

**MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL PRE-MEETING
OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF APRIL 24, 2017**

Mayor Strazdas called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Mayor Peter Strazdas and Councilmembers Richard Ford and Patricia M. Randall. Councilmember Claudette Reid was present via the conference phone line. Councilmembers Jim Pearson and Terry Urban and Mayor Pro Tem Ansari 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.2, Amberly #1 Pump Rehabilitation – Sole Source Contract, Councilmember Reid asked if there was a possible perception of a conflict of interest since the same entity is identifying the problem, and the same entity is getting the contract to fix the problem. By way of explanation, Mr. Shaffer indicated that Peerless-Midwest, Incorporated, is the only entity that can perform both services. He indicated that T&U Director Chris Barnes pointed out that the City could buy a new pump, but the old pumps are of better quality. Councilmember Reid stressed that her concern was with the process since Peerless-Midwest, Incorporated, also received the contract for evaluation of the Pump. Mr. Shaffer indicated that he would touch base with City Attorney Randy Brown and get a response to you and City Council. Councilmember Reid said that it may be in the best interest of the City to get separate entities to do the job.

Regarding L.1, Radio Equipment Upgrades Public Safety Communication Infrastructure – Bid Tabulation, Councilmember Ford asked if this equipment from Roe Communications was involved in the Consolidated Dispatch effort at all. Mr. Shaffer indicated that it does not involve Consolidated Dispatch, but Deputy City Manager Rob Boulis pointed out that it is involved in Dispatch Communications which will be needed even if the City does or does not go with Consolidated Dispatch.

Regarding Reith-Riley and L.2, Spring Mill & Fill – Bid Tabulation, Councilmember Ford indicated that Mr. Barnes said street repairs would be delayed last year because of the U.S. 131 Project, and he questioned that because Reith-Riley had other local projects could our other local streets become secondary projects for them, unless they are undermanned again this year. Mr. Shaffer indicated that he would talk to Mr. Barnes about this and provide a response.

When Councilmember Randall asked if the City plans to do more Spring Mill & Fill internally, Mr. Shaffer indicated that even though the City does not plan to do Spring Mill & Fill, the City will do Duro-Patch and crack sealing.

When Mayor Strazdas asked if the cost of L.1, Radio Equipment Upgrades Public Safety Communication Infrastructure – Bid Tabulation, would be reimbursed by Consolidated Dispatch should the City go with Consolidated Dispatch, Mr. Shaffer answered in the affirmative. He explained that this regards internal communications between officers in the field and back to the base which includes the tower system and internal radio system. Councilmember Reid expressed concern that there was no documentation that the City has verified that the Roe Comm, Inc. System would be compatible with the system installed by Consolidated Dispatch, especially since there has been much discussion of a variety of options. She asked for assurances that Executive Director Jeff Troyer has been contacted and that the equipment will indeed be compatible with Consolidated Dispatch when it happens, and Mr. Shaffer responded staff would confirm that. Mayor Strazdas posed the question of whether there would be reimbursement if the equipment was not compatible versus if it is compatible,

Consolidated Dispatch spend \$150,000 if it is not compatible, and there is no way to determine if it is going to be passed by the voters, and his concern that “if we make the leap” to the new equipment, do we get our money back through reimbursement.

In response to Councilmember Randall, Mr. Boulis offered that the life of the equipment is approximately five (5) years, and Mayor Strazdas indicated that through his experience at Western Michigan University, the life is five (5) to eight (8) years.

Councilmember Reid pointed out that the current City equipment use is over ten years according to the City Manager Communication in the Council Agenda Packet, and stated that the City equipment is on borrowed time at this point.

Councilmember Randall highlighted Item G.1, Presentation by the Public Safety Department – Police Division regarding Police K-9 Zorro and his partner Officer Jordon Wentworth since there was no back-up information in the Council Agenda packet.

Councilmember Randall asked if the tree used in the Tree-Planting Ceremony would be from Romence Gardens again this year. Since it is not in the Proclamation, Mr. Hudson indicated that Parks Superintendent John Milowe provides that information. In response to Councilmember Reid, it was determined that the Tree-Planting Ceremony would take place at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Strazdas shared that he and Mr. Shaffer met with the Portage Rotary leadership on Friday afternoon, and the Rotary is concerned about any kind of political implications as Rotary is not political, so they prefer not to talk about Central Dispatch, and not to be engaged with the State of the City Address. He said they came to a mutual agreement that election ballot issues and political issues will not be addressed at Rotary, so there will not be a joint session with Rotary for the State of the City.

Tim Earl, 6862 Shallowford Way, questioned the need for the 2017 National Day of Prayer Proclamation, acknowledged the Federal Government observes it and prefers not to see it. He objected to it as written and offered two changes. He objected to the quote from the Gospel: Matthew 12:21 says, “in His name the nations will put their hope.” He also objected to the very last line of the NOW, THEREFORE, “.... and call on Portage citizens from all backgrounds to recognize the importance of prayer in preserving a strong moral nation” because it is particularly offensive to people who do not pray. Mayor Strazdas asked Mr. Shaffer to look into it and provide City Council with a recommendation. When Councilmember Randall asked who wrote the proclamation, Mr. Hudson indicated it was here when he came to Portage; he indicated that there are times when the Proclamation has not made it to the Agenda because the group involved may not have approached us quickly enough. He also indicated that they came early this year as they now have to place application to use the Fountain area outside per the direction of Council. Mayor Strazdas pointed out that the group is “all of the Churches of Portage,” but is not sure if the group wrote the Proclamation; that there may not be anything important about these words; that the words may not be sacred, important or preferred by the group; therefore, perhaps there is an opportunity to find a middle ground and make some adjustments. Mr. Shaffer indicated that he would get with Jim Hudson and call up the sponsors of the Proclamation and see if changes can be made and bring that forward to Council.

ADJOURN: Mayor Strazdas adjourned the meeting at 8:17 a.m.