

# City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

## Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, November 7, 2022

In the City Council Chambers at City Hall

259 Kent St., Portland, MI 48875

Present: Mayor Barnes, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Members Fitzsimmons, Johnston, and Sheehan; City Manager Gorman; City Clerk Miller; DDA Director ConnerWellman; Police Chief Thomas

Guests: Tim Fuller of Opera Block Properties; Merry Hass of The Port; April Vogl of OM's Garden; Mike Judd; Kathy Parsons

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

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Sheehan, to approve the proposed agenda.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under Public Comment, Tim Fuller of Opera Block Properties stated that many of the downtown business owners are concerned about the timeline for the Kent Street Improvement Project. It seems the City keeps "moving the goalposts" and delaying the project.

Mayor Barnes stated there has never been a concrete timeline for the Kent Street Improvement Project. Only recently have the design concepts been approved and there have been too many variables to set an actual construction date or timeline.

City Manager Gorman explained the design, funding, and easement processes to date and noted the funding and easement process is still underway.

There was continued discussion with the Council regarding how the process for the Kent Street Improvement Project has evolved.

Under City Manager Report, City Manager Gorman presented a summary of the progress on the Kent Street Improvement Project provided by Fleis & VandenBrink.

City Manager Gorman reminded residents that tomorrow is Election Day. Voting will take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of City Hall from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

City Staff has been working with Granger on a new contract for refuse and recycling services. There has been no rate increase or contract renewal since 2017.

The Board of Light and Power has started work on undergrounding electric service on Market St. and will continue that effort in other service areas. This project will likely conclude in the Spring. They also continue planning for a new substation and the anticipated Broadband Infrastructure Project.

City Attorney Karen McFadden has announced her retirement. City Manager noted his appreciation for the work she has done for the City of Portland. He further noted his expectation to have a recommendation for her replacement at the next Council meeting.

City Manager Gorman provided development updates. The Draft Revised Zoning Ordinance is currently under legal review. Auto Zone is making preparations to establish their business in the former Goodwill building. The Planning Commission has approved a site plan for development of a new car wash facility at the rear of the property of the Shell Gas Station. Construction is anticipated to begin in the Spring.

The City is working with the Portland Public Schools on an upgrade to the shared phone system while considering future upgrades to the network with broadband functionality.

Under Presentations, Director ConnerWellman presented her Downtown Report.

Under New Business, the City Council considered Resolution 22-85 to approve payment to F&V Construction, in the amount of \$113,932.80, for work performed for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by Johnston, to approve Resolution 22-85 approving payment to F&V Construction for work performed for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The City Council considered Resolution 22-86 to approve the proposal from Civic Plus to provide consulting services, in the amount of \$5,500.00, for the City of Portland website.

City Manager Gorman presented other recent changes to the City website to Council. Recent changes include an updated, searchable Code of Ordinance and a new video platform to host videos of the City Council meetings.

Motion by Johnston, supported by Sheehan, to approve Resolution 22-86 approving the proposal from Civic Plus to provide consulting services for the City of Portland website.

Yeas: Johnston, Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council Meeting on October 17, 2022,

payment of invoices in the amount of \$533,056.99 and payroll in the amount of \$109,445.58 for a total of \$642,502.57. Purchase orders to Fleis & VandenBrink in the amount of \$7,146.75 for the Kent Street Improvement Project, Scotty's Construction in the amount of \$9,900.00 for underground distribution line repair/replacement, and the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in the amount of \$14,250.00 for 2023 Safety Dues were also included.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under City Manager Comments, City Manager Gorman noted that DPW crews continue picking up leaves across the City.

City Manager Gorman noted Halloween was a great event. He thanked the community, the Police Department, and Ionia County Central Dispatch.

Under Council Comments, Mayor Barnes reminded residents to vote. He further suggested that residents should switch to electronic mailing of their utility bill rather than mailing through the postal system if they haven't already done so.

Council Member Sheehan stated she was in car accident last week in a very visible area of the City. She thanked the Police Department and City staff that stopped to check on her. She noted how thankful she is to live in such a caring community.

Council Member Johnston noted that Shrek the Musical, through the Portland Civic Players, will continue through this next weekend. Shows to this point have been very well attended.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck noted how nice the new roof on the Portland Area Municipal Building looks.

Mayor Barnes noted how thankful he is for the Portland Area Fire Authority for their diplomacy, care, and concern on the recent call from his home.

City Manager Gorman noted there was no loss of electricity to customers during the recent wind storm.

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

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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James E. Barnes, Mayor

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Monique I. Miller, City Clerk