



City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, October 16, 2023

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; Police Chief Thomas; Police Officer Smith

Guests: Representative of Tru Family Dental; Kathy Parsons; Mike Judd

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

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by Johnston, to approve the proposed Revised Agenda.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

There was no Public Comment.

Under City Manager Report, City Manager Gorman stated a Utility Financial Solutions, Inc. (UFS) will conduct a utility rate study of the water, wastewater, and electric rates. The electric portion will include an EV Study, a Solar Study, and a Time of Use Study. The study was kicked off with a meeting today.

A Notice of Intent to Bond for the Electric Department has already been approved for a substation project and potentially for installation of AMI infrastructure. The City has been waiting to proceed depending on the award of grant funding for the AMI work. Staff has decided to move ahead with the grant process and will not include monies for the AMI work as there is still no information related to the grant funding.

The DDA has been awarded \$200,000 of the \$240,000 requested through the RAP 2.0 – MEDC Grant for demolition of the building at 103 E. Grand River Ave. Funds will also be used to secure the retaining wall along the Looking Glass River and to create an open space plaza.

Anlaan will begin repairs to the Boardwalk this week. Staging will take place tomorrow and work will begin Wednesday, October 18, 2023.

There were no Presentations.

Under New Business, the Council held the First Reading of Ordinance 175VV to amend Section 8-8 of Chapter 42 "Zoning", of the Code of Ordinances as it relates to fences and walls.

City Manager Gorman stated the issue related to using unorthodox materials to construct a fence recently became an issue when a resident applied for a Fence Permit to construct a fence using wood pallets. The Fence Permit was denied due to it being a fire hazard and the construction. The denial was appealed by

the applicants to the Zoning Board of Appeals where the Board voted to uphold the denial. A moratorium on the issuance of Fence Permits is in place at this time.

The Council held the First Reading of Ordinance 175WW to amend the City Zoning Map to rezone the property located at 155 Rowe Ave. (Tru Family Dental) from C-3 (Highway Commercial District) to C-2 (General Business District) to construct two small building additions.

City Manager Gorman noted the proposed rezoning to C-2 is consistent with the City's Master Plan, the property does not have frontage on or visibility from E. Grand River Ave. and is not well suited for travel-oriented businesses in the C-3 District, and the proposed rezoning would remove the nonconforming status of the existing use and permit the expansion of the business.

The Council considered Resolution 23-70 to revise Council Policy 77-10 to update the Employee Safety Program which provides incentives to work safely and allows employees to accrue \$25.00 per year as established in 2009. City Manager Gorman recommends increasing the incentive amount from \$25.00 to \$50.00 for full-time employees and \$25.00 for part-time employees.

Motion by Johnston, supported by Sheehan, to approve Resolution 23-70 to revise Council Policy 77-10 concerning the Employee Safety Program.

Yeas: Johnston, Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 23-71 to approve a proposal from HydroCorp in the amount of \$15,168.00 to provide a Cross Connection Control Program.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fitzsimmons, to approve Resolution 23-71 approving HydroCorp's proposal to provide a Cross Connection Control Program for the City of Portland.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 23-72 to approve payment to F&V Construction in the amount of \$854,635.49 for work performed for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

Motion by Sheehan, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 23-72 approving payment to F&V Construction for work performed for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

Yeas: Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 23-73 to approve a Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS) Service Credit purchase by City Employees.

Motion by Johnston, supported by Sheehan, to approve Resolution 23-73 approving a Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS) Service Credit purchase by City Employees.

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 2, 2023, payment of invoices in

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the amount of \$156,016.35 and payroll in the amount of \$135,731.01 for a total of \$291,747.36. Purchase orders to Able Diving Co. in the amount of \$6,190.00 for repairs to the gate doors at the dam, Michigan Wood Fibers in the amount of \$11,985.00 for brush grinding and chip removal, and Clery Fence Co. in the amount of \$16,867.00 for River Trail fence repairs related to storm damage were also included.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under City Manager Comments, City Manager Gorman reminded residents to follow the policies for both brush and leaf pickup. The last day for loose leaf pickup will be Monday, December 4, 2023.

Halloween is Tuesday, October 31, 2023. Trick-or-treating will take place from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M. The sirens will be sounded to begin and end trick-or-treating.

Under Council Member Comments, Council Member Johnston noted the Portland Community Orchestra will hold a concert on Thursday, October 19, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. at the Portland High School Auditorium.

Mayor Barnes noted the next Council meeting will be held Monday, November 6, 2023, and the City Council Election will be held Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

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

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk