

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, August 1, 2011

In Council Chambers at City Hall

Present: Mayor Barnes; Mayor Pro-Tem Clement; Council Members VanSlambrouck, Calley and Fabiano; City Manager Dempsey; City Clerk Miller; DDA/Main Street Director Reagan; Police Chief Bauer; Camera Operator Cummins

Guests: Kathy Parsons; Jon Szerlag of the Sentinel-Standard; 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 DDA/Main Street Director Reagan.

Motion by Clement, supported by Fabiano, to approve the Agenda as presented.

Yeas: Clement, Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Calley, 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 gave a report on the impact of the heavy rains on July 27th to the City. The cap on the south abutment wall at the dam was cut and a hole where the water is leaking was discovered. Engineers are currently looking at how best to fix this problem. After checking old records Electric Superintendent Hyland discovered there was a similar problem that was repaired in the 1960's. The current voids seem to be a result of how the earlier repairs were made. Collins Engineering was in to inspect the spillway repairs made 5 years ago. It discovered that there is a 100 ft. long void that extends back approximately 13 ft. under the spillway. These areas were not part of the repairs made along the spillway 5 years ago. The City is looking to make these repairs at the same time as repairs are made to the south abutment wall. There were some boards lost on the dam over the weekend and late last week due to the heavy rains and trees/trash washing over the dam. There are also a lot of debris/trash/trees lodged on the boat barrier that is in danger of breaking. It is too violent at the present time to send someone out to try and remove it.

The DPW was planning to remove debris and trees stuck in the river on the Grand River Ave. Bridge last week before the heavy rains. One of the trees has moved down river. The rest will be removed by DPW crews when the water levels are lower.

Due to the heavy rains, water is migrating into the lower bearing housings of both generators at the hydro dam, inside the building. Unit #1 had to be taken off line Thursday afternoon; it presently has about 8 ft. of water in the shaft area. Unit #2 had to be taken off line late Thursday night with about 4 ft. of water in the shaft area. Superintendent Hyland advised that it is not uncommon for a little bit of water to be coming in from the bottom packing glands, but never this amount of water. The water is coming down from the top of the shaft area, rather than the bottom. Both units are still off line. This afternoon the Electric Department pumped the water out and as of 3:30 P.M. it was staying out. Unit #2 may be able to get back on line tomorrow. They are going to take the same approach with Unit #1

in hopes of getting it back online soon. The headrace water was about 6 inches from going over the banks and the pier wall; this is where the water is believed to be migrating in. Superintendent Hyland advised that this is the highest he has ever seen the water in the headrace.

The street projects have been impacted by the rains, there has been no significant damage but they have incurred some delays.

The Planning Commission held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, July 27th and approved an application from the First Baptist Church to increase the size of their parking lot.

Mayor Barnes asked City Manager Dempsey to explain the importance of the hydro dam to the City.

City Manager Dempsey explained that about \$200,000 in electricity is generated each year from the generators at the hydro dam. In addition, the City receives credits for its Renewable Energy Programs, required by the State of Michigan. Because of these credits the City does not have to purchase electricity from renewable sources.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 11-69 to confirm the Mayor's appointments to various Boards and Commissions.

Mayor Barnes thanked the individuals that have been appointed to City Boards for volunteering their services to the community.

Motion by Clement, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve Resolution 11-69 confirming the Mayor's appointments to City Boards and Commissions.

Yeas: Clement, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 11-70 to amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012. The Portland Main Street Program and the DDA have partnered with the Portland Area Chamber of Commerce, the Portland Community Arts Council, and other area non-profits to put on the 2011 Portland Riverfest. The DDA has agreed to accept the sponsorships and cut checks for the expenses of the sponsored activities and has approved revising its Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Budget and recommends the Council approve the proposed amendments.

Motion by Clement, supported by Fabiano, to approve Resolution 11-70 to amend the Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012.

Yeas: Clement, Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

The Council considered Resolution 11-71 to approve settlement of Portland Partners, LLC's Tax Tribunal Appeal. In 2009, Portland Partners, LLC filed a Michigan Tax Tribunal appeal on the Parkers Landing Apartments property on Charlotte Hwy. The City Assessor has provided a memo that outlines a proposed settlement of the appeal. The City Manager and City Assessor believe it is in the best interest of the City of Portland to enter into the proposed settlement to avoid incurring the professional fees associated with defending the appeal, the possibility of a less favorable valuation finding by the Michigan Tax Tribunal, and to have a final resolution of an appeal that has been pending for three years.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Clement, to approve Resolution 11-71 to approve settlement of Portland Partners, LLC's Tax Tribunal Appeal.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Clement, Calley, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Motion by Clement, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council Meeting held on July 18, 2011, payment of invoices in the amount of \$778,057.73 and payroll in the amount of \$101,838.65 for a total of \$879,896.38. There are no purchase orders over \$5,000.

Yeas: Clement, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Fabiano, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under Council Comments, Council Member Fabiano reported that he had received an email for Danby Township Supervisor Pohl and talked to Portland Township Supervisor Tiemann. The Townships held a joint meeting in regard to the proposed fire authority formation. They have made minor changes to the proposed agreement and instructed their attorney to have a draft agreement back to them by August 12th which will be presented to the City Council.

Mayor Barnes extended his thanks to Council Member Fabiano and City Manager Dempsey for their work on this issue.

Mayor Pro-Tem Clement reminded residents about upcoming community events including Thursdays on the Grand which is held on Thursday nights at the Band Shell. Riverfest will be held August 19th – 21st. This year's Riverfest event has been created to be a combined effort between many community organizations; for more information go to www.portlandmichiganriverfest.org. The Portland Community Arts Council is holding a fundraiser this summer called "Sit a Spell". Local artists have painted Adirondack chairs that are placed in the Downtown. There will be a silent auction held for the chairs. The winner will be announced at Oktoberfest.

Chief Bauer presented information on the upcoming Relay for Life to be held August 12th-13th from noon to noon at Portland High School. This is a family event with food and many games. A 5k/half marathon was held this past weekend to raise funds for the event. There were 146 runners and 20 volunteers. The goal is to raise \$96,000 this year.

Mayor Barnes stated that Jack Green, former Council Member and great member of the community, has passed away. Mayor Barnes stated his appreciation for his service to the City of Portland.

Motion by Clement, supported by Fabiano, to adjourn the meeting.

Yeas: Clement, Fabiano, VanSlambrouck, Calley, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk