



OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF LANSING  
PROCEEDINGS OF JANUARY 12, 2009



City Council Chambers  
Lansing, Michigan

The City Council of the City of Lansing met in regular session and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Quinney.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Allen, Hewitt, Jeffries, Quinney, Robinson, Wood

ABSENT: Councilmembers Dunbar (arrived at 7:16 p.m.) and Kaltenbach

Council President Quinney asked that we remember Sherill Pittman, who recently passed away during the Meditation. The Council observed a moment of Meditation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by President Quinney

#### APPROVAL OF PRINTED COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

By Councilmember Robinson

To approve the printed Council Proceedings of January 5, 2009

Motion carried

#### TABLED ITEMS

1. BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
  - a. Authorizing Litigation Against the Mayor to Compel the Opening of Waverly and Red Cedar golf courses

#### SPECIAL CEREMONIES

- Special Ceremonies
  1. Tribute; Remembering Maria Rodriguez Velasquez and recognizing her lifetime achievements

Councilmember Wood spoke about the life of Maria Rodriguez Velasquez, about her love of family and her dedication to the City of Lansing.

City Clerk Swope read the following Resolution:

**RESOLUTION #005**

BY COUNCILMEMBER CAROL WOOD  
RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANSING

WHEREAS, Maria Rodriguez Velasquez was born on November 26, 1925 in Ballenger, Texas to Juanita and Aurelio Rodriguez, who were both born and raised in Mexico; and

WHEREAS, shortly after Maria was born, Aurelio moved his family to Crystal City, Texas. Maria's very early life consisted of makeshift camps inhabited by migrant farm workers and the crops that were harvested each year; and

WHEREAS, in 1933, at the young age of 8, Maria's young life changed

drastically after the death of her mother. Her childhood over, Maria took over the household duties and took care of her younger brother and sister while her father worked to make ends meet; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, Aurelio packed up his three children, Maria, Sylvia, and Cipriano (Tony), with little more than the clothes on their backs, and jumped aboard a labor contractor's truck for the long journey from Crystal City, Texas to Michigan; and

WHEREAS, the family first settled in Jackson and labored in the fields picking cherries, carrots, onions, string beans, and sugar beets. They roamed the state, moving from farm to farm in search of work and finally settled in Lansing, Michigan; and

WHEREAS, in 1943, after a brief courtship, Maria and Filipe married and began a life together, continuing their work as migrant workers as well as working odd jobs; and

WHEREAS, it was four years later in 1947 that Maria lost her brother, Tony, to lung disease caused by years of exposure to deadly pesticides and other hazardous fertilizers; and

WHEREAS, in 1953, Maria was diagnosed with tuberculosis and spent the next 19 months in the hospital to remove part of a lung and to recuperate from the effects of the tuberculosis. Her seven children were looked after by her father, Aurelio, and step-mother, Petra, until Maria fully recovered and returned with a quiet defiance to begin a new life and make life better for her family; and

WHEREAS, Maria found work at Sohn Linen Service and a second job as a cook at a local Mexican restaurant, Torres Taco House, working both for the next 13 years; and

WHEREAS, Maria's oldest daughter, Juanita, was the first to graduate from Eastern High School in 1958, setting a pattern for her fourteen brothers and sisters. In 1976, she was given a Special Parent Award for her active volunteer participation at school events; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, while on her first volunteering assignment, Maria set a precedent by being the first female recipient of the Boys Club of Lansing's Man of the Year Award. She eventually convinced the Boys Club to start allowing girls to participate in after school activities; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, Maria was elected as an Ingham County Commissioner and subsequently, won re-election in 1982; and

WHEREAS, after 35 years of service, Maria retired in 1990 from Sohn Linen Service and the owners presented her with a two-week vacation in Hawaii and her children surprised her with the keys to a brand-new 1990 Buick Century; and

WHEREAS, after her retirement, Maria was prepared to spend the golden years of her life with her children and beloved Felipe. In 1993, her and Felipe's 50th wedding anniversary celebration was held, but not with the excitement once anticipated due to the death of their daughter, Santos, one month earlier; and

WHEREAS, just one year after their 50th wedding anniversary, her beloved Felipe departed. Grieving, but unwilling to sit idle for too long, Maria quietly continued her volunteer work at the American Red Cross Distribution Center, which she continued until 2008; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, Maria was awarded the Senior Service Award and a tree was planted in her honor in Frances Park in Lansing, and in 1996, she received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the United States Hispanic Leadership Conference; and

WHEREAS, Maria's volunteer service included St. Mary Cathedral Church Council and Altar Society, the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing, the American Red Cross, Food Distribution Center as well as serving as a member of the Corporate Board Chicano Advisory Committee to the Lansing Board of Education Spanish Speaking Democrats, the Lansing Chapter Michigan Spanish Speaking Democrats, the Ingham County Democratic Party, the Mujeres Unidas de Michigan, the President League of United Latin American Citizens, the El Renacimiento, the Y.W.C.A Board of Directors, and the Democratic Women's Caucus; and

WHEREAS, Maria served as Treasurer of the American G.I. Forum and the Pedro Mireles Chapter and as a member of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, Girl Scouts of America, Greater Lansing Food Bank Board of Directors, Board of Universidad Autonoma of Guadalajara of Lansing Community College, and Student Exchange and as a delegate at the National Democratic Convention; and

WHEREAS, for her dedication and service to Lansing, she received numerous awards, which include the Committee Patriotico Diploma of Honor, the Boys Club of Lansing Medallion Award, nominee as delegate to the Women's Year Conference and a Certificate of Appreciation from Governor Milliken, the Boys Club of America, the Y.W.C.A, and the Livonia League of Women Voters. She also received Honor Roll membership to the Women's Hall of Fame, the Y.W.C.A Diana and Service Awards, and the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lansing City Council, hereby, recognizes Maria Rodriguez Velasquez for her remarkable strength and courage and for her many years of service to the City of Lansing and its residents. Maria will be dearly missed by her family, friends, and the community which she loved and cared for as her own family. Through her life, she rose above her struggles and inspired those around her with her warmth, kindness, and sincerity.

By Councilmember Wood

Motion Carried

Aurelio Velasquez thanked the City Council for this honor on behalf of his family.

2. Tribute; Pastors United of Lansing on their 21st Annual Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Celebration Service

Councilmember Wood spoke about the Pastors United of Lansing and presented them with the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION #006**

BY COUNCILMEMBER CAROL WOOD

RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANSING

WHEREAS, the Pastors United of Lansing will hold their 21st Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration service on Thursday, January 15, 2009, at the New Jerusalem Church, located at 1919 S. Pennsylvania Avenue at 7:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, each year the pastors honor Dr. King's life and ministry with a service on his birthday, January 15th; and

WHEREAS, the Pastors will hold a special tribute to the late Reverend Dr. J.E. Graves, founder of the Pastor's Conference of Greater Lansing, led the effort to name a street in the City of Lansing after Dr. King and who marched with Dr. King during the 1950's and 1960's for civil rights and social justice in America.

WHEREAS, the Pastors United 2009 celebration will feature Reverend Robert Dean, Pastor of the New Life Church of God in Christ in Grand Rapids, as the Keynote Preacher and launch the Pastor's United of Lansing's campaign to honor Dr. Graves with a special memorial designation in the City of Lansing for his leadership and contributions to the Lansing community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lansing City Council, hereby, congratulates the Lansing Pastors United of Lansing on their 21st Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the citizens of our community are encouraged to come together and celebrate the legacy of Dr. King and Reverend Graves to this free event being held on January 15, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

By Councilmember Wood

Motion Carried

Rev. Charles Bicy thanked the City Council for this honor and invited everyone to attend their celebration service.

*Councilmember Dunbar arrived at the meeting at 7:16 p.m.*

Rev. Michael Murphy thanked the Mayor and City Council for this honor and recognized Council President Quinney and Vice President Robinson on their election as City Council officers. He spoke about the upcoming celebration service and asked everyone to remember the contributions of the late Rev. J.E. Graves.

Councilmember Wood spoke about Pastor Tyner's 56 years of pasturing, and stated that he and other pastors weren't present at the time of this ceremony.

3. Presentation; Recognition of Greater Lansing Area Holiday Commission's 24th Annual Luncheon in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mayor Bernero read the following proclamation:

**WHEREAS:** It is a privilege to join the Greater Lansing Area Holiday Commission as it hosts the 24th Annual Luncheon in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 19, 2009 to recognize Dr. King's vision with this year's selected theme, "A Dream Comes Closer"; and

**WHEREAS:** This year's celebration is especially momentous as it is held one day prior to witnessing the historic inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack H. Obama. When Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of his dream, he spoke of a day when a person would be judged on their character, not the color of their skin. With the recent election, we as a people have come closer to his dream; and

**WHEREAS:** This holiday should not be thought of as an arbitrary break from work or school, but a prelude to the January 20, 2009 inauguration and a day of reflection about Dr. King's lifelong accomplishment toward peace, justice and equality. It should be a day of participation, wherein all citizens contribute something positive to their community and the public, by educating our youth about the Civil Rights Movement and its progress over the years; and

**WHEREAS:** During his lifetime, Dr. King contended, "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus" He also espoused the notion that, "An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity". The results of this recent general election speaks to the truth that Yes We Can, Yes We Did, and Yes We Will; and

**WHEREAS:** In memoriam of his inspirational life, work, and worldview, Dr. King should never be forgotten by future generations. His legacy continues only if we actively work for positive social change. Let us, as a community and a nation, keep the dream alive so that his accomplishments continue to be remembered for years to come.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, VIRG BERNERO,** Mayor of the City of Lansing, by the power vested in me, do hereby proclaim January 19, 2009 as

**“Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day”**

in Lansing. May we continue to pursue the social equality articulated in Dr. King's speeches and draw closer to living his dream.

Councilmember Robinson thanked the committee members on behalf of the City Council.

Myron Freeman stated that the Mayor's proclamation summed up the committee's efforts and stated that it is a pleasure to serve the greater Lansing area with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. He stated that all of the commissioners work very hard. He thanked and introduced all of the committee members present.

Mayor Bernero stated that he really appreciates the efforts of the committee members. He also stated that tickets for the event can be purchased on the 4th floor of City Hall and at the Hannah Center in East Lansing.

4. Presentation; School Based Mini Grants to Lansing Teachers

Mayor Bernero stated that this is the 13th year of the program, which is funded through the proceeds of the City's annual golf outing. He stated that funds are to be used to combat substance abuse. He introduced the following grant recipients:

7th grade representatives from Otto Middle School's PALS program spoke about their program.

Linda Ketchum of Pleasant View School spoke about the school's PALS program.

Monie Rademacher of Post Oak Elementary spoke about the school's Drug Free Puppeteers.

Robin Pizzo of Wainwright Magnet School spoke about the school's Drug Free PSA.

Mary Zeineh spoke about Education Options Art Group at the Hill Center.

Linda Redding of Otto Middle School spoke about the school's Create and Relate After School Art program.

Mary Zeineh of Wexford Montessori Magnet School spoke about the school's After School Tae Kwon Do program.

Mayor Bernero thanked all of the students and coordinators present.

Ed Hagan spoke about how citizens can get involved in these programs through the United Way and the City's golf outing.

Mike Botke spoke about Teen Court.

Guillermo Lopez of the Human Relations and Community Service Department thanked all of the volunteers and Joan Jackson Johnson for all of their efforts related to these grant programs. He spoke about the City's Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Celebration Service.

**COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS  
AND CITY CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Councilmember Robinson stated that a movie filmed on Fairview Ave. would be screened at Celebration Cinema. She announced the Lewton-Rich neighborhood meeting and spoke about the upcoming 2nd Saturdays meeting.

Councilmember Wood announced the Groesbeck neighborhood meeting and the Happendance event at Lansing Community College. She spoke about the Pastors United MLK event and the upcoming Bea Christy event.

Councilmember Dunbar wished Councilmember Robinson a happy 40th birthday. She spoke about the upcoming She Laughs event for the Women's Center and the Hawk Island Triathlon. She remembered the life of Olive Ikeh, who recently passed away.

**SPEAKER REGISTRATION FOR  
PUBLIC COMMENT**

Clerk Swope announced that the public comment registration form(s) for those intending to address Council on legislative or City government matters will be collected and that only those persons who have fully completed the form(s) will be permitted to speak.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

Mayor Bernero announced the next City Hall on the Road event, the next Mobile Food Pantry and a food drive at Eastern High School. He stated that there is a snow advisory for the next few days. He gave a Go Green! Initiative update and stated that the City would receive reimbursement for clean-up efforts related to last year's tornado event. He gave his condolences to the family of Olive Ikeh, who recently passed away.

**PUBLIC COMMENT  
ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

• Public Comment on Legislative Matters:

Legislative Matters included the following public hearings:

There were no Public Hearings

City Attorney Smith spoke about the opinion he rendered regarding the conduct of audience members at City Council meetings.

Darnell E. Oldham, Sr. of 3815 Berwick Dr. spoke about Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Celebration Service.

John Pollard of 1718 Blair Sr. spoke about Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Celebration Service.

Charlene Decker of 2711 Pleasant Grove Rd. spoke about Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Celebration Service.

**PUBLIC COMMENT  
ON CITY GOVERNMENT RELATED MATTERS:**

Morris Glover of 732 Wisconsin Ave. spoke about snow plowing.

Bob Gray of 422 Dadson Dr. spoke about various city matters.

Sylvester Stewart of 3601 Berwick Dr. spoke about various city matters.

Ammahad Shekarakki of 902 Willow St. spoke about getting a Malcolm X. memorial in the City of Lansing.



*Tim Kaltenbach, Chair*  
*Eric Hewitt, Vice Chair*                      *Staff: Terese*  
*Derrick Quinney, Member*

**Committee on Public Services**

*Kathie Dunbar, Chair*  
*Tim Kaltenbach, Vice Chair*                      *Staff: Diana*  
*Brian Jeffries, Member*

**Committee on Personnel – Call of the Chair**

*A'Lynne Robinson, Chair*  
*Derrick Quinney, Vice Chair*                      *Staff: Terese*  
*Sandy Allen, Member*  
*Kathie Dunbar, Member*

**Other Boards and Commissions**

Employee/Police and Fire Retirement Boards: *Carol Wood*  
EDC/Brownfield Re-development/Tax Increment Financing Authority/  
Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors: *Brian Jeffries*  
Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau: *Carol Wood*  
Planning Board: *Brian Jeffries, Sandy Allen, Derrick Quinney*  
Tri-County Michigan Works: *Sandy Allen, Derrick Quinney, Kathie Dunbar*  
Tri-County Commission on Aging: *Sandy Allen, Kathie Dunbar*  
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission: *Carol Wood, Eric Hewitt, Tim Kaltenbach*  
Capital Region Airport Authority: *Brian Jeffries*  
Downtown Blue Ribbon: *Tim Kaltenbach*  
Downtown Lansing, Inc: *Tim Kaltenbach*  
Lansing Entertainment & Public Facilities Authority: *Kathie Dunbar, Tim Kaltenbach*  
Principal Shopping District: *Tim Kaltenbach*  
Community Corrections Advisory Board: *Carol Wood*  
Entrepreneur Institute of Mid-Michigan: *Carol Wood*  
City of Lansing and Charter Township of Lansing Liaison Commission: *Kathie Dunbar, A'Lynne Robinson*

**ADJOURNED TIME 8:57 P.M.**

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**CHRIS SWOPE, CITY CLERK**