

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 6, 2015

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Mayor Strazdas at 7:30 p.m.

At the request of Mayor Strazdas, Pastor Jeff Wenke of The Bridge Church gave the invocation and City Council and the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy City Clerk called the roll with the following members present: Councilmembers Nasim Ansari, Richard Ford, Patricia Randall, Claudette Reid and Terry Urban, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson and Mayor Peter Strazdas. Also in attendance were City Manager Laurence Shaffer, City Attorney Randy Brown and Deputy City Clerk Adam Herringa.

PROCLAMATIONS: Mayor Strazdas recognized that there were many high school students, parents and teachers in the audience and shared that Portage Public Schools and host families were welcoming 11 students on an exchange program from Denmark. Mayor Strazdas then invited Mr. Chuck Schira with the Portage Public Schools International Baccalaureate program to come forward and share a little about the current exchange program. Mr. Schira explained that this was the third year of this exchange and explained how it got started and some of the activities in which the Danish students and host families were engaged. Two Danish teachers, Ronni Hansen and Mette Brondum, also shared their thoughts on the program and on what it was like to be in Portage. One of the Danish students, Mathilde, and a student from Portage Northern High School, Danna, shared their thoughts on the experience and the Danish student also shared that it is great to see the American lifestyle, experience an American city and that it is great to see all of the nature and trees in Portage.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilmember Ford asked that the minutes be modified to reflect the individual who provided the invocation. Motion by Reid, seconded by Ford, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2015, as amended. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

* **CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor Strazdas asked Councilmember Ansari to read the Consent Agenda. Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to approve the Consent Agenda motions as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

* **APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER OF OCTOBER 6, 2015:** Motion Ford, seconded by Randall, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of October 6, 2015. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS: Carol Voss, 1104 Rainbow Court, expressed frustration with a parking situation that has been ongoing for several months. She shared that she has been in contact with multiple city officials on several occasions but the situation persists. Ms. Voss expressed concern that officials in one department were providing information which ran counter to what she was hearing from other city staff. She asked what can be done to resolve the parking matter. Mayor Strazdas thanked Ms. Voss for coming before City Council and for clearly articulating her concern. The Mayor then asked the City Manager to meet with Ms. Voss to review the circumstances and to report back to City Council at the October 20th City Council Meeting.

Mr. Tim Earl, 6862 Shallowford Way, expressed concern with a statement made by a Councilmember at the last meeting about a possible shuttle between Portage and airports in Detroit and Grand Rapids. He stated that such a shuttle could be detrimental to the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport and shared the many benefits of using this airport.

REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION:

- * **WEST OSTERHOUT RECONSTRUCTION CHANGE ORDER:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to approve Change Order No. 1 to the West Osterhout Reconstruction Project to include the Portage Road Sidewalk Addition with Michigan Paving & Materials, Incorporated, in the amount not to exceed \$44,390 and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to the contract on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.
- * **REZONING 15/16-1 – 710 AND 732 EAST CENTRE:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to accept Rezoning Application #15/16-1 for first reading and set a public hearing for November 3, 2015; and subsequent to the public hearing, approve Rezoning Application #15/16-1 and rezone 710 and 732 East Centre Avenue from B-1, local business, to OS-1, office service, with the exception of the west five feet of 710 East Centre Avenue, which is to remain zoned R-1A, one family residential. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.
- * **FY 2014-2015 ANALYSIS OF ZONING CONSISTENCY UPDATE:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to accept the FY 2014-2015 Analysis of Zoning Consistency Update. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

COMMUNICATION:

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING – OCTOBER 20, 2015: Mayor Strazdas stated that the City of Portage has a good problem which is excess funds in the General Fund. He then stated his desire to hold a Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss what to do with these excess funds. Mayor Strazdas asked City Council to share any questions, concerns or thoughts regarding the topic to the City Manager by the end of the week. Motion by Pearson, seconded by Randall, to set a Committee of the Whole meeting on October 20, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room #1 to discuss appropriation of excess funds in the General Fund. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

* **MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEETINGS:** City Council received the minutes of the Portage Public Schools Board of Education Regular and Special Meeting Minutes of August 17, Policy Governance Retreat of August 18 and Special and Committee of the Whole Work Session of September 14, 2015.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

CITY MANAGER SALARY REVIEW/EVALUATION COMMITTEE: Mayor Strazdas shared that the City Manager Salary Review/Evaluation Committee, composed of himself, Mayor Pro Tem Pearson and Councilmember Ford, had met and shared that the committee had received feedback from all seven councilmembers. He stated that it was the desire of this committee to share the individual feedback that had been received with the entire City Council in a digital format. Mayor Strazdas then asked that the Deputy City Manager complete a review of the salaries received by other city managers in comparable cities in advance of the next City Manager Salary Review/Evaluation Committee meeting which is scheduled for October 16th at 4:30 p.m. Mayor Strazdas then disclosed that a closed session would be held toward the end of the Regular City Council Meeting of October 20th to discuss the evaluation and salary of the City Manager.

Councilmember Randall inquired as to the plan to provide copies of individual Councilmember feedback to all of City Council in a digital format and if this was a change to past practice. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated that this is a change but that providing the information in advance of the meeting will provide City Council with an opportunity to better review the material.

City Attorney Brown stated that sharing the information in a digital manner is fine but that City Council should refrain from engaging in back and forth discussion of the material. Mayor Strazdas

asked City Council if they would prefer to have the material the week before the October 20th meeting or if the day before would be acceptable. Councilmember Urban expressed support for receiving the material the day before the meeting with the caveat that it be sent early in the day. There was general consensus with this approach. Mayor Strazdas then summarized that there would be a closed session during the October 20th City Council Meeting and that information would be shared with City Council for review on October 19th at 8:00 a.m. Motion by Ansari, seconded by Reid, to receive the verbal report from the Mayor. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

CENTRAL COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY: Mayor Pro Tem Pearson provided a brief update on the activities of the Central County Transit Authority (CCTA) and shared that small meetings/briefings have been held with the Executive Director of the CCTA and that information is being gathered and contract details reviewed. Councilmember Urban shared that the proposed contract was presented to the Kalamazoo City Commission yesterday evening.

NEW BUSINESS:

* **APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to reappoint William Beck and Martha Dahlinger and appoint Jerry Kroehn with term ending October 1, 2018, and appoint Mike Sergeant with term ending October 1, 2017 to the Environmental Board; to reappoint Suzanne Nemeth and Katie vanLonkhuyzen and appoint Collin Forrest with term ending December 31, 2018, and appoint Martha Deming Maytnier with term ending December 31, 2017, to the Historic District Commission; to reappoint Diane Durian, Raymond LaPoint and Sandra Sheppard with terms ending October 1, 2018, and appoint Fiorella Spalvieri with term ending October 1, 2016, to the Human Services Board; to reappoint Tim Earl and Charles Thomas and appoint Marshall Cammack with term ending October 1, 2018, to the Park Board; to reappoint Ann Perkins and Trudy Riker and appoint William Wierenga with term ending October 1, 2018, appoint Arthur Roberts with term ending October 1, 2017, appoint Jean Wenz with term ending October 1, 2016, and appoint Kathleen Mishler and Sharon White as Alternate Members with terms ending October 1, 2016, to the Senior Citizens Advisory Board; and to reappoint Keith Lewandowski with term ending December 31, 2021, to the Economic Development Corporation/Tax Increment Finance Authority/Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

BID TABULATIONS:

* **PURCHASE OF A VEHICLE FROM DON SEELYE FORD, INC:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to approve the purchase of a 2016 Ford F-550 crew cab chassis with a KSS Ford stylized service body from Don Seelye Ford, Inc. of Kalamazoo, Michigan in the amount of \$57,375 and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to this matter on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

OTHER CITY MATTERS:

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL: Councilmember Ansari congratulated the International Baccalaureate (IB) students and shared that his son was among the first group of IB students.

Councilmember Reid thanked all of the residents who had applied and interviewed for a spot on one of the boards and commissions. She continued and stated that City Council was faced with the wonderful dilemma of having more volunteers than vacancies on the boards and commissions.

Councilmember Ford shared that he was pleased with the recent Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Open House, with the format and with the opportunity for public input. Mr. Ford then reviewed the Portage 2025 Visioning exercise and shared some of the thoughts from the “Neighborhoods” group

that was a part of the exercise. Finally, Mr. Ford shared that he went to the new Portage Farmer's Market and that he is the new president of the Kzoo Spartans.

Councilmember Randall shared that she found the Portage 2025 Visioning event to be extremely worthwhile and that it will help provide direction for the City and staff in the years to come. She thanked staff for their work in putting on the event and expressed her support for the Farmer's Market and how great it is to have in the community. Finally, she shared that the annual Portage Cross Country Invitational is this coming weekend and that approximately 8,700 runners representing 400 schools will be present. She continued by stating that this is a tremendous event for the community and the local economy and to please be patient with the traffic.

City Manager Shaffer acknowledged staff for their work on Portage 2025 and congratulated all the citizens who participated in the event. Mr. Shaffer then discussed the CIP Open House and that the results of the open house and web surveys would be forwarded to the Planning Commission. Mr. Shaffer expressed his support for involving the public in determining the course of the city and the value of asking citizens for their input. Mr. Shaffer continued by stating his support for the Farmer's Market and implored the public to come out and support it. Finally, Mr. Shaffer shared that the City had recently refinanced some bonds and that the action will save the City \$1.6 million over the course of ten years.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson offered his support of the Farmer's Market and complimented the Director of Transportation and Utilities, Chris Barnes, who played the banjo as part of the live music at the market. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson was also complimentary of the Portage 2025 Visioning event. He continued by sharing that one participant brought his son to the event and shared that this individual had also participated in the annual Mayor and City Council for the Day program. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson expressed optimism that our schools are providing leaders of the future.

Mayor Strazdas shared that, with Portage 2025, the City of Portage recognizes that the community must continue to look ahead and plan for the future. He likened the City of Portage to a well-built boat that is rising with the tide while other communities are busy fixing leaks and do not have the time to look ahead. Mayor Strazdas asked the community to hold City Council and City Administration accountable for the direction that is set and in how we get there. Mayor Strazdas reminded residents that snow will be falling soon and to please recognize the importance of following winter parking regulations. Finally, Mayor Strazdas invited the public to attend the Committee of the Whole meeting planned for October 20th in which City Council will be discussing what to do with excess funds in the General Fund.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Strazdas adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Adam Herringa, Deputy City Clerk

***Indicates items included on the Consent Agenda.**