

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, June 17, 2013

In Council Chambers at City Hall

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

Absent: Council Member Calley

Guests: Marilyn Smith; Kathy Parsons; 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.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to revise the Agenda to excuse the absence of Council Member Calley.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Calley

Adopted

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to approve the revised Proposed Agenda as presented.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Calley

Adopted

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

City Manager Dempsey stated that testing will be done on the catalytic convertors on the diesel engines at the Electric Department over the next couple of days.

On Thursday, June 13th representatives from the City of Hastings visited Portland for Mayor Exchange. There were 13 visitors that toured the City. The event was very successful.

Under Presentations, DDA/Main Street Director Reagan gave a report on activities in the Downtown. Portland Pay Day is underway through August 23rd with the prize party scheduled for August 29th. There are 19 businesses participating. Over the past four years, this promotion has kept over \$247,000 in the Portland community.

The 2013 Block Party was held Saturday, May 18th in the Downtown Portland and was a very successful event. There were kid's activities, crafters, live music, and a BBQ contest with 10 teams participating.

The Great Lakes BBQ Association has stated they are very interested in taking an active role in 2014. There were over 300 volunteer hours invested in planning and hosting this successful event.

“Wine the Walk” will be held Saturday, August 17th from 4:00 – 11:00 p.m. on the Boardwalk and will feature craft beer and Michigan made wines. In 2012 over 500 people attended this event.

The Volunteer Recognition Event will be held Thursday, July 18th in conjunction with the Portland Community Arts Council’s “Thursdays on the Grand” concert series. This event will celebrate 10 years of being a Main Street community as well as recognizing all of the great volunteers.

Mayor Barnes commented the Volunteer Recognition Event is also an excellent opportunity for interested individuals to get more information on getting involved.

Mayor Barnes inquired about the talent contest held at the Block Party.

Director Reagan commented the talent contest was very successful with 18 participants and was won by Maggie Timmer. There are very talented individuals in the Portland area.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck thanked Director Reagan and all of the volunteers for their efforts in holding the Block Party.

Mayor Barnes opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 P.M.

City Manager Dempsey stated the City of Portland has previously applied for and received MSHDA grants to rehab rental units on the 2nd floors in the Downtown. Grants are available for building owners up to \$35,000. After renting 50% of the rehabilitated rental units for an affordability period of 5 years the loan is forgiven. This opportunity is an incentive for building owners to diversify their income sources. The grant is not to exceed \$400,000; it is not expected to use the full amount. Marilyn Smith is the 3rd party administrator for the grant through MSHDA. She is paid through the grant. There are no City funds expended for this grant.

Mayor Barnes stated these grassroots efforts in the Downtown get more people living there to help sustain it. The City has already seen its success. The improved buildings also increase the property value and taxation. These kinds of projects are a win-win for the community as they also bring in rental income for the building owners they may not have had prior.

City Manager Dempsey noted the tax dollars generated in the DDA stay in the DDA.

Marilyn Smith stated she has worked on over 50 of these projects; including several in the City of Portland. She further stated foot traffic is important to a Downtown. People living Downtown is critical as this creates foot traffic. Portland is a beautiful community. These types of projects have already been done well in Portland and further projects should be effortless.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck stated Portland does have experience with these projects and has seen increased residency rates. Further investments in the Downtown will likely take effect and further improve what has already taken place in Portland.

Mayor Barnes closed the Public Hearing at 7:38 P.M.

Under New Business, the First Reading of Ordinance 8A to amend Section 6-1 and create 6-3 of the Code of Ordinances was held to allow the keeping of Muscovy ducks in addition to female chickens in the City of Portland.

The First Reading of Ordinances 145A to amend Sections 4-2 to allow the City Council to approve ordinances or resolutions that would allow the possession and consumption of alcoholic liquor in public and Ordinance 146A to amend Section 22-30 to allow the City Council to approve resolutions that would allow the possession and consumption of beer and wine in City Parks with posted park rules that permit the same.

Mayor Barnes noted that amending Ordinances 145A and 146A would allow the Parks and Recreation Board to develop a policy to allow alcohol in the parks. This policy would then come to the City Council for approval. Mayor Barnes further encouraged the public to comment on this issue.

The First Reading of Ordinance 194C to amend Section 28-6 of the City Code of Ordinances to permit the use of plywood rated for outdoor use for the supporting structure of signs 32 sq. ft. or less.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck stated the importance of lumber approved for outdoor use be used for these purposes.

The Council considered Resolution 13-41 to authorize the Mayor to sign a permit for a fireworks display at Portland High School on the 4th of July to celebrate Independence Day with a rain date of Saturday, July 6th, if the show on the 4th of July is cancelled by Melrose Pyrotechnics, Inc.

Motion by Fabiano, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 13-41 approving, authorizing, and directing the Mayor to sign a permit for a fireworks display at Portland High School.

Yeas: Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Krause, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Calley

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-42 to approve a Subpoena Appearance Policy for City Employees governing time off requests for full-time and regular part-time employees who are benefit eligible. The City will provide paid leave of absence to all eligible employees who are required to attend a judicial proceeding in response to a subpoena that requires the attendance of the employee before an arbitrator, legislative council, or at a judicial proceeding regarding a legal matter involving the City or on account of the employee's City employment. The City will provide unpaid leave of absence for subpoena appearances not related to the City or the employee's City employment.

Motion by Krause, supported by Fabiano, to approve Resolution 13-42 approving a Subpoena Appearance Policy for City Employees.

Yeas: Krause, Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Absent: Calley
Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-43 to approve a grant application to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) for a Downtown Rental Rehabilitation Grant not to exceed \$400,000. The City of Portland is interested in providing rental rehabilitation assistance to downtown building owners to upgrade and provide affordable rental housing for low and moderate income residents. MSHDA's Downtown Rental Rehabilitation (DRR) Program assists downtown property owners with the development or rehabilitation of residential rental units on the second floor of commercial buildings in the downtown by providing 5-year no interest loans which are forgivable after the apartment is offered for rent for a 5-year affordability period. The City Council approved a proposal submitted by Smith Housing Consulting to act as the third party administrator to prepare the grant application. The City has published a Public Notice and held a Public Hearing on the proposal to submit a grant application to MSHDA for a DRR Grant not to exceed \$400,000.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to approve Resolution 13-43 approving and authorizing a Grant Application to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority for a Downtown Rental Rehabilitation Grant not to exceed \$400,000.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fabiano, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Calley
Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-44 to approve Fleis & VandenBrink's proposal to apply for a grant and to update the City's Wellhead Protection Program Plan that includes delineation for wells PW-4, PW-5, PW-6 and PW-7 that is now more than 5-years old. City Manager Dempsey explained that if desired by the Council this proposal would include investigation into the fracking well to the west of town and its possible impact on the water supply to the City of Portland. City Manager Dempsey stated funds for this plan would come out of the FY 2013-2014 Budget.

Council Member Krause stated she did not think it would be a waste of City funds to ensure the public safety on this issue.

Motion by Krause, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 13-44 approving Fleis and VandenBrink's proposal to apply for a grant and to update the City's Wellhead Protection Program Plan.

Yeas: Krause, VanSlambrouck, Fabiano, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Calley
Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-45 to amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. Finance Director Schrauben has reviewed the current fund balances and expenditures for FY 2012-2013 and recommends the Council approve the proposed amendments.

Motion by Fabiano, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 13-45 to amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

Yeas: Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Krause, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Calley
Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-46 to confirm the Mayor's appointments to City Boards and Commissions.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to approve Resolution 13-46 confirming the Mayor's appointments to City Boards and Commissions.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fabiano, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Calley
Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-47 to approve a cost of living adjustment, health insurance reforms and pension plan reforms for Non-Union City Employees. The City has settled a collective bargaining agreement with the City Employees represented by the Police Officers Labor Council (POLC) for the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016 and continues to negotiate with the Public Works Employees represented by the Governmental Employees Labor Council (GELC). City Manager Dempsey has met with representatives of the non-union employees to discuss revising compensation and benefits for non-union employees in light of the POLC settlement and continued negotiations with GELC. Based on those discussions the City Manager is recommending the City Council approve the same cost of living wage adjustments, health insurance reforms and pension plan reforms, as the POLC settlement with the exception that the City will not make a contribution to the Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP) provided in lieu of Retiree Health Insurance for the non-union employees.

Motion by Krause, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 13-47 approving cost of living adjustment, health insurance reforms and pension plan reforms for Non-Union City Employees.

Yeas: Krause, VanSlambrouck, Barnes
Nays: Fabiano
Absent: Calley
Adopted

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to go into Closed Session at the end of the meeting to discuss strategy for collective bargaining.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Fabiano, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Calley
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 June 3, 2013, payment of invoices in the amount of \$64,152.28 and payroll in the amount of \$149,038.37 for a total of \$213,190.65; there were no purchase orders over \$5,000.00.

Yeas: Krause, VanSlambrouck, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None
Absent: Calley
Adopted

Under Council Comments, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck thanked all the participants in the VFW Golf Outing held Saturday, June 15th. He thanked everyone for their support of the veterans.

Council Member Krause commented on Mayor Exchange held with the City of Hastings on Thursday, June 13th and stated they were very impressed with Portland's Downtown, its River Trail, Parks and Cemetery. She extended acknowledged the hard work of the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Director Mary Scheurer and all of City Staff.

Mayor Barnes thanked all of the organizations that helped welcome the City of Hastings for Mayor Exchange by putting a welcome on their signs.

Mayor Barnes further noted how beneficial Mayor Exchange is in networking with and learning from other communities. It is also an opportunity to learn about our own community in learning more about the things we take for granted. There is much history, knowledge and information to share.

Mayor Barnes thanked the City Staff, City Clerk Nikki Miller and City Manager Dempsey for their efforts in helping to make Mayor Exchange a success.

Mayor Barnes noted the recent passing of Esther Schrauben and extended his thoughts to the family. At last year's 4th of July parade he had the privilege of driving Ike Wilcox and Esther Schrauben in the parade as the Grand Marshalls. Both of these pillars of the community have passed away over the past year and will be missed.

The Council adjourned to Closed Session at 8:00 P.M.

The Council returned from Closed Session at 8:35 P.M.

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

Yeas: Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Krause, Barnes
Nays: None
Absent: Calley
Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk