

A. CALL TO ORDER:

A Special Meeting of the Troy City Council was held on February 28, 2022, at City Hall, 500 W. Big Beaver Rd. Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

B. ROLL CALL:

- a) Mayor Ethan Baker
Edna Abraham
Theresa Brooks
Rebecca A. Chamberlain-Creanga
Ann Erickson Gault
David Hamilton
Ellen Hodorek

C. PUBLIC COMMENT:

D. BUSINESS STATED IN THE SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE:

D-1 Proclamations and Congratulatory Certificates

Mayor Baker opened the meeting and asked City Manager Mark F. Miller to discuss the topic.

Mr. Miller introduced the topic of how Council can handle proclamations and certificates, and the history of how these presentations have been addressed up to this point.

City Attorney Lori Grigg Bluhm discussed some legal aspects of proclamations and certificates.

Mayor Baker commented that this is a topic that needs to be addressed, and resolved. He said that there should be a clear process in place for which proclamations are presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Erickson Gault commented that she would like to see a solution that is different from other cities where they don't have any proclamations presented at meetings. She said that vetting proclamations shouldn't be a burden on staff, but there should be some vetting. She said that there shouldn't be preferential treatment. She said it's probably simplest to restrict them or eliminate them completely from the meetings.

Mayor Baker commented that there's also risk with the current way that Council can each bring proclamations to meetings, and perhaps there should be a process to address that, also.

Council Member Hamilton commented that there is a process for doing ribbon cuttings, and perhaps there's a similar process that could be in place for proclamations that wouldn't burden staff as much. He said his thoughts are similar to Mayor Pro Tem Erickson Gault that maybe it's easier to eliminate them.

Mayor Baker commented that he would rather not get to the point where we aren't doing any proclamations at all.

Council Member Chamberlain-Creanga commented that she is not in favor of eliminating proclamations altogether. She said she would like to establish some criteria, for example, proclamations that address alleviating suffering in the community, or health/safety/welfare. She commented that she would like to see the Global Troy Advisory Committee be included in the discussion of proclamations that relate to global issues, such as having Global Troy handle those proclamations, then bring them to City Council as a report. She said that there are a lot of people who do amazing things worthy of a proclamation, but don't know how to access the process, so perhaps it's better to not expand on those since it would be a burden on staff.

Council Member Brooks suggested that there be standing proclamations that aren't official and presented, but are ongoing, and the list would be reviewed by Council annually. She said that there is a value to giving proclamations to residents and feel-good events. She agreed that global issue proclamations could be addressed by Global Troy, like Council Member Chamberlain-Creanga suggested.

Council Member Hodorek commented that she doesn't know if City Council is the appropriate body to issue proclamations on certain issues, especially issues that seem nonpartisan but actually turn out to be divisive. She said that sometimes divisive proclamations can undermine Council's ability to represent everyone in the community. She commented that because Troy is so diverse, it can be very difficult to recognize everyone sufficiently. She agreed with Council Member Brooks' suggestion to have standing proclamations on the City website. She commented that last-minute proclamations are problematic, and puts a tremendous burden on staff, so they should be very rare.

Council Member Abraham commented that she is leaning toward curtailing the types of proclamations that were presented in the past. She said that the meetings are for business, but sometimes local recognition proclamations based in Troy deserve to be recognized. She said that she also agrees with Council Member Brooks' idea to have a list of standing proclamations that is approved annually by City Council. She said she likes the idea of having proclamations approved by Global Troy, but that there would still be a risk of unintentionally creating a potentially divisive issue for Global Troy.

City Attorney Bluhm commented that according to the Council Rules, congratulatory certificates do not require City Council action.

City Manager Miller commented that City Council could annually approve a list of generally agreeable proclamations that would be distributed at the appropriate time.

Mayor Baker agreed with Mr. Miller's idea, and commented that the list of proclamations could make that process streamlined. He said that sometimes events are in the news, and then they become proclamations, which is a traditional way of handling proclamations for individuals. He said he doesn't want to eliminate proclamations completely. He said there seems to be a consensus that if it's for a Troy-based event or group, it could be approved easily, however there are still divisive issues that affect Troy residents.

Mayor Pro Tem Erickson Gault clarified that she would like to remove the proclamations from presentations at the meetings, but still issue them. She said perhaps have proclamations be a rare occurrence at meetings, but issue more certificates after Council votes on them.

Council Member Hodorek commented that perhaps some events could be addressed with moments of silence, or other acknowledgment, during the invocation before the Council meeting. She suggested that Global Troy work on the list of standing proclamations.

Mayor Baker commented that proclamations from Council should be listed as Council Referrals, and when they're done last-minute, there's no opportunity for Council or the residents to examine them before Council has to vote or present them. He said that Council can address issues during Council Comments. He said that he thinks that last-minute proclamations brought by one or two Council Members should be very rare, especially when done at the last-minute with a waiver of the Council Rules.

Mayor Baker summarized that there was a consensus to create a list of standing proclamations, and he asked Mr. Miller to prepare that list.

Mr. Miller commented that the list could be approved at the City Council organizational meeting. He said that there could be a criterion of being Troy-focused, but he said there needs to be some thought in regards to the global issue proclamations.

Mayor Baker commented that Community Affairs Director Cindy Stewart has done a wonderful job writing proclamations, and that this conversation is not a slight against her efforts.

Mr. Miller commented that City Hall is lit currently with the colors of the Ukranian flag.

E. OTHER BUSINESS:

F. ADJOURNMENT:

The Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 7:02 PM.



Mayor Ethan Baker



M. Aileen Dickson, MMC, MiPMC II
City Clerk