

**MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF DECEMBER 18, 2017**

Mayor Randall called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Mayor Patricia Randall and Councilmember Chris Burns were present and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson and Councilmembers Richard Ford and Lori Knapp joined via the conference phone line. Councilmember Reid joined the meeting via conference phone line at 8:16 a.m. Councilmember Terry Urban was absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Laurence Shaffer, Deputy City Manager Rob Boulis, City Clerk Adam Herringa and Deputy City Clerk Erica Eklov.

Mayor Randall opened the meeting and inquired if there were any questions or concerns regarding items on the proposed agenda. She inquired if parking fees for residents at Ramona Park were being eliminated next summer. City Manager Shaffer confirmed the proposed elimination of Ramona Park entry fees for residents in 2018. He continued by stating there is no plan to reinstate the fees at this time. In response to a question from Mayor Randall about staffing the access gatehouse, Mr. Shaffer replied that summer staff at Ramona Park rotate from job to job and the gatehouse will continue to be staffed to address non-resident entry. He continued by stating that the City is exploring automation to replace the gatehouse and estimated that not collecting entry fees for residents will cost approximately \$33,000. He concluded his comments by stating that not charging residents is the right thing to do given the current financial health of the City.

Councilmember Knapp inquired, as it related to Item C.1, if the City is paying for school crossing guards. Deputy City Manager Boulis stated that the City has provided crossing guards for a significant length of time and three years ago contracted out the service. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked that City Administration research whether the City should be paying for this service. Councilmember Knapp then inquired if the City had the law firm Warner Norcross on retainer. Mr. Boulis stated that the City currently uses Warner Norcross for labor related issues.

Councilmember Knapp inquired, as it related to Item F.1, how many special assessment projects are possible given the November 7, 2006 approval of the street millage. City Manager Shaffer stated that the number of unassessed sewer projects is open-ended as many portions of the sewer system were installed years ago and pass in front of vacant lots.

Councilmember Burns inquired, as it relates to the FOIA fees, how the error related to the "Full Copy of Electronic Property Tax File" occurred such that it was changed from \$50 to \$0.38. City Clerk Herringa stated that when the FOIA laws changed in 2015 the fee structure was modified accordingly and this fee was inadvertently changed and should not have been. Councilmember Reid questioned, given that the file is electronic in nature, whether \$50 is an appropriate fee and asked for justification for the amount.

Councilmember Reid inquired, as it relates to the proposed food truck fees, what the estimated cost of the program will be to the City and if this cost was used to calculate the proposed fees. City Manager Shaffer replied that the proposed fees are introductory in nature and designed to encourage food trucks to set up at City parks. He continued by stating that he did not believe the cost of administering the program to be high and that staff will evaluate after this year. With regard to whether

or not to require a permit, City Manager Shaffer stated that the permit program affords the City some control.

Councilmember Reid then inquired as to the proposed change in softball practice periods from 1.5 hours to 1 hour and whether most teams utilize the 1.5 hours for practice. If so, she continued, will teams now be forced to shorten their practice or reserve a full two hours and pay accordingly. Councilmember Reid inquired if softball teams were consulted on the impact of this change. Related to Parks and Recreation, Councilmember Knapp asked that usage/event attendance data be provided to City Council for the upcoming retreat.

With regard to Item F.2, Councilmember Ford inquired if the Consent Agenda could be released earlier than it currently is. Mayor Randall asked that a provision be inserted into the Rules of Order and Procedure asking that Councilmembers notify City Administration by noon the day of a Regular Meeting if they want an item removed from the Consent Agenda. She stated this would allow staff and other persons the ability to know in advance whether their presence at the meeting is necessary.

Councilmember Reid asked that the proposed statement for approving items on the Consent Agenda include a statement identifying which items have been removed from the Consent Agenda prior to the vote. Councilmember Reid identified typographical omissions/edits in Sections 8 and 9 and noted the highlighted section of Robert's Rules of Order inadvertently blocked out the writing of the relevant section.

With regard to Item F.4, Mayor Randall inquired how people will access the donated land. City Manager Shaffer and Deputy City Manager Boulis identified a few possibilities. Mayor Randall commented that the parcel is somewhat landlocked and asked what the City was planning to spend on access, signage, etc. City Manager Shaffer replied that the City was not planning on spending any money on access at this time and discussed the beautiful aspects of the property. Mr. Shaffer also shared some of the downfalls of owning property such as litter and illegal dumping. Mr. Shaffer stated that the City of Kalamazoo has a well field adjacent to the parcel from which it pumps out high quality water. Mayor Randall inquired as to the assessed value of the parcel and the related annual property taxes. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired as to the naming of the parcel and City Manager Shaffer replied that a stipulation of the donation is that it be named after former Mayor Betty Lee Ongley. He continued by stating that the naming of public facilities in Portage has been varied in that some are named after people and some are not.

With regard to Item L.1, Councilmember Ford noted a large disparity among the bids and inquired as to why this might be the case. City Manager Shaffer replied that he would research the matter.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked that, as it relates to the Committee of the Whole Meeting, if the City would provide numbers of potential medical marijuana facilities and related distance requirements. He continued by asking if proposed distance requirements would limit the number of growers. Mr. Pearson concluded by asking that the proposed changes to the Home Occupation Ordinance be highlighted. City Manager Shaffer stated that he would provide the requested information in advance of the Committee of the Whole Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:31 a.m.