

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 4, 2020

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held virtually as permitted by Senate Bill 1108. Mayor Patricia M. Randall, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson and Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter, Claudette Reid, and Terry Urban were present. Mayor Randall and Councilmember Ledbetter were present in-person in Council Chambers while all others participated virtually from Portage, Michigan. Also in attendance were City Manager Joe La Margo, City Attorney Catherine Kaufman and Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa who served in the role of City Clerk for this meeting.

At the request of Mayor Randall, the audience observed a moment of silence to honor all denominations and called for peace and unity in our nation. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Randall shared where the public can access the meeting agenda and asked if any Councilmember or anyone in the audience would like an item removed from the Consent Agenda. No items were removed. Motion by Reid, seconded by Burns, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Reid, seconded by Burns, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 20, 2020, and Pre-Council Meeting of November 2, 2020. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER OF NOVEMBER 4, 2020: Motion by Reid, seconded by Burns, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of November 4, 2020. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

POLICE VEHICLE EQUIPMENT CHANGEOVER: Motion by Reid, seconded by Burns, to approve the expenditure in the amount of \$80,278.24 for retrofitting services on four Ford Interceptor police vehicles by Emergency Vehicle Products and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to this purchase on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

REZONING APPLICATION #20/21-2: Motion by Reid, seconded by Burns, to accept Rezoning Application #20/21-2, 4627 S. Long Lake Drive for first reading and set a public hearing for December 1, 2020. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS: Motion by Reid, seconded by Burns, to receive the Calendar of Meetings. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: No citizens attended the meeting in-person or called into the meeting.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

I LOVE PORTAGE ESSAY CONTEST: Mayor Randall summarized the annual essay contest and asked if any Councilmembers would volunteer to review the essays and select the winners. Councilmembers Burns, Reid and Urban volunteered. Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Reid, for Councilmembers Burns, Reid and Urban to review the essays and select the winners. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: Councilmember Knapp provided an update on the Portage Community Center regarding their holiday food and gift programs, energy assistance program and significant improvements made to the landscaping and building. She then provided an update regarding the Kalamazoo County Public Art Commission (KCPAC). She shared how the KCPAC recently heard from local artists and opportunities for public art in the community. She also highlighted a project that will promote and enhance the ability for Kalamazoo County residents to locate public art in the community. Motion by Burns, seconded by Reid, to receive the Council Committee Reports. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmember Burns shared that he stayed up late watching election results and commended election workers and officials of the City of Portage for their efforts. He asked that voters be patient as votes are still being counted.

Councilmember Reid reflected on the opening ceremony for the new Fire Station No. 2 and commented that it is an excellent facility. She shared that a public open house will be held in the springtime unless the on-going pandemic limits such an event. She continued by expressing appreciation for poll workers and City Clerk Erica Eklov and staff of the Office of the City Clerk for their work in executing the election. Councilmember Reid concluded by encouraging residents to continue to wear masks and practice good hygiene as COVID levels in Kalamazoo County are increasing.

Councilmember Urban thanked all city staff that helped conduct the election and noted that, in many parts of the state and country, votes are still being counted and the meeting of the Electoral College is still weeks away. Like Councilmember Reid, he noted that COVID cases in Kalamazoo County are on the rise and shared that his church is reinstituting in-person restrictions.

Councilmember Knapp commented that she has been very impressed by election staff and poll workers and in how the election was conducted. She emphasized the importance of counting every vote and thanked Portage voters for turning out at the polls.

Councilmember Ledbetter also complimented the Office of the City Clerk and election staff. He reminded residents that it is leaf pick-up season and shared information on when the Portage Leaf Compost Facility would be open should residents want to take advantage of it. He concluded by wishing Councilmember Urban a happy birthday.

City Manager La Margo stated that this day marks his one-year anniversary with the City of Portage and thanked City Council for their support. He then shared that the Community Survey would begin shortly.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson offered Mr. La Margo congratulations on his one-year anniversary and congratulated city staff and election workers on a job well done.

Mayor Randall mentioned the opening of Fire Station No. 2 and offered compliments on the attractiveness and functionality of the facility. She noted that the opening ceremony also included other activities that had been postponed due to COVID including the official swearing in of several new firefighters and the annual Fire Division awards presentation. She informed City Council that a tour could be arranged should any Councilmember like a closer inspection of the new station. Mayor Randall next offered compliments to election officials and the Department of Public Safety on the safe conduct and execution of the election. In conclusion, Mayor Randall congratulated the City Manager on his one-year anniversary and that she is looking forward to his next year of service.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Adam Herringa, Deputy City Manager