

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
Special Meeting
Monday, January 30, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: By Mayor Lewis, Monday, January 30, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Lewis, Councilmembers Bahmer, Johnston, Mitchell, Ridge, Russo, Sanders, Community Development Director Myrkle and City Clerk Terpstra.

ABSENT: None.

DISCUSSION REGARDING FOOD TRUCKS:

Mayor Lewis explained purpose of meeting was to discuss whether or not to pursue the food truck ordinance and what council wishes to do with this issue. He intends to bring this issue to council on Monday, February 13th for a decision.

Discussion was held among councilmembers on what other cities are doing such as Dewitt, Grand Ledge and Ann Arbor.

Mayor Lewis stated that he is not in favor of having them for long periods of time.

Councilmember Mitchell suggested having them at the concerts on Thursday's and also expanding them to other sponsored activities.

Councilmember Johnston stated that he is generally opposed to food trucks because of the brick and mortar stores. If they decide to allow them he would like to see it for event sponsored venues.

Councilmember Bahmer stated that he felt a pilot program would not be a bad idea. He stated that he does not have a problem with seasonal but that it would be imperative that there be an even playing field between the food trucks and the brick and mortar stores.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sanders stated that the ordinance would sunset in one year and then council could decide if it wanted to move forward for a longer period. He would like to see a level playing field with the brick and mortar stores. He was in agreement that they have to leave each night as stated in the ordinance.

Councilmember Russo agrees with Councilmember Johnston. He stated he is concerned about the brick and mortar stores. He stated that food trucks end up leaving to greener pastures and the brick and mortar stores end up empty buildings. He would like to coordinate this with Rising Tide and not this year.

Councilmember Ridge commented that she likes the idea of the level playing field. If it was to be event driven she feels they would need to readdress these fees. She would like to work with Charlotte Rising and Michigan Main Street once they get the Economic Development Director so that they can help to coordinate.

Community Development Director Myrkle reminded council that some of the service clubs have been very supportive of the concert series and bring food and events and that he would like to protect that relationship with them. He stated that East Lansing's ordinance seems to be the closest to the one that is proposed for Charlotte. He found that they didn't have as many food trucks due to the fee amount.

Councilmember Russo thanked Community Development Director Myrkle for his work on putting this ordinance together and also the Planning Commission for the time they have spent on this issue.

Councilmember Bahmer suggested not having a license fee if this was done on a trial basis.

Councilmember Ridge stated that if it was done with Charlotte Rising that there was no need for an ordinance.

Councilmember Mitchell stated that competition spurs innovation and that the brick and mortar stores may see something very popular.

Mayor Lewis asked that councilmembers give him their ideas in time to present at the next council meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lloyd Conway, 313 W. Lovett, stated that the Planning Commission never really arrived at a consensus. He stated that he would be willing to give them a chance as long as they were not allowed in the downtown area. However, the commission did not have a unanimous recommendation.

Jane Doty, 221 E. Lawrence Ave., inquired about what was considered to be the downtown.

Kathryn Conrad, 203 Prairie, stated that she is involved in the Taste of Charlotte, and the concert series and she would like to have that continued. She also is involved with Beach Market. They will be making major improvements and this might be a venue for the food trucks. They are working with Charlotte Rising to make this better.

Paul Wilson, 116 S. Cochran, stated that the restaurants may start to think that they need to get in on the food truck business.

Jim Cicorelli, 3210 Daryls Way, part owner of Maple Brook Golf Course stated that they are looking for a way to keep their business operating and it is very difficult to hire good seasonal staff. He explained that people need full time work and they were thinking that they might sublease to food trucks.

Bryan Myrkle, stated that he would like to protect the events and special gatherings. He stated that the local preference clause in the proposed ordinance, would relate to Jim Cicorelli in that case.

Chuck Doty, Hot Rod Shop, stated that the overall objective is to attract millennials to the city and they will go to this type of food rather than the brick and mortar restaurants.

Jim Cicorelli, 3210 Daryls Way, stated that millennials want to be able to create the wow factor. He fears that if he doesn't find a way to survive he will have to close the golf course. Not as many people play golf anymore.

Ken Wirt, S. Cochran, stated that working with Charlotte Rising makes a lot of sense. He feels that Jim's idea is good for at the golf course.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS:

- Mayor Pro-Tem Sanders stated that they have a lot to think about and thanked everyone for coming.
- Councilmember Johnston thanked everyone for coming. He thanked the Planning Commission for their work on this project as well and Mr. Myrkle and staff.
- Councilmember Bahmer stated that the Planning Commission had put in a lot of time on this issue. He stated that he would be in favor of establishing business to use them without a permit fee. However, he is not opposed either way.
- Councilmember Ridge thanked everyone for their comments and for coming out.
- Councilmember Mitchell thanked everyone for their comments and input on this matter.
- Mayor Lewis thanked everyone for coming out. He thanked Lloyd and the Planning Commission. He thanked Bryan Myrkle for all that they have done to prepare for this issue.

Councilmember Johnston moved, supported by Mitchell to adjourn at 8:06 p.m.

Tim Lewis, Mayor

Ginger Terpstra, City Clerk