BOARD & COMMISSION INTERVIEW
MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 3, 2023

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Special Meeting to order at 05:32 PM in Conference Room #1 at Portage City Hall.

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

ABSENT: Councilmembers Chris Burns and Vic Ledbetter.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Pat McGinnis, City Clerk Erica Eklov, and Administrative Assistant (Clerk) Aaron Thiel. Citizens Mark McKeon, Nicole Miller, and Brooke Kolodzieczyk were also present.

ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD: From 5:30 p.m. to 5:40 p.m. the City Council conducted interviews for the Environmental Board. Applicants David Moe and Wendy Pennell were present. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked them about the environmental issues in which they were interested. Mr. Moe noted atomic fallout concerned him. Ms. Pennell responded that her degree has always had her interested, but she is also concerned about clean groundwater and air. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson then spoke regarding the Environmental Board's purpose in relation to advising the City Council.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION: From 5:40 p.m. to 5:50 p.m. the City Council interviewed for the Historic District Commission vacancy. Applicant Steven Rice was present and relayed his background as a former paint store manager inspiring his interest in refreshing historic buildings. He highlighted his ownership of the historic home on the corner of Vanderbilt and Oakland Drive. Mr. Rice then asked about the differences in the various city boards, as well as the short length of his term and the potential for renewing.

HUMAN SERVICES BOARD: From 5:50 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., the Council interviewed for the Human Services Board (HSB). Applicants Julie Pryor, Martha Perry, and Brian Plescher attended and provided summaries of their backgrounds. At the invitation of the Mayor, current HSB Chair Brooke Kolodzieczyk described the current responsibilities and oversight of the Board. She highlighted October's Red Ribbon Week and November's Community Services Open House event.

Councilmember Urban asked the applicants about their potential interest in the other boards on the docket, noting the remaining opening in the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Plescher and Ms. Pryor indicated measured interest, with first preference for the HSB.

LOCAL OFFICERS COMPENSATION COMMISSION: From 6:00 p.m. to 6:10 p.m. the City Council interviewed for the Local Officers Compensation Commission. Julie Pryor remained from the prior session to interview for the vacant position. Mayor Randall noted the infrequency of the Commission's meetings and asked Ms. Pryor if she was comfortable with such a schedule. Ms. Pryor was amenable to the option if she was needed to fill a vacancy.

Councilmember Urban inquired about returning applicant Dr. Toni Woolforke-Barnes and whether she remained interested in the position. Clerk Eklov confirmed that staff had verified Dr. Woolforke-Barnes was still interested in the Commission.

PARK BOARD: From 6:10 p.m. to 6:25 p.m. the Council interviewed for the Park Board. Applicants Tara Barber and Josh Piotter were present. Following a summary of the Board's oversight and meeting schedule by the Clerk, Mayor Randall asked each applicant to relay their favorite park and their specific interest in the Board. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked the applicants what aspect they would like to see introduced. Ms. Barber relayed an interest in increasing the sense of community and Mr. Piotter expressed a desire for greater communication from the city regarding park programming and events. Mayor Randall clarified the number of vacancies would capture both applicants. Councilmember Urban asked to verify whether the applicants had an interest in any other

city boards, noting the continued vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Both applicants indicated interest in remaining with the Park Board option.

SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD: From 6:25 p.m. to 6:35 p.m. City Council interviewed for the Senior Citizens Advisory Board. Current Chair Linda Zoeller and existing member Lawrence Smith attended. Ms. Zoeller provided an update regarding the activities of the Board and upcoming projects. Mr. Smith noted he currently teaches a calligraphy class and enjoys the amenities of the new Senior Center building. There was additional discussion regarding the Memory Cafe service and its increased popularity due to the recent closure of the area's two memory care facilities. Ms. Zoeller asked about the makeup of the current board, noting the term limit of long-standing member Art Roberts. Mayor Randall asked about the demographics of the current Senior Center membership in light of the large increase in new members. She also asked about driver availability for the two new Center buses.

The City Council also interviewed Mr. Vincent Keszei for the Senior Citizens Advisory Board earlier from 5:40 p.m. to 5:47 p.m. Mr. Keszei detailed his background as an ophthalmologist and his desire to provide the senior community with more health-related support options.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS: Beginning at 6:35 p.m. the Council reviewed the Zoning Board of Appeals. As there were no applicants present, the Council asked the Clerk regarding the two citizens. Clerk Eklov noted that applicant Justin Gish was a former member of the Park Board and more recently the Environmental Board, and stated she was not familiar with applicant Amy Lipset. Mayor Randall noted Mr. Gish's prior service on the Board of Review as well. There was discussion regarding Mr. Gish's departure from the Environmental Board and his prior interviews before City Council.

BRA/TIFA/EDC: Following the discussion on the Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council then briefly reviewed the BRA/EDC/TIFA. As there were no applicants present, the Council asked the City Clerk to include the vacancy to the January interview session.

BOARD AND COMMISSIONS APPOINTMENTS DISCUSSION: There was additional discussion regarding the Zoning Board of Appeals vacancy. At the inquiry of the Mayor, Human Services Board (HSB) Chair Brooke Kolodzieczyk highlighted two of the three applicants for the Board's vacant positions, noting her preference for Martha and Josh based on their prior experience. The Council recommended the third applicant for the HSB, Julie Pryor, be assigned to the Local Officers Compensation Commission in the interim and asked the Clerk to extend an invitation to Ms. Pryor to continue attending HSB meetings should a future vacancy occur. Clerk Eklov inquired about the potential reappointment of Senior Citizens Advisory Board member, Art Roberts, noting the lack of applicants to fill his position. Councilmember Urban recommended that Mr. Roberts be re-appointed to a single-year term.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 6:48 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk