

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, March 3, 2014

In Council Chambers at City Hall

Present: Mayor Barnes, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Members Krause and Fitzsimmons; City Manager Dempsey; City Clerk Miller; Police Chief Knobelsdorf

Absent: Council Member Sunstrum

Guests: Kathy Parsons; Roger Manning; Ted Alberta of Portland Products; Kristy Reynolds of the Portland District Library; 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 City Manager Dempsey.

Motion by Krause, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve the Agenda with the addition to excuse Council Member Sunstrum.

Yeas: Krause, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to excuse Council Member Sunstrum from the meeting.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

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 Danby Township has agreed to consider a Recreation Services Agreement to contribute funds to recreation programs so that participants from Danby Township would pay the same rates as those from Portland Township and the City of Portland.

Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Director Scheurer is training Recreation Programmer Brown on some of her duties. This will allow for some savings in the Recreation Fund as the functions will be performed at a lower pay rate.

City Manager Dempsey stated that spring weather is here, meteorologically speaking, and commended City workers for their continued efforts during this winter season and into the spring season.

Tornado siren testing began this past weekend and will continue through October with testing on the first Saturday of each month, unless threatening weather is present.

Mayor Barnes opened the Public Hearing at 7:24 P.M.

City Manager Dempsey explained that the purpose of this Public Hearing for the proposed Downtown Development Authority Amended Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan is to provide the public with an opportunity to comment.

He further explained Tax Increment Financing and that the same tax amount will be paid by property owners. The only change is what entities the collected funds are distributed to.

The DDA has done a tremendous job since its creation to prevent blight and increase property values; most notably with the construction of City Hall. Approximately \$300,000 is collected per year by the DDA and has been used for the most part to pay debt on City Hall. The current plan is scheduled to sunset when City Hall is paid off.

Over the years, the original DDA plan has morphed into an organization realizing many other goals and opportunities through the Main Street program. There are additional future plans and projects as well as the requirement for a full-time Main Street manager.

The Michigan Legislature is considering proposed legislation that would drastically change the structure of all DDA's going forward. The DDA in Portland decided to take action and consider what they would like to accomplish over the next several years, both short-term and long-term. The proposed plan outlines those goals.

With growth in Portland's DDA since its creation, the number of residents in the DDA has risen to over 100 individuals which require the formation of a Citizens' Advisory Council. The DDA has proposed reducing its size. Because they do not want to be perceived as not wanting public comment they have gone beyond the posting requirements laid out by statute. The City has really tried to inform the public of what is going on, but they have not received very much feedback. There were four attendees at the public information meeting held on Monday, February 24th at City Hall. Less than half a dozen calls have been received at City Hall in regard to this issue.

City Manager Dempsey further noted that all of the required notices have been published.

City Manager Dempsey noted some of the projects listed in the proposed Downtown Development Authority Amended Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan:

- Pay off of City Hall debt
- Street/sidewalk improvements
- Street/sidewalk improvements on Bridge St.
- Divine Highway bridge repairs
- Provide funding for snow removal in the central business district where there is no place for snow storage.
- Streetscape and parking lot improvements
- Street lighting improvements (changeover to LED)

- Sealing/lining of parking lots
- Kent Street enhancements
- Fencing around the parking lot at Bridge and Canal Streets
- Promotional and identity building
- Design a community entrance feature
- Continue the annual fireworks sponsorship
- Continue holiday decorations
- Splash pad/spray park
- Paint and repair the railroad bridge across the Grand River
- Light the Veterans Bridge
- Trail maintenance in the downtown
- Establish a public art program
- Continue the Downtown Sign Grant & Façade Grant Programs

City Manager noted that no action will be taken tonight as no action can be taken until 60 days after the Public Hearing.

There was no public comment.

Mayor Barnes asked City Manager Dempsey to explain the rationale for the requirement of a Citizens' Advisory Council.

City Manager Dempsey explained that the DDA Act of 1976 was during a period of Urban Renewal. Local governments were using eminent domain to tear down old buildings and construct new ones. The Citizens' Advisory Council requirement was put in place in order that governments needed to hear the opinions of the residents in the area if a certain population was present.

Mayor Barnes closed the Public Hearing at 7:46 P.M.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 14-16 to amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014. The Finance Director has reviewed current fund balances and expenditures and recommends the Council approve the proposed amendments.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 14-16 to amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Krause, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-17 for a contractual rate increase for residential trash pick-up provided by Granger Container. The City entered a contract for residential track pick-up with Granger Container Service that allows the contract to be increased based on the Consumers Price Index (CPI) capped at 3% for the period of February 1, 2014 through January 31, 2017. Granger has requested a CPI adjustment for the upcoming year of 1.6% based on information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Motion by Krause, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 14-17 approving a contractual rate increase for residential trash pick-up.

Yeas: Krause, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-18 to approve an Equipment Use Agreement between Portland Area Ambulance and Sparrow Hospital Association and McLaren Greater Lansing, the Hospitals. The Edward W. Sparrow Hospital Association and McLaren Greater Lansing have requested the Portland Area Ambulance and other ambulance/EMS agencies to enter an Equipment Use Agreement for the LifeNet System 5.0 which the Hospitals will purchase and donate to the ambulance/EMS agencies for use pursuant to the terms of the agreement so that there is uniformity in transmitting EKG information on patients being transmitted to the Hospitals. The agreement states the City will be responsible for insurance, repair and maintenance of the equipment and any connectivity charges after the first year. The City's Ambulance Department already pays connectivity charges for transmitting EKG information.

Motion by Krause, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 14-18 approving an Equipment Use Agreement between Portland Area Ambulance and Sparrow Hospital Association and McLaren Greater Lansing.

Yeas: Krause, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-19 for the Mayor and Clerk to sign an agreement for Sheriff's Office services between the City of Portland and Ionia County so that Ionia County Deputies can be used to cover unfilled shifts so the City can maintain 24/7 law enforcement coverage. The City previously approved this agreement to expire on March 31, 2014. The City anticipates it will continue to have difficulty covering all shifts necessary to maintain 24/7 coverage over the next year due to turnover, work limitations and time off requests. The hourly rate in the Sheriff's Office Services Agreement 2014-2015 is \$40.45 which is \$1.18 higher than the prior contract, largely due to increases in health care costs paid by the County.

Mayor Barnes wished Police Chief Knobelsdorf a Happy Birthday and asked if there have been any problems with the Ionia County Sheriff's Office covering shifts in Portland.

Chief Knobelsdorf stated the deputies do a good job; they are professional and provide all necessary services to the residents. They don't provide the same level of service as our local police officers. For example, unlocking a car with keys locked inside. Chief stated that he tries to schedule their services in the early morning hours when there is low traffic and movement of residents. The City very much appreciates their service.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 14-19 approving, authorizing, and directing the Mayor and Clerk to sign an agreement for Sheriff's Office services between the City of Portland and Ionia County.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Krause, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-20 to approve the Board of Light and Power's recommendation to approve a capacity purchase through the Michigan Public Power Agency (MPPA) to remain in compliance with its previously approved Risk Policy and Hedge Plan. The Board of Light and Power met on February 25th to review the parameters of the proposed capacity purchase and is recommending the Council authorize Electric Superintendent Hyland or the City Manager to sign an authorized Member Representative Authorization Letter to approve the purchase for a total commitment not to exceed \$181,320.

Mayor Barnes commented that this is a very complex process and he is very grateful to have Electric Superintendent Hyland on staff. His wealth of knowledge and expertise helps the City provide a very reliable electric service at the lowest rates possible.

Motion by Krause, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 14-20 approving the Board of Light and Power's recommendation to approve a capacity purchase through the Michigan Public Power Agency.

Yeas: Krause, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 14-21 to approve the Board of Light and Power's recommendation to award electric undergrounding work to Cook Brothers Excavating, Inc., who has agreed to hold their prior year's bid prices for additional work this summer to continue undergrounding electric lines along Gibbs Road, Friend Road, Maynard Road, Riverest Road and Oak Road. The Board of Light and Power met on February 25th and reviewed the proposed scope of work and estimated cost based on the previous contract with Cook Brothers Excavating, Inc. and approved a recommendation to the City Council to approve the projects for construction in 2014 and 2015.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to approve Resolution 14-21 approving the Board of Light and Power's recommendation to award electric undergrounding work to Cook Brothers Excavating, Inc.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

Motion by Krause, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council meeting held on February 18, 2014, payment of

invoices in the amount of \$53,315.31 and payroll in the amount of \$123,158.01 for a total of \$176,473.32. There were no purchase orders over \$5,000.

Yeas: Krause, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

Under Public Comments, Police Chief Knobelsdorf commented that he was hired by the City of Portland under City Manager Dempsey's management. He further commented that he regrets seeing City Manager Dempsey leave but he wishes him all the best. He has never worked with anyone of the same caliber as City Manager Dempsey, he does an excellent job of managing the City's budget while meeting the needs of the people.

Under Council Comments, Mayor Barnes presented City Manager Dempsey with a plaque in sincere appreciation of his service to the City of Portland. His excellent leadership, expertise and professionalism will be missed. He further wished City Manager Dempsey good luck and all the best in the future.

Council Member Krause commented that in talking with individuals she has realized how respected City Manager Dempsey has been for staying with the City of Portland for so long as it is a very difficult job. She expressed her sincere appreciation.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck echoed the same sentiments. City Manager Dempsey's service to the City of Portland is unparalleled. He further expressed his appreciation for everything he has done for the City of Portland and personally for him as a council member.

Council Member Fitzsimmons echoed the same, and commented that we still have his phone number.

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

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Sunstrum

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk