

**MINUTES FROM THE PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF MARCH 24, 2020**

Mayor Patricia Randall, via the conference line, called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Claudette Reid and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson also joined via the conference phone line. Councilmembers Richard Ford and Terry Urban were absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Joseph La Margo, Deputy City Manager Mike Carroll, Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa (via conference phone line) and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

Mayor Randall began by reviewing the agenda and asked if anyone would be present to read the Fair Housing Month Proclamation. City Clerk Eklov responded that it was planned to be a representative of the Fair Housing Center, but City Clerk Eklov had since requested the representative to not attend in light of the new COVID-19 health concerns. City Clerk Eklov offered to read the proclamation instead and Mayor Randall agreed.

With regard to Item A.3, Councilmember Reid asked for clarification regarding the Abonmarche, Consultants flat fee. She wanted to know how the city will know when Abonmarche exceeds the fee or time threshold. Councilmember Knapp highlighted specific language in the letter from Abonmarche attached to the agenda item that stated any additional services would be billed separately.

With regard to Item A. 6, Councilmember Reid inquired as to why the County Treasurer's Office was offering the proposed services, at no cost and for what benefit. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson agreed and expressed questioned whether the service had a fee involved. City Manager La Margo stated he would further research and respond.

With regard to Item A. 8, Councilmember Reid asked what mechanism the vendor would utilize to remove the invasive species at the parks. She stated she thought the city has been trying to avoid herbicide treatments. City Manager La Margo stated he would further research and respond.

With regard to Item A. 9, Councilmember Reid inquired about language related to maintaining existing trees and vegetation within the proposed subdivision phase. She asked how the city might strengthen its position to prevent clear-cutting. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the city ordinances currently lack provisions to prevent clear-cutting in proposed developments, but that the City Administration was working to bolster those ordinances going forward. He noted that the current developer of the Copperleaf subdivision has already clear-cut the newest phase and the city cannot go back and request remediation. However, Deputy City Manager Carroll relayed that the Community Development Department will not be issuing any building permits for the development until the developer provides sufficient replacement of trees per parcel. Councilmember Reid noted that the Copperleaf Condominium Subdivision is a Planned Development (PD) and stated there should have been language in the PD regarding vegetation for the city. City Manager La Margo responded that such requirements should have been in the original PD, but was not. He further noted that the City Administration will ensure Planned Developments will account for this issue in the future. Mayor Randall inquired whether this was the final phase of the Copperleaf Condominium Subdivision. City Manager La Margo responded that he believed it was but would further research and respond.

With regard to Item A. 13, Councilmember Reid requested the number of contracts that were between \$40,000 and \$75,000 compared to the total number of contracts from 2019 for reference. City Manager La Margo stated he had those numbers available and would provide them to Council in the Pre-Council Meeting responses.

With regard to Item A. 14, Councilmember Reid asked whether the proposed resolution authorizing the City Manager to temporarily make purchases and approve contracts up to \$4 million in the absence of the City Council during a state of emergency was truly necessary in light of the recent Executive Order from the Governor regarding remote meetings. City Manager La Margo responded that the resolution may not be essential but the City Administration desired the resolution as a safeguard due to the quickly evolving situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated that as long as City Council can continue business as needed, then the resolution would not be necessary. However, the Council could find it cannot achieve a quorum or future Council meetings could be canceled then it could be required, otherwise the resolution will not be activated. City Manager La Margo noted the dollar amount was calculated based on the next 60 days of city projects currently planned that would require attention. Mayor Randall asked when the resolution is slated to expire. City Manager La Margo responded that the resolution will expire with the May 12 City Council Meeting or whenever regular City Council Meetings resume in the event meetings are canceled.

With regard to Item A. 15, Mayor Randall confirmed that City Council can schedule the Board and Commission Interview session for May 26th now, but can reschedule at a later date if needed due to the current emergency situation.

With regard to Item A. 18, Councilmember Reid inquired whether all of the meetings listed in the Calendar of Meetings would be taking place in light of the COVID-19 measures. City Manager La Margo responded that any non-essential Board and Commission meetings would be canceled through April 13th.

With regard to Item C.1, Mayor Randall inquired if a presentation was planned and what was expected of City Council. Deputy City Manager Carroll noted that the Kalamazoo County Office of Emergency Management was simply looking to present its current plan and seek support from the local municipalities. City Manager La Margo noted that this item had previously gone before Council several years prior and Portage was one of the few municipalities to support the matter. He stated that Portage would likely support the plan again this time. Following discussion by Council, the City Clerk was instructed to alter the recommended action to accept the presentation as a gesture of support for the proposed plan from the Kalamazoo County Office of Emergency Management.

ADJOURNMENT: Following a summary of the meeting, Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:34 a.m.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk