

**MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF DECEMBER 19, 2016**

Mayor Strazdas called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Mayor Pro Tem Ansari and Mayor Peter Strazdas. Councilmembers Claudette Reid and Jim Pearson were present via the conference phone line. Councilmembers Patricia Randall, Richard Ford and Terry Urban were absent with notice and excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Larry Shaffer, Deputy City Manager Rob Boulis and City Clerk James Hudson.

With regard to Item F.9, Special Meeting for Board and Commission Applicants, from the December 6, 2016 Regular Meeting, Councilmember Reid asked when would the Board of Review Pod Interviews take place. City Manager Shaffer responded that the Administration would be offering a recommendation that there be only one Pod instead of two, and that there will be three members who would serve as Regular Members of the Board, and that there would be two Alternate Members. He also conveyed that newly elected Kalamazoo County Commissioner Michael Quinn is not a candidate for Board of Review membership. Councilmember Reid stressed that the membership needs to be opened up to the rest of the citizens of the City, and Mr. Shaffer concurred.

With regard to Item F.4, 2017 Pre-Council Meetings, Councilmember Pearson pointed out that Councilmembers Urban and Ford are not able to call in or be present for the information sessions during the 9 a.m. Monday morning, Pre-Council Meeting day and time slot. He asked that Mr. Shaffer reach out to them so they may consider alternatives to this day and time ahead of time, so they are not "put on the spot" and are prepared with their options. With that, Mr. Shaffer offered to reach out and determine if there is a mutually convenient time Councilmembers can agree to call in or attend Pre-Council Meetings. Mayor Strazdas suggested the survey take place before the Council Retreat that will take place at The Seasons, Fetzer Center, Western Michigan University Main Campus, on January 23, 2017, beginning at 8 a.m., and he asked that Council bring their calendars to the Retreat. Mayor Pro Tem Ansari questioned the need for Pre-Council Meetings and whether the questions and answers could all be handled online perhaps using a pre-defined deadline. Mayor Strazdas noted the distinction among meeting face to face, on a conference call, or online. He indicated that the Retreat would be a good time to discuss this matter.

Councilmember Pearson said that 9 a.m. on the Monday prior to the Regular Council Meeting is a good time for him and that he prefers to call in; moreover, he likes the Pre-Council Meeting format.

Councilmember Reid indicated that she was functioning the same as Councilmember Pearson by usually calling in rather than physically coming in and agreed that it works, but also wants to make it possible for everyone else. She said that perhaps Councilmembers Urban and Ford do not feel the need to do this, prefer to deal with this another way, or it is not a good time for them. Mayor Strazdas placed this matter on the Retreat Agenda to be addressed with the use of the Facilitator, and thanked Councilmember Pearson for raising the question.

Councilmember Reid indicated that Item M.3.b, Reminder of Meetings, Public Media Network Board of Directors Meeting, had already taken place and should be crossed out because they met last week owing to a schedule change due to the holidays.

Councilmember Reid suggested scheduling a Committee of the Whole (COW) before the January 9, 2017 Pre-Council Meeting to look at how to spend the funds that will become available should the Emergency 911/Dispatch Consolidation Millage pass the muster of the voters, and to still have discussions on the matter at the Retreat. Councilmember Pearson indicated that he and Councilmember Reid collaborated on this and completely agree. He pointed out that the Authority would appreciate this proposal somewhat because *mLive* was very premature in saying what Portage was going to do with the savings; so, it is probably best for the Council to get together and decide on a policy. After weighing the options for a day and time to review this matter, Mayor Strazdas settled upon the options of: Tuesday, January 17, 2017; Thursday, January 12, 2017; or Tuesday, January 3, 2017; for a couple of hours beginning at 4 p.m., 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. He mentioned he might utilize a “Doodle” survey of Council to help obtain the cross section of data necessary to make a decision.

Under Item L.1, Contract Approval – Comprehensive Janitorial Services, Councilmember Pearson asked why New Fresh Cleaning did not bid on City Hall or the Public Services Building, and Mr. Shaffer said he did not know, but would find out. Deputy City Manager Rob Boulis indicated that Purchasing Manager Judy Johnson may have some insight on this, albeit speculation, and that he would check with her on it, first.

Regarding N.1, Monthly Reports from the Parks Director Kendal Klingelsmith, Councilmember Pearson noted that Mr. Klingelsmith cited contracts that were finalized with Byce & Associates to develop a master site plan for the Portage Senior Center. He then asked what the scope is for this; how extensive is this; is it a major thing or a minor thing. He indicated that he is asking this just to give Council a preview of what that means.

Mayor Strazdas indicated he sent an e-mail out to everyone referencing calls he received from residents regarding snow plowing. He said Mr. Shaffer responded that the snowplows started at midnight and some got done earlier, some did not, but they should be finished by this afternoon. Another concern from the residents was why plow parking lots before plowing all of the neighborhoods streets. He voiced his concern that Council all have the same message and Mayor Pro Tem Ansari proposed that if a Councilmember receives a call, that he or she informs the resident that we are waiting for information from City Manager and he will respond. Mr. Shaffer confirmed that he would. Mayor Strazdas asked that everyone enjoy the brisk weather of today.

ADJOURN: Mayor Strazdas adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

James Hudson, City Clerk