



City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024

In the City Council Chambers at City Hall

259 Kent St., Portland, MI 48875

Present: Mayor Barnes, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Members Johnston, and Sheehan; Interim City Manager Terry; City Clerk Miller; Finance Director Tolan; Police Chief Thomas

Absent: Council Member Fitzsimmons

Guests: Kathy Parsons; Mike Judd; Tim Fuller; Rachel Gross; DJ; Erin Gorman; Mary Kay Steffes-Schmitz; City Employees Barb Brown and Tammy Meyers; Jerry Tolan; Jodi Woodman; Andrea Gruber; Cheryl VanGoor; Terry Schrauben; Kathy Perez; Charlie Schrauben; Michelle Trierweiler

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 agenda as revised to excuse the absence of Council Member Fitzsimmons.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Fitzsimmons

Adopted

Motion by Johnston, supported by Sheehan, to excuse the absence of Council Member Fitzsimmons.

Yeas: Johnston, Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Fitzsimmons

Adopted

Under Public Comment, Kathy Perez stated her support for the Council.

Tim Fuller addressed Council and noted the need to share information through social media. He noted his concern with employee morale and their concern for the job security if they speak out regarding current issues. He further noted he has not received the information he requested per his FOIA request dated August 9, 2024.

Michelle Trierweiler offered her support to the Council. She noted that Mr. Fuller is in arrears on the properties he owns in the City and asked about the process in handling this situation.

Cheryl VanGoor offered her support for the Council.

Jerry Tolan thanked the Council for their reflective comments at the August 19, 2024, meeting and for the hard work of the City employees during this difficult time. He further asked if the Council received harassment training and if not, he suggested they do so.

Rachel Gross recognized all of the work of the Council but noted there also needs to be accountability and mistakes should be admitted.

Under Interim City Manager Report, Interim City Manager Terry noted would he hold his comments to the end of the meeting.

Under Presentations, DDA Director ConnerWellman presented her Downtown Report.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 24-74 to approve a contract with VC3 to provide IT services for the City of Portland.

Motion by Johnston, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 24-74 approving a contract with VC3 to provide IT Services for the City of Portland.

Yeas: Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Fitzsimmons

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 24-75 to approve the Michigan Public Power Agency's (MPPA) recommendation to approve the Amended and Restated Belle River Power Sales Agreement to repower the current two-unit coal-fired baseload power plant to natural gas. The Board of Light and Power voted to recommend Council approve this contract.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Sheehan, to approve Resolution 24-75 approving the Michigan Public Power Agency's (MPPA) recommendation to approve, authorize, and direct the Member Authorized Representative to sign the Amended and Restated Belle River Power Sales Agreement.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Fitzsimmons

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 24-76 to approve Pay Request No. 3, in the amount of \$95,698.74 to the State of Michigan for work completed on the Kent Street Improvement Project through July 23, 2024.

Motion by Sheehan, supported by Johnston, to approve Resolution 24-76 approving Pay Request No. 3 to the State of Michigan for work done on the Kent Street Improvement Project.

Yeas: Sheehan, Johnston, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Fitzsimmons

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 24-77 to confirm the Mayor's appointment of Rachelle Breeden to the Board of Review.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Sheehan, to approve Resolution 24-77 confirming the Mayor's appointment to City Boards and Commissions.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Sheehan, Johnston, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Fitzsimmons
Adopted

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Johnston, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council Meeting on August 19, 2024, payment of invoices in the amount of \$479,797.49, and payroll in the amount of \$163,947.78, for a total of \$643,745.27. A purchase order to Visco in the amount of \$5,664.00 for filigree rings for the decorative streetlights was included.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Johnston, Sheehan, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Fitzsimmons
Adopted

Under Interim City Manager Comments, Interim City Manager Terry noted the Wastewater Treatment Plant Open House will be held September 19, 2024, from 1:00 – 4:00 P.M. This is an excellent opportunity to see the recent investment and upgrades made to the plant.

Interim City Manager Terry reminded residents about the City ordinance related to election signs that states they are not allowed in the rights-of-way or on public property.

Interim City Manager Terry addressed the comments by Mr. Fuller related to his FOIA request. The City fully intends to cooperate and comply, it has met with its attorney and the information will be presented soon. He further noted he is still working to recover documents he might have related to the request.

Interim City Manager Terry noted he has worked very hard to improve employee morale and wants employees to feel encouraged to speak. He has never implied any jobs are on the line and will not tolerate intimidation of City employees. He further stated he has nothing but respect for the City of Portland.

Interim City Manager Terry noted that a lightning strike last Tuesday on Cross St. caused the rupture of a gas line and created a gas leak which was immediately addressed by Consumers Energy.

Under Council Member Comments, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck stated the VFW will host a Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, September 8, 2024, from 8:00 – 11:00 A.M.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck expressed his apologies to the victim and City staff for the reality of the current situation. His thoughts around decision making are based on his own experiences and wonders how the decision making over the past few months has influenced the current situation.

Mayor Barnes commented on the current streaming and mechanics of recordings and playback of the City Council meetings.

Interim City Manager Terry suggested reaching out to VC3 to find the best way to move the current technology forward.

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

Yeas: Johnston, Sheehan, VanSlambrouck, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Fitzsimmons
Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk