

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM APRIL 28, 2015

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Mayor Strazdas at 7:35 p.m.

At the request of Mayor Strazdas, Elder John Medema of the First Reformed Church gave the invocation and Cub Scouts from Pack 288 led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

At the request of Mayor Strazdas, the City Clerk called the roll with the following members present: Councilmembers Nasim Ansari, Richard Ford, Patricia M. Randall, Claudette Reid and Terry Urban, and Mayor Peter Strazdas. Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson was absent with excuse. Also in attendance were City Manager Laurence Shaffer, City Attorney Randy Brown and City Clerk James R. Hudson.

PROCLAMATIONS: Mayor Strazdas issued a National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Proclamation and a Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month Proclamation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilmember Reid asked for corrections to the April 14, 2015 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes on page 7 with her report on the Kalamazoo County Dispatch Authority to reflect that, "She said that the Authority also selected a Task Group to develop a budget. Lastly, she indicated that the Kalamazoo County Commission has agreed to provide some funding..." and, under Statements of City Council, to add the term "Therapy" to reflect that it is "Occupational Therapy Month." Motion by Ansari, seconded by Reid, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 14, 2015, as amended. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 4 to 0 with Councilmember Urban and Mayor Strazdas abstaining.

Motion by Reid, seconded by Ansari, to approve the April 14, 2015 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes and the Budget Session Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2015, as presented. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor Strazdas asked Councilmember Ford to read the Consent Agenda. Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to approve the Consent Agenda motions as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER OF APRIL 28, 2015:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of April 28, 2015. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2015 UTILITY RATE FINANCIAL STUDY: Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing and deferred to City Manager Shaffer, who introduced Interim Director of Transportation & Utilities Kendra Gwin, who reported on the results of the 2015 Utility Rate Financial Study. Ms. Gwin explained the Fixed Charge, or Base Charge, saying that it is the basic quarterly charge that is designed to cover the fixed costs of providing service. She mentioned the approval by City Council in November of 2010 of a contract with Utility Financial Solutions to perform a comprehensive analysis to determine the cost of providing water and waste water services for the public. She explained the study using charts depicting water production, utility commodity rate, historical utility rate adjustments, cost of service, the sewer comparison, the water comparison, sewer utility rate comparison and water utility rate comparison of cities of similar size in the State, both of which place Portage roughly at the median and a comparison of city taxes and fees for cities of similar size in the State where Portage is third from the bottom. Because Portage obtains its water from the city aquifers, Ms. Gwin stressed the importance of

protecting the ground water, so these activities are also funded by the water fund. Lastly, she indicated that the 2015 Utility Rate Financial Study recommends that the rates be effective October 1, 2015. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Ansari voiced his objections to the increase because the savings from privatization has never been passed on to the citizens of the City of Portage; the increase causes hardship to seniors and the economically challenged more than others; and rate increases by the City of Kalamazoo are passed on to the City of Portage, but the City of Portage does not pass the increases on to the townships to the south. For these reasons, he said he could not support the proposed increases.

Councilmember Ford indicated that in 2008, the State indicated that the fund was not operating with a positive cash balance, so water rates were increased, but the past few years, the increases have been stable and in line with the rate of inflation. He stressed the importance of keeping these funds healthy so they do not have to be subsidized with other funds, and he said that he considers the rate increase as reasonable.

Councilmember Reid mentioned the additional cost incurred by the construction of the arsenic removal facility which was mandated as a result of the change in the allowable arsenic levels from the Federal Government that placed more pressure on the water and sewer rates. She also mentioned that funds had to be taken out of the water fund for the water main portion of the South Westnedge Avenue improvements from Mall Drive to Dawnlee Avenue. When she asked Ms. Gwin how much affect this would have on the water and sewer funds, she responded that the extra funds needed for the replacement of the water main on South Westnedge will be funded from the \$2.1 million cash balance in the water fund, so it may take another year or so extra, if the rates are kept lower, to bring the fund up to \$2.9 million, and this will be spread over several years. She said that the projected rate increase is 0.12% to 1.06 % over the next four years, or a 1% inflationary increase over the next four years. Mayor Strazdas spoke in support of the rate increases and the South Westnedge Avenue project.

City Manager Shaffer explained that there is a difference of \$550,000 between the staff estimate and Mr. Hoffman's estimate to cover the water component for the South Westnedge project, which he said would have come from the water fund regardless. He offered the following alternatives: to borrow the money or take it from cash; and, even though \$2.9 million is desirable, there is adequate cash in the water fund based on the fact that there is a 23-24% fund balance after taking \$550,000.

In response to Councilmember Reid, Ms. Gwin indicated that senior citizens who are 65 or older may apply for a 10% discount through the Treasury Department for the water portion of the bill only. For people who have difficulty paying their water bill, there is assistance through the Portage Community Center (PCC), and the City of Portage does provide funds to PCC for this purpose.

Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing to the audience. There being no comments, motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to close the public hearing. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Motion by Ford, seconded by Reid, to adopt the 2015 sewer and water rate resolutions establishing sewer and water utility rates, sewer and water franchise area fees, service fees and charges outlined in the 2015 Utility Rate Financial Study as recommended by the City Administration and the City Council Water and Sewer Rate Study Committee, with rates to be effective October 1, 2015. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 5 to 1. Yeas: Councilmembers Reid, Ford, Urban and Randall and Mayor Strazdas. No: Councilmember Ansari. Resolution recorded on pages 477 and 481 of City of Portage Resolution Book No. 45.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT #14/15-A, AUTO REPAIR AND VEHICLE FUELING STATION REGULATIONS: Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing, introduced the item and deferred to City Manager Shaffer, who introduced Community Development Director Vicki Georgeau for her report. She reviewed the efforts of the Planning Commission in the review of the proposed ordinance. She explained the difference between minor and major auto repair and indicated that staff reviewed the auto repair facility activities within the City. She referred to page 2 of the Communication from the City Manager regarding this ordinance dated March 24, 2015, located in the City Council Agenda Packet, and explained the proposed amendments to the Ordinance regarding vehicle repair

activities, parts storage, auto body repair, zoning requirements, screening, vehicle fueling stations, and air compressors and vacuum stations. She discussed protections for existing stations and discussion followed.

Councilmember Urban asked for a clarification of why the air compressors and vacuum stations should no longer be allowed on the front of the property along with the fueling stations. Ms. Georgeau indicated that these areas are not always well-maintained and may cause conflicts with vehicles accessing and exiting the site, so the preference of staff was to have them more on the side of the property or towards the rear so they are out of sight and not in the position to pedestrian or vehicular conflicts. Councilmember Urban asked whether this is better handled at the site plan review stage. Ms. Georgeau concurred where the site is big enough, but she stressed the issue of aesthetics as a goal. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Urban noted his observation that auto body shops in the area are better maintained than the repair shops and asked for a distinction. Ms. Georgeau indicated that the repair shops were not much different than shops providing tires, oil changes, etc., whereas the body shops are more associated with industrial use, with the use of spray paints, numerous wrecked vehicles, etc., so additional standards were sought to provide more protection to adjacent property owners.

Councilmember Ford asked what the approach would be for a station on a corner lot, in effect having two front yards, with respect to the air compressors and vacuum stations not allowed on the front of the property along with the fueling stations. Ms. Georgeau provided an explanation and used the station on a triangular-shaped lot on the corner of Oakland Avenue and Centre Avenue with no developed area in the rear of the property as an example. Discussion followed regarding screening.

Councilmember Reid asked why storage of parts has to be in the rear yard since some stations are built up to the property line in the back. In response to Councilmember Reid, Ms. Georgeau answered that if an owner did not have space in the rear of the facility, he or she would have to find a way to store parts and other similar items indoors and, if the options within the ordinance could not be met, then a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals would be necessary.

In answer to Councilmember Ansari, Ms. Georgeau cited some of the protections within the ordinance and explained that current businesses are being grandfathered with the exception of storage of parts, especially discarded parts, because they are not covered in the current ordinance.

In response to Councilmember Randall, Ms. Georgeau indicated that the sale of a business would not trigger the 25% investment clause requirements because it only applies when there is a 25% investment in the business. With regard to her concern about Sec. 42-262 (B)(4)(b) and the number of vehicles being stored outside for 14 days, Ms. Georgeau said that there is no number limitation that attaches. She explained that the intent is not to have vehicles sitting on the property for extended lengths of time and the opinion of the auto repair shop owners was that 14 days was reasonable.

Councilmember Ford asked about religious institutions that move into strip malls, and what happens to those shops that are now non-conforming? Ms. Georgeau answered that religious use, child care use, etc. would impact the location, but the existing business would be afforded the protections and could expand. City Attorney Randy Brown concurred unless the City can prove that they intentionally abandoned the use for more than ninety (90) days which is difficult to prove.

Councilmember Urban asked for an explanation of why the City would want to start storing tires outdoors when, on a large scale, they are considered a fire hazard and a breeding area for mosquitos, so why would Portage consider doing this since this is probably the reason outdoor storage of tires has never been allowed before. Ms. Georgeau explained that this is an attempt to recognize that some auto repair facilities have no outdoor storage capacity; others have constructed a building addition; still others have limited storage areas for parts, tires, used parts, etc.; and, a need to regulate these activities is warranted in order to keep them in a confined area and to ensure there is no negative impact on adjacent properties. Councilmember Urban still asked for better reasons for allowing tires to be moved outside in a screened area for an unlimited amount of time when they can be a fire hazard and a breeding area for mosquitos. She provided the example of a tire shop that had a surge in business before the winter season that resulted in their having a large stack of tires next to the building that were gone

within less than a week and explained. Councilmember Urban took exception with her example since all business owners are not necessarily going to be as responsible as the one she mentioned and explained his reasoning.

Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing to the audience. There being no comments, motion by Reid, seconded by Ansari, to close the public hearing. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Motion by Randall, seconded by Ansari, to approve Ordinance Amendment #14/15-A, Auto Repair and Vehicle Fueling Station Regulations.

Councilmember Ford said he trusted the vetting efforts of the Planning Commission with regard to the 300 foot requirement which is his main concern with the proposed ordinance.

Discussion followed. Motion by Urban, seconded by Reid, to amend the proposed ordinance to read “to remove any provision that allows the outdoor storage of tires and to remove the requirement for air compressors and vacuum stations in any zoning district to be not located in the front yard.”

City Attorney Brown indicated that the outdoor tire storage issue could be addressed in other parts of the ordinance if the proposed “used tires” language in Sec. 42-262 (B)(4)(c), B-3, general business district, is adopted as part of the ordinance since there are sections that speak to “infestation, unsanitary or unclean conditions,” for example. He indicated that this issue is not a zoning issue, but a public health, safety or welfare issue that is more appropriately handled under other sections of the ordinance. Councilmember Urban indicated that businesses are storing tires outdoors, but because they are not allowed to do this, the City can enforce this section of the ordinance as well as the “infestation, unsanitary or unclean conditions” sections of the ordinance. When he also indicated that many businesses have made accommodations necessary to not store tires outdoors, Mr. Brown responded that enforcement is more appropriate under the sanitation sections rather than under a zoning exception. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Reid concurred with Councilmember Urban and expressed her concern that these changes make enforcement more difficult.

City Manager Shaffer suggested that if City Council is inclined to accept the proposed amendment, it may be appropriate to send the ordinance back to the Planning Commission with a request to have them evaluate how those proposed conditions might interact with other aspects of the ordinances and how they may or may not wish to feather these considerations into the ordinance. With this in mind, Mr. Brown reminded City Council how tough it is to change language of an ordinance on the floor, especially a couple of provisions. He said it can be done, but it is not the best way of doing things, so he recommended that it be sent back to the Planning Commission for review with direction as the proper course to take.

Ms. Georgeau said removing the term “used tires” or the section on “air compressors and vacuum stations” was not a significant concern expressed by the Planning Commission since it was initiated by staff and suggested the language that could be used instead.

Mayor Strazdas gave his opinion that the Planning Commission should be given the opportunity to review this with the business community, and that he is not in favor of the amendment to the motion.

Councilmember Randall provided her reasons for being in favor of the original motion, but not the amendment. Councilmember Ansari concurred with Mayor Strazdas. Councilmember Ford concurred with changing the language as suggested by Ms. Georgeau and to go forward with the ordinance tonight. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Urban asked Ms. Georgeau whether she knew if storage of tires outdoors is allowable under State Law. He indicated that there are regulations regarding what can be done with even one tire and regulations about how many tires can be accumulated by a retailer and what records they have to keep. Ms. Georgeau responded that she did not know the State Law references and reiterated that removing the term “used tires” was not a significant concern and explained. Discussion followed and Councilmember Urban indicated that he did not specify sections in his amendment to the motion and that he trusted staff to write the language to the ordinance as needed to make it work. Discussion followed regarding the amendment motion. At the suggestion of Mr. Brown,

Councilmember Urban withdrew his amendment in favor of a new one and Councilmember Reid concurred.

Motion by Urban, seconded by Reid, to amend the proposed ordinance, with the removal of the term, “used tires” any place it appears in the ordinance and to add the phrase “excluding used tires” after the word “material” in the first sentence in Sec. 42-262 (B)(4)(c), B-3, general business district, and to delete Sec. 42-262 (C)(4)(b), B-3, general business district, and any reference to Sec. 42-262 (C)(4)(b) in Sec. 42-262 (C)(4)(d), B-3, general business district, and any place it appears in the ordinance. Discussion followed. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Mayor Strazdas called for the vote on the original motion as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Ordinance recorded on page

LEXINGTON GREEN DRAIN #319 EASEMENT VACATION AND WORK

AGREEMENTS: Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing and deferred to City Manager Shaffer, who again introduced Interim Director of Transportation & Utilities Kendra Gwin. Ms. Gwin indicated that the purpose of the public hearing is to transfer the City’s rights to the Lexington Green Drain to the Office of the Drain Commissioner. She described the location of the drain as being in the Lexington Green area, Lexington Green Park and areas east of Portage in Pavilion Township, and discharges into the Davis Olmstead Drain #69 at the intersection of Sprinkle Road and Meredith Street.

Ms. Gwin referred to the Communication from the City Manager in the City Council Agenda Packet, Item D.3, dated April 28, 2015, as she described the history of the process utilized to transfer the drain to the Drain Commissioner over the years. She outlined the easements that have to be granted, the license agreement to perform drainage work in Lexington Green Park, the necessity to transfer jurisdiction and ongoing maintenance of the storm drainage systems on certain public streets. She summed up and if there were any questions, that she or Assistant Drain Commissioner Justin VanBelle could answer any questions or concerns of City Council.

Councilmember Urban asked whether the City has ever transferred underground infrastructure to the County Drain Commissioner where maintenance or street reconstruction had to be done in the past and Ms. Gwin indicated that the City has never done this before. Mr. VanBelle concurred, and indicated that the County Drain Commissioner holds easements by definition and for the purpose of future maintenance. He discussed the industrial nature of the area and the desire to correct drainage issues in the area such as the large ponds by Stryker which some neighbors would like to see smaller. He agreed that this is unique to the County of Kalamazoo and inferred that he has never experienced this before. He pointed out that the attorneys drafted a maintenance agreement where the City of Portage can still provide minor maintenance, and the County would take care of major maintenance.

In response to Councilmember Ansari, Mr. VanBelle said the maintenance costs are shared by the benefiting property owners which usually means 65% of the cost goes to the benefiting property owners and the other 35% goes to the other municipalities such as Portage, the Kalamazoo County Road Commission or the County. He distinguished minor and major maintenance and discussion followed regarding assessments and how much each entity would contribute toward the improvements and the basis for the assessment costs. He provided further analysis of the project and the benefits to be derived from proper management of this wetland and said that the estimates to residential property owners are not available at this juncture.

In answer to Mayor Strazdas, Mr. VanBelle indicated that Kalamazoo County would be doing the special assessment and, in answer to Councilmember Randall, he said there will be cost sharing from Kalamazoo County, Pavilion Township and Kalamazoo County Road Commission. He indicated that this is not an expensive project and Chris Barnes set aside funds to assist and offset some of the costs of the Portage portion. Discussion followed.

Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing to the audience. There being no comments, motion by Urban, seconded by Ford, to close the public hearing. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

Motion by Randall, seconded by Ansari, to deed the easement rights located in Lexington Green, Lexington Green No.1 and Lexington Green No. 3 plats, to the Lexington Green Drain #319

Drainage District; grant an easement to the Lexington Green Drain #319 Drainage District on city-owned property for the construction, operation and maintenance of storm drainage facilities located at 6775 Quality Way, 6401 Corporate Avenue and 4550 Quality Court; approve a license agreement to perform drainage work in Lexington Green Park; transfer jurisdiction and ongoing maintenance of the storm drainage systems in Commercial Avenue, Environmental Drive, Quality Way, Quality Court as well as drain crossings at Meredith Street and Bishop Avenue to the Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner; and authorize the Mayor to execute all documents related to the above action on behalf of the city. In answer to Councilmember Urban, City Attorney Brown indicated that he doubts that there is a way to “back out” of granting these easements once the City Council grants them, unless there is a special meeting called tomorrow for the purposes of changing the motion. Mr. Brown followed up that the agreement does provide that when the City does the work that the City can bill the Drain Commissioner for the cost. Discussion followed. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION:

* **AMENDMENT CODE OF ORDINANCES – HISTORIC DISTRICT MODIFICATION: 3821 WEST MILHAM AVENUE:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to receive the proposed amendment to Section 38-35 of Chapter 38, Historical Preservation, of the City of Portage Code of Ordinances and take final action to approve the amendment on May 26, 2015. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Ordinance recorded on page 323 of City of Portage Ordinance Book No. 12.

* **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM – INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to approve the contract with Kalamazoo County for household hazardous waste collection for the period of January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2015, in the amount not to exceed \$26,000 and authorize the City Manager to execute all documents related to the contract on behalf of the city. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING ON TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015 – INFORMATION ONLY:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to forego setting a Committee of the Whole (COW) Meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2015. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **MARCH 2015 SUMMARY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY REPORT:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to receive the March 2015 Summary Environmental Activity Report as information only. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **DEPARTMENTAL MONTHLY REPORTS:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to receive the Departmental Monthly Reports. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT NO. 2014-0194 – OAKLAND DRIVE (I-94 TO KILGORE ROAD):** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign all documents with the Michigan Department of Transportation related to Contract No. 2014-0194 on behalf of the City. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Resolution recorded on page 487 of City of Portage Resolution Book No. 45 of City of Portage Resolution Book No. 45.

* **PUBLIC HEARING ON FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 BUDGET:** Motion by Ford, seconded by Ansari, to adopt the Resolution setting a public hearing on May 12, 2015 for the fiscal year 2015-2016 proposed city budget and proposed 2015 tax levy. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Resolution recorded on page 489 of City of Portage Resolution Book No. 45.

* **MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEETINGS:** City Council received the minutes of the following Boards and Commissions:

Portage Public Schools Board of Education Regular Business of February 23, Committee of the Whole Work Session and Special Meeting of March 9 and Regular Business of March 23, 2015.

Portage Youth Advisory Committee of March 9, 2015.

Portage Zoning Board of Appeals of March 9, 2015.

Portage Planning Commission of March 19, 2015.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT:

PUBLIC MEDIA NETWORK (PMN): Councilmember Reid indicated that there was a PMN Board Meeting last week. She said that PMN is working on setting up a system for live streaming of all programming on all PMN channels; the contract with Charter Communications has been dealt with and the bandwidth is now available, so what they are working on right now is having the tech contactor, Cybermind, set up the system and make sure they are working; programming should be on line fairly soon; the musical video production where all of the partners will have the same video equipment in the various jurisdictions and the legal agreement is being developed. An RFP for hardware to be purchased and for installation with the anticipation of the legal agreement will get to the municipalities by April 17, 2015.

Nest, she discussed the AT&T audit that was done jointly by the City of Kalamazoo and the City of Portage because AT&T wanted to withhold franchise fees because they said they had overpaid us, so a group of municipalities statewide were going to be asking for an audit, so Kalamazoo and Portage as the larger municipalities in the (PMN) group put in some funds and participated in the audit. She indicated that the audit found that AT&T had not overpaid and, in fact, they had underpaid us, so we will be getting funds back from the audit. The original agreement indicated that any legal fees would come out of the settlement before the funds were distributed, but the PMN Board voted not to retake those legal fees out because Kalamazoo and Portage supported the rest of the group by going forward, so they are not deducting the legal fees and we will be getting the full amount of the money.

She said the PMN Board is reviewing the preliminary budget and, at the next meeting, will be doing the full budget.

She indicated that PMN picked up a new Regional film festival called North by Northwest with films from all over the Midwest in several different categories and promises to be an annual event that will bring attention to the area. Councilmember Ansari indicated that there is also a local contest of local films where prizes will be awarded, also. He mentioned that there is a timeline for Charter Communications regarding this by the end of June or July. Discussion followed.

Motion by Ford, seconded by Randall, to receive the report regarding the activities of the Public Media Network as presented by Councilmembers Reid and Ansari. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

OTHER CITY MATTERS:

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL: Councilmember Ford said he received an invitation to the Governor's Office to attend Urban and Metro Initiatives, a research presentation on Kalamazoo "walk-up" that compares the walkability of cities as it relates to higher real estate values and higher GDP of these walkable areas and expressed his appreciation for the interest in growing the walkable area in Kalamazoo. On April 17th he said he volunteered to work on the Pretty Lake Farm as a part of the Spartans.WILL Day of Service. He said he attended the Senior Center Volunteer Breakfast with Councilmember Ansari, Councilmember Randall, City Manager Larry Shaffer and Parks, Recreation &

Senior Citizens Services Director Kendall Klingelsmith to honor the volunteers and he expressed his appreciation that the Treasury Office is accepting credit cards.

Councilmember Randall expressed her appreciation for the fantastic food provided by Michelle's Restaurant to thank over one hundred area volunteers. She indicated that Bike Week is being celebrated May 9 – May 16 and the local website is *kalamazoobikeweek.com* for those who wish to obtain more information regarding Bike Week events.

Councilmember Reid said she attended the Greenathon where she received a lot of great information from a lot of good-spirited individuals, despite the weather, including the Council Youth Advisory Committee Members.

City Manager Shaffer indicated that he attended the Portage District Library Board Meeting last evening where he offered collaboration on a host of issues. He said he also learned of the penetration of electronic books and extolled the e-services provided by the Library. He said they also discussed the implication that the Portage 2025 Study and the City Center Concept might have with the Library in terms of how the Library would contribute to and support that vision.

Mayor Strazdas reiterated the opportunity to get out and bike as mentioned by Councilmember Randall, that he was honored to be a judge for the 2015 Kalamazoo Starr Awards and humbled by the amount of time, the number of area people who volunteer and their extraordinary contributions each year to the community. He said he had just returned from San Antonio, Texas, and spoke favorably about the present condition of Portage Roads and optimistically about the future of Portage Roads when compared to other cities. He mentioned that next week he would be in Baltimore, Maryland, and expressed his appreciation for one of the best Public Safety Offices in the State of Michigan, which received CALEA reaccreditation, and for the level of civility in Portage.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Strazdas adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

James R. Hudson, City Clerk

***Indicates items included on the Consent Agenda.**