

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING – CITY MANAGER FINALIST INTERVIEWS
MINUTES FROM MAY 5, 2022**

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Special Meeting to order at 02:30 PM in the Council Chambers at Portage City Hall.

ROLL CALL: Councilmembers Lisa Brayton, Chris Burns, Lori Knapp, Vic Ledbetter, Terry Urban, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Mayor Patricia Randall were present.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Acting City Manager Adam Herringa, Human Resources Director Shannon Hertz, City Clerk Erica Eklov, and Frank Walsh of Walsh Municipal Services, LLC.

CANDIDATE PETER DAME: From 2:33 p.m. to 2:34 p.m., Mr. Dame provided his opening interview statement.

Questions from City Council & Public: From 2:34 p.m. to 3:05 p.m., City Councilmembers asked and Mr. Dame responded to fourteen questions assembled from the Council, Administration, Mr. Walsh, and the public. The questions covered certain scenarios, communication with City Council, climate change action, business growth, and management planning. Mayor Randall then transitioned to the presentation portion of the interview.

Presentation: From 3:05 p.m. to 3:18 p.m. Mr. Dame was asked to present to the City Council on the following topic: "The City of Portage is experiencing a lack of 'workforce and affordable housing' and City Council has a goal to take steps to address this issue. This is also a key goal of Kalamazoo County voters. To this end, voters approved an 8-year countywide housing millage in 2020. City of Portage taxpayers contribute 26% of the millage collected (over \$1.67 million in the first year alone). This contribution is expected to increase annually. A key component of the millage is that it is largely non-profit and developer-driven as a municipality is ineligible to receive direct funding (although a community can assist development via such activities as land acquisition and infrastructure support)."

Inquiries Regarding the Presentation: From 3:18 p.m. to 3:27 p.m. members of the City Council posed questions to Mr. Dame in follow-up to his presentation. Councilmember Urban inquired whether all of the options discussed by Mr. Dame were available in Michigan. Mr. Dame confirmed they were. Councilmember Burns asked Mr. Dame to provide insight on how he would handle community concerns with affordable housing developments, such as traffic, property values, and crime. Mr. Dame responded that he would educate the common misconception between "workforce housing" and "public housing" for those in poverty, the former being the housing format that Portage seeks.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked Mr. Dame to expound more on the Lake Center District Area that he had mentioned during his first interview. Mr. Dame elaborated on his thoughts on the area and similar factors shared by the City of Grosse Pointe.

Closing Candidate Statement: From 3:27 to 3:30 p.m., Mr. Dame provided his closing remarks regarding his interest in the City Manager position and Portage.

3:30 p.m. to 3:36 p.m. – RECESS

CANDIDATE PATRICK MCGINNIS: From 3:36 p.m. to 3:38 p.m., Mr. McGinnis provided his opening interview statement.

Questions from City Council & Public: From 3:38 p.m. to 4:05 p.m., City Councilmembers asked and Mr. McGinnis responded to fourteen questions assembled from the Council, Administration, Mr. Walsh, and the public. The questions covered certain scenarios, communication with City Council, climate change action, business growth, and management planning. Mayor Randall then transitioned to the presentation portion of the interview.

Presentation: From 4:06 p.m. to 4:20 p.m. Mr. McGinnis was asked to present to the City Council on the following topic: "The City of Portage is experiencing a lack of 'workforce and affordable housing' and City Council has a goal to take steps to address this issue. This is also a key goal of Kalamazoo County voters. To this end, voters approved an 8-year countywide housing millage in 2020. City of Portage taxpayers contribute 26% of the millage collected (over \$1.67 million in the first year alone). This contribution is expected to increase annually. A key component of the millage is that it is largely non-profit and developer-driven as a municipality is ineligible to receive direct funding (although a community can assist development via such activities as land acquisition and infrastructure support)." Mr. McGinnis reviewed his prepared slide show presentation.

Inquiries Regarding the Presentation: From 4:20 p.m. to 4:22 p.m., members of the City Council posed questions to Mr. McGinnis in follow-up to his presentation. Councilmember Burns asked Mr. McGinnis to provide insight on how he would handle community concerns with affordable housing developments, such as traffic, property values, and crime. Mr. McGinnis responded that he would begin such development with full community involvement in the project, followed by developers and taxing entities. There being no further questions, Mayor Randall invited Mr. McGinnis to provide closing remarks.

Closing Candidate Statement: From 4:22 p.m. to 4:24 p.m., Mr. McGinnis provided his closing statement regarding his interest in the City Manager position and Portage.

4:25 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. – RECESS

CANDIDATE JADE SMITH: From 4:30 p.m. to 4:31 p.m., Mr. Smith provided his opening interview statement.

Questions from City Council & Public: From 4:32 p.m. to 4:45 p.m., City Councilmembers asked and Mr. Smith responded to fourteen questions assembled from the Council, Administration, Mr. Walsh, and the public. The questions covered certain scenarios, communication with City Council, climate change action, business growth, and management planning. Following the question portion of the interview, Mayor Randall invited Mr. Smith to present.

Presentation: From 4:48 p.m. to 5:05 p.m. Mr. Smith was asked to present to the City Council on the following topic: "The City of Portage is experiencing a lack of 'workforce and affordable housing' and City Council has a goal to take steps to address this issue. This is also a key goal of Kalamazoo County voters. To this end, voters approved an 8-year countywide housing millage in 2020. City of Portage taxpayers contribute 26% of the millage collected (over \$1.67 million in the first year alone). This contribution is expected to increase annually. A key component of the millage is that it is largely non-profit and developer-driven as a municipality is ineligible to receive direct funding (although a community can assist development via such activities as land acquisition and infrastructure support)." Mr. Smith reviewed his prepared slide show presentation.

Inquiries Regarding the Presentation: From 5:05 p.m. to 5:08 p.m., members of the City Council posed questions to Mr. Smith in follow-up to his presentation. Mayor Randall inquired about efforts to shift employers' perspectives. Mr. Smith responded. Councilmember Burns asked Mr. Smith to provide insight on how he would handle community concerns with affordable housing developments, such as traffic, property values, and crime. Mr. Smith replied that the city should focus

strongly on aligning workforce housing with non-car transit options and avoid increased density housing. Councilmember Ledbetter asked about a mixed-use building example from Mr. Smith's presentation. Mr. Smith responded that the set-up had been successful to date with employees either living in the same building as their workplace or nearby.

Closing Candidate Statement: From 5:08 p.m. to 5:10 p.m., Mr. Smith provided his closing statement regarding his interest in the City Manager position and Portage.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: Mr. Rick Frieman (3218 Bennington Court) stated he is a member of the Planning Commission and was happy to hear questions regarding planning and zoning included in the interviews. He stated that all three candidates were great choices, but noted that one candidate stood out to him due to his community engagement recommendations and team focus.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Mayor Pro Tem Pearson thanked consultant Frank Walsh for bringing three strong candidates to the Portage search process and stated there was a difficult choice to be made. Mayor Randall concurred with Mayor Pro Tem Pearson.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 05:14 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk