CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 12, 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 Victor Ledbetter.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Pat McGinnis, 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 all that makes Portage one community to call home. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:

1. Alan Loveridge (23965 88th Ave, Marcellus) proposed an alternative nationwide work week schedule.
2. Jason Mikkelborg (6834 Manhattan Street) recommended that the City Council allow residents to opt out of the single waste hauler program and relayed concerns regarding decorations in South Cemetery.
3. Chris Phillips (5137 Ridgebrook) noted his employment with Best Way Disposal and discussed discrepancies between the waste hauler bids and the Council's decision criteria.
4. Dustin Thomas (7625 Andrea Lane) relayed his current Freedom of Information Act request and his disappointment with an apparent lack of transparency in awarding the single-hauler contract.
5. Terry Tessari (6047 Marlow) complimented several city staff.
6. William Davies (613 Beauvois) requested information regarding city projects on Portage Road from the City Manager.
7. Sue Garvey (2514 E. Shore Drive) complimented the City's Parks and Recreation Department and requested additional information regarding the new road coming in at Portage Road and Forest Drive. She then spoke regarding her unease during the July 22nd City Council meeting.

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 Burns, 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 Burns, to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 22, 2025. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of August 12, 2025, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Legal Services Contract: Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to appoint Bauckham, Thall, Seeber, Kaufman & Koches, P.C., as City Attorneys for General Municipal & Legal Prosecution Services, with Catherine P. Kaufman appointed as lead City Attorney and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to this action on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Rezoning Application No. 25/26-1 (4815 W. Milham Avenue): Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to receive Rezoning Application No. 25/26-1 to rezone 4815 W. Milham Avenue from B-2 Community Business District to B-3 General Business District, and set a public hearing for September 23, 2025. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Copperleaf Planned Development - Phase 6 (3800 W. Milham Ave.) Final Preliminary Condominium Plan (engineering plans) Requested Extension: Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to approve a 2-year Extension of the previously approved Final Preliminary Condominium Plan (engineering plans) for Copperleaf Planned Development Phase 6, 3800 West Milham Avenue. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Youth Advisory Committee Establishing Resolution - Third Amendment: Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to adopt the third amendment to the Youth Advisory Committee resolution. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Michigan Municipal League Annual Meeting: Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to designate Councilmember Jihan Young as the Voting Representative and Councilmember Nicole Miller as the Alternate for the City of Portage at the Annual Meeting of the Michigan Municipal League to be held on September 17, 2025, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Minutes of Boards & Commissions: Motion by Young, seconded by Burns, to receive the minutes of the Board of Review of July 22, 2025. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

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

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: Councilmember Burns provided an update on the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA). Motion by Pearson, seconded by Young, to receive the Council Committee Reports as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Urban spoke regarding the single waste hauler agenda item and tensions during the July 22, 2025, regular meeting. He provided an overview of how the agenda is presented to the City Council and made statements about his approach to decisions regarding agenda items.

Councilmember Miller spoke to potential citizen education programs regarding public meetings similar to the communities of Ferndale and Warren. She then highlighted several local businesses and business promotional programs. Councilmember Miller closed by noting her recent meeting with the new president of Western Michigan University and his goal of ensuring the university can help the business community meet its needs.

Councilmember Young began by thanking the citizens in attendance. She summarized the Council's steps in the meeting and the agenda process. She noted the Open Meetings Act, which prohibits the Council from discussing items outside of public view, and encouraged a continued open and respectful dialogue. Councilmember Young closed by urging members of the public to continue reaching out to the Council with any questions or concerns.

Councilmember Burns highlighted two items passed via the Consent Agenda: the new contract with City Attorney Kaufman and the appointment of Councilmembers Young and Miller as delegates for the annual meeting of the Michigan Municipal League. He thanked Attorney Kaufman for her thoroughness during the interview process. He closed by highlighting the Mayor’s recent hosting of the Michigan Mayors' Association the prior week.

City Manager McGinnis responded to Mr. Davies's questions about the home on Portage Road, adjacent to Lakeview Park. He then spoke about the recent Freedom of Information Act request regarding waste hauling. Mr. McGinnis closed by responding to the citizen concerns about cemetery decorations.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson expanded on Councilmembers Urban and Young's comments regarding the decorum from the July 22 City Council meeting and encouraged respect going forward.

Mayor Randall spoke about government transparency improvements during her sixteen-year tenure on the Council. She also spoke regarding Lakeview Park improvements. Mayor Randall noted the compliments Portage had received from the Michigan Mayors' Conference attendees. She closed by noting the Council's efforts to meet the needs of the citizens and its best intentions.

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

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Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk

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