

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF APRIL 11, 2016**

Mayor Pro Tem Nasim Ansari called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Councilmember Jim Pearson and Councilmember Claudette Reid via the conference phone line. Those not present were: Councilmembers Richard Ford, Patricia Randall and Terry Urban, and Mayor Peter Strazdas. Also in attendance were City Manager Larry Shaffer, Deputy City Manager Rob Boulis and City Clerk James Hudson.

City Manager Larry Shaffer indicated that Mayor Strazdas e-mailed to let City Council know he would not be present at the meeting today, but would be at the Regular City Council Meeting, April 12, 2016. There being no quorum, Mayor Pro Tem Ansari asked that the Agenda be reviewed item by item and Councilmembers Reid and Pearson concurred. Mr. Shaffer offered to review the Agenda down the page in sequence and began.

Councilmember Reid asked whether there would be any written information on the Budget ahead of time. Mr. Shaffer responded that Council would be getting the full Budget on the dais and a brief soliloquy from him at the Meeting tomorrow night. Councilmember Pearson asked for the information on which departments are listed for the “split” Budget Review Sessions #1 and #2 to allow him to concentrate on the respective Budget proposals from each department.

With regard to item F.3, Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Plan – 5825/5901 Willoughby Drive, Councilmember Reid asked if this applicant is going through the County Brownfield process or only the Portage Brownfield process. Mr. Shaffer indicated that the applicant is going through the County Brownfield process; and, he confirmed for her that the request is to support this application as it goes through the County Brownfield process. Councilmember Reid asked the Administration to show how the County process impacts the City Brownfields process. She indicated that there should be a realignment necessary because these are two really significantly different ways of approaching Brownfields. She noted that of the recent Brownfields in Portage, the applicants are going over to the County for process.

Councilmember Pearson asked is it more advantageous to go through the County only instead of only through the City, and Mr. Shaffer indicated that there would be some advantage because the County Brownfield fund is better funded than the City presently. He also provided his assurances that the process will be synchronized, and indicated that the City is taking advantage of the liquidity of the County at this time. In answer to Councilmember Pearson, Mr. Shaffer indicated that he would find out whether this company approached the County first or the City first, and he shared that the Administration coordinates pretty closely with the County Brownfield Authority through Southwest Michigan First. However, he stressed that it made more sense to use the County Brownfield Authority as a primary instead of the City because of the liquidity of the County Brownfield Authority. Mr. Shaffer agreed with Councilmember Pearson that the City will always choose the “best way to go on these” and conceded that he would keep Council “in the loop” on this.

Councilmember Reid asked whether we are losing out somewhat because the County is more liquid, and is there some plan we should be looking at so we can be in a position where we can manage these in-house; and, is this advantageous for the applicant, but not for the City? Mr. Shaffer indicated that he would be glad to look into this. She queried whether this might be a topic that is appropriate for a Council of the Whole session.

In answer to Councilmember Pearson, there was a consensus that all of the Councilmembers would be present at the April 12, 2016 Regular Meeting. Because City Clerk James Hudson did not hear his question, he reviewed Item F.4, Special Meeting for Board and Commission Applicants, and informed Council that there were no new applicants for the Building Contractor position on the Construction Board of Appeals (CBA) since Larry Schmidt has served three terms, and there were no new applicants for the Public Media Network (PMN) position.

In answer to Councilmember Reid, Mr. Hudson indicated that it is entirely up to City Council to accept an application for a Board or Commission closer to the time of the Meeting.

Also, in answer to Councilmember Pearson, Mr. Hudson responded that the Administration did advertise on the website for applicants for the PMN.

Councilmember Reid asked that we contact PMN, let them know the position is open and to ask Portage residents who are actively utilizing their services if they would be interested in being a member of the PMN Board. She asked if someone called tomorrow, would they be eligible for consideration and Mr. Hudson responded, "Absolutely." He indicated that he would definitely process them for Council review.

Both City Manager Shaffer and Councilmember Reid assured Councilmember Pearson that Council had received the final report regarding Item No. 2 referred to in the minutes of the City of Portage Human Services Board dated March 3, 2016, under New Business: FY 2016-17 Human/Public Service Application Funding.

In answer to Councilmember Pearson, Deputy City Manager Boulis indicated that it is his understanding that one of the things that keeps people from bidding on Item L.4, Department of Public Safety – Police Division Vehicle Maintenance – Bid Tabulation, is the certification necessary for a vendor to work on a police vehicle. He noted that there are security things in place to make sure the vehicles are not tampered with, so this is not quite as much of an issue. In answer to Councilmember Pearson regarding whether there were any complaints about the bidder from Public Safety, Mr. Shaffer indicated that staff "loves them" and really appreciates the great job done by the low bidder, Michigan Municipal Police & Fire Repair, LLC, aka "McDonald's" for past services.

Councilmember Reid asked that staff review the 24 organizations that were approached for a request for proposal to see if they have the certifications necessary to do this work, otherwise this becomes a sole source bid process; or, if they have the certifications and chose not to bid, she would like to know the reason. Mr. Boulis indicated that we can probably find out why they chose not to bid, and offered to make some inquiries to find that out. He pointed out that there were three bids received last

time and the hourly rate for Michigan Municipal Police & Fire Repair, LLC, was lower. He offered to ask Purchasing Manager Judy Johnson to make the inquiries.

Councilmember Pearson interjected that he overheard that Michigan Municipal Police & Fire Repair, LLC, gives the low hourly bid, then they over charge us, and he wanted assurances that we are really going out and having a fair process; and, that he really wants to see more than one bid.

ADJOURN: Mayor Pro Tem Ansari adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

James Hudson, City Clerk