and Twelve Mile is a complete disaster. The patching job done by the County is very uneven. They should have rolled the patch smooth. Mr. Scharret replied that he will vigorously encourage the County to fix the problem. He will find out their long and short term plans for the road.

Councilman Fracassi noted that Bradford Academy is in the process of building a high school. The City needs some answers regarding traffic flow in the neighborhood.

Councilman Fracassi added that parents are still picking their kids up on Telegraph Road. Mr. Banda replied that he spoke to the State and they have not completed the warrant study. The study must be done in order to install a new light. The neighborhood association is still reluctant to close Garner.

Mayor Lawrence replied that it is a public safety issue. The Police Department should have officers out there putting a stop to parents picking up students on Telegraph.

Mr. Scharret responded that he would have a meeting with the Police Chief the next day and report back to Council.

There being no further business, the Regular Meeting (conducted as a Committee-of-the-Whole) adjourned at 9:40 p.m., March 3, 2008, until the next Regular Meeting on March 17, 2008, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan.

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Joan Seymour, Council President

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Nancy L. M. Banks, City Clerk