

City Council Meeting Summary

February 26, 2013

STUDENT MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS FOR THE DAY

- ◆ City Clerk James Hudson swore in the Student Mayor and Student Councilmembers for the Day.

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

- ◆ Mayor Strazdas recognized Joseph Seeberger with a Certificate of Recognition for setting a world record by catching a Muskellunge weighing 58 pounds, measuring 59 inches long with a girth of 29 inches on October 13, 2012, on Lake Bellaire in Antrim County.
- ◆ City Council also recognized the Portage Public Safety Hockey Team for their victory over the Kalamazoo Public Safety Hockey Team as a fundraiser for families in need after a loss due to a deceased Public Safety Officer.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER

- ◆ Approved the Check Register of February 26, 2013, as presented.

REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

- ◆ Adopted Resolution No. 3-13 setting a public hearing on the issuance of the Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate for Summit Polymers, Inc., for real and personal property in the estimated amount of \$2.99 million at 6715 Sprinkle Road, Industrial District No. 56, for March 12, 2013, at 7:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard.
- ◆ Adopted Resolution No. 3-13 setting a public hearing on the issuance of the Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate for Mann+Hummel USA, Inc. for personal property in the estimated amount of \$15.89 million at 6400 Sprinkle Road, Industrial District No. 48, for March 12, 2013, at 7:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard.
- ◆ Approved Contract 13-5011 between the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of Portage concerning funding for street improvements on Forest Drive (Lovers Lane to Portage Road); amended an engineering services contract with Wightman & Associates, Incorporated, for construction inspection and administration of street improvements on Forest Drive (Lovers Lane to Portage Road) in the not to exceed amount of \$94,500; adopted a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign Contract 13-5011; and authorized the City Manager to sign all other documents related to the Michigan Department of Transportation and the consultant contracts for this project on behalf of the city.
- ◆ Adopted a resolution and endorsed a petition to the Office of the Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner to locate, establish and construct the Lexington Green Channel as a County Drain and authorized the City Manager to execute the documents on behalf of the city.
- ◆ Tabled the matter of establishing April 30 and May 7 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. as the dates for review of the proposed Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Budget.
- ◆ Amended the 2013 fee schedule to include a \$3.00 drop-in fee for the Portage Senior Center.
- ◆ Filled the recently vacated citizen position on the Water/Sewer (Utility) Rate Committee by appointing Mr. Nasim Ansari.
- ◆ Received the communication from the City Manager regarding the January 2013 Summary Environmental Activity Report as information only.
- ◆ Received the Department Monthly Reports.

COMMUNICATIONS

- ◆ Accepted the February 17, 2013 letter from Jerry and Sherry Garrett, 10322 Archwood, the communication from David and Jill Meyle, 217 Cliffwood Avenue, and the communication from Margaret Krenselewski, 10315 Archwood Drive, regarding 10323 Archwood Drive, and approved an additional contingency on the sale of 10323 Archwood Drive that no manufactured dwelling be constructed on the property.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- ◆ Agreed to have independent tax attorneys present for the training segments of the organizational meetings of March 4 and 11, 2013, to accept the 2013 Board of Review Updated Checklist as presented, and to not have the tax attorneys in the Board of Review sessions with the citizen petitioners, but watching from a streaming observation station in City Hall for the first two days of appointments to determine whether there is something not in accordance with State Tax Guidelines and to provide feedback to the Board of Review, the Assessor representative and the petitioners right away.

BID TABULATIONS

- ◆ Approved a three-year contract with Bell Equipment Company for: rental of two street sweepers for four weeks each for a three year total of \$57,600 for spring sweeping of streets following hydrant flushing; rental of two street sweepers for six weeks each for a three year total of \$80,100 for fall street sweeping of streets following leaf pickup; both with an option for three, one-year renewals, and authorized the City Manager to execute all documents related to this action on behalf of the city.
- ◆ Approved the purchase of four two wheel drive Chevy Tahoe police pursuit vehicles through the State of Michigan Purchasing Program (MiDEAL) at a total cost not to exceed \$107,880 and authorized the City Manager to execute all documents related to these purchases on behalf of the city.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS

- ◆ Michael Quinn, 7025 Rockford Street, presented himself as an appointee to the Board of Review, thanked Mayor Strazdas for providing the criticisms of the 2012 Board of Review discussed at the interview session, and took exception to some of the criticisms. Councilmember Urban explained.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL

- ◆ Councilmember Randall reviewed dates and times of the Board of Review from the *Portager*: March 11, 1 to 4 p.m., March 12, all day, March 13, all day, March 14 all day and an evening session with additional sessions as needed. She advised concerned citizens to get their information together, contact a realtor and to look at neighboring property assessments. Councilmember Pearson concurred and mentioned the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) as a resource.
- ◆ Councilmember Sackley expressed his disappointment with his property valuation as it went down instead of increased. He indicated that his goal is not to see the value of his property go down, his taxes go down and revenue to the city reduced because he feels he gets an extremely high value for the taxes he pays. He said he donates to causes in the city such as the Summer Entertainment Series because of the great deal he gets with the city, and he feels just paying his taxes is not enough. Also, he said if the property valuation was based on the value of his neighborhood and the friendship of his neighbors in the Oakwood Forest Subdivision, his taxes should be twice what they are right now.
- ◆ Councilmember Urban read from the mobile e-mail to all of City Council thanking them for listening to the concerns of the neighbors of 10323 Archwood Drive. He added a caveat to those Board of Review petitioners as a realtor may not know what kind of sales can be used as they cannot be foreclosure sale – they have to be arms length sales – and petitioners may want to talk to a tax expert on these matters. He also expressed his appreciation to the City Assessor and his staff for the hard work they do all of the time and he indicated that he did not question their work, nor did he question their review. He further expressed his appreciation for the work they have done to respond to all of the questions asked for the meeting tonight, recognizing the office is short-staffed at this time.
- ◆ Mayor Pro Tem Reid highlighted the Consent Agenda Items F.1, Summit Polymers, Inc. – PA 198 Tax Abatement, F.2, Mann+Hummel, Inc. – PA 198 Tax Abatement, and F.6, Portage Senior Center Fee for drop-in patrons.
- ◆ Mayor Strazdas reflected upon sequestration and the inability of the U.S Congress to find middle ground and praised the Portage City Council for finding middle ground with regard to the Board of Review matter under Unfinished Business.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF EACH CITY COUNCIL MEETING ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CITY WEBSITE AT PORTAGEMI.GOV, IN CITY HALL AND IN THE DISTRICT LIBRARY. MINUTES OF CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS.