

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 8, 2021

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The regular meeting was held virtually as permitted by PA 228, in accordance with December 2020 Kalamazoo County Emergency Declaration. Mayor Patricia M. Randall, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter, Claudette Reid, and Terry Urban were present. All members participated virtually from Portage, Michigan. Also in attendance were City Manager Joe La Margo, City Attorney Catherine Kaufman, Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa, and Community Development Director Kelly Peterson, Deputy Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services Christopher Forth and Deputy City Clerk Tammy Durian.

At the request of Mayor Randall, the audience observed a moment of personal introspection to honor all denominations and personal beliefs as we work together towards a more equitable and just America. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Councilmember Ledbetter read the Juneteenth Celebration Day Proclamation and Councilmember Reid read the Pride Month 2021 Proclamation.

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. Patricia Rakoci, Redwood Living, spoke on a letter presented to City Council in lieu of installing sidewalks. Patricia Rakoci, Redwood Living, requested the removal of Item A.4 from the Consent Agenda. Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to approve the Board and Commission Interview Session of May 25, 2021, the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 25, 2021 and Pre-Council Meeting Minutes of June 7, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of June 8, 2021, as presented. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Delinquent Water and Sewer Bills: Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to order notice to applicable property owners that all water and/or sewer charges remaining unpaid as of June 30, 2021, will be transferred to the 2021 city tax roll and assessed against the property for which the services were furnished. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Resolution for Tasting Room – Lake Burgers (6800 South Westnedge): Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to adopt the Resolution for Local Government Approval for an

On-Premises Tasting Room License for Lake Burgers for 6800 South Westnedge (Suite F). Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Minutes of Boards and Commissions: Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to accept the minutes of the Youth Advisory Committee of April 19, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Materials Transmitted: Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to accept the Materials Transmitted of May 21, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Calendar of Meetings: Motion by Ledbetter, seconded by Burns, to accept the Calendar of Meetings as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENT OF CITIZENS: Michael Cartier, 1127 Lakeview Drive, commented on the petitions submitted to Council and thanked the Steering Committee for hosting the open house for the Lake Center District. He addressed Councilmember comments related to the Lake Center District Steering Committee report and looks forward to meeting in person to discuss the report with Council. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson replied to Mr. Cartier's comment and thanked him for his invitation to visit West Lake.

The Office of the City Clerk received a citizen petition to Protect West Lake Water Quality and Safety addressed to the City Council and a citizen petition regarding Issues Related to the Lake Center District Steering Committee Report addressed to City Council.

Motion by Burns, seconded by Ledbetter, to receive the Citizen Petition to Protect West Lake Water Quality and Safety. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Motion by Burns, seconded by Reid, to receive the Citizen Petition regarding Issues Related to the Lake Center District Steering Committee Report. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

GENESIS PHARMOPTIMA, 6710 QUALITY WAY, APPLICATION FOR INDUSTRIAL TAX ABATEMENT: Mayor Randall opened the public hearing. City Manager La Margo deferred to Deputy Director of Planning and Neighborhood Service Chris Forth. Mr. Forth noted that City Council has received a request from Genesis PharmOptima to expand Industrial Development District (IDD) No. 78 and a Public Act 198 tax abatement application. The proposed Genesis PharmOptima expansion project includes the construction of an approximate 13,000 square foot addition and will create additional jobs.

Patrick Lennon, representative for Genesis PharmOptima, indicated that this is a two-step process. The first step is expanding the industrial development district to capture the new footprint of the building, and the second is to consider the tax abatement agreement. Mr. Lennon also introduced Michael Gayle, Vice President Genesis PharmOptima. Mr. Gayle thanked the City Council for consideration, and said the proposed tax abatement allows the opportunity to grow and to create more jobs.

Motion by Pearson, seconded by Reid, to close the public hearing. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Motion by Pearson, seconded by Knapp, to adopt: Resolution No. 2 to expand Industrial Development District No. 78 for Genesis PharmOptima, LLC, and adopt Resolution No. 3 to set a hearing on the proposed Tax Abatement at 6710 Quality Way for June 22, 2021.

Councilmember Reid shared discussion related to the Project Impact Analysis. She noted there were corrections and the corrected information is on the website.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson looks forward to the success of Genesis PharmOptima in the City of Portage. Mr. Gayle provided background for Genesis PharmOptima.

Councilmember Urban asked for clarification regarding the name listed as property owner. Mr. Lennon explained the holding company leases the real estate to the business. Attorney Kaufman confirmed statutory requirement.

Upon roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Final Plan for Redwood Living, 7801 Garden lane and 1203 East Centre Avenue. Item A.4 was removed from the Consent Agenda by Vice President of Acquisitions for Redwood Living, Patricia Rakoci, and added to Regular Business. Mayor Randall asked that Patricia Rakoci call in to discuss the agenda item. Emily Engelhart, representative of Redwood Living, said that she is able to articulate the concerns of Redwood Living. She explained that there was discussion with the Planning Commission regarding sidewalk installation along Lovers Lane and Garden Lane. Redwood Living is not opposed to installing sidewalks but did provide a letter to City Council detailing a proposal for payment in lieu of sidewalk installation at the time of development.

City Manager La Margo noted that sidewalk installation is consistent with the City Council adopted 2015 Complete Streets Policy and Comprehensive Plan. Community Development Director Kelly Peterson shared the value of installing sidewalks.

Councilmember Reid pointed out that connection of sidewalks is a way to for the citizens to be able to utilize the area. She does not want to restrict the pedestrian opportunity by not having a sidewalk installed.

Councilmember Burns asked about the process that will connect north and south on Lovers Lane and Garden Lane in the future. Director Peterson noted that the City has sidewalks programed in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as well as a sidewalk GAP program through Public Works and Transportation and Utilities Department as well as sidewalk funding that could be used to facilitate connections. Mayor Randall asked how soon funding would be obtained.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired about a previous property that received a sidewalk to nowhere delay. Director Peterson replied there would be follow-up with the property owner.

Councilmember Burns appreciates Redwood's flexibility and is committed to the availability of adjoining sidewalks so residents can utilize them.

Mayor Randall confirmed Redwood Living's position on moving forward. Emily Engelhart, Redwood Living, agreed and thanked Council for their comments.

Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Final Plan for Redwood Living, 7801 Garden Lane and 1203 East Centre Avenue, subject to: a) the execution of a development agreement between the City of Portage and Redwood Living that would outline measures implemented by Redwood Living during the construction phase of the project to minimize impacts on the adjacent residents, and, b) the installation of sidewalks during the development of the Redwood project. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

CLOSED SESSION: Mayor Randall introduced the item and explained that the Regular Meeting would resume following the proposed Closed Session. Motion by Pearson, seconded by Reid, to go into Closed Session to consider the lease or purchase of real property immediately following conclusion of the business items of the Regular Agenda. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Adjourned to Closed Session at 7:55 p.m.
Resumed the Regular Meeting at 9:16 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF OPEN SESSION: Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to authorized the City Manager to execute the direction of the City Council that was discussed in Closed Session. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 – 0, 1 (Burns) abstained.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: Councilmember Burns noted that he and Mayor Pro Tem Pearson attended a finance subcommittee of the Central County Transportation Authority Board (CCTA). He shared the recommended budget and proposed millage rate for the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority was discussed.

Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to accept the Council Committee Report as presented. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Burns is excited to hear that Western Michigan University will receive a \$550 million donation from an anonymous alumnus, noting this is the largest donation to a public university on record.

Councilmember Reid commented on COVID-19's effect on technology and on businesses. She also thanked Genesis PharmOptima, and noted she looks forward to review of the Tax Abatement Project Impact Analysis form.

Councilmember Urban shared that a number of people gathered for the Charles & Lynn Zhange Portage Community Senior Center Topping Off Ceremony to watch the placement of the final beam, and noted the ability to see them face-to-face. He highlighted the effects of COVID-19. Lastly, he read and commented on a quote from the Juneteenth proclamation.

Councilmember Ledbetter attended the City of Portage Farmers Market and encouraged folks to attend. He urged everyone to research the Emancipation Proclamation and the meaning of Juneteenth (which was two years after the Emancipation Proclamation), noting the correct term is enslaved versus slaves.

City Manager La Margo replied to a comment from a caller earlier in the evening regarding taxes and the corridor improvement for the Lake Center District. He shared that the City of Portage's millage has not been increased for 7 years and there was a 10% decrease in budget without negatively affecting services provided to residents. He expressed his condolences to Kendra Gwin.

Mayor Randall began by asking staff to update the Juneteenth Proclamation. She then commented on the Topping Off Ceremony. She reported she attended the public announcement for the Western Michigan University gift, and gave a virtual presentation, including an update from Portage, to the Kalamazoo Greater Area Board of Realtors. She also shared that Southwest Michigan First is interested in providing guidance for leadership for people interested in public service. She closed with the City of Portage uses eminent domain as a last resort and has no properties in mind, and encouraged residents to read the June Portager.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Tammy Durian, Deputy City Clerk