

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 07:02 PM. The regular meeting was held virtually as permitted by PA 228. Mayor Patricia M. Randall, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter, and Claudette Reid were present. All members participated virtually from Portage, Michigan. Terry Urban was absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Joe La Margo, City Attorney Catherine Kaufman, Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa, Deputy City Manager Mike Carroll, and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

At the request of Mayor Randall, the audience observed a moment of silence to reflect with heavy hearts on the over 500,000 people who have died of COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS: Councilmember Burns read the Proclamation honoring National Entrepreneurship Week, noting he was the spouse of a small business owner. Councilmember Reid read the Proclamation highlighting National Career and Technical Education Month.

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. Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 9, 2021, and Pre-Council Meeting of February 22, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of February 23, 2021, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Traffic Signal Improvements - Bid Tabulation: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to award a contract for the purchase of traffic signal poles, mast arms, and assemblies for traffic signal upgrades on Milham Avenue to Farr & Faron Associates of Brighton, Michigan in the not-to-exceed amount of \$102,522 and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents related to the contract on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Comprehensive Liability, Property and Auto Fleet Insurance: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve a one-year agreement for comprehensive liability, property and auto fleet insurance through the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) at a total cost not to exceed \$504,273 for the period March 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022, and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to this action on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

MDOT Contract #21-5007 Portage Road/Bender Road Traffic Signal

Replacement: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve Contract #21-5007 between the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of Portage concerning funding for the replacement of the Portage Road and Bender Road traffic signal. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

MDOT Contract #20-5546 East Milham Road (South Westnedge Avenue to Portage Road): Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve Contract #20-5546 between the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of Portage for the reconstruction of East Milham Avenue from South Westnedge Avenue to Portage Road and adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign all documents related to the project on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Water/Sewer (Utility) Rate Committee Vacancy: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to appoint Elma Pat Maye as the second citizen-at-large representative and Councilmember Vic Ledbetter to the City Council Water/Sewer (Utility) Rate Study Committee. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Housing and Neighborhoods Committee: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to reinstate the City Council Housing and Neighborhoods Committee and appoint Mayor Patricia M. Randall, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Councilmember Chris Burns. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Minutes of Boards and Commissions: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to accept the Minutes of the Human Services Board of January 28 and February 4, 2021, and the Zoning Board of Appeals of December 14, 2020. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Calendar of Meetings: Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to accept the Calendar of Meetings as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Reid thanked the City Council for the Career and Technical Education proclamation, noting the recent national interest in the topic due to a lack of new skilled trades applicants as the existing workforce begins to retire. She then expressed excitement regarding the President's recent visit and stated Portage was lucky to have such a resource and facility in Pfizer. Councilmember Reid closed her comments with a reminder to continue the health and safety measures in the fight against COVID-19.

Councilmember Burns thanked City Council for appointing him to serve on the reinstated Housing and Neighborhoods Committee noting the recent passage of the countywide housing millage. He expressed hope that the Committee will work to bring those millage resources to Portage. He then thanked the city and area leaders for hosting the President's recent visit.

Councilmember Ledbetter thanked the city for presenting the "Fridays in February" Black History Month events, stating that he had enjoyed them.

Councilmember Knapp echoed the comments of Councilmembers Burns and Reid regarding the President's recent visit.

City Manager La Margo thanked the Public Safety Department for their efforts and preparation with the President's recent visit, including the last-minute adjustments when the scheduled arrival day changed. He relayed that meeting the President was a great opportunity and thanked the Pfizer employees for their efforts on the COVID-19 vaccine production.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated he was proud to be a former Pfizer employee and implored the Mayor to relay her visit with the President.

Mayor Randall relayed that meeting the President had been a highlight in her role as Mayor. She stated that both she and the City Manager had urged the President's staff to allow the entire City Council to attend the event at Pfizer but only a limited attendance was permitted. She stated that her early arrival at the event with the City Manager allowed them time to meet with the new Pfizer leadership and receive a small tour of the facility. Mayor Randall relayed that Pfizer had hired an additional 500 people to increase the COVID-19 vaccine production. She stated that President Biden was very welcoming with a diverse young team of staff. She then acknowledged the extensive efforts of various city teams to prepare for the President's first visit to Portage. Mayor Randall closed by stating the preceding week had been very busy leading up to the historic moment for Portage.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 07:23 PM.

Erica Eklov, City Clerk