

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 21, 2023

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 07:00 PM in the Council Chambers at Portage City Hall.

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

ABSENT: Councilmember Lisa Brayton.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Pat McGinnis, Deputy City Manager Adam Herringa, 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 the importance of fair housing, the need for affordable housing to address discrimination, and to build a more inclusive community.

Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Fair Housing Month: Human Services Board Chair Brooke Kolodzieczyk, Vice Chair Jihan Young, and member Sue Beasley read the proclamation.

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 Urban removed Item A.5 (Tentative Plan and Rezoning Application No. 22/23-7). Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 7, 2023. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of March 21, 2023, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Block Party Ordinance: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to accept for first reading an amendment to Chapter 66 of the Code of Ordinances (Streets, Sidewalks, & Other Public Places) include Sec. 66-7. "Block Parties," with final reading to occur April 4, 2023. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Rezoning Application No. 22/23-8 - 7438 Lovers Lane: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to receive Rezoning Application No. 22/23-8 to rezone 7438 Lovers Lane from R-1B One-Family Residential to R-1T Attached Residential for future duplex developments, and set a public hearing for April 18, 2023. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Utility Management and Operation Services - Contract Renewal: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve a five-year contract renewal with Veolia Water Contract Operations USA, Incorporated, for the provision of utility management and operation services for the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2028, and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to the action on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Computer Replacement: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the purchase of computing devices, monitors, and accessories from CDW-G under the Michigan Master Computing

MiDEAL competitive bid process in the amount of \$121,435.27 and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to this action. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Substantial Amendment to the CDBG Program FY2021-22 Annual Action Plan: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the FY 2021-22 Annual Action Plan Substantial Amendment and allocate \$110,341 to Housing Resources, Inc., to support housing stabilization due to COVID-19 for eviction prevention and rapid rehousing, and to allow families to remain in their homes. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

AVB Contract for Housing Development at 9617 Portage Road: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to approve the selection of AVB, Inc., for a public-private partnership to develop a housing development at 9617 Portage Road and authorize the City Manager to commence negotiations related to the remaining elements of the development on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Minutes of Boards & Commissions: Motion by Burns, seconded by Knapp, to receive the minutes of the Zoning Board of Appeals of January 9, 2023, Human Services Board of February 2, 2023, Environmental Board of February 8, 2023, and Planning Commission of February 16, 2023. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Materials Transmitted: None.

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

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:

1. Alan Loveridge (23965 88th Avenue, Marcellus) expressed concerns about e-mail scams and suggested potential alternatives.
2. Bill Davies (613 Beauvois Ave) expressed concerns about the city-owned properties at 9338 Portage Road and 9303 Portage Road, the prices paid, and the taxes on the properties. He discussed the use of taxpayer dollars in purchasing properties and alternatives for the funds, including funding schools and KRESA. He also recommended instead using the funds for assisting citizens on a fixed income. Councilmember Urban responded with background regarding the Council-approved purchases of the properties and planned uses for each property.
Mr. Davis also expressed interest in metal detection on the city's mill property and concerns about permission to do so.
3. Chanda Webster (Kalamazoo resident) from the Delta Theta Sigma Sorority spoke, along with fellow representatives, to recognize the sorority's Delta Days event at the local government level with collaboration efforts. Ms. Webster stated the sorority was started at Howard University and would soon be celebrating its 50th anniversary in June 2023.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA:

Tentative Plan and Rezoning Application (#22/23-7), from Commercial Planned Development (CPD) to Planned Development (PD) for a proposed mixed-use development at 412 W. Centre Avenue and 7860 Shaver Road: Councilmember Urban expressed apprehension about the proposal, including the traffic study and citizen concerns expressed during the project's review before the Planning Commission. He noted the traffic study's land use categorization for the proposed site and the low vehicular statistics cited for the 200-unit development, which seem to contrast the characteristics of the community. Councilmember Urban also discussed questions about access points, the adjacent West Centre Avenue/Shaver Road intersection, and an earlier Planning Commission discussion with similar concerns. He believes the project is underdeveloped at this point with numerous assumptions. He expressed the need for additional information relating to a development

of this size. Councilmember Urban also questioned the information regarding proposed rents for the project and the effects on future tenants. He closed with a brief recognition of prior development proposals for the property and welcomes developing the parcel, but is concerned the current proposal is not the best option.

At the invitation of the Mayor, City Manager McGinnis briefly addressed Councilmember Urban's comments, confirming that the City Administration would be sure to have answers and data in time for the project's public hearing on April 18, 2023.

Motion by Burns, seconded by Pearson, to receive a Tentative Plan and Rezoning Application No. 22/23-7 to rezone 412 West Centre Avenue and 7860 Shaver Road from Commercial Planned Development (CPD) to Planned Development (PD) for a proposed mixed-use development, and set a public hearing for April 18, 2023. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 5 to 1, with Councilmember Urban voting no.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Burns provided an update on the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) in conjunction with Mayor Pro Tem Pearson. Councilmember Burns highlighted that the CCTA received a good financial report and a clean audit. He relayed that the CCTA's employee benefits model, transitioned from the old, closed system under the City of Kalamazoo, to a new Medicare plan, reducing liability for the CCTA and returning funds to better uses.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson noted the CCTA was recently split into several sub-committees, including the new Planning and Development Committee to be chaired by Councilmember Burns.

Motion by Pearson, seconded by Knapp, to receive the Council Committee Reports as presented. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:

1. Jack Gesmundo of American Village Builders (AVB) thanked the Council for selecting his firm as the builder for the new private-public partnership development at 9617 Portage Road.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmember Burns noted he would be out of town for the City Council Utility Rate Study Committee meeting this week, deferring to fellow Councilmembers Knapp and Ledbetter on the committee. He asked the City Administration to provide him with the information electronically to review.

Councilmember Ledbetter recognized the Human Services Board for highlighting Fair Housing month and noted complementary efforts offered by the Kalamazoo area Housing Resources Inc. organization. He then recognized the Delta Sigma Theta sorority representatives and their work within the varying levels of government.

Councilmember Knapp had no comment.

Councilmember Urban acknowledged the upcoming retirement of Mike Wise, Superintendent of Streets, after a tenure of 44 years with the city and congratulated him on his service. He also recognized the upcoming retirement of Deputy Police Chief John Blue, also congratulating him on his years of service to the community.

City Manager McGinnis began by mentioning the public-private housing partnership with AVB. He also spoke regarding the proposed Capital Improvement Plan and FY 2023-24 Budget slated for review at the upcoming Council meetings. Mr. McGinnis then presented feedback from resident Carol Nelson regarding the provision of local shelters during future emergency events. He closed by introducing two new staff in the City Administration, including Willa DiTaranto and Kylar Chandler.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson spoke regarding the public-private partnership with AVB for a housing development at 9617 Portage Road. He also acknowledged the recent groundbreaking for the Wild Plum development by AVB on West Osterhout. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson then highlighted the historical background and recent developments regarding Mixed-Use development, including the proposal from the agenda.

Mayor Randall also spoke regarding the new City Council goal to focus on affordable housing opportunities in the city and working with the Kalamazoo County Housing Department, as well as AVB on the new Portage Road development. She thanked the City Council, City Administration, and the noted project partners for their efforts to promote long-term, attractive and affordable housing in the community.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 07:58 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk