

**MINUTES FROM THE PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF DECEMBER 14, 2020**

Mayor Patricia Randall, via the WebEx meeting platform, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter, Claudette Reid, and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson also joined via the WebEx meeting platform. In compliance with Michigan Public Act 228, the Mayor and Councilmembers disclosed they were all participating in the meeting virtually from Portage, Michigan. Councilmember Urban was absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Joseph La Margo, Deputy City Manager Mike Carroll, Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa, and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

Mayor Randall began by reviewing the Proclamations, noting a pending addition of a proclamation recognizing the Pfizer Corporation.

With regard to Item A.3, Councilmember Reid noted the Special Assessment Fees Resolution had notations for 2019 and 2020, but not 2021. She then asked whether the charge for \$0.10 per page was still relevant. City Clerk Eklov responded that the Special Assessment Fees Resolution references were typos and would be updated. Clerk Eklov then responded that the large majority of Freedom of Information Act requests are fulfilled in electronic format with hard copy request increasingly rare. She confirmed that the long-standing cost of \$0.10 per page remained valid.

With regard to Item A.4, Councilmember Reid noted the City Manager's report cited an incorrect June date for prior Council approval. She then expressed concerns with the noted safety and sanitation measures for project contractors. With regard to the Guaranteed Maximum Price notation in the supporting documents, Councilmember Reid noted 19 different areas with two to five bidders each and she expressed concern with a potential conflict of interest for AVB. Councilmember Reid requested a list of the bidding companies and their prices. City Manager La Margo responded that the incorrect June date in the report would be corrected and staff would provide the bidder listing. Deputy City Manager Herringa stated the Purchasing Department had worked closely with AVB to compile the bids and as such, would be able to compile a listing. Deputy City Manager Carroll noted AVB, as the contracted General Project Manager, utilizes sub-contractors as part of the process. Councilmember Reid inquired whether the city had used these types of services previously. Deputy City Manager Herringa confirmed the city had not. City Manager La Margo noted Councilmember Urban had also e-mailed several questions regarding the agenda, including Item A.4, which would be addressed as part of the Pre-Council Meeting responses.

Councilmember Knapp noted the Action Recommended for Item A.4 should include "Portage" when referencing the new center. She then highlighted a section of the AVB attachment that required corrections to dollar amount notations. Mayor Randall inquired about in-kind project donations. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that items included in the contract, once the contract was secured, would not allow in-kind donations. Councilmember Reid inquired whether in-kind donations for fixtures were still allowed. Both Deputy City Managers confirmed. City Manager La Margo added that enhancements to the project could also be in the form of in-kind donations.

With regard to Item A.5, Councilmember Reid inquired whether maintaining the five-year cycle of vehicle replacements was still smart in light of the unique year created by the effects of COVID-19 and decreased interactions and mileage. She further asked for the city's plan on shifting city vehicles to more energy-conscious options. City Manager La Margo responded that the City Administration desires to maintain the five-year cycle despite the low mileage on the current vehicles to avoid a future cluster of necessary vehicle replacements. He further relayed that Public Works Director Rod Russell

had stated that the current time was prime for sending vehicles to auction. Deputy City Manager Herringa relayed that the noted vehicles had maintained use for construction site visits during the past year. Mayor Randall inquired why the replacement vehicle for the Community Development Department was an SUV instead of a sedan like the current vehicles. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that it was a small Ford Escape to allow for better off-road driving and ground clearance for construction sites and winter driving.

With regard to Item A.6, Councilmember Knapp inquired why a Land Contract was proposed and the specific of the Contract. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the Land Contract option allowed the city to pay less upfront for the property and pay off over time or all at once at a later date without penalty. Councilmember Reid inquired whether the existing home would be razed and any associated costs. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the City Administration did not have immediate plans to raze the structure until a new use for the property was decided, but that potential cost would be minimal, as staff in the Department of Public Works would complete any demolition. Councilmember Reid inquired whether demolition included the basement. Deputy City Manager Carroll confirmed. Mayor Randall inquired whether the house would be maintained by the city during the five-year length of the Land Contract. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that negotiations with the property owner were ongoing but the default plan would be to leave the building. Councilmember Burns inquired whether the City Administration would postpone the matter before City Council until the terms of the Land Contract had been confirmed with the property owner. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the terms of the Land Contract were completed and the document did not specify the use of the property. At the request of Council, he confirmed the document would be included as part of the agenda. Mayor Randall further inquired whether City Council should be reviewing the matter at this time. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that City Council was being asked to approve the initial purchase of the property at this time.

With regard to Item A.7, Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired whether the proposed software purchase was an annual cost or cloud-based and the cost of ongoing maintenance. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the price of \$136,139.24 was for the software and the annual support costs \$2,000. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson noted the data collection process with this software was needed to maintain the Fire Division's certification but asked for clarification on the anticipated efficiencies. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the proposed software would acquire the data from several different databases in real-time and allow for reporting. Councilmember Reid clarified that the annual cost was not \$2,000 but instead \$20,000. She further inquired why staff had not chosen the software subscription option instead of purchasing the product.

With regard to Item A.9, Councilmember Reid asked to have the Project Impact Analysis for the proposed Midwest Fastener tax abatement. City Manager La Margo stated he would research and respond.

With regard to Item A.10, Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired whether staff supported the appeal of Michigan Pure Green. Deputy City Manager Herringa responded that, based on changes at the state level and potential city ordinances revisions to match the state requirements, staff did want to accommodate the applicant.

With regard to Item C.1, Councilmember Knapp requested clarification regarding the desired direction from City Council. Deputy City Manager Herringa responded that the City Administration was asking Council for direction regarding the Environmental Board's proposal for a Resolution declaring a climate emergency. Councilmember Reid noted that she was uncomfortable pursuing a Resolution at this point but suggested a future Committee of the Whole meeting on the topic. Mayor Pro Tem

Pearson agreed, noting the Environmental Board's request entails a cost but no actual amount is provided.

With regard to Item C.2, Councilmember Reid asked whether Ms. Thompson had accurately identified a discrepancy with the Medicare health insurance and if it could be addressed. Deputy City Manager Carroll clarified the current Medicare plan options and relayed that the Personnel Rules and Regulations since 2012 allowed for changes to healthcare as needed as long as equitable options were provided. City Manager La Margo stated that he had provided the City Administration's response to Ms. Thompson's points in his bi-weekly notes to City Council on Friday.

ADJOURNMENT: Following a summary of the meeting, Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:58 a.m.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk