

City of Muskegon  
City Commission Worksession  
December 8, 2014  
City Commission Chambers  
5:30 PM

MINUTES

2014-94

Present: Commissioners Hood, German, Rinsema-Sybenga, Gawron, Johnson, and Spataro.

Absent: Commissioner Turnquist.

**Urban Farming.**

Frank Peterson, City Manager, gave an overview of the topic, provided a hand-out to Commissioners regarding urban gardening and the Right to Farm Act.

Mr. Peterson stated the City has a strong history of supporting community gardens and has allowed a number of neighborhood gardens to operate on city property. The topic isn't as simple as we would like it to be, as a state law that was designed to protect farmers from residential encroachment could be used to allow commercial farming operations to operate free of many local zoning rules. This law did not contemplate commercial farming encroachment into residential areas, and absent a state legislative fix, protecting residential areas from commercial farming operations, there is a possibility that allowing a private farmer to operate commercially could take away the rights of his/her neighbors to avoid what they may perceive as nuisances associated with commercial farming practices.

Comments were received from the public.

The City Commission directed staff to work with state organizations to create an ordinance that allows for the commercial sale of items grown in private and community gardens, provided appropriate regulations are developed to protect all other homeowners and residents from the potential encroachment of commercial farming activities into densely populated urban neighborhoods and to present a draft to City Commission in the first quarter of 2015.

**Adjournment.**

**Motion by Commissioner Hood, seconded by Vice Mayor Spataro to adjourn at 6:54 p.m.**

*MOTION PASSES*

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**Ann Marie Cummings, MMC  
City Clerk**