

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 8, 2012

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Mayor Strazdas at 7:30 p.m.

At the request of Mayor Strazdas, Associate Pastor Kevin DeVries of the Portage Free Methodist Church of Portage gave the invocation and City Council and the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The City Clerk called the roll with the following members present: Councilmembers Elizabeth A. Campbell, Jim Pearson, Patricia M. Randall and Terry R. Urban, Mayor Pro Tem Claudette S. Reid and Mayor Peter J. Strazdas. Edward J. Sackley was absent with notice. Also in attendance were City Manager Maurice S. Evans, City Attorney Randy Brown and City Clerk James R. Hudson.

PROCLAMATIONS: Mayor Strazdas issued a National Safe Boating Week Proclamation and a 160th Anniversary of the Ladies' Library Association Proclamation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Urban, seconded by Reid, to approve the April 24, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Motion by Urban, seconded by Reid, to approve the Budget Meeting Minutes of April 30, 2012, and the Budget Meeting Minutes of May 1, 2012, as presented. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor Strazdas asked Councilmember Pearson to read the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Pearson asked that Item K.1, Appointments to Various Boards and Commissions, be added to the Consent Agenda. Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve the Consent Agenda motions as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER OF MAY 8, 2012:** Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of May 8, 2012. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

PUBLIC HEARING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013 PROPOSED BUDGET: Mayor Strazdas indicated that there is before City Council a communication from City Manager Maurice Evans recommending that City Council hold a Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 proposed Budget and the tax rate of 10.7778 mills required to support the proposed budget. Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing and introduced City Manager Evans, who provided a brief overview of the proposed 2012-13 Fiscal Year Budget. He began by providing a little history of Portage and pointing out that it is the 50th Anniversary of the City of Portage. He indicated that over the years, the City has practiced low cost service delivery which includes privatization of utilities and information technology as well as utilizing part-time, on-call and contract personnel to supplement full time personnel. He indicated that the overall Budget of \$61.4 million continues this practice and is an excellent Budget that allocates funds for core city services, capital improvement projects, debt payment as well as the voter approved millages for services.

He pointed out that when considering the Budget, the Administration not only looked at this year, but also looked into the future. He highlighted some of the elements of the Fiscal Year 2012-13 Budget by explaining that there is a decrease in the overall city tax rate from 10.8916 mills to 10.7778 mills and the General Fund has \$22.8 million in expenditures which is a 2.4% reduction or \$548,000 when compared with the current budget year. He expressed his appreciation for the 1.5% increase in personal property tax revenue due mostly to the investments by Pfizer Corporation, but pointed out that

it is personal property, and those revenues will not be available when Michigan eliminates personal property taxes in the future. He also mentioned that the budget reflects an incorporation of the Economic Vitality Incentive Program payments from the State of Michigan, which is a replacement of Statutory Revenue Sharing, which has been reduced over the years to \$270,000.

Mr. Evans referred to the allocation of an Intergovernmental Collaboration Studies Fund of \$100,000 to address funding needs associated with planned collaborative service studies, and referred to one of the two Budget Work Sessions wherein Councilmember Sackley asked whether the City of Kalamazoo or Kalamazoo County had allocated funds in their budgets for these studies. He responded that Kalamazoo County has made the allocation, that the City of Kalamazoo has not, but Kalamazoo City Manager Ken Collard indicated that the Kalamazoo City Commission would be very supportive of such an allocation.

Because the City of Portage has a plan to reduce its overall debt level and the funding of post employment benefits has been sufficiently addressed, Mr. Evans proposed that this Budget has a prescribed fund balance for the General Fund to increase from 13 percent to 25 percent to accommodate future liabilities. He discussed some of the cost containment measures in the Budget, such as reducing the work force from 184 to 179 employees and the savings realized by responding to Act 152, which restricts the amount of employer contributions to employee health premiums. He also mentioned that the Budget has been on the City of Portage website as a public document for weeks under the Finance Department segment, so the public has had time to review it.

Next, he referred City Council to the Materials Transmitted document distributed earlier in the evening for their review realizing that they had had little time to spend on it. He enlisted the services of Finance Director Daniel Foecking, explained the report and reviewed all of the charts depicting: General Fund Expenditures and General Fund Ending Balance since 2002/2003, Ending Fund Balance at Selected Percentages by dividing the Ending Fund Balance by the actual 2010/2011 General Fund expenditures (including Transfers), Projected Personal Property Tax Revenue Loss For Industrial and Under \$40,000 in Investment Only from 2013/2014 to 2022/2023, a Community Survey of Fund Balances of various cities and counties in Michigan, and a Community Survey of Fund Balances/Long-Term Debt of various cities and counties in Michigan. Discussion followed. Mayor Strazdas opened the public hearing for public comment. There being none, motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to close the public hearing. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0. Discussion followed. Mayor Pro Tem Reid asked that the information contained in the Materials Transmitted be posted online for public viewing and asked citizens to contact any City Councilmember with any questions or concerns. Mayor Strazdas commended City Council for their hard work in the Budget Sessions and their conscientious approach to the Budget process. Discussion followed. Councilmember Pearson encouraged Portage citizens to read the Budget, especially someone who has expertise in this area, because each Councilmember wants the feedback such an exercise could bring.

REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION:

* **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT RECOMMENDATION:** Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program FY 2012-13 Annual Action Plan element of the Consolidated Plan and authorize the City Manager to submit the application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **TENTATIVE PLAN AMENDMENT FOR OAKLAND HILLS AT CENTRE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AT 2275, 2301 AND 2401 WEST CENTRE AVENUE AND 8080 OAKLAND DRIVE:** Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to accept the Tentative Plan Amendment for Oakland Hills at Centre Planned Development and set a public hearing for June 12, 2012, at 7:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard; and, following the public hearing, consider approving the Tentative Plan Amendment for Oakland Hills at Centre Planned Development at 2275, 2301 and 2401 West Centre Avenue and 8080 Oakland Drive, subject to the conditions outlined in the April 13, 2012 Department of Community Development report. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **PRELIMINARY PLAT OF OAKLAND FARMS NORTH, 9810 OAKLAND DRIVE:** Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to approve a request from Hyland Associates, LLC, allowing for an additional 90-day time period for City Council action on a preliminary plat of Oakland Farms North, 9810 Oakland Drive. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

COMMUNICATIONS:

PRESENTATION BY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON MARK REILE: At the request of Mayor Strazdas, Historic District Commission Chairperson Mark Reile indicated that May is designated National Preservation Month by the National Trust for Preservation. He also indicated that the annual Homeowners Gathering will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 17, 2012, on the bottom floor of the Portage District Library to honor the homeowners who care for the properties within the Historic District and to increase awareness to let the public know that the Historic District does exist in Portage. He mentioned that Randy Case, a local Architect from Battle Creek, who is within our Region, will speak about local hidden treasures at the event. He also said for a small donation, an attendee would receive the 67-page full color book highlights the story of 42 of the oldest properties in the City of Portage, *Where the Trails Crossed*. Discussion followed. Mayor Strazdas thanked him for his service and discussion followed. Motion by Reid, seconded by Campbell, to receive the presentation by Historic District Commission Chairperson Mark Reile. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

PRESENTATION BY PARK BOARD CHAIRPERSON MIKE ZAJAC: At the request of Mayor Strazdas, Park Board Chairperson Mike Zajac came forward, introduced Parks Director Bill Deming, and listed some of the events organized and attended by the Park Board, including: traditional holiday events, The Taste of Portage, a family fishing fair and the Third “Annual Get Active, Portage” event. He also noted some of the Park Board initiatives such as the Recycled Art Event and the cooperative efforts with other committees, such as the joint venture with the Youth Advisory Board and the Environmental Board to get rid of Garlic Mustard. He indicated that the Park Board is very ambitious so the need for more help inspired the Friends of the Park Initiative to get the public involved and to get more volunteer support. He thanked everyone for their support of city parks and asked for any questions from City Council. Mayor Strazdas thanked him for his service and discussion followed. Motion by Reid, seconded by Campbell, to receive the Presentation by Park Board Chairperson Mike Zajac. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

* **MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:** City Council received the minutes of the:
Portage Historic District Commission of March 7, 2012.
Portage Human Services Board of March 28, 2012.
Portage Park Board of April 4, 2012.
Portage Youth Advisory Committee of April 9, 2012.
Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners Committee of the Whole and Regular of April 17, 2012.
Portage Planning Commission of April 19, 2012.

NEW BUSINESS:

* **APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:** Motion by Reid, seconded by Urban, to appoint Eric Alden, Austin Atkinson, Taylor Bruinwood, Catherine Cartier, Matthew Cartier, Ansh Chaudhary, Sujay Dewan, Kyle Huitt, Nadia Javeed, Kitu Komya, Abhiram Krishnan, Nicholas Lansendorfer, Humza Mirza, Robbie Overlander, Arju Patel, Sarah Perry, Richard Phillips, Aayushi Priya, Audrey Searing, Genevieve Sertic, Abbas Shariff, Jodi Stoffer, Nolan Stoffer, Zachery Stoner, Reinie Thomas, Raoul Wadhwa, Timothy Wilger, Logan Wilson, Tori Wilson and Lai Zhexuan with terms ending June 30, 2013, to the Youth Advisory Committee; appoint Raoul Wadhwa with term ending June 30, 2013, as Youth Participant to the Environmental Board; appoint Timothy Wilger with term ending June 30, 2013, as Youth Participant to the Human Services Board; appoint Sarah Perry with term ending June 30, 2013, as Youth Participant to the Park Board; appoint Audrey Searing with term ending June 30, 2013, as Youth Participant to the Senior Citizens Advisory Board; reappoint Carlynn Compton and Gary Gilchrist with terms ending June 1, 2015, to the Construction Board of Appeals; reappoint Richard Bosch, David Felicijan and Wayne Stoffer with terms ending May 31, 2015, to the Planning Commission; appoint Jeffrey Bright as Member and Mike Robbee as Alternate with unfulfilled terms ending February 28, 2014, to the Zoning Board of Appeals; appoint Arnett Williamson with unfulfilled term ending October 1, 2012, and Luis Henriquez with unfulfilled term ending October 1, 2013, to the Environmental Board; reappoint Ayesha Mangla with term ending May 31, 2015, to the Public Media Network Board; appoint Russell Randall with unfulfilled term ending December 31, 2013, to the Historic District Commission; and appoint Kelly Williams with unfulfilled term ending October 1, 2013, to the Human Services Board. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 6 to 0.

OTHER CITY MATTERS:

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Randall mentioned the Kalamazoo County Bike Week, May 13 through May 18, 2012, for families and wellness.

Mayor Pro Tem Reid noted the efficiencies created in the administration service areas of the Community Development Department that resulted in a drop from 19% funding to 8% funding from the CDBG funds thereby increasing the amount of funds going to serve the needs of Portage families.

Mayor Strazdas highlighted the Special Meeting held earlier to interview Boards and Commission Applicants and was awestruck by the number of youth in the community who expressed an interest in serving on the Youth Advisory Committee.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Strazdas adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

James R. Hudson, City Clerk

*Indicates items included on the Consent Agenda.