

The regular meeting of the Clare City Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers of Clare City Hall, 202 West Fifth Street, Clare, Michigan by Mayor Pat Humphrey who led with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. Also, present: Jeremy Howard, City Manager; Vicki Corlew, City Treasurer; Diane Lyon, City Clerk; Gabe Ambrozaitis, Airport Manager; and Police Chief David Saad.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

Moved by Commissioner Murphy second by Commissioner Bonham to approve the items listed with an asterisk (*), Agenda, Minutes, Communications, Professional Development, Board & Committee Appointments, and Bills) that are considered routine by the City Commission. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.*

3. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approved by Consent Agenda.

4. *APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Approved by Consent Agenda.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. RECOGNITION OF MARY WARNER UPON RETIREMENT

Mary Warner has faithfully served the residents of the City of Clare for the past ten years as the Utility Billing Clerk in the Department of Public Works, and for four years prior as an assistant in the Clerk's office. Mary has tendered her letter of resignation and retirement effective as of October 4, 2025. The City Commission is asked to consider formally recognizing Mary for this distinguished achievement.

Motion by Commissioner Bonham second by Commissioner Murphy to recognize Mary's service by adoption of Resolution 2025-082. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.*

B. RECOGNITION OF RESERVE OFFICER SHANE LEMKE, 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Reserve Officer, Shane Lemke has faithfully, honorably, and courageously served the residents of the City of Clare and the greater Clare area community for the past ten years as a member of the Clare Police Department Reserve Division. The City Commission is asked to consider formally recognizing Reserve Officer Shane Lemke for this distinguished achievement.

Motion by Commissioner Murphy second by Commissioner Bonham to recognize the service of Shane Lemke by adoption of Resolution 2025-083. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.*

C. MIDDLE MICHIGAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT

The City of Clare is one of Middle Michigan Development Corporation's (MMDC) municipal clients and we have a seat on its board of directors. Each year MMDC provides an annual report to the City Commission outlining its major accomplishments and achievements. Katie Mora, MMDC President introduced MMDC Downtown Business Liaison Emma Maniez and presented MMDC's report to the commission.

D. ELECTION OF MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE LIABILITY & PROPERTY POOL DIRECTORS

The City of Clare is a member of the Michigan Municipal League's (MML) Liability & Property Pool. The Board of Directors of the Pool are elected from membership of the Pool. The City has received notice that two Board members are up for reelection this year. The City Commission is asked to cast its ballot to fill these positions by voting for the two incumbent candidates designated on the ballot or select write-in candidates.

Motion by Commissioner Bonham second by Commissioner Murphy to direct the Clerk to cast the ballot in accordance with the direction of the City Commission by adoption of Resolution

2025-084. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.*

E. REVOKE IFTE CERTIFICATE 2014-072, 123 INVESTMENTS LLC

On February 17, 2014, 123 Investments, LLC located at 314 E. 4th Street, Clare, Michigan was granted a twelve (12) year Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption (IFTE) Certificate for real property taxes in the amount of \$256,680, by the adoption of Resolution 2014-019 and related Agreement by adoption of Resolution 2014-020. The State Tax Commission issued Certificate 2014-072 to 123 Investments, LLC. dba Robotic Welded Parts beginning on December 31, 2014, and ending on December 30, 2026 for said Exemption.

123 Investments LLC. has now asked the City to terminate (revoke) Certificate 2014-072 and associated Agreement due to a pending sale of the property to Jennmar. Jennmar will not be taking assignment of the Certificate to receive the tax benefit conferred by the Certificate, thus with the revocation, the City and Taxing Jurisdictions will receive the entirety of real property taxes for the year 2026. The City must now pass a resolution to officially approve the revocation of the Exemption Certificate (2014-0) as outlined in PA 198 of 1974, as amended.

Motion by Commissioner Murphy second by Commissioner Bonham to approve the revocation of IFTE Certificate 2014-072 issued to 123 Investments DBA Robotics Welded Parts by adoption of Resolution 2025-085. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.*

F. REVOKE IFTE CERTIFICATE 2019-087, NORTHERN FUELS, LLC

On September 3rd, 2019, Northern Fuels, LLC., 805 Industrial Drive, Clare, was granted a twelve (12) year Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption (IFTE) Certificate for abatement of real property taxes in the amount of \$800,000 and personal property in the amount of \$35,000, for the cost of machinery and equipment, for a new facility (Northern Dry Bulk) at 595 Industrial Drive, Clare, as provided for under PA 198 of 1974 by the adoption of Resolution 2019-127.

Northern Fuels sold its real and personal property at 595 Industrial Drive to Keenan Leasing, Inc., part of the Keenan Advantage Group, Inc. (KAG), in February 2024. On multiple occasions, the city notified KAG that they would need to submit a completed IFTE Transfer Application and associated documentation to proceed with the transfer of the IFTE certificate. In early 2025, the City Assessor reached out to the State Tax Commission who informed us that KAG no longer has interest in filing for a transfer of the certificate. The City must now pass a resolution to officially revoke the Exemption Certificate 2019-087 as outlined in PA 198 of 1974, as amended.

Motion by Commissioner Bonham second by Commissioner Murphy to approve the revocation of IFTE Certificate 2019-087 by adoption of Resolution 2025-086. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.*

G. CLARE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT-WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION

The city and Airport Manager have received concerns regarding wildlife (most specifically deer) that are often on the runway at the Clare Municipal Airport. The City Attorney has shared a Confidential Legal Opinion with the City Commission on this issue in the past. The Airport Manager gathered information on potential remedies, deterrents, and other options, and then presented that information to the commission at meetings on July 21st and September 2nd of this year. The City Commission raised additional questions and requested more information during those meetings. Tonight's discussion is to provide additional information, hold discussions, and take the potential next steps if the Commission deems it necessary and prudent.

The city desires to install fencing around the entirety of the airport but is currently unable to do so due to the large expense.

MDOT Aeronautics (MDOT Aero) is slated to receive 6.8 million in State funding however we do not know if grant funding will be available or how those funds will parse out with the grants that we've received to pay for fencing in the airport. The city should have a better idea of whether grant funds will be available at the end of October or mid-November. The city estimates that they could tentatively pull \$100,000 out of the fund balance to go toward installing the first two sections of fencing at the airport (almost to Colonville Road) to deter the deer travel in that area but isn't inclined to spend money out of the fund balance if grant funds become available. If the city installed the first two sections of fence it would be completed to FAA specs and if grant funding became available after, installing a portion of the fencing would likely be viewed favorable on a grant application. Whether or not an expenditure for fencing by the city would be

considered as the match portion on a grant application would be dependent upon what type of grant MDOT Aeronautics made available (block grant or appropriation grant).

If MDOT Aero goes with the grant process, it is unknown if the costs to install the fencing will increase; competitive bidding may push the pricing down. However, MDOT Aeronautics funding may necessitate an environmental assessment which is an additional expense that the city would not incur if it did not use grant funding to install a fence. If the city were to receive an MDOT grant, Meade & Hunt Consultants will help shepherd us through the grant process. The city will be required to bid out the fencing project due to the high cost of the project.

Mark Bolle has donated his time and equipment clearing much of the vegetation from the north side of the taxiway and Airport Manager Gabe Ambrozaitis has reached out to the (Clare County) Drain Commissioner to schedule a meeting to discuss removing vegetation from in and around the Drain (10' on either side) down to Washington Road to help eliminate wildlife bedding areas. With the removal of the vegetation, there has been a drop in the number of deer seen at the airport, however this may also be due, at least in part, from the removal of the farm crops from the property, albeit there are other crop fields adjacent to the airport. No additional crops will be planted at the airport until next spring. Since the farming contract is an annual contract, the Commission has the prerogative not to renew. The Airport Manager reported that Mount Pleasant does not have crops at their airport.

Closing in the retention pond at the airport holding Lake Shamrock spoils may deter deer but the city is still in the process of putting dredging materials into the pond. Once the water drains out the dirt will be pushed into a smaller hill, but it will take a year or two for the dirt to dry out.

Culling deer can only take place during daylight hours, and all tags must be accounted for at the end of the year whether they are used or not. If the city decided to cull deer, only does would be taken.

Commissioner Bonham was not in favor of voting on this topic tonight but did express favor of expending \$100k to install the first two sections of fencing as an immediate first step while we wait to find out if MDOT Aero will have grant funds available to cover the remaining costs for fencing in the airport. The Airport Manager could concurrently reach out for donations from individuals who have expressed a desire to donate toward the project and those who hold an interest in assisting with the cost of fencing in the airport. Commissioner Bonham himself has offered to donate \$10,000 toward the project.

Commissioner Murphy was not in favor of expending funds for fencing at the airport because the city has many other needs and those city funds could be used for expenses that affect a greater portion of the population.

Mayor Humphrey invited members of the audience to provide input on this discussion.

Pilots Mark Bolle and Mike Hales, Pilot and Airport Advisory Board Member Steve Stark, and neighboring property owner David Maxwell provided comments and opinions to the Commission.

Following further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bonham and seconded by Commissioner Murphy to authorize the Airport Manager to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) to obtain bids that includes bid pricing to the first two sections of fence only, and bid pricing to install fencing around the entire airport, while concurrently reaching out to potential donors to help fund the fencing project. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell.
Motion Carried.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT: The Treasurer provided a report to the Commission.

9. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Lake Shamrock Dredging. The city continues to dredge mechanically at the west end of the lake; we operate during normal DPW business hours as time and workload permits. Savin's hydraulic dredging is under a short pause in operations, but they are scheduled to return mid-October.

Lake Shamrock Dam Project. Our engineering firms, GEI and Spicer, continue design work on the new dam, the emergency/auxiliary spillway, and the new walkway. GEI has submitted the preliminary permit application to EGLE, and they continue to work toward the 90% completion mark on the design. We will meet with them this month to finalize the design. Bidding will

occur over the winter. We are still waiting on the grant agreement with FEMA and plan to apply for additional funds from DRRGP dollars if they become available.

Lake Shamrock – Dam – Mussel Relocation Project. EGLE and the DNR require the City to do a Mussel Relocation in the area surrounding Lake Shamrock Dam in preparation for the removal and replacement of the dam and emergency spillway. The project began the first week of October and will take about a week.

MDOT Summer Road Project. The MDOT road project from 3rd Street northerly to State Street (where last year's Mill & Fill project began) is close to completion. There were a couple of delays due to weather and scheduling, but overall, the project went very smoothly. They are finishing doing the manhole lifts which will complete the project.

New Gas Station Business – Groundbreaking. A new (Flecksmart) gas station is slated to be built on the Northeast corner of Colonville Rd. and S. Clare Ave. On October 1st, RPF Oil broke ground and started moving dirt to prepare for the project to begin.

Addendum: Family Night Out is scheduled for October 7 from 3-7pm. Numerous businesses from the downtown area up to "Hamburger Hill" will be participating in the event with free food and/or activities.

11. *COMMUNICATIONS: *Approved by Consent Agenda.*
12. EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: Dan Shively issued a complaint regarding the train signals on West 5th Street remaining on for an extended period causing traffic backups when no trains are present. The city is aware of the concern and has contacted the railroad regarding this matter on multiple occasions, unfortunately, the city has no control over the railroad. Great Lakes Central Railroad recently sold the tracks to Watco. Watco is presently rebuilding the rail siding and switches just north of West 5th Street. The city has reached out to Tom Kunse to obtain Watco's contact information in order to address the issue with the new owner.
13. COMMISSION DISCUSSION TOPICS: Gus Murphy inquired about reopening City Hall on Fridays.
14. *APPROVAL OF BILLS: *Approved by Consent Agenda.*
15. *PROFESSIONAL & EDUCATIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: *Approved by Consent Agenda.*
16. ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Commissioner Bonham seconded by Commissioner Bussell to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioners Bob Bonham, Pat Humphrey, and Carolyn (Gus) Murphy. Nays: None. Absent: Maegan Jenkins and Kim Bussell. *Motion Carried.* The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Pat Humphrey, Mayor

Diane M. Lyon, City Clerk