

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 14, 2022

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 07:01 PM in the Council Chambers at Portage City Hall.

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

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Acting City Manager Adam Herringa, Deputy City Manager Michael Carroll, City Attorney Catherine Kaufman, and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

At the request of Mayor Randall, the audience observed a moment of silence to reflect on efforts to make a more equitable and inclusive community to allow all to feel safe and valued. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS: Councilmember Ledbetter read the proclamation for Juneteenth 2022. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson read the proclamation for National Scleroderma Month 2022.

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 Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of the Board & Commission Interviews of May 24, 2022, and the Regular Meeting of May 24, 2022. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of June 14, 2022, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Delinquent Water and Sewer Bills: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to order notice to applicable property owners that all water and/or sewer charges remaining unpaid as of June 30, 2022, will be transferred to the 2022 city tax roll and assessed against the property for which the services were furnished. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Resolution for sale of city-owned parcel at 7905 Oakland Drive: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to adopt a resolution to sell city property at 7905 Oakland Drive for Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, place the resolution on file with the Office of the City Clerk for 28 days for public review and comment, and take final action at the regular City Council meeting of July 12, 2022. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Resolution for sale of city-owned parcel at 5916 Oakland Drive: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to adopt a resolution to sell city property at 5916 Oakland Drive for Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, place the resolution on file with the Office of the City Clerk for 28 days for public review and comment, and take final action at the regular City Council meeting of July 12, 2022. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Minutes of Boards & Commissions: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to receive the minutes of the Planning Commission of April 21 and May 19, 2022, as well as the Environmental Board of May 11, 2022. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

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

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: Rick Frieman (3218 Benington Court) congratulated the City Administration on its receipt of the Gold Award from Michigan Green Communities. He encouraged the city to continue its efforts towards environmental awareness and focus on de-carbonization. In response to Mr. Frieman's comments, Acting City Manager Herringa noted that the Department of Public Works had recently received a grant from the State of Michigan to purchase a fully electric snow plow for the following winter.

Mary Balkema (1131 Whites Road, Kalamazoo) spoke on behalf of the Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Organization. She was joined by fellow members Matt Milcarek and Beth McCann in thanking the city for adopting the two resolutions for affordable housing locations on Oakland Drive.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Burns provided an update regarding the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA). He noted that the comprehensive analysis was still underway, with the recent closure of the public survey and compiling of responses. Councilmember Burns stated the micro-transit option was still preferred by the Board, which had found similar models in Muskegon, Grand Rapids, and Detroit. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson also spoke regarding the CCTA, providing additional details on the comprehensive analysis and the micro-transit model. He also noted that the CCTA was working to manage the recent spike in gas prices within the organization's existing budget. Mayor Randall inquired whether the gas price increase had resulted in a CCTA ridership increase. Councilmember Burns responded that he had posed a similar question to the CCTA Director and found that the data was not yet available.

Councilmember Brayton relayed an update regarding the Kalamazoo County Environmental Health Advisory Council (EHAC). She stated that the County Health Department was currently engaged with issuing food vendor licenses, as well as inspections for outdoor pools and beaches. Councilmember Brayton also warned that the County had discovered the presence of Lone Star Ticks at Western Michigan University's Kleinstuck Preserve.

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

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: Lana Escamilla (2327 Lorraine Avenue, Kalamazoo) stated that she was running as a candidate for 8th District Judge in the upcoming August Primary Election and provided her prior history with the city.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmember Urban provided an update regarding a recent meeting of the City Council/School subcommittee with Councilmember Brayton and Burns. He stated the group had met with the Public Safety Chief and Deputy Chief to discuss violent event preparedness in the local schools, including the School Resource Officer program. Councilmember Urban stated the subcommittee was impressed at the level of preparedness by the Public Safety Department. He encouraged the Department to consider expanding into the younger schools in light of recent events.

Councilmember Brayton agreed with Councilmember Urban and praised the Public Safety staff, noting the City Administration and Public Safety Department have a great relationship with the Portage Public Schools. She then wished everyone Happy Father's Day and thanked the Police and Fire Departments for working on the holiday.

Councilmember Burns thanked the Public Safety Department for their time in meeting with the

Council/School subcommittee and for answering all their questions. He then wished area school families a happy summer break in light of the school year's end.

Councilmember Ledbetter highlighted the upcoming June 17th city dedication of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and the correlation with the ongoing Juneteenth celebrations. He then spoke in further detail regarding the history of the Juneteenth holiday development.

Councilmember Knapp encouraged everyone to be mindful of the influx of children on area roads in light of the end of the school year and stressed safety. She also recommended the use of the various city parks by families during summer break.

Acting City Manager Herringa relayed his recent visit to Pfizer for its announcement of the Paxlovid drug for the continued battle against COVID-19. He then spoke regarding a recent MLive article that highlighted the Portage Department of Public Safety's partnership with area mental health groups in responding to calls. Mr. Herringa closed with a reminder about the Martin Luther King, Jr. park dedication and a note of thanks to the representatives from KNHS.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson thanked the City Council/School subcommittee members for their focus on safety measures in the schools and expressed support for the expansion of the school resource officer program from his own time on the subcommittee.

Mayor Randall began by thanking the representatives from KNHS for collaborating with the city on affordable housing and stressed the need to increase the opportunities in Portage to capture more of the countywide millage funding. She then acknowledged the city's 2021 Tree City USA Growth Award. Mayor Randall then spoke about the new Community Senior Center opening and programming, congratulating Director Kim Phillips for her work on the project. She closed with a recognition of the Flag Day holiday and issued a reminder about the Martin Luther King, Jr. park dedication that week.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 07:45 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk