

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, December 7, 2020

In the City Council Chambers at City Hall

259 Kent St., Portland, MI 48875

And Via Zoom Meeting ID# 856 2519 4973

Present: Mayor Barnes, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Members Fitzsimmons, Johnston, and Sheehan; City Manager Gorman; Treasurer Tolan; Police Chief Thomas

Present Via Zoom: City Clerk Miller; DDA Director ConnerWellman; Acting Electric Superintendent Henry; Evan Sasiela of the Sentinel Standard

Guests: Bill Tucker, CPA with Maner Costerisan; Kathy Parsons

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

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

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

There was no Public Comment.

City Manager Gorman noted that City Clerk Miller, DDA Director ConnerWellman and Brent Henry are attending the meeting tonight from home via Zoom.

Under City Manager Report, City Manager Gorman noted that Governor Whitmer extended the current shut down order until December 20, 2020. The lobby at City Hall is closed to the public at this time, but the drive thru remains open for service. The essential services that city staff perform prevents most city employees from working from home.

City Manager Gorman stated that he is very pleased with the audit results that will be presented. City Treasurer Tolan has done an excellent job.

The Planning Commission's review of the Master Plan will be pushed to January due to the most recent shut down.

Taco Bell is planning to open sometime in December.

Mayor Barnes noted that the stone façade and very appealing aesthetics of the Taco Bell building can be attributed to the enforcement by City Manager Gorman of the approved site plan by the Planning Commission.

Under Presentations, DDA Director ConnerWellman provided her report on downtown activities. Director ConnerWellman provided updates on business and property in the DDA District and other projects, recent activities, and community events.

Bill Tucker, CPA with Maner Costerisan presented the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Audit. It was a clean audit, with no material issues to report. The City was able to increase its fund balance of 15.9% last year to 32.5% this year.

City Treasurer Tolan further explained the MERS unfunded liability is 62% funded. The City received the waiver that was requested from the State of Michigan because a plan for funding is in place.

There was discussion.

Under New Business, the Council considered the acceptance of the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Audit.

Motion by Sheehan, supported by VanSlambrouck, to accept the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 audit as presented by Maner Costerisan.

Yeas: Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 20-65 to approve the City Manager's recommendation to appoint Brent Henry as the Acting Electric Department Superintendent.

Mayor Barnes stated that he is thankful for Mr. Henry's willingness to step in during this transition process with the retirement of Mike Hyland.

Mr. Henry provided his professional background, qualifications, and experience working with Mike Hyland and the Board of Light and Power. He stated that Portland has an excellent reputation and staff which can all be attributed to Mike Hyland. He further stated that most of his time will be spent doing strategic planning, the Electric Department staff are well trained on the day-to-day activities of the department. He also stated that the fiber project initiative is a great move forward that will allow for smart grid technology and automated meter reading.

Motion by Johnston, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 20-65 approving the City Manager's recommendation to appoint Brent Henry as the Acting Electric Department Superintendent.

Yeas: Johnston, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 20-66 to approve the Board of Light and Power's recommendation to appoint the City Manager to the Michigan Public Power Agency (MPPA) Board as the City's representative. The MPPA provides a means for Michigan municipalities to secure electric power and energy for their present and future needs. The MPPA Board is comprised of its members throughout the State. At its meeting on November 24, 2020, the Board of Light and Power approved this action.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 20-66 approving the Board of Light and Power's recommendation to appoint the City Manager to the Michigan Public Power Agency (MPPA) Board as the City's representative with the Acting Electric Superintendent as the alternate.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 20-67 to approve the Defined Benefit Plan Adoption Agreement Addendums for the Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS). MERS is requiring all participating members review certain provisions of their plans and to complete an addendum for each of their divisions. The City affirms that it is not making any changes of the Defined Benefit plans; and all plans will continue to be administered as they have been.

Motion by Johnston, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 20-67 approving the Defined Benefit Plan Adoption Agreement Addendums for the Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS).

Yeas: Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, 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 held on November 16, 2020, payment of invoices in the amount of \$182,286.24 and payroll in the amount of \$101,617.99 for a total of \$283,904.23. Purchase orders to Fleis & VandenBrink in the amount of \$5,982.48 for construction engineering on the Grand River Avenue Small Urban Project, Portland Area Municipal Authority in the amount of \$7,118.22 for a partial payment on new windows, the State of Michigan in the amount of \$7,629.83 for payment on the Grand River Avenue Bridge Project, Moyer Concrete in the amount of \$15,950.00 for repair to a driveway approach at the Hydro Plant, and the State of Michigan in the amount of \$49,375.84 for payment on the Grand River Avenue Small Urban Project were also included.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under City Manager comments, City Manager Gorman thanked the Department of Public Works and the Electric Department for help in decorating the City.

City Manager Gorman noted there has been an increase in activity on the River Trail and the amount of dog waste that is not being picked up by owners. He further reminded residents to clean up after their dogs.

Mayor Barnes noted there are dog waste bags provided along the trail system.

City Manager Gorman stated that the bathroom at Toan Park has been closed at this time. Because it has been newly renovated the City is evaluating timed locks or some other mechanism to prevent vandalism.

The City Council Goal Setting Session will be coming up in January. City staff will work with Council to set a date.

Under Council Comments, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck noted that today is the 79th Anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

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

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk