MINUTES FROM THE PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF JANUARY 7, 2019

Mayor Randall called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Claudette Reid and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson joined via the conference phone line. Councilmembers Richard Ford and Terry Urban were 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 January 8th Regular Meeting Agenda. With regard to Item A.3, Purchase of Easements for Trailways, Councilmember Reid inquired as to the process for determining costs for the properties. She also inquired, with regard to property purchases that are being negotiated, whether eminent domain was under consideration. City Manager Shaffer stated that Pfizer only requested the city pay the assessed value for the 16 parcels. With regard to eminent domain, Mr. Shaffer stated that it is a method of last resort and should only be utilized under dire circumstances. He speculated as to whether a bike trail could be upheld in the courts as an appropriate use of eminent domain. Councilmember Reid inquired as to the status of negotiations for the purchase and/or use of other properties necessary for the planned bike trails. Mr. Shaffer stated that some property owners would prefer any trail go along the edge of their property instead of directly through and other property owners believe their property is worth more should it be developed with something other than a bike trail. Regardless, Mr. Shaffer stated that negotiations are on-going.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired if residents that would be impacted by the planned Austin Lake Trail had been notified of the project. He continued by inquiring if the trail would run along the property line or if there would be any setback. Mr. Shaffer stated that residents along the trail had not yet been notified and that the trail would run along the property lines. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired if the city was looking at obtaining easements, purchasing properties or both. Mr. Shaffer stated that the city is looking at easements. Mr. Pearson inquired if the city is looking at "the O'Brien property" or railroad property. Mr. Shaffer stated that the O'Brien property and railroad property is the same and reviewed the need for this and other property to implement the trail. In response to an additional inquiry, Mr. Shaffer explained that the trail will run along the railroad bed and explained how using the railroad bed will make building the trail easier. During her summary of the meeting, Mayor Randall inquired when impacted residents would be notified of trail plans.

With regard to item C.1, presentation from Mr. Devin Mackinder, Mr. Shaffer confirmed that a copy of the presentation would be distributed to City Council and be posted for public view.

With regard to item D.1, Hill 'An' Brook Drive and Merryview Drive Project, Councilmember Burns inquired about the property owner who is withdrawing her support for the project and how it impacts the level of support for the project. City Manager Shaffer shared that this morning the City Clerk received a petition in opposition to the project and that it

appears three people who originally supported the project are now in opposition. He continued by explaining that 60% of the frontage of property owners is necessary for the project to move forward and that the withdrawal of just one person would result in the frontage level dropping below the threshold. Mr. Shaffer stated that he will be asking the City Attorney to review the new information.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson commented that it sounds like the project was supported in concept and inquired as to the cost for residents. Mr. Shaffer reviewed the cost projections and shared that the largest total assessment is $11,000 while the smallest is $3,900. Councilmember Burns inquired if the timeframe of the assessment could be extended beyond ten years to reduce monthly costs. Mr. Shaffer responded in the affirmative and explained that the timeframe for the assessment cannot exceed the life of the improvement. He continued by stating that he would ask staff to research this possibility and impact on monthly costs. Councilmember Reid inquired if the curb and gutter would be concrete or asphalt and Mr. Shaffer shared that it would be concrete. Councilmember Reid inquired if asphalt curbs would reduce costs and Mr. Shaffer stated that he would research the question. Mayor Randall inquired if there were other asphalt curbs in the city and Mr. Shaffer commented that the city tries to avoid asphalt curbs because they breakdown faster than concrete.

Mayor Randall inquired, should the timeframe for payment be extended, if all residents would have to comply with the amortization schedule. Mr. Shaffer stated that residents would be welcome to pay in advance. Mayor Randall asked Mr. Shaffer to have information regarding possible amortization schedules available. Mayor Randall pointed out that the city is in step three of this special assessment process and wondered if special action would be needed to halt the project. Mr. Shaffer stated that he would research and respond. Mayor Randall inquired if there are other neighborhoods in the city in which there is a mix of streets with curb and gutter and those without. Councilmember Reid spoke in the affirmative and shared that this was the case in a neighborhood in which she used to live.

With regard to the Board and Commission Interview Session, Councilmember Reid shared that there are more than enough people to fill vacancies. She also indicated that, due to illness, she may not be in attendance at either the Interview Session or Regular Meeting. She asked that staff take steps to allow her to participate in the Regular Meeting remotely. Councilmember Knapp indicated that, due to a prior commitment, she is unable to attend the Interview Session.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired about a letter received by City Council about boat lifts around Austin Lake. Mr. Shaffer stated that City Council can officially receive the letter and refer it to City Administration for review and report. City Clerk Herringa indicated that he would add the letter to the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT: Following a summary of the meeting, Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:22 a.m.

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Adam Herringa, City Clerk