

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 10, 2025

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 06:00 PM in the Council Chambers at Portage City Hall.

ROLL CALL: Councilmembers Chris Burns, Nicole Miller, Terry Urban, Jihan Young, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Mayor Patricia Randall were present.

ABSENT: Councilmember Vic Ledbetter.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Pat McGinnis, Chief Operating Officer Adam Herringa, Chief Development Officer Peter Dame, 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 Juneteenth celebration, for a just and equitable community. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Juneteenth Freedom Day Celebration: Councilmember Young read the proclamation.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:

1. Alan Loveridge (23965 88th Avenue, Marcellus) spoke regarding the provision of daycare in public schools, as well as hosting a public forum for ideas with state representatives.
2. Keith Grafos (5112 Midfield) expressed concerns regarding the provision of a single waste hauler and advocated that citizens should have the right to choose their own service provider based on rates, services, and solutions. He noted recent social media discussion about the concerns of a single waste service.
3. Nicole Caswell (6836 Bratcher) spoke against the provision of waste hauling by a single vendor, highlighting that competition between haulers ensured better quality services for lower prices. She expressed her concern about whether brush pick-up was reduced or eliminated.

Following the comments, Mayor Randall and Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked City Manager McGinnis to provide information regarding the city's efforts to date toward providing waste hauling in the city, noting the ordinance amendments in January 2025 and administrative reviews of companies to serve as a potential single vendor. He noted that a final proposal of switching to a single hauler would be brought forward to Council for review. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson and Mayor Randall also responded to the concerns by citing potential cost savings, fair pricing, and infrastructure preservation.

CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Randall shared where the public can access the meeting agenda and asked if any would like an item removed from the Consent Agenda. Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of the Board & Commission Interviews of May 27, 2025, and Regular Meeting of May 27, 2025. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of June 10, 2025, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Chip Sealing Services - Single Source: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to approve the single-source purchase of chip sealing services from Pavement Maintenance Systems in the amount of \$283,415.94 and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to this purchase. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

2026 Local Streets Reconstruction Program - Award of Engineering Contract: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to award a contract to perform engineering services to Integral Partners, LLC (dba: Land & Resource Engineering) of Walker, Michigan in the amount not to exceed \$164,420 for the reconstruction of the 2026 Local Streets Reconstruction Program and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to the contract on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Brownfield Redevelopment Plan Amendment No. 15, American Village Development II, LLC, (1075 Bacon Avenue): Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to receive the American Village Development II, LLC, Brownfield Redevelopment Plan Application, with Brownfield Redevelopment Plan Amendment No. 15, American Village Development II, LLC, 1075 Bacon Avenue, Portage MI, and set a Public Hearing for July 8, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Closed Session to Discuss a Personnel Matter: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to meet in Closed Session immediately following the regularly scheduled City Council Meeting of Tuesday, July 8, 2025, to discuss a personnel matter. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Committee of the Whole Meeting: Portage Community Land Trust and Stanwood Crossings: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to set a Committee of the Whole for Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. to discuss the proposed Portage Community Land Trust Operating Agreement and Stanwood Crossings Declaration of Easements and Restrictive Covenants. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Unpaid Water & Sewer Charges: Motion by Young, seconded by Urban, to order water and/or sewer charges remaining unpaid as of June 30, 2025, to be transferred to the 2025 city tax roll and assessed against the property on which the services were furnished. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Minutes of Boards & Commissions: None.

Materials Transmitted: None.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Code of Ordinances Text Amendment and Rezoning #24/25-4: City Centre Subarea: At the request of the Mayor, City Manager McGinnis summarized the proposed mixed-use development for the City Centre area. Chief Development Officer (CDO) Pete Dame presented the aerial view of the subject location and provided background on the property, which is currently zoned for office space. He noted the two-part proposal included both a mixed-use project as well as a new zoning district for the subject property within the City Center Plaza development.

Councilmember Burns spoke regarding the current office economy and the need to reconsider current land use regulations to provide more housing opportunities. He commended staff for supporting the proposed zoning change for the historically underutilized subject parcel.

Councilmember Urban noted the parcels adjacent to the property were owned by Portage

Public Schools and zoned for residential development. He inquired about a potential future conflict of zoning uses should the school district sell the property and asked if the project would be recommended if residential projects developed Councilmember Urban then asked CDO Dame about potential conflicts with the smaller setbacks in the neighboring residential area. CDO Dame did not see an issue with the hypothetical and presented a future use map that illustrated the areas nearby as commercial and stated that he saw no problem putting a higher density development in the property in question. Mayor Randall highlighted current developments in similar contrasting zoning areas, such as Tall Timbers. Councilmember Urban asked if the adjacent properties should be rezoned; CDO Dame declined.

Mayor Randall inquired about the ingress/egress on South Westnedge Avenue and access points. CDO Dame confirmed that the proposed development would be required to have multiple access points and stated that a future approval of an access point onto South Westnedge Avenue was expected.

Mayor Randall opened the public hearing at 6:34 PM. There were no comments. Motion by Burns, seconded by Young, to close the public hearing. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA:

Local Officers Compensation Commission Appointment: Mayor Randall introduced the item, noting Lori Knapp had been appointed to the Local Officers Compensation Commission during the recent Board and Commission interviews but had since indicated she could no longer serve due to personal reasons. The Mayor stated that Fran Bruder had stepped forward, offering to fill the resulting vacancy. Councilmember Burns cited his familiarity with Ms. Bruder and her prior service to the community, offering the motion.

Motion by Burns, seconded by Young, to appoint Francine (Fran) Bruder to the Local Officers Compensation Commission to the remainder of a partial term ending October 2030. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: Councilmember Burns provided an update regarding the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA). He noted a 5-percent increase in ridership on Portage's fixed bus routes, and that the CCTA's new on-demand service had been gaining in popularity since its introduction the year prior.

Mayor Randall inquired about route changes and updates, considering the various road construction sites in the area. Councilmember Burns advised monitoring the Kalamazoo Metro website or Facebook page.

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

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Young began by thanking city residents who had attended the meeting and personally contacted Councilmembers to express concerns about a single waste hauler. She assured transparency as the review progressed and encouraged citizens to continue relaying concerns about the potential proposal. Councilmember Young noted the recent graduations and school year completions. She closed by relaying several upcoming city events.

Councilmember Burns promoted membership at the Portage Zhang Senior Center as a Father's Day Gift by listing upcoming programs and experiences.

Councilmember Urban followed Councilmember Young in speaking on provision of waste-hauling services, noting that the members of the City Council were also residents of Portage who utilize

such services.

Councilmember Miller relayed her viewpoint as a new Councilmember who recently entered the discussion and review about waste hauling in the city, and ensured residents she is aware and listening to citizen concerns. She briefly spoke regarding road construction underway around the city and several upcoming events.

City Manager McGinnis highlighted recent staff achievements, beginning with Justin Williams' efforts regarding the new Juneteenth display in the City Hall Lobby put on in collaboration with the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. He then recognized Transportation & Utilities Director Kendra Gwin for receipt of the Transportation and Utilities State Avenue award for the Cooley Drive reconstruction and Clerk's Office recent award with MiExcellence Award from the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks. He closed with a short presentation of staff efforts to address unsightly electrical boxes around the city.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson relayed his experience with local waste-hauling vendors, noting the City of Portage was currently an unregulated community. He stressed that a staff review has shown price variations to be widespread in the city and current vendors are hoping to avoid regulations to carry out such practices. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson closed with an assurance to the citizens that any contracts would be pursued with transparency and in the citizens' best interests.

Mayor Randall began by noting the slower pace of the spring collection of brush due to the large amount storm debris. She then highlighted the recent Stanwood Crossings groundbreaking, and the upcoming expansions for four different housing options in the city as part of an effort to address the national workforce housing shortage. Mayor Randall then recognized Councilmember Ledbetter, who was absent from the meeting due to a Juneteenth special event hosted by Governor Whitmer in Lansing. She closed with wishes for a happy Father's Day.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 7:04 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk