

# City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

## Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Tuesday, February 18, 2020

In Council Chambers at City Hall

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

Guests: Bob Lathers of The Beacon

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

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

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

There was no public comment.

Under City Manager Report, City Manager Gorman stated the \$800,000 SAW Grant, Stormwater & Asset Wastewater Management Grant project is underway with continuing fieldwork.

Developers of a proposed Taco Bell at Grand River Ave. and Bristie St., at the location of the former China Buffet, Red Tomato, and car wash, have made their formal submissions to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission. The Zoning Board of Appeals will consider the variance request at their meeting on March 9, 2020. The Planning Commission will consider approval of the site plan, the application for Special Land Use, and the completed traffic study at their meeting on March 11, 2020.

The Fiber Project Executable Project Plan (EPP) continues to move forward and is expected to be complete by the end of March. This project will outline a potential timeframe for completion of a project.

The Safe Routes to School project is in its final design phase; the City is working to secure the required easements and grading permits. The goal is for an MDOT bid letting in May.

The project to realign W. Bridge St. to Quarterline St. at Grand River Ave. is currently out to bid. This project will improve the safety of the intersection and will include a dedicated right turn lane onto W. Bridge St. from Grand River Ave. This project will require the City to secure a couple of easements from adjacent property owners.

Revisions to The Grand River Avenue Small Urban Road Project have been made with the removal of the sidewalk under the I-96 overpass as this added significant cost to the project. The Rivertrail already provides safe passage under the expressway for pedestrians. The project will be relet for new bids.

The Master Plan Review process was scheduled to take place at the February 12, 2020 Planning Commission meeting but due to the lack of a quorum there was no meeting. The review will be rescheduled for a later date.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 20-08 to approve a Pension Waiver Application to be submitted to the Michigan Department of Treasury. Finance Director Tolan explained the Protecting Local Government Retirement and Benefits Act was made law in 2017 to preserve public employee pension and healthcare benefits through the establishment of minimum funding levels. The Act requires that pensions meet a 60% funding level. The City of Portland was recently notified that its funding level through the Michigan Municipal Employee Retirement Systems is 59%. The City may request a waiver to establish a deficit elimination plan based on certain criteria. The City has taken significant steps well before this legislation to address pension funding and is currently in year 3 of a 20-year plan to be fully funded.

Motion by Johnston, supported by Sheehan, to approve Resolution 20-08 approving and authorizing a Pension Waiver Application be submitted to the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Yeas: Johnston, Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 20-09 to rescind Council Policy 00-1 regarding employee home computer purchases.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 20-09 to rescind Council Policy 00-1 regarding employee home computer purchases.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 20-10 to approve a recommended Unassigned Fund Balance level for the Portland Area Fire Authority. The City of Portland, Portland Township, and Danby Township have been discussing the need to establish an unassigned fund balance level. The City's auditors, Manner Costerisan, recommends a fund balance of 15-20% as a general rule. The City Manager and Finance Officer are comfortable with the Auditor's recommendation, but are continuing to work with the Townships on this matter to there is consensus with the decision.

City Manager Gorman stated that he heard from both the Portland and Danby Township supervisors today, they both agreed to a 30% unassigned fund balance level. City Manager Gorman noted that the Portland Area Fire Authority budget includes separate line items to save for future purchases of vehicles and equipment.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck stated that the Portland Area Fire Authority will be looking at the Fiscal Year 20/21 budget to see if further adjustments can be made. He further noted that the community should be very proud of the strong fire department service in the Portland area. It is well staffed and has excellent response times.

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by Johnston, to approve Resolution 20-10 to approve a recommended Unassigned Fund Balance level for the Portland Area Fire Authority.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council Meeting on February 3, 2020, payment of invoices in the amount of \$70,1362.46 and payroll in the amount of \$114,467.79 for a total of \$184,600.25. A purchase order to Resco in the amount of \$7,060.00 for a transformer was also included.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under City Manager Comments, City Manager Gorman reminded residents that the Daddy/Daughter Dance will be held February 26 and 27, 2020.

Under Council Member Comments, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck stated the VFW will host a Burger Night Fundraiser on February 21, 2020 for the Portland Community Fund.

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

Yeas: Johnston, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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James E. Barnes, Mayor

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Monique I. Miller, City Clerk