

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, January 20, 2014

In Council Chambers at City Hall

Present: Mayor Barnes, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Members Krause, Fitzsimmons and Sunstrum; City Manager Dempsey; City Clerk Miller; DDA/Main Street Director Reagan; Police Chief Knobelsdorf

Guests: Kathy Parsons; Joshua Hinds; Tom Thelen of the Review & Observer

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

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to approve the proposed Agenda.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fitzsimmons, Sunstrum, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under the City Manager Report, City Manager Dempsey presented information on the action items for consideration on the Agenda.

City Manager Dempsey reported that the Planning Commission will meet on Wednesday, January 22nd, rescheduled from the regular meeting date of January 15th, to receive and review the site plan from The WODA Group on the proposed redevelopment of the Old School Manor property at 306 Brush St.

Under Presentations, DDA/Main Street Director Reagan presented the Amended Downtown Development Authority Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan to extend the life of the DDA 20 years. The MML expects legislation to be proposed to current DDA law could potentially cripple Portland's DDA. It is being proposed that certain parcels be removed from the DDA in order to avoid forming a Citizens' Advisory Council as it is already difficult to fill open seats on Boards and Commissions. Removal of these parcels from the DDA would not decreased taxes; it would only change the disbursement of the funds collected. Director Reagan presented the list of projects, including several capital improvement projects that would be accomplished by extending the life of the DDA.

Council Member Krause clarified that legislation exists that allows the creation of DDA's to capture funds. She also clarified that the purpose of decreasing the size of Portland's DDA District is to reduce the number of residents below 100. If the number of residents is above 100 then a Citizens' Advisory Board is required to be formed. This would potentially prove to be very difficult given the small size of our community.

There was continued discussion in regard to the potential difficulties with forming a Citizens' Advisory Board.

Council Member Krause inquired how much revenue would be lost to the DDA by removing the parcels suggested.

Director Reagan stated approximately \$6500 would be lost to the DDA and redistributed according to the required splits to Ionia County, the Portland District Library, and the City of Portland.

Director Reagan reported the Main Street Organization and Finance Committee will be offering, as a competitive based service, a free webisode service to five selected Main Street district businesses. These webisodes will highlight the chosen businesses, their products, goods, and services, and will give a glimpse to the wider world why Portland is a great place to do business.

Director Reagan encouraged everyone to save the date Saturday, May 17, 2014 for the 2014 Downtown Block Party.

Director Reagan reported the National Main Street Conference will be held in Detroit this year May 18th – 20th. Council Member/DDA Member Sunstrum will be presenting at the conference on social media and Director Reagan will be presenting on Main Street Management.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 14-08 to set a Public Hearing on Monday, March 3rd at 7:00 P.M. to receive comments on the proposed amendment to the DDA Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Sunstrum, to approve Resolution 14-08 setting a Public Hearing date on proposed amendment to the DDA Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Sunstrum, Krause, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-09 to approve a Letter of Understanding with Gorman Law PLLC. City Manager Dempsey previously approved a Letter of Understanding with Winters Gorman PLLC, to retain Tutt Gorman to prosecute local ordinance violations and otherwise act as the City Attorney. Jeff Winters suffered a severe stroke in November of 2013 and the law firm of Winters Gorman, PLLC is being dissolved and Tutt Gorman will be practicing law under the name Gorman Law, PLLC. Mr. Gorman has requested the City update the Letter of Understanding to reflect the change as it relates to his law firm affiliation.

Motion by Krause, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 14-09 approving a Letter of Understanding with Gorman Law PLLC.

Yeas: Krause, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Sunstrum, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-10 to approve a recommendation by the Parks and Recreation Board to approve Josh Hinds' proposal to conduct fund raisers to generate revenue to purchase materials and have volunteers construct a dog park in Bogue Flats. The Parks and Recreation Board met on

January 17th to review and discuss the proposal and voted to make the recommendation to the City Council.

Mayor Barnes thanked Mr. Hinds for volunteering his time to serve on the Planning Commission and taking on this endeavor to provide a dog park for the community.

Mr. Hinds stated that he has 3 dogs of his own and several friends with dogs as well that would enjoy a dog park. He knows some people that travel outside of the community to visit other dog parks.

Mayor Barnes asked how safety would be ensured.

Mr. Hinds stated that rules would be displayed. He also plans to speak with staff of the Hawk Island Dog Park to get recommendations and suggestions.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck inquired about the location, as the parking lots in the proposed location are very busy during the summer with ball games. He asked if other locations had been considered and if trees would be removed.

Mr. Hinds stated that other locations that were considered need a lot of work, this area is ready. No trees will be removed.

Council Member Krause asked if Mr. Hinds would be involved long term in the park.

Mr. Hinds stated he will continue to be involved as long as he is in the community. In that event, he would try to find a successor.

Motion by Krause, supported by Sunstrum, to approve Resolution 14-10 approving the Parks and Recreation Board's recommendation to approve Josh Hinds' proposal to conduct fund raisers to generate revenue to purchase materials and have volunteers construct a dog park in Bogue Flats.

Yeas: Krause, Sunstrum, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Motion by Krause, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council meeting held on January 6, 2014, payment of invoices in the amount of \$129,459.13 and payroll in the amount of \$116,688.78 for a total of \$246,147.91. Purchase orders to the Michigan Municipal Electric Association in the amount of \$6,515.00 and to the Michigan Public Power Agency in the amount of \$14,682.75 for 2014 Membership Dues.

Yeas: Krause, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Sunstrum, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under Council Comments, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck gave an update on the Portland Area Fire Authority. The recent storms and winter weather have resulted in an increased number of runs and

increased costs. Everything is running smoothly. The audit has been completed. It went well with nothing to report.

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

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fitzsimmons, Sunstrum, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk