

**MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF FEBRUARY 12, 2018**

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

Mayor Randall opened the meeting and inquired if there were any questions or concerns regarding items on the proposed agenda. Mayor Randall inquired if Ms. Hoogenboom was going to be present for the Proclamation. City Manager Shaffer stated she was not but City Council was invited to her birthday party on Saturday, February 17th.

Councilmember Burns inquired if "Ed and Ted's Excellent Adventures" listed on the Accounts Payable Register was used as a vendor for Senior Center excursions. City Manager Shaffer concurred.

With regard to Item A.3, Austin Lake Trail Project, Councilmember Reid referenced the legal cost of \$145,000 when the original estimate for the entire project was \$100,000. She inquired as to the estimate for the design work and acquisition. City Manager Shaffer stated the estimate for the design work is \$50,000 but he does not have an estimate for the acquisition. Mr. Shaffer stated the cost for the design work will likely come from an unappropriated fund balance after June 30, 2018. Councilmember Reid inquired as to the process for condemnation/eminent domain. City Manager Shaffer stated there is a full legal process which includes an appraisal, negotiations and a good faith offer. If this process is not successful then City Council would be asked to approve eminent domain. Councilmember Reid inquired if the cost of property acquisition could be estimated and provided. Mr. Shaffer stated that one particular piece of property has been appraised at approximately \$310,000 but the owner is asking for significantly more. Councilmember Knapp inquired if there is a single property owner that has accumulated much of the land identified for the trail. City Manager Shaffer stated, yes, one property owner has accumulated most of an old railway bed that is targeted for trail development. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired as to the status of the property owned by Stryker, Pfizer and Peg Giem that is needed for trail development. Mr. Shaffer stated he was unsure as to the status of the Stryker property, the Pfizer property has been negotiated and will be deeded to City for the assessed value, and Peg Giem and Director of Parks and Recreation Kathleen Hoyle are in negotiations. Councilmember Knapp inquired if the land owners are aware of the trail plans. Mr. Shaffer replied in the affirmative. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired if the trail would be set back from East Shore Drive and Mr. Shaffer replied that the trail would be on the railbed which is twenty to forty feet from the road. Mr. Shaffer stated the railbed is ideal for a bicycle trail.

With regard to Item A.4, Budget Transfer of \$550,000, Councilmember Reid inquired as to the reason for the budget transfer request and City Manager Shaffer stated the goal is to get design work completed early in the year so actual construction can be started earlier and, by so doing, hopefully at a more competitive price. Mr. Shaffer continued by sharing that earlier design work for road projects will be included in next year's budget.

With regard to Item A.5, Perceptive Controls Change Order, Councilmember Knapp inquired as to the availability of funding as project funds for this agenda item were included in

the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 budget. City Manager Shaffer stated there are two types of funding: operational and capital improvement funds. While operational funds are good for the single fiscal year, capital funds are available for the duration of the project and remain until the appropriation is pulled.

With regard to Item A.6, Purchase of Property, Councilmember Reid inquired how much space the lift station will take and what the City planned to do with the building on the property that is proposed for purchase. City Manager Shaffer reviewed the location of the lift station and shared the lift station needs to be rebuilt on a larger footprint. Mr. Shaffer continued by stating that landscaping is planned to enhance aesthetics and consideration is being given to closing Emily Drive. Mr. Shaffer stated one potential use of the property is as a storage facility which would replace existing rental units. Mr. Shaffer stated that the property owner has had difficulty selling the building and the attractiveness of the building for a potential buyer would be impacted by the new lift station. Councilmember Ford inquired as to the redevelopment potential of the property especially if Emily Drive is closed and the lift station is strategically located to minimize impact. City Manager Shaffer expressed skepticism as to redevelopment potential. Mayor Randall inquired as to the initial sale price and Mr. Shaffer replied that the original list price was \$280,000 and City had received an appraisal of \$220,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated that he views a potential lost opportunity for the property if it is used for a lift station and storage. He reviewed potential lost tax revenue and inquired if it was possible to relocate the lift station such that the City does not need to purchase the entire property. City Manager Shaffer stated the lift station needs to be farther away from the road and the ideal location would be near the middle of the parking lot currently located on the parcel. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired as to whether the new lift station would be odorous because he has not detected any odor from the existing lift station. Mr. Shaffer replied the hope is the new lift station will be no more odorous than the current one. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson encouraged the City to explore options to allow for redevelopment of the parcel as he believes it is in a prime location. Councilmember Reid cautioned City Council to avoid discussion at the Pre-Council Meeting and to focus on questions and answers. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated the City has talked about closing Emily drive and asked the City Manager to provide a reason why the lift station could not be located such that the parcel could not be developed. Mr. Shaffer stated access to the building is via Emily Drive and closing Emily Drive would eliminate access to the building.

With regard to Item A.9 and the ICON Shelter, Councilmember Ford inquired as to the status of the ICON Shelter at Eliason Nature Preserve. City Manager Shaffer stated the foundation is in but the structure is not yet in place.

There being no other questions Mayor Randall summarized the questions raised at the meeting requiring follow up from City Administration.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:27 a.m.

Adam Herringa, City Clerk