

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, October 21, 2019

In Council Chambers at City Hall

Present: Mayor Barnes; Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Member Fitzsimmons, Baldyga, and Johnston; City Manager Gorman; City Clerk Miller; Police Chief Thomas

Guests: Kathy Parsons; Erica Sheehan; Mike Judd

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor Barnes with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve the Proposed Agenda as presented.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Baldyga, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

There was no public comment.

Under City Manager Report, City Manager Gorman stated that late afternoon on Friday, October 18, 2019 he received a letter from the Michigan State Police stating that the City's Request for Reconsideration of Section 19 Emergency Funding was denied. City Manager Gorman presented the letter and a memo he wrote outlining his concerns with the denial to City Council. He further stated that it his opinion, and the opinion of the City's attorneys with Dickinson Wright, that the City of Portland does in fact qualify for the funding under the administrative criteria and he will work to gain further clarification on the issue.

Mayor Barnes stated that he will be interested to learn what clarification City Manager Gorman is able to get.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck concurred.

Council Member Baldyga stated he is concerned with what this means for disasters that could happen in the future.

City Manager Gorman stated that the reinstatement of 2-hour parking in the downtown has been going very well.

Chief Thomas stated that the Police Department has only issued three warnings for 2-hour parking violations. They will begin issuing tickets for violations on November 1, 2019. Everyone seems to understand the new rules very well.

City Manager Gorman noted that design work continues along with the drafting of easements for the Safe Routes to School improvements.

A lot of fieldwork has been taking place recently for the Stormwater, Asset Management & Wastewater (SAW) Project. The City was awarded funding in the amount of \$764,000 to improve the design and mapping of the underground infrastructure.

Last year PFAS testing was conducted by DEQ/EGLE in the City of Portland. There was a trace detection of PFAS in one of the City's wells that has since been taken off line. The City plans to continue annual PFAS testing once the new regulations are released by the State of Michigan.

The DDA continues to move forward with plans for improvements to Toan Park to include the construction of a splash pad.

There has been further discussion and preliminary planning with representatives of Taco Bell for a substantial development project.

City Manager Gorman and staff will meet with Pulse Broadband on November 6, 2019 to kick off the development of the Executable Project Plan (EPP) which will provide further information for planning and development of the fiber infrastructure project.

Andrew Pace, a senior at Portland High School, has been working as an intern at City Hall since the beginning of the school year to earn high school credits. He has been doing an excellent job on a variety of projects.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 19-63 for the purchase of a new pump for the Canal Street Lift Station in the amount of \$6,365.00. During the annual maintenance of the Canal Street Lift Station it was discovered that pump #2 sustained a catastrophic seal failure rendering it inoperable and in need of replacement.

Motion by Baldyga, supported by Johnston, to approve Resolution 19-63 approving the purchase of a new pump for the Canal Street Lift Station.

Yeas: Baldyga, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 19-64 to approve improvements to the Toan Park restrooms. The Parks Director sought quotes for improvements to the restrooms and recommends the Council approve the work to be completed by Durrant Brothers Construction, LLC in the amount of \$17,424.00.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 19-64 approving improvements to the Toan Park restrooms.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Baldyga, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Motion by Johnston, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council Meeting held on October 7, 2019, payment of invoices in the amount of \$105,710.41 and payroll in the amount of \$106,598.30 for a total of \$212,308.71. There were no purchase orders over \$5,000.00.

Yeas: Johnston, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Baldyga, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under City Manager Comments, City Manager Gorman noted that trick-or-treating will take place on Halloween, Thursday, October 31, 2019 from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Under Council Member Comments, Mayor Barnes noted that the City Council Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2019 and asked City Clerk Miller to explain upcoming changes to the voting in Portland.

City Clerk Miller stated that polls will be open on Election Day, November 5, 2019 from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. and that absentee ballots will be available until 4:00 P.M. on November 4, 2019. City Hall will also be open on Saturday, November 2, 2019 and Sunday, November 3, 2019 from 8:00 A.M. until Noon each day for voters to register to vote and get an absentee ballot.

City Clerk Miller further explained that the City of Portland Election Commission recently met and voted to permanently consolidate the precincts in Portland and create an Absent Voter Counting Board (AVCB). With the passage of Proposal 3 during the November 6, 2018 General Election all voters are now able to request an absent voter ballot without a reason. According to the Bureau of Elections it appears that voters are taking advantage of this option, and are increasingly choosing to vote by absentee ballot rather than in the precinct on Election Day. In the next few weeks City Clerk Miller stated that she will begin publicizing information that registered voters in the City of Portland can request to be on her Permanent Absent Voter List which will allow for them to receive an application for an absentee ballot for every election.

Council Member Fitzsimmons stated that it is wonderful that the restrooms at Toan Park are being upgraded.

Council Member Baldyga noted that former Governor Milliken has recently passed away.

There was discussion about governmental cooperation and what can be accomplished.

Mayor Barnes noted that he received a request from Margaret Sheffer, President of the Portland Area Historical Society, for the City to display some of their historical items. Specifically, the framed historical photos that used to hang in the former McDonald's building. Mayor Barnes requested the City make the proper arrangements to do so.

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by Johnston, to adjourn the regular meeting.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Baldyga, Barnes
Nays: None
Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk