

## CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 10, 2026

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, Victor Ledbetter, Nicole Miller, Kathleen Olmsted, Jihan Young, and Mayor Patricia Randall were present.

**ABSENT:** Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson.

**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 celebrate Black History Month and highlight diversity and inclusion. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:**

1. Mark Anthony Martin (10519 Dandale Street) spoke regarding the single-hauler waste contract and rollout timeline as it pertained to the May 5 Special Election
2. Liz Healy and Tracey Lowdy spoke on behalf of the Chubby Mermaids Swim Club, noting the club's request under item A.7 to hold a fundraiser to support the club.
3. Chandra Kinney (5950 Portage Road) spoke on behalf of the Kalamazoo Conservation District, highlighting the organization's growth and inviting everyone to attend the annual organizational meeting on March 5.
4. Doug Vohden (2149 Woody Knoll Drive) spoke in favor of the single-hauler waste initiative.
5. Richard Nellums (9240 East Shore Drive) spoke via phone. He made four brief comments: (1) commended the city for its Black History Month presentation; (2) relayed the Environmental Board's review of "dark skies"; (3) requested detailed design information for the Austin Lake Trail for the city website; and (4) expressed concerns on trailway safety enforcement for electric bicycle speeds.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor Randall shared where the public can access the meeting agenda and asked if anyone would like an item removed from the Consent Agenda. She noted a correction to Item A.11 (Calendar of Meetings): the Planning Commission date should read Thursday, February 19th, instead of the 18th.

Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to approve Consent Agenda with the minor correction to Item A.11. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 27, 2026. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**Accounts Payable Register:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of February 10, 2026, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**Comprehensive Liability, Property, Auto Fleet Insurance and Risk Management Services:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to approve a one-year contract to the Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) at a total cost not to exceed \$658,933 for citywide comprehensive insurance for liability, property, and fleet auto coverage and risk management services beginning March 1, 2026, to March 1, 2027, and authorize the Authorized

Member Representative (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.

**Adoption of Reimbursement Resolution and Notice of Intent Resolution:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to adopt the Notice of Intent resolution to fund construction of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 capital improvement projects, in the amount not to exceed \$6,000,000; 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.

**Austin Lake Trail:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to approve Contract No. 25-5666 between the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of Portage for the construction of the Austin Lake Trail and adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign all documents related to the contract on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**City Council Capital Project Policy:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to approve the City Council Capital Project Policy. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**Resolution for Charitable Gaming License - Chubby Mermaids Swim Club:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to adopt the Resolution for Charitable Gaming License recognizing The Chubby Mermaids Swim Club as a nonprofit organization in the City of Portage. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**March 10th Regular Meeting Rescheduling:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to reschedule the Tuesday, March 10, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting to Monday, March 9, 2026, while retaining the start time of 6:00 p.m. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**Minutes of Boards & Commissions:** Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Councilmember Young, to receive the minutes of the Park Board of January 7, 2026. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

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

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Chapter 18 Cemetery Ordinance Update:** Mayor Randall introduced the item, and the City Manager relayed a summary of the revisions slated for adoption. Motion by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Burns, to adopt the amendment to Chapter 18, Cemeteries, of the Code of Ordinances. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Councilmember Miller provided an update regarding the Discover Kalamazoo Advisory Board.

Motion by Councilmember Burns, seconded by Councilmember Ledbetter, 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 Olmsted began by highlighting the upcoming public hearing for the Planning Commission on battery energy storage systems and data centers. She encouraged citizens to attend the hearing to hear different perspectives on the issue.

Councilmember Ledbetter spoke about the city's recent Black History Month presentation surrounding the history of the Green Book. He then noted the May Special Election, providing various informational points regarding the related single-hauler topic. Councilmember Ledbetter closed by turning back to Black History Month and listed several commonly used items created by Black inventors, considering Black History Month.

Councilmember Miller began by highlighting a Zap Zone XL preview event hosted by Southwest Michigan First. She then thanked Councilmember Burns for his efforts on the Capital Improvement Project policy A.6 under the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Miller closed by expounding on her committee update, noting the various effects on local tourism and skating extracurriculars that the reduction in area ice rinks is creating, and urged citizens to support an increase in the industry's capabilities.

Councilmember Young began by highlighting several events in the area, encouraging residents to consult the monthly newsletter, *The Portager*, for a full list of things the city has to offer. She then noted the various city programs available in support of the small business community. Councilmember Young also spoke about the city's Black History Month program. She closed with an invitation to the public to attend the Kalamazoo County Environmental Health Advisory Committee to learn more about the county's environmental services.

Councilmember Burns thanked Councilmembers Ledbetter and Young for their efforts at the city's Black History Month event. He then thanked Finance Director VanderVeen for her assistance in creating the new Capital Improvement Program financial policy and closed with a reminder of the upcoming opening of the Raising Cane's restaurant and the expected increase in traffic.

City Manager McGinnis first highlighted the Youth Advisory Committee's upcoming "Have a Heart" event and its details. He then echoed the reminders about the upcoming openings of the Raising Cane's restaurant and Zap Zone XL facility.

Mayor Randall also highlighted the upcoming opening of Zap Zone XL and its potential role in revitalizing the Crossroads Mall, as well as the pending opening of Raising Cane's, urging patience with the expected traffic increase in the area. She closed by wishing everyone a Happy upcoming Valentine's Day.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 6:44 PM.

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Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk