

**MINUTES FROM THE PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF MAY 24, 2021**

Mayor Patricia Randall called the virtual meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Councilmembers Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter, and Claudette Reid also joined virtually. In compliance with Michigan Public Act 228, the Mayor and Councilmembers disclosed their virtual participation from Portage, Michigan. Councilmember Terry Urban and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson were absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager La Margo, and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

Mayor Randall began by highlighting the Proclamations, noting Councilmember Burns would read the National Gun Violence Awareness Month acknowledgment.

With regard to Item A.3, Sale of Excess City Property (S. Westnedge and Gladys), Councilmember Reid inquired regarding the City Administration's options for guiding future tenant choices for the space, noting previous property stipulations with tenant stipulations, as well as brownfield development. City Manager La Margo responded that the city still has the zoning code to regulate potential tenant types for the property. He further noted the applicant continues to collaborate with the City Administration regarding desired uses of the parcel. Councilmember Reid then noted the prior traffic back-ups on South Westnedge with the additions of the Chic-Fil-A and Panda Express restaurants and inquired whether the City Administration expected a similar use and issue for the subject parcel. She further asked whether the city had tools to address such traffic disruptions. City Manager La Margo responded that the city now requires traffic studies to mitigate such issues and he believed the property had enough land to avoid a similar issue. Discussion followed regarding the subject parcel's driveway location. City Manager La Margo stated he would research and respond. Councilmember Burns inquired regarding the appropriateness of staff performing the land appraisal. City Manager La Margo relayed that a third-party appraisal had been done previously, as well as the applicant contracting an appraisal, which confirmed the city's amount. Mayor Randall stated that COVID-19 had largely disrupted the earlier plans and proposals for the subject parcel.

With regard to Item A.4, Traffic Signal Maintenance Contract, Councilmember Reid asked for the amount of the prior contract with Severance Electric Company, including the annual overage amounts, for comparison to the current proposal. City Manager La Margo stated he would review and respond.

With regard to Item A.5, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan, Councilmember Reid inquired if submittal of the Plan could be delayed to allow for additional review in light of the reactivated Neighborhoods and Housing Committee. She stated the goals of both the CDBG Plan and Committee were very similar and the approach may need re-evaluation. City Manager La Margo stated he would further research and respond.

With regard to Item C.1, Presentation by Portage Public Schools Superintendent, Mayor Randall inquired about the costs of the August Special Election. City Clerk Eklov confirmed the majority of costs would be reimbursed with the exception of the regular staff salaries.

With regard to Item D.1, Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board Dissolution, Councilmember Reid inquired whether the City Council could direct the Lake Board to address new projects before dissolution. City Manager La Margo stated he would confer with the City Attorney and respond. Councilmember Knapp noted the Lake Board's current funds could not

be re-purposed to pay for a feasibility study for a new project. Mayor Randall inquired whether a new weed treatment program could be expedited to occur during the 2021 summer season. City Manager La Margo confirmed he would research and respond.

With regard to Item H.1, Board and Commission Appointments, Mayor Randall asked about the start time of the Interview Session and format. City Clerk Eklov responded that the interviews started at 5:15 p.m. and would be virtual.

ADJOURNMENT: Following a summary of the meeting, Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 8:29 a.m.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk