

**MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF FEBRUARY 13, 2017**

Mayor Pro Tem Nasim Ansari called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Councilmember Jim Pearson and Mayor Peter Strazdas were present via the conference phone line and Councilmember Patricia M. Randall joined the meeting via the conference phone line at 9:05 a.m. which established a quorum. Councilmembers Claudette Reid, Richard Ford and Terry Urban were absent with notice and excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Larry Shaffer, Assistant to the City Manager Mary Beth Block and City Clerk James Hudson.

Mayor Pro Tem Ansari began reading the Agenda Outline to determine if there were any questions or concerns with the Agenda for February 14, 2017. City Manager Larry Shaffer explained that Items F.5, Brownfield Plan for Stryker Instruments, and F.6, Industrial Tax Abatement Application: Stryker Instruments (6520 Portage Road), were not on Consent because he considered them important enough that Council may wish to comment on them, and stressed that there is nothing controversial about either of them.

Councilmember Pearson asked Mayor Strazdas for a clarification regarding whether Council would wish to adopt a Resolution in support of the Consolidated Dispatch millage with regards to the January 12, 2017 Committee of the Whole Follow-up: Consolidated Dispatch, presented as Item F.10. Mayor Strazdas referred to the recent State Law and expressed his concern that elected officials cannot somehow support a millage. He pointed out that this is a tax, and not a millage, and asked Mr. Shaffer to have City Attorney Randy Brown distinguish the difference, if any. Councilmember Randall offered the suggestion to wait until Mr. Brown returns from his vacation and Mayor Strazdas concurred.

Mayor Strazdas reflected on the past practice of Council and inferred that City Council never adopted resolutions for wars, for political matters in Washington, D.C., federal policy matters, etc. He stated unless surrounding municipalities adopted resolutions together, the City of Portage stayed away from adopting such resolutions. He indicated he imparted this information to give Council guidance with regard to where resolutions may be considered appropriate for social issues or tax issues, for example.

Councilmember Pearson selected out the Resolution Against Human Trafficking as an exception to past practices and indicated his preference that Council follow policy on this particular matter. He explained that even though City Council has determined that the City has \$640,000 in savings in the budget that can be returned to Portage citizens, the City does not know the options or capabilities of the other jurisdictions in the area, and pointed out that the County Commission grappled with what to do here. He concluded that it is too early to even think about a Resolution without more information. Mayor Strazdas concurred and reviewed the process thus far.

Councilmember Pearson made the suggestion that individual Councilmembers can express his or her preference from the dais and recommended continuing that practice saying he was bothered by some of the wording contained in the resolution. Mayor Pro Tem Ansari concurred, but asked if he is suggesting that the resolution means that each Councilmember needs to endorse the tax or speak for or against it, and Councilmember Pearson answered in the affirmative. Mayor Strazdas asked Mr. Shaffer to share his thoughts with those Councilmembers who are not present.

In reference to Item F.12, 2017 Committee of the Whole Meetings, Councilmember Pearson indicated that he could understand setting the COW on April 10, 2017, but asked if there was something on the November 7, 2017 Election ballot regarding Marijuana, and Mr. Shaffer said he was not aware of such an issue. He reflected on information contained in the news that there was a possibility of a referendum regarding recreational Marijuana on the November 2018 Election ballot. He concluded that there would not be anything on the November 7, 2017 Election ballot regarding recreational Marijuana, and reminded Council of the December 2017 deadline for

the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) to promulgate regulations in relation to Medical Marijuana. Councilmember Pearson referred to the November 14, 2017 COW meeting on Marijuana and whether this was too soon after the November 7, 2017 Election, one week after the election, for a new Councilmember to be up to speed, for example.

In answer to Councilmember Pearson, Mr. Shaffer indicated that the COW meeting will take at least two hours depending upon the actions of LARA, and he mentioned that it appears that LARA may promulgate regulations prior to the deadline. He noted that once the regulations are promulgated, it makes sense to bring ordinances forward to Council, if Council is going to consider any of the five areas allowed by statute that will be regulated by LARA: cultivating, shipping, processing, testing and dispensing.

In answer to Councilmember Pearson regarding H.1, Unsafe/Unfit Structure – Order to Abate Debris at 3923 Florinda Avenue, Mr. Shaffer stated he called last week, expected real progress, City Inspections took photos on Friday, but there has been no real change; therefore, he indicated that he will advise Council to order this abatement because Mrs. Barbara Krauss has no ability to clean it up herself and needs assistance from outside. Councilmember Randall cited that her daughter attended the last meeting and left after Council deferred action. She then asked if Mrs. Krauss' daughter could be of any help and Mr. Shaffer answered in the negative. Mr. Shaffer said Police Chaplain Ken Hovencamp had people from his church come in to help who cleaned out two rooms and placed everything in the garage to be taken to the dump, but Mrs. Krauss brought most of the stuff back into the house that night. He indicated that this is a psychological affliction. He noted that he told Mrs. Krause that the last thing he wants is to do is be involved in her affairs. He said he told her that he would like to go in, get the house cleaned up, go away and leave her alone. He stressed his intent to be very respectful of Mrs. Krauss at the meeting, and prefers to be quiet about it, but is willing to share any information offline, if asked. He then provided a sampling of one of the conditions of the house when he disclosed that a dead and decomposed cat was found on the couch after it was cleared of debris.

Councilmember Randall indicated that her cousin sits on a Board that deals with these matters in Grand Rapids and asked if Kalamazoo has anything that would deal with situations such as this. Mr. Shaffer said he was not aware of any, but would be happy to research it. Mayor Strazdas expressed his frustration that there is nothing else Council can do at this point except follow the ordinance. Mr. Shaffer concurred and wanted Council to know that staff has dealt with Mrs. Krauss as respectfully and considerately as possible, but he sees no other option except to intercede at this juncture. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Ansari, Mr. Shaffer indicated he would research staff conversations with the daughter of Mrs. Krauss and reemphasized his willingness to resolve this matter amicably.

ADJOURN: Mayor Pro Tem Ansari adjourned the meeting at 9:18 a.m.

James Hudson, City Clerk