

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, October 7, 2013

In Council Chambers at City Hall

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

Guests: Charlsie Abel, Chairman of the Organization & Finance Committee of the Main Street Program; Nicole Sunstrum and Brian Grapentien, Candidates for City Council; 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 led by Charlsie Abel.

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

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Calley, Fabiano, 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 explained that as part of the design phase on the Knox, Barley, Storz Streets Improvement Project it was discovered that Storz St. has only a 33 ft. right-of-way and not the 66 right-of-way that there should be or was expected. Given this circumstance it is nearly impossible for the engineers to lay out the streets. City Manager Dempsey stated he has spoken with Portland Public Schools Superintendent Dumas about obtaining an additional easement from the school to expand the right-of-way. Mr. Dumas seemed to be in favor of this option. An alternate solution includes vacating Storz St. which would mean there would not be a connecting road in that area between Barley and Knox Streets. The additional property would go to the property owners. Another alternative would be to approach the school about paving the portion of the road that is on the school's property. Superintendent Dumas was not amenable to this option.

At this time the engineers are looking at design alternatives; input will be taken from the surrounding property owners later this month followed by a proposal to Council for approval. The end of Storz St., south of Barley St. is used strictly for parking by the school so they could continue to use that section of road in the current manor but would require a license agreement. The school parking along Storz St. parallel to the school could be bid with the project and the City would work with the school for them to pay their portion of the project.

City Manager Dempsey also reported that the City Dashboard was updated on the website to qualify for EVIP from the State of Michigan.

The draft Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Audit was received from the auditors today. The auditors will attend a Council meeting in the next few weeks to present their findings.

Hydrant flushing is still underway, since last week. Many complaints have been received. Possible causes are being investigated by City engineers to mitigate the impact of future hydrant flushing to residents. Part of this investigation is the time of day flushing is done. Residents should be assured the water is safe; the discoloration is caused by iron sediment.

Testing has begun at the Electric Department on the diesel generators that have been under repair. Fine tuning to the fuel injectors is being done then testing will be completed.

Maintenance on the City's emergency warning system will take place on Thursday and Friday this week. The sirens may be heard for short periods of time.

Under Presentations, Charlsie Abel gave the DDA/Main Street report. Although the Oktoberfest is not taking place this year, the 5th Annual Big Beer 5K Run will be held on Saturday, October 19th at 10:00 A.M. at the Veteran's Memorial Bridge. Medals will be awarded for the top three male and female runners in each age bracket. The top overall male and female runners will receive trophy beer steins.

A raffle for \$4,000 in travel vouchers from Stiffler Travel and Tours in Mulliken is being held this year in place of Oktoberfest. This is a unique raffle in that only 100 tickets will be sold at a cost of \$100 each. Three prizes will be awarded for this raffle; the first prize is the travel vouchers worth \$4,000, the second prize is \$200 and the third place prize is \$100. Main Street board members will be selling the raffle tickets. The drawing will be held in conjunction with the annual Holidayfest on Saturday, November 23rd immediately following the annual Holidayfest parade, in Scout Park.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 13-80 to approve a contract with Clear Rate Communications for the ISDN PRI phone lines at City Hall. The City previously partnered with Portland Public Schools to replace the phone system at City Hall to use the same VOIP phone system and switchgear as the schools. The City's VOIP phone system is currently served by an ISDN PRI phone line with Telnet, which is the same provider the schools were using when the phone system was converted. Portland Public Schools advised the City they moved their ISDN PRI service from Telnet to Clear Rate at substantial savings. The City obtained a proposal from Clear Rate to move the City Hall ISDN PRI from Telnet to Clear Rate that will save the City \$120 per month.

Motion by Fabiano, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 13-80 approving a contract with Clear Rate Communications for the ISDN PRI phone lines at City Hall.

Yeas: Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Krause, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-81 to approve a Joint Pole Replacement Project with Homeworks Tri-County Electric. The City shares a utility pole line with Homeworks Tri-County Electric on Divine Highway that is also used by Westphalia Telephone and WOW cable. The telephone and cable lines on the shared utility poles north of the City limit and south of Barnes Road hang too low and cannot be moved higher on the poles and maintain the minimum clearance standards required from the electric

lines. The cable and telephone companies were approached about burying the lines in a joint trench or paying for taller replacement poles and decided to replace 5 poles to obtain the needed height and maintain the required clearance from the electric lines. The cost to replace the poles would be borne by the telephone and cable company and the City and HomeWorks Tri-County Electric investigated the cost of doing a pilot project to upgrade the 5 poles from wood to concrete which is stronger for wind and ice loading, less likely to be damaged by farm equipment, and has no problem with insects, decay or rot. The increased cost of materials and labor to upgrade the poles from wood to concrete is estimated at \$4,355 - \$5,530 depending on the price of poles when the order is placed, which would be split between the City and Homeworks Tri-County.

Motion by Krause, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 13-81 approving a Joint Pole Replacement Project with Homeworks Tri-County Electric.

Yeas: Krause, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 13-82 to approve, authorize, and direct the City Manager to change natural gas suppliers for certain accounts. The Michigan Municipal League (MML) has put together a consortium of municipalities to solicit bids for an alternative natural gas supplier. The City currently contracts with an alternative natural gas supplier which charges the City for natural gas based on the NYMEX monthly market rate + \$0.90. City Manager Dempsey recommended participating in the MML's Natural Gas Program and changing the gas supplier on all of the City's natural gas accounts, except for the account at 723 E. Grand River Ave, to CenterPoint Energy using the variable price option based on the NYMEX monthly rates + \$0.61 per the proposal.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Fabiano, to approve Resolution 13-82 approving, authorizing, and directing the City Manager to change natural gas suppliers for certain accounts.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fabiano, Calley, Krause, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council held a discussion of the Storz Street right-of-way information City Manager Dempsey presented during his City Manager Report.

Mayor Barnes stated the current appearance should be maintained and an easement for the additional 12 feet needed for the right-of-way and a license agreement for the area south of Barley St. used for a parking lot should be requested from Portland Public Schools.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Krause, to go forward with requesting an easement for the additional 12 feet needed for the right-of-way and a license agreement for the area south of Barley St. used for a parking lot from Portland Public Schools.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Krause, Calley, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Council Member Fabiano noted that he voted yes but would like the process approved by the neighboring property owners.

Motion by Krause, supported by Fabiano, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council meeting held on September 16, 2013, payment of invoices in the amount of \$99,260.68 and payroll in the amount of \$90,431.40 for a total of \$189,692.08. There were no purchase orders over \$5,000 included.

Yeas: Krause, Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under Council Comment, Council Member Krause reminded everyone that the Portland Fire Department will hold an Open House on Thursday, October 10th from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M. in recognition of Fire Prevention Week.

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

Yeas: Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Krause, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk