

**MINUTES FROM THE PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF MARCH 11, 2019**

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

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired if there were any questions or concerns regarding items on the proposed March 12th Regular Meeting Agenda.

With regard to Items A.3, A.4, A.5 and A.6, (all street improvement contracts) Councilmember Knapp inquired as to the proposals by the firm Williams & Works, Inc. She noted that Williams & Works was the low bidder for each item but only received contracts for items A.5 and A.6. She noted that Williams & Works had proposed use of a drone for the survey portion of A.4 and inquired if this was a factor in recommending the next highest bidder, Abonmarche Consultants, Inc. City Manager Shaffer explained that the use of a drone for survey work is not supported by the city, especially when it involves the need to accurately identify the location of underground utilities. He continued by explaining that exact knowledge of property boundaries is also important with this project since all of the city right-of-way will be utilized. He continued by sharing that Williams & Works has done work for the city in the past and he is happy they are again bidding on projects.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired as to the last time Williams & Works was awarded a contract by the city. Deputy City Manager Boulis stated that he would need to research the exact time but speculated that it has been between 10 and 15 years. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired as to whether selecting Abonmarche Consultants was in part due to their familiarity with "City of Portage policies and procedures" as mentioned in Item A.4 and was a factor in not selecting Williams & Works, Inc., for the contracts involving South Westnedge Avenue. City Manager Shaffer stated that City Administration wants the best work to be done as it relates to South Westnedge Avenue and Shaver Road. Deputy City Manager Boulis shared that Abonmarche Consultants was the firm responsible for other reconstruction efforts on South Westnedge and is also responsible for the traffic signal work in this area.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson pointed out that the highest bidder on the four street improvement contracts was the Kalamazoo firm Wightman & Associates. He inquired if there is ever any follow-up with bidders to review bids and how or why their particular bid wasn't lower. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson commented that he prefers it when local contractors win bidding opportunities. Deputy City Manager Boulis commented that firms often ask to review bids once an award has been made. City Manager Shaffer stated that he would reach to Gary Hahn of Wightman & Associates to review and discuss their bids for the various projects.

ADJOURNMENT: Following a summary of the meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Pearson adjourned the meeting at 8:07 a.m.

Adam Herringa, City Clerk