

CITY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

November 17, 2015

- ◆ Received the Board of Canvassers Report.
- ◆ Retiring City Council adjourned sine die.
- ◆ The City Clerk administered the Oath of Office to Councilmembers Randall, Pearson and Ford and Mayor Strazdas.
- ◆ Councilmembers Randall, Pearson and Ford and Mayor Strazdas signed the Ethics and Values Policy.
- ◆ City Council elected Councilmember Nasim Ansari as Mayor Pro Tempore.
- ◆ City Council adopted the Rules of Order and Procedure.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

- ◆ Mayor Strazdas recognized various citizens and elected officials in the audience, including his wife, Sharon Strazdas, former Mayors Betty Ongley and Jamie Graham, Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell, Kalamazoo City Manager James Ritsema, Kalamazoo County Under Sheriff Paul Matyas, former Councilmember and current State Senator Margaret O'Brien, and House Representative Brandt Iden.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

- ◆ Mayor Strazdas asked if there were any comments from the City Council and each Councilmember recounted his or her election activities and congratulated and thanked the newly elected Councilmembers.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS AND GUESTS

- ◆ State Senator Margaret O'Brien congratulated the newly elected Councilmembers and thanked City Council for all they have taught her. She explained that, as a Councilmember, this is where she learned about how to address issues, how to build relationships, and how to debate with one another and still come together. She explained how these skills have served her well in the legislature and that she is looking forward to continuing their partnership and working together.
- ◆ House Representative Brandt Iden characterized the work by Council as a "wonderful job" and explained that he understands the difficulties associated with running a campaign while serving on Council and working a job in the community. He thanked Council for their service and continued dedication to Portage. He pointed out that he served with Mayor Pro Tem Ansari on the Kalamazoo County Commission and congratulated him on his new office.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER

- ◆ Approved the Accounts Payable Register of November 17, 2015, as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING

- ◆ Approved an Ordinance to establish a Budget Stabilization Fund for the City of Portage, Michigan, by adding Article 3, Budget Stabilization Fund, to Chapter 70, Taxation.

REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

- ◆ Adopted Resolution No. 1, accepted the City Manager Report, requested preparation of Resolution No. 2 for the South Shore Drive Sanitary Sewer Project #416-S, awarded a contract to Midwest Civil Engineers, Incorporated, for design and construction engineering services for an amount not to exceed \$42,500 and authorized the City Manager to sign all documents related to these matters on behalf of the city.
- ◆ Authorized the replacement of the grade crossing at the West Centre Avenue railroad crossing by the Grand Elk Railroad in the amount of \$95,840 and authorized the City Manager to sign all documents related to this authorization on behalf of the city.
- ◆ Confirmed the City Manager appointments to the Local Development Finance Authority by adopting the Resolution to Appoint Members to the Local Development Finance Authority of the City of Portage.
- ◆ Confirmed the appointments to the Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors.
- ◆ Received the communication from the City Manager regarding the October 2015 Summary Environmental Activity Report as information only.
- ◆ Received the Department Monthly Operational Reports from the various departments for October 2015.

COMMUNICATION

- ◆ With Councilmember Reid recusing herself, reappointed citizen, Richard Kraas, and appointed citizens Christopher Burns and Aimee Kornowicz to the Investment Committee.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ◆ Councilmember Randall recounted the Discovery Kalamazoo meeting, including a PowerPoint presentation by Kalamazoo City Manager James Ritsema regarding what is happening in Kalamazoo and an excellent report on the City of Portage by City Manager Larry Shaffer.
- ◆ Councilmember Ford indicated the minutes of the last meeting of the Environmental Health Advisory Council will be available just before the next meeting.
- ◆ Councilmember Urban indicated that the Central County Transit Authority reviewed how much work needed to be done by the October 2016 closing date; that they reviewed a spreadsheet of 210 items, with 60% as the responsibility of the CCTA Board of Directors, including contracts and policies; and, that the list was by no means exhaustive or comprehensive.
- ◆ Councilmember Pearson indicated that the Countywide Dispatch Authority is very close to announcing an Executive Director; that Mr. Shaffer is taking the lead in working out the details of the employment contract; and, Mr. Shaffer confirmed that it should be announced in a couple of weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

- ◆ Mayor Strazdas asked for and received a consensus to use the same facilitator as last year and indicated that he would cross-reference all calendars with that of the facilitator. He recommended a one day session and suggested a Friday or Saturday. After a discussion of four date options, Council agreed to January 22, 2016, and the same location as last year.
- ◆ Mayor Strazdas asked for input on having a meeting prior to the Regular City Council Meeting with the intention that if there were any questions on an Agenda Item, it would be easier to speak face to face with a Department Head or the City Manager. After discussion, he observed that Council agrees that there have to be some rules promulgated and that only agenda items can be addressed on Monday with the City Manager. He offered to work with Mayor Pro Tem Ansari and City Manager Shaffer to create some basic rules of engagement, publish the rules and that Council would work within the confines of these rules if anyone shows up for a meeting.
Councilmember Urban objected saying there is no necessity for Pre-Council Meetings since all Councilmembers have telephones and e-mails and can contact the City Manager with questions a number of ways. He indicated that it is simply a question to the City Manager, and a regularly scheduled public meeting of the entire Council is not necessary. Mayor Strazdas indicated it is just another avenue of a "face to face;" no one has to be there; and the other opportunities are still options.
Councilmember Pearson indicated that he is not hearing any objections to the concept, and asked if Councilmember Urban could settle on a time on Monday and let Council know. At the request of Councilmember Pearson, Mayor Strazdas asked City Manager Shaffer to arrange a Doodle survey.

BID TABULATION

- ◆ Approved the five-year agreement between CTS Telecom of Galesburg, Michigan and the City of Portage for the provision of telephone services at an approximate annual cost of \$28,584 and authorized the City Manager to execute all documents related to the contract on behalf of the city.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL

- ◆ Councilmember Ford attended the Grand Opening of the KENCO Facility the day after the election with Mayor Strazdas, Mayor Pro Tem Ansari, Councilmember Randall and City Manager Shaffer. He thanked his wife and family for tolerating him during his campaign and announced that his wife is going to have another child. City Council, Mayor Strazdas and City Manager Shaffer congratulated him.
- ◆ Councilmember Randall attended the Senior Center Craft sale and congratulated the school board, the parents and those who voted for the Portage Public School Proposals. She wished Happy Thanksgiving to everyone and safe travels.
- ◆ Councilmember Pearson stressed the time commitment involved in the community, Council meetings, campaigning and home responsibilities and noted that campaigning helps a person lose weight, so he was glad the campaigning was over since he reached his target weight.
- ◆ Councilmember Reid expressed her appreciation for the moment of silence requested by Mayor Pro Tem Ansari and reflected on family, the holidays and the importance of the people we really care about.
- ◆ City Manager Shaffer congratulated the newly elected Councilmembers, Mayor Strazdas and Mayor Pro Tem Ansari and indicated he was looking forward to working with all of Council.
- ◆ Mayor Pro Tem Ansari recognized former Mayor Jamie Graham and reflected on the earlier conversation regarding the time for the Pre-Council Meetings.
- ◆ Mayor Strazdas discussed his meeting with the owners of KENCO, and indicated that he took the opportunity to show the owner around Portage since she had never been to Michigan. He asked Council to focus on business, the economy and good jobs for Portage. He reminded Councilmembers Urban, Reid and Ford that they volunteered to read the essays, "What I like About Portage." Councilmember Urban recused himself since his daughter is writing one of the essays.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF EACH CITY COUNCIL MEETING ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CITY WEBSITE AT PORTAGEMI.GOV, IN CITY HALL AND IN THE DISTRICT LIBRARY. MINUTES OF CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS.