

**MINUTES FROM THE PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 21, 2021**

Mayor Patricia Randall called the virtual 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 virtually. In compliance with Michigan Public Act 228, the Mayor and Councilmembers disclosed their virtual participation with Mayor Randall attending from South Haven, Michigan, and the Councilmembers from Portage, Michigan. Councilmember Terry Urban was absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Joe La Margo, Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa, Deputy City Manager Mike Carroll, and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

With regard to Item A.4, RCKC Contract - Sprinkle Road/Meredith Street Water Main Replacement, Councilmember Knapp inquired as to the cost for the city and whether the dollar amount would be included as part of the Action Recommended. City Manager La Margo stated he would research and respond.

With regard to Item A.5, Kalamazoo County Solid Waste Management Plan Amendments, Councilmember Reid inquired whether there would be additional costs to Kalamazoo County and associated jurisdictions. Deputy City Manager Herringa responded that the proposal was a private investment in the future use of the site instead of a user expense. Councilmember Reid inquired whether construction and demolition waste is currently recycled or trashed, and questioned the benefit of a separate recycling facility for said waste. The City Manager stated he would research and respond. Councilmember Burns inquired whether residents would be dealing with a separate vendor going forward. City Manager La Margo responded they would not.

With regard to Item A.7, OpenGov Software, Councilmember Reid inquired whether OpenGov would be replacing existing software or was a new system with new data not otherwise tracked. City Manager La Margo responded that it was a new software to improve efficiency and automation of the budget preparation process, as well as generate data for process improvements. Councilmember Reid then asked whether the City Administration anticipated cost-savings with the current BS&A contract in light of moving budgeting functions to the new software. City Manager La Margo responded that it was not planned at this point. Councilmember Burns noted the attached service agreement contained document revisions and asked for clarification. City Manager La Margo stated he would research and respond.

With regard to Item E.1, Towing Audit Report, Mayor Pro Tem Pearson noted this matter is part of a repeat issue with one of the complaints relating to limited bid specifications that result in only one qualified vendor. He requested a copy of the bid specifications and asked for clarification on whether the current vendor, McDonald's Towing, is the only one capable. City Manager La Margo confirmed that past bid specifications were limiting, which the City Administration corrected to level the field, but noted the primary factor for McDonald's Towing receiving the contract was a result of consistent below market pricing. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson then asked about the removed specifications. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that certain aspects such as indoor storage for a period of up to 25 cars were unnecessary and removed. He further noted requirements for continued monitoring on Closed Circuit television and alarm systems was also deemed unnecessary. Mr. Carroll noted he had met with Jamie Graham of Graham's Towing, as well as the President of McDonald's Towing and the President of the Michigan Tow Association to ensure the existing bid specifications were sufficient.

Councilmember Reid inquired about the various options offered as potential next steps in the Action Recommended. Councilmember Reid then inquired about the frequency of a Portage Police Officer attending vehicle auctions. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that it was usually every quarter. She then requested the cost to the city for the police officer to attend the auctions, noting rotational towing would increase this duty. Deputy City Manager Carroll confirmed he would research. Councilmember Reid then asked about the number of potential additional vendors and Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that an outside opinion had quoted about ten to twelve possible vendors. City Manager La Margo relayed that discussions with Kalamazoo County Consolidated Dispatch Authority Executive Director Jeff Troyer confirmed rotational towing was best performed on a weekly basis. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson inquired about a focus on Portage vendors. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that a prior administrative review of local vendor preferences would violate certain purchasing association rules. Councilmember Burns inquired about the additional vendors noted in the audit report. Deputy City Manager Carroll responded that the President of McDonald's Towing owned several other companies used by the city and encompassed in the original citizen complaint. Councilmember Ledbetter expressed concern with towing delays during the cold winter months. City Manager La Margo noted the current contract allowed for utilizing other vendors if the city's contractor was unable to respond.

With regard to Item F.1, Sale of Excess City Property - South Westnedge Avenue and Gladys Street, Councilmember Reid noted demolition had already begun at the site and inquired about the proposed new business. City Manager La Margo responded that a restaurant was planned but further details would be held until all contracts had been finalized.

ADJOURNMENT: Following a summary of the meeting, Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:39 a.m.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk