



Rochester Hills

Minutes - Draft

City Council Special Meeting

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Home Page:
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*David J. Blair, Susan M. Bowyer Ph.D., Ryan Deel, Dale A. Hetrick, Carol Morlan,
Theresa Mungioli and David Walker*

Vision Statement: The Community of Choice for Families and Business

Mission Statement: "Our mission is to sustain the City of Rochester Hills as the premier community of choice to live, work and raise a family by enhancing our vibrant residential character complemented by an attractive business community."

Monday, June 26, 2023

6:30 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

In accordance with the provisions of Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, the Open Meetings Act, notice was given that a Special Rochester Hills City Council Meeting would commence at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, June 26, 2023, to discuss Rochester Hills Elections and the implementation of Proposal 2022-2.

CALL TO ORDER

President Deel called the Special Rochester Hills City Council Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Michigan Time.

ROLL CALL

Present 6 - David Blair, Ryan Deel, Dale Hetrick, Carol Morlan, Theresa Mungioli and David Walker

Others Present:

*Bryan Barnett, Mayor
Sheila Brown, Deputy Clerk
Leanne Scott, City Clerk*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Hetrick, seconded by Bowyer, that the Agenda be Approved as Presented. The motion CARRIED by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Blair, Bowyer, Deel, Hetrick, Morlan, Mungioli and Walker

COUNCIL AND YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORTS

PRESENTATIONS

2023-0312 Presentation on Implementation of Proposal 2022-2; Leanne Scott, City Clerk, and Sheila Brown, Deputy Clerk; presenters

Attachments: [Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)

Leanne Scott, City Clerk, and **Sheila Brown**, Deputy Clerk, were present.

Clerk Scott thanked Council for the opportunity to provide information on the implementation of Proposal 2022-2 (Prop 2) and how it will affect the City of Rochester Hills. She explained the importance of the various components of this legislation that is now part of the United States Constitution and added that these changes will affect elections moving forward.

Clerk Scott provided the following information regarding Michigan Elections over the past few years:

- 2018 - Proposal 2018-3 introduced and voted in by the electorate
- 2019 - Implementation of Prop 3: same day voter registration/online voter registration/no-reason absentee voting
- 2020 - High profile Presidential Election / COVID
- 2021 - Threats and accusations
- 2022 - Redistricting / High profile election / Proposal 2022-2
- 2023 - Implementation of Prop 2

She noted that over the years, the Clerk's Team has adapted to these changes and will continue to assess and reassess election processes. She pointed out that Prop 2 brings the most significant changes to election law since 1955.

Clerk Scott provided the following information in regard to the implementation of Proposal 2022-2:

- Permanent Absent Voter List (mail ballot)
- Early In-Person Voting
- Prepaid Return Postage for Absent Voter Applications and Ballots
- Absent Voter Ballot Drop Boxes (1 required for every 15,000 registered voters)
- Overseas and Military Returned Ballots Counted After Election Day (6 days)
- Ballot Tracking System - Michigan Voter Information Center (MVIC)

She explained that the Permanent Absent Voter (ballot) List will replace the Permanent Application Voter List. She added that the significant change with the Permanent Absent Voter (ballot) List is that a voter can now check a box on the application to automatically receive an absentee ballot by mail for all future elections without having to submit an application each year. She noted that signatures will still be verified on each application and ballot. She stated that once a voter opts to be on the Permanent Absent Voter List, that status will follow the voter if they move to another city within Michigan. She explained that communication will still be sent to each voter on this list prior to an election stating that the ballots will be sent out by a specific date and asking voters to inform the Clerk's Office if they will not be at their residential address during an

election. She stated that voters that know they will be out of town can still complete an application noting their temporary address and the absentee ballot will be sent to that address. She added that if a voter receives the absentee ballot and decides they want to vote at an early in-person voting center instead, they can bring their absentee ballot to the early voting center to be put through the tabulator. She noted that the voter would not be required to spoil their absentee ballot in order to vote at an early voting center. She explained that voting in-person on election day may require the voter to vote a precinct ballot; therefore, they may be required to spoil their absentee ballot if they received one. She stated that during a Presidential Primary Election, the Clerk's Office will be required to send out a primary ballot selection form to each voter on the Permanent Absent Voter List to select which ballot they want.

Clerk Scott explained that early in-person voting allows voters to go to a designated early voting center during a nine day period to vote and place their ballot in the tabulator to be counted. She added that early voting will begin two Saturdays prior to an election and will conclude the Sunday prior to the election. She pointed out that totals will not be generated until election night. She noted that the hours of early voting are tentatively set to be 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on eight of the early voting days, with the exception of Thursday hours from 12:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. She provided the following options regarding an early voting site within Rochester Hills:

- The City provides an early voting site and runs it independently. She noted that utilizing City Hall under this scenario is the only viable option as the early voting site.
- The City partners with neighboring communities in locating a building and splitting the costs associated with early voting.
- The City partners with neighboring communities and Oakland County. She added that Oakland County has committed to supplying all of the initial outlay that would be needed. She stated that includes the electronic poll book, the voting booth, supplies and voting equipment.

Clerk Scott stated that another change Prop 2 brings to Michigan Elections is prepaid postage. She explained that there will be zero cost to the voter to return either their application or absentee ballot through the mail. She added that Prop 2 also requires each City to have one drop box for every 15,000 registered voters. She noted that Rochester Hills has just under 60,000 registered voters, requiring four drop boxes to be installed within the City. She stated that the location of the drop boxes will be at City Hall, Oakland County Sheriff's Office, Rochester Adams High School and Borden Park. She noted that when it is not election season there will be a cover over the opening of each of the drop boxes prohibiting anyone from putting anything in the box. She explained that the City will be required to inspect them 75 days prior to each election continuing all the way through election day. She stated that 45 days prior to each election applications and ballots will be collected from each drop box on days that the Clerk's Office is open. She explained that this new process will require two people that have been given and taken an oath to drive around the City and not only collect materials from each drop box, but also fill out a chain of custody form from each pickup at each drop box location daily.

Clerk Scott explained that Prop 2 also allows military and overseas ballots that

are postmarked on or before election day to be counted if received up to six days after the election. She stated that any ballots received within the six day period from military and overseas voters will be brought to Oakland County for processing at the end of the sixth day.

Clerk Scott stated that the State of Michigan Bureau of Elections will be enhancing the current ballot tracking system and possibly implementing a new system over the next couple of years. She explained that the system will track submitted applications and ballots and will include an electronic notification that informs the voter of any deficiencies on their application or ballot. She noted that the system will also instruct the voter on the steps they need to take to correct any deficiencies. She added that a deficiency could be a missing signature or a non-matching signature.

Mr. Blair questioned the signature verification process with Prop 2 and only needing to submit one application for all future elections, noting that many signatures change over the years.

Clerk Scott explained that when ballots come in if the signature does not match the voter will be required to come in and verify the signature. She added that upon verification the signature will be updated in the Qualified Voter File. She noted that this is the current process for signature verification.

Clerk Scott added that a voter will now have three days after an election to take care of any discrepancies that they were notified of during that election. She stressed the importance of voters indicating their phone number and email address on their application should the Clerk's Office need to contact them. She noted any ballots cured during those three days will be delivered to Oakland County for processing by the end of the fourth day.

Clerk Scott stated that another change will be the precinct size. She explained that the precinct size will increase from 2,999 voters to 5,000 registered voters. She added that this increase will allow the City to consolidate the in-person election day precincts, which in turn would result in a cost savings to the City.

Clerk Scott noted the following additional election changes that have been passed:

- Photo ID issued by Educational Institution - verify identity for registration purposes
- 8-days pre-processing of absentee ballots
- Potential of moving the Primary from August to June

Clerk Scott noted that one of the most difficult tasks faced during elections is recruiting election workers. She explained that the 8-days of pre-processing will allow the opportunity to work fewer hours each of those eight days rather than trying to complete it all in one day.

Clerk Scott explained that a few months ago Oakland County sent a survey out to each Clerk in Oakland County asking if they would be interested in partnering with them. She added that several Clerks replied that they wanted more information before agreeing to partner with Oakland County. She stated that

there have been several informational meetings since the survey went out and all but three communities have agreed to partner with Oakland County. She noted that two of the three communities opted out because they are within two different counties and it did not work well for them to partner with Oakland County communities. She explained that originally the County partnered Rochester Hills up with the City of Rochester, Oakland Township and Auburn Hills. She added that shortly after announcing this, the County realized that there were too many registered voters collectively in this partnership, therefore, Auburn Hills was removed from the partnership. She noted that each community has until the end of the month to submit a form indicating whether or not they want to participate in the agreement.

She stated that there are some jurisdictions and communities that have community centers or senior centers that can be utilized for early voting; however, the City of Rochester Hills is not equipped with these types of buildings for early voting. She explained that the early voting center options chosen for Rochester Hills and its partnered communities included: the Older Persons' Commission (OPC) Building, Rochester University, and the Rochester Hills Public Library. She added that she had a brief conversation with Councilwomen Morlan who suggested the Oakland University Pavilion or the Incubator. She concluded that she believed it makes the most sense to partner with the neighboring communities and with Oakland County and utilize the Rochester Public Library as a central site for early voting. She added that the Library Board of Trustees has approved the proposal to use their multi-purpose room to pilot early voting in the November 2023 election. She expressed the importance of piloting early voting in 2023 prior to the Presidential election in 2024.

She explained that in partnering with Oakland County, the County will be the early voting center coordinator. She stated that they will supply the initial outlay of equipment, supplies, voting booths, hire and train the voting center workers. She added that the local municipalities will be the early voting center site supervisors and will be responsible for managing the site each day.

Deputy Clerk Brown explained that they met with Oakland County and the neighboring communities to discuss what a partnership would look like and after careful consideration, partnering with Oakland County was the best option. She added that this recommendation makes the most sense as it is a cost savings to the City of Rochester Hills in addition to lessening the burden on the Clerk's Office staff. She pointed out that location played a big role in this decision as the City does not have a space outside of City Hall to hold early voting. She added that another factor was the cost associated with acquiring additional election equipment and workers. She noted that the biggest concern with early voting was the site location. She explained that if Rochester Hills was to stand alone and not partner with Oakland County and neighboring cities, city hall would have to be utilized for early voting. She stated that this would impact the day-to-day business for departments and staffing from October 28, 2023 to November 7, 2023. She added that prior to Proposal 2, the Clerk's Office was required to be open to the public the Saturday before the election; however, the Clerk's Office is now required to be open two full weekends prior to the election, 8 hours each day. She stated that additional staffing would be needed to open

and close the building on the non-traditional business days leading up to the election.

Deputy Clerk Brown provided the following information regarding Proposal 2022-2 Implementation Costs:

Early Voting Rochester Hills Stand Alone estimated cost is \$68,953 that includes:

Equipment Supplies \$30,582
Tabulators
Voter Assist Terminals
V-Drives
Electronic Poll Books
EPB Flash Drives
Voting Booths
Ballot Bags
Election Workers \$23,097
Early Voting Workers
Training Costs
Drop Box Inspections (75 days)
Drop Box Collections (40 Days)
ACVB Pre-Processing Workers
Communications \$15,274
Letter from the Clerk - Prop 2 Changes
AV Applications with Permanent Ballot List Language
Early Voting Site Notification Post Cards

Early Voting Partnering with Oakland County estimated cost is \$33,363 that includes:

Equipment Supplies \$0
Initial capital outlay covered by the County
Election Workers \$18,089
Election Inspector pay and training costs are divided among partnering jurisdictions
Drop Box Inspections (75 Days)
Drop Box Collection (40 Days)
ACVB Pre-Processing Workers
Communications \$15,274
Letter from the Clerk - Prop 2 Changes
AV Applications with Permanent Ballot List Language
Early Voting Site Notification Post Cards

Deputy Clerk Brown explained that partnering with Oakland County would provide the City of Rochester Hills a savings of approximately \$35,590.

Clerk Scott noted the following as the next steps for implementing Proposal 2022-2:

- Get Authorization from City Council to move forward with a partnership agreement for Early Voting.
- Meet with and update our Election Commission.
- Provide a written response to Oakland County by the end of June.

- The State of Michigan will provide a template agreement.
- All partnering entities will meet in early August to sign the agreement which will be in place for November 2023 through the November 2024 canvass.

Clerk Scott and **Deputy Clerk Brown** thanked the City Council for their continued support and stated that elections are only a fraction of what is done in the Clerk's Office, but is one of the most visible things the Clerk's Office does.

President Deel thanked Clerk Scott and Deputy Clerk Brown for their presentation and stated that he recognizes the amount of research and study that had been done related to Proposal 2022-2. He noted that time is of the essence, as Oakland County needs a response before City Council meets again.

Ms. Mungioni inquired about the changes with absentee ballot applications and stated that voters are already skeptical of multiple applications being sent to homes. She questioned how only submitting one application will stop all the other applications from being sent.

Clerk Scott responded that it will not stop other applications from being sent to voters. She explained that absentee voter applications are much like credit card applications. She noted that people can receive several credit card applications from multiple places but that does not mean they have to fill them out and return them. She added that if an absentee voter application is sent to a home that is not for the current resident they should contact the Clerk's Office. She further explained that if a voter receives an application for someone that does not reside at that location, that does not mean a ballot will be sent to that person. She added that residents that complete their application and send it back to the Clerk's Office will be added to the permanent ballot list if they selected that option. She reminded everyone that if they are on the permanent ballot list, that ballot still has to be returned with a signature and the signature will have to be verified.

Ms. Mungioni questioned what the State will do to clean up the Voter Records and what happens if someone moves out of the State or passes away.

Clerk Scott responded that the State notifies the Clerk's Office of all deaths and explained that if someone passes away before the election their absentee ballot is pulled. She added that with early voting, once the ballot is put through the tabulator, that vote is cast when the voter was alive.

Ms. Mungioni inquired about preprocessing and if the ballot is run through the tabulator at the time of voting.

Clerk Scott explained that preprocessing includes placing the ballot through the tabulator. She noted that the results will not be posted until election night and will still have to allow for the six days after the election to receive any military and overseas ballots that were postmarked on or before election day.

Ms. Mungioni asked how many military and overseas ballots are accounted for each election.

Clerk Scott responded it depends on the election and stated that in a presidential election there are approximately 150 military and overseas ballots. She added that there are times that the ballots are not received until a week after the election and are postmarked before the election.

Ms. Mungoli stated that election night the totals could state one candidate has the majority of votes; however, additional ballots could be received and the results could be different once the election is finalized. She questioned when the candidates will know the actual results of an election.

Clerk Scott responded that the unofficial results will be available election night; however, those results will not become official until the canvass is complete and the election is certified.

Ms. Mungoli also questioned partnering with Oakland Township and stated that they do not have an election this year.

Clerk Scott responded that opting into a partnership this year will help them to gain experience for the upcoming presidential election in 2024.

Ms. Mungoli asked about the drop boxes that will be placed around the City and if they will be bolted to the ground and if they will have cameras on them. She inquired whether the team that will be collecting materials from the drop boxes will be the same people every time and what the procedure will be each time materials are collected.

Clerk Scott responded that cement pads will be poured and the drop boxes will be bolted to those pads. She added that the State Legislature has gone back and forth on whether the drop boxes should have video cameras on them. She explained that as of right now, there is no requirement to have cameras on the drop boxes; however, the locations that the City has selected for the drop boxes will have cameras. She stated that the cameras will not be on the drop boxes themselves, rather on the buildings near the drop boxes and the cameras will capture the boxes. She replied that the intent is to have the same people collect materials from the drop boxes daily, they will fill out the chain of custody form at each drop box, and place the materials in a secure container to be brought back to City Hall.

Ms. Mungoli questioned if the team collecting materials from the drop boxes will take pictures of the materials they collect.

Clerk Scott responded they will not take photos, they will be filling out the chain of custody form and they have to take an oath prior to collecting election materials. She added that the team may be City staff.

Ms. Mungoli explained that she would feel more comfortable knowing that City staff are collecting election materials from the drop boxes. She added that she is not comfortable with sending just anyone out to collect materials who could possibly have a strong stance for a certain candidate.

Clerk Scott stated that there will always be two people going to the drop boxes at the same time and each will represent a different political party.

Ms. Mungoli questioned the three day cure at the County for the overseas ballots and whether the County will tabulate those ballots.

Clerk Scott responded that Oakland County will be tabulating those ballots for all jurisdictions in the County because the local election tabulators will be closed out on election night.

Ms. Mungoli inquired about redistricting the precincts again, after the precincts were just redistricted.

Clerk Scott replied that during the redistricting process they were pushing for the State Legislature to consider increasing the precinct size at that time and they would not. She added that it was a lot of work to redistrict the precincts, however; it should be much easier to redistrict this time.

Ms. Mungoli asked about the six day canvass timeline and when the term of office ends this year.

Clerk Scott responded that she does not have that official date but it is mid-November and the State has discussed putting something in place where all elected officials will take office in January.

Mr. Hetrick asked when the election officially starts and ends.

Clerk Scott responded that it officially starts eleven days before election day with early voting and that early voting ends Sunday before election day. She added the following:

- Monday before election day the precincts get set up
- Tuesday is election day
- six days after election to receive overseas and military ballots that were postmarked on or before election days
- three days after the election for voters to cure any issues identified prior to that.

Mr. Hetrick asked for an explanation on the security for the drop boxes.

Clerk Scott replied that it is very similar to the drop box that is currently outside of City Hall. She explained that there is a security camera on the building facing the drop box that records any activity at the box. She added that throughout the day there will be numerous trips to the drop boxes to get the ballots in for signature verification and to allow time to notify any voters that may need to cure a signature problem. She stated that two individuals each representing a different political party will receive an oath before collecting from the drop boxes. She noted that the only difference in the process is that there now is a chain of custody form that will have to be filled out at each location each visit that identifies the day, time and location with their names next to it. She stated that the materials are then brought back to the Clerk's office and are date and time stamped. She explained that after the election is over, there is a cover that is inserted in the drop box to prevent any materials being dropped in the box during non-election times.

Mr. Hetrick stated that election integrity is important and that the procedure for the drop boxes ensures that the City maintains proper election protocols. He questioned the collaboration with other municipalities and how the workload would be divided.

Clerk Scott stated that the workload between the municipalities will be shared between the communities and noted that there will be representation from the City of Rochester Hill's at the early voting center daily.

Mr. Walker thanked Clerk Scott and Deputy Clerk Brown for the presentation. He inquired who the authority is on the photo identification issued by an educational institution to verify the voter.

Clerk Scott replied that there is legislation that includes photo identification issued by an educational institution in the list of acceptable forms of identification. She stated that she can provide Mr. Walker with the language for that law.

Mr. Walker questioned what happens if the neighboring communities decide not to opt in to work with the County. He asked if the neighboring communities will have the same benefit to partner with us as we do partnering with them.

Clerk Scott responded that as long as one neighboring community opts in then the City will benefit from collaborating with the County. Clerk Scott replied that the neighboring communities will receive the same benefits from partnering with us as we do with them.

Ms. Morlan inquired about partnering with neighboring communities and questioned whether the City could partner with a different neighboring community if Oakland Township or Rochester decided to opt out of the partnership.

Clerk Scott responded that it may not be feasible to partner with another community in Oakland County due to proximity. She added that if one of the two neighboring communities opted out of the partnership and the County decided to add a community like Auburn Hills she would be open to that.

Ms. Morlan asked how long the canvass review typically takes after an election.

Clerk Scott responded that it is at least a week after the election.

Ms. Morlan inquired how the Clerk's Office gets notified of deaths.

Clerk Scott explained that there is a daily inbox received through the Qualified Voter System that informs the Clerk's Office of all changes that have taken place in regards to voters. She provided examples of some of the inbox notifications received consist of voters that moved into the City or moved out of the City, deaths, and name changes.

Mr. Blair questioned the ballot tracking system that the State has on its website and how the ballots are actually tracked.

Clerk Scott responded that once the Clerk's Office issues or receives a ballot in QVF, it is automatically updated in the State's Voter Information Center, that is the State's tracking system. She added that voters can log-in to check whether a ballot has been issued or received by the Clerk's Office.

Vice President Bowyer questioned what happens when a voter tries to vote but the system has them marked as deceased. She also inquired whether the State will only be reimbursing the City for the early voter workers.

Clerk Scott responded that as of today the State has only communicated that they will pay for only the first three early voting center workers; however, this could change.

Vice President Bowyer motioned to move the resolution with the amendment "through the November 2024 election".

President Deel inquired about the partnership with neighboring communities and whether this was triggered by Proposal 2 or if this was something that could always be done in previous elections.

Clerk Scott replied that this is new and was triggered by Proposal 2 and State Legislation.

Ms. Mungoli asked about campaigning at the early voting center and if the Library is prepared to have several candidates campaigning near their building.

Clerk Scott responded that the candidates have to stay 100 feet away from the entrances just like any other precinct.

Ms. Mungoli asked if candidates are still able to request the absentee ballot list.

Clerk Scott responded that in the future, candidates can still request the absentee ballot list from the Clerk's office, however; they will not have the buffer of an application. She noted that it will truly be a ballot list.

Ms. Mungoli asked what the actual cost is to execute Proposal 2 to the City and if this will come before Council in the third quarter budget amendment.

Clerk Scott responded that they could not give an absolute cost, the City will not be paying for equipment and supplies, but will be paying for the cost of workers. She added that there will be a communications cost whether the City partners with the County or not. She explained that the first quarter of 2024 would be the soonest the City would see the full expense of the execution of Proposal 2.

Mayor Barnett explained that there has been a lot of discussion regarding the execution of Proposal 2. He added that it is great to have an astute team working for the City of Rochester Hills Clerk's team. He noted that the intensity surrounding elections is high and the City is doing everything they possibly can to make sure there is no concern in the community.

A motion was made by Bowyer, seconded by Mungioli, that this matter be Adopted as Amended by Resolution to specify 'for the November 2023 General Election through November 2024 General Election'. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Blair, Bowyer, Deel, Hetrick, Morlan, Mungioli and Walker

Enactment No: RES0173-2023

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby authorizes entering into a collaborative agreement with neighboring communities and Oakland County for a Central Early Voting Site for the November 2023 General Election through November 2024 General Election.

Further Resolved, the Rochester Hills City Council authorizes the City Clerk and/or the Mayor to execute this agreement on behalf of the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR Items not on the Agenda

LEGISLATIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

Ms. Mungioli stated that she was just informed that Bob Gosselin passed away. She added that he was a Michigan State Representative and passed away suddenly. She asked that everyone keep his family in their thoughts and prayers.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING DATE - Regular Meeting - Monday, July 10, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before Council, it was moved by Mungioli and seconded by Walker to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

*RYAN DEEL, President
Rochester Hills City Council*

*LEANNE SCOTT, MMC, Clerk
City of Rochester Hills*

*AMBER BEAUCHAMP
Administrative Coordinator
City Clerk's Office*

Approved as presented at the (insert date, or dates) Regular City Council Meeting.