

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 10, 2021

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 07:01 PM. The regular meeting was held in a partial virtual format as permitted by PA 228, in accordance with the 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. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, Councilmember Burns and Councilmember Ledbetter participated virtually from Portage, Michigan. Councilmember Knapp participated virtually from Cognashene, Georgian Bay, Canada. Also in attendance were Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa, City Attorney Catherine Kaufman, 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 on working together towards a more equitable and just community. Following the moment of silence, Portage Eagle Scout Jaden Switzer led the City Council in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

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 Urban, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve the meeting minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of July 27, 2021; Special City Council Meeting of July 29, 2021; Special City Council Meeting of July 31, 2021; Special City Council Meeting of August 2, 2021, and, Pre-Council Meeting of August 9, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Claudette Reid, seconded by Terry Urban, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of August 10, 2021 as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Agreement with Joseph La Margo: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement with Mr. Joseph La Margo as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Delta Dental Plan of Michigan Insurance: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve a one-year contract, with the option of an additional renewal for a period of up to two years, with Delta Dental Plan of Michigan for dental insurance and authorize the City Manager's Office to execute all documents on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Final Condominium Subdivision for Pennridge Trail No. 2: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve the Final Condominium Subdivision for Pennridge Trail No. 2, 1800 West Osterhout Avenue subject to completion of sidewalks and street trees by November 2023. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Ice Control Salt Purchase - Cooperative Purchase: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to award contracts to Detroit Salt in the amount of \$87,164 for the early delivery of 1,400 tons of ice control salt at the price of \$62.26 per ton and \$101,970 for 1,500 tons of ice control salt for seasonal backup on an as-needed basis at the price of \$67.98 per ton. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Investment Policy Update: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to accept and approve the investment policy as recommended by the City of Portage Investment Committee. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Board and Commission Interview Session: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to set a Special Meeting on Tuesday, October 5, 2021, beginning at 5:15 p.m., to interview Board and Commission applicants. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Local Officers Compensation Commission (LOCC) Report: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to receive the report from the Local Officers Compensation Commission. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Materials Transmitted: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to receive the Materials Transmitted of August 4, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Calendar of Meetings: Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to receive the Calendar of Meetings as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: None.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Kalamazoo Conservation District Award: Kalamazoo Conservation District (KCD) Manager Elizabeth Rochow presented Rod Russell, Director of Public Works, with the Partner of the Year Award for the City of Portage. Ms. Rochow noted the City of Portage has been a wonderful partner with the KCD on several projects and programs, including the Wildlife Habitat Enhancement project at the Gourdneck State Game Area. She stated the Department of Public Works was able to provide expertise in selectively cutting trees and keeping the parking lot cleared of snow. Ms. Rochow also highlighted the City of Portage Parks Department for providing event promotion and program space at Schrier Park for two workshops as part of the Urban and Community Forestry Education Series. Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to accept the Kalamazoo Conservation District's Partner of the Year Award. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA:

Acting City Manager Appointment: Mayor Randall introduced the proposed appointment of Deputy City Manager Herringa to the position of Acting City Manager in light of City Manager Joe La Margo's resignation. Councilmember Reid highlighted Mr. Herringa's history with the city and the array of positions through which he had progressed with increasing responsibility. Ms. Reid further noted the various projects Mr. Herringa was involved in, including the launch of the city's Youth Advisory Committee. She expressed confidence in his move to the Acting City Manager position, citing his internal knowledge of the city. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson also noted Mr. Herringa's professional progression and expressed confidence in his appointment.

Motion by Urban, seconded by Reid, to approve the appointment of Adam Herringa to the position of Acting City Manager. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0. Mayor Randall commended the City Council for supporting Mr. Herringa and moving the appointment forward.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Urban provided an update regarding the Gourdneck Lake Governmental Lake Board. He relayed the Board's recent decision to continue the lake weed abatement program and the public hearing scheduled for August 25, 2021 regarding the program's special assessment.

Councilmember Burns provided an update regarding the Central County Transportation Authority. He stated the board scheduled a public hearing for September to review the fiscal year 2022-23 budget and selected a vendor to complete a comprehensive operations analysis that includes reviewing the efficiency of existing routes. Councilmember Burns stated he would ensure the City of Portage was well represented in the analysis.

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

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: None.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmember Urban thanked Deputy City Manager Herringa for stepping into the Acting City Manager role.

Councilmember Reid highlighted several items from the Consent Agenda, including the Board and Commission Interviews and the updated Investment Committee investment policy. She then congratulated Mr. Herringa on his appointment to the Acting City Manager role. Councilmember Reid closed with an update on the COVID-19 pandemic and a recommendation to resume wearing masks.

Councilmember Knapp welcomed Acting City Manager Herringa to his new role.

Councilmember Burns thanked Acting City Manager Herringa and commended his 17 years of service. He stated the earlier decision to have two Deputy City Managers proved fortunate when the need arose for someone to step into the Acting role. He then asked the City Clerk to give a brief report on the August 3, 2021 Special Election. Clerk Eklov provided the voter turnout and absent voter statistics, noting the Portage Public Schools' millage question had passed.

Councilmember Ledbetter congratulated the City Clerk on her recent Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks Certification. He then congratulated Acting City Manager Herringa on his appointment. Councilmember Ledbetter closed by noting his recent visit to North Carolina and the lack of COVID-19 protocols in the region, hence his virtual meeting participation for the evening's meeting.

Acting City Manager Herringa congratulated the directors of the departments of Public Works and Parks for their collaboration with the Kalamazoo Conservation District. He then noted the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada Investment Policy Certificate of Excellence Award received by the Investment Committee and congratulated Finance Director Lauren VanderVeen and her staff. Mr. Herringa expressed gratitude to the City Council for their support in appointing him the Acting City Manager. He closed by thanking former City Manager Joe La Margo for originally appointing him to the role of Deputy City Manager and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson congratulated Mr. Herringa on his appointment to the Acting City Manager role, stating he looks forward to working with him.

Mayor Randall provided clarification regarding the Kalamazoo County Health Department as the entity in charge of the pandemic mask requirements, noting the City of Portage did not issue such mandates. She then thanked the members of the City Council for meeting several times since the prior Regular Meeting. Mayor Randall closed with a reminder to members of City Council to forward potential recruiting firms and any updates to the Community Profile to her attention for the new City Manager search.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 07:28 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk