

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 3, 2021

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 07:01 PM. The regular meeting was held in a partially virtual format as permitted by PA 228 and in accordance with December 2020 Kalamazoo County Emergency Declaration. Mayor Patricia M. Randall, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Councilmembers Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter (virtual - Portage, MI), Claudette Reid, and Terry Urban were present. Councilmember Chris Burns was absent with excuse. Also in attendance were Acting 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 the conclusion of another election cycle and the representation of democracy in action. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS: None.

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. Councilmember Reid removed Item A.4 (Pennridge Trail Phase II). Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

City Council Meeting Minutes: Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 19, 2021, and Pre-Council Meeting of November 1, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of November 3, 2021, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Zoning Amendment to add 'Veterinary Animal Hospital/ Clinic' to the Commercial Planned Development district: Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to accept Ordinance Amendment No. 21-22-A (Veterinary hospitals or clinics in the CPD, Commercial Planned Development District), for first reading and set a public hearing for December 7, 2021. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Minutes of Boards & Commission: Motion by Knapp, seconded by Reid, to receive the Minutes of the Youth Advisory Committee of September 20, 2021, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

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

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:

Michael Estes (1820 Tamfield Avenue) expressed discontent with the free publications printed by the Kalamazoo Gazette and commonly delivered at the end of citizens' driveways. He urged the City Council to create an ordinance that prevents unsolicited delivery of newspapers, citing them as unsightly and wasteful. Mayor Randall thanked Mr. Estes for his comments and deferred to Acting City Manager Herringa. Mr. Herringa cited concerns about legal implications of the proposed ordinance but relayed the City Administration would review the matter.

Acting City Manager Herringa next highlighted a new city practice regarding the availability of a recorded phone line for citizen comments in light of the continued virtual attendance option through

December 31. He explained the prior procedures adhered to the Open Meetings Act but noted a recent citizen concern had asked the City of Portage to offer a similar phone line option as that of the City of Kalamazoo.

Following Mr. Herringa's explanation, the City Clerk read the written comments of Mr. John Stears dated November 1, 2021, regarding a request for a citizen phone line option.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA:

Final Plan for Pennridge Trail North Planned Development (Phase 2 North; Units 23-74), 1800 West Osterhout Avenue: At the request of the Mayor, Councilmember Reid explained removing the item from the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Reid noted that the Pennridge Trail Development had come before the City Council in several prior instances and she had expressed concerns with the planned egress and ingress. She compared the development to the city's rules for cul-de-sacs and noted the single point of entry and exit for the 134 planned units. Councilmember Reid expressed appreciation for the inclusion of a second access point for emergency use but stated her desire that it be opened for citizen use.

Motion by Pearson, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Final/Site Plan for Pennridge Trail North Planned Development (Phase 2 North; Units 23-74), 1800 West Osterhout Avenue, subject to finalization of engineering-related details associated with the public water main and sanitary sewer main extensions. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 4 to 2 with Councilmembers Reid and Urban voting no.

Closed Session Recommendation - Real Property Matter: Motion by Pearson, seconded by Knapp, to move into Closed Session under Section 8(d) of the Open Meetings Act, to consider the purchase or lease of real property immediately following the conclusion of the business items of the Regular Meeting. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: None.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmember Urban highlighted the November 2 City General Election that included the City Council race, stating it was humbling to see his name on the ballot and have citizens vote for him. He expressed appreciation for open, fair, and free elections, and looked forward to serving another four years.

Councilmember Reid congratulated all of the City Council candidates and expressed confidence in the new group. She noted the election was unusual due to the number of uncontested races and was disappointed to see only two new citizens step forward as a candidate. Ms. Reid encouraged future citizen participation in local government. She then congratulated Metro Transit on the passage of its millage renewal and expressed support for the service. Councilmember Reid closed by highlighting the recent approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for ages five and older.

Councilmember Knapp also highlighted the November 2 City Election and congratulated those that were elected, including herself, for which she stated she was humbled.

Councilmember Ledbetter echoed the election sentiments of the other Councilmembers and stated he looked forward to learning more as a member of the Council, as well as no longer serving as the newest member.

Acting City Manager Herringa congratulated the winners of the recent election. He also congratulated Councilmember Reid on her years of service as a Councilmember. Mr. Herringa closed by thanking the Office of the City Clerk, its volunteers, and election workers for another great election.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson congratulated the newly elected and re-elected members of the City

Council. He then thanked City Council candidate Tara Gish for stepping up to run for the position, as well as her service to date on the Park Board.

Mayor Randall conveyed accolades to Councilmember Reid for her years of service, highlighting the festivities planned for the November 16th City Council meeting. She expressed gratitude for being re-elected and the functionality of the City of Portage non-partisan City Council. Mayor Randall then thanked Tara Gish and her husband for their service to the city. She highlighted recent election turnout statistics, noting Portage was the highest contributor to absentee voting in Kalamazoo County, and thanked the Office of the City Clerk staff. Mayor Randall closed her comments by noting the city's ongoing Fall Leaf Collection Program and efforts to collect all leaves despite the late arrival of autumn.

-- Entered Closed Session at 7:32 p.m. --

-- Resumed the Regular Meeting at 8:15 p.m. --

ADJOURNMENT: Upon roll call, all original members were present. As there were no additional comments or discussion, Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 08:16 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk