

City of Portland

Portland, Michigan

Minutes of the City Council Meeting

Held on Monday, July 6, 2015

In Council Chambers at City Hall

Present: Mayor Barnes, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck, Council Members Fitzsimmons, Clement, and Baldyga; City Manager Gorman; City Clerk Miller; Police Chief Knobelsdorf; Interim DDA/Main Street Director Perry; Eric Proctor

Guests: Kathy Parsons; Janice & Mike Courter, Tim Fuller, Ron Nelson, Al & Char Lazette; Doug DeVries, Ionia County Emergency Management Coordinator; Paul Starr of “I’m a Beer Hound”; Tom Thelen of the Review & Observer; Members of the Media

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor Barnes with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Clement, supported by Fitzsimmons, to appoint Robert Baldyga to fill the vacant council seat vacated by Kyle Butler.

Yeas: Clement, Fitzsimmons, VanSlambrouck, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

City Clerk Miller swore in Council Member Baldyga.

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

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Clement, Baldyga, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Under Public Comment, Eric Proctor introduced Paul Starr of “I’m a Beer Hound” who is one of the organizers of the Beerfest on the Bridge who provided information about the event that is scheduled to be held on Saturday, August 1, 2015 from 3:00 – 8:00 P.M. on the historic Veterans Memorial Bridge on Bridge Street. This is a beer tasting event that will feature 14 breweries and cideries.

Under the City Manager Report, City Manager Gorman gave a report on the tornado that struck Portland at approximately 2:15 P.M. on June 22, 2015. Fortunately, there was no loss of life although there was heavy damage to the community. The City is also fortunate to have much of its electric infrastructure underground so there was little to no loss of electricity and no downed power lines which aided in the quick cleanup of brush and debris.

The City requested and was granted a Local State of Emergency a few hours after the event which was good for 7 days. A 14-day extension was also requested and granted for administrative purposes to evaluate the need for assistance and funding. Today, July 6, 2015 Governor Snyder signed a Declaration of Disaster for Portland which will provide for some reimbursement of funds to aid in the cost of cleanup from the tornado. Preliminary estimates to the City for cleanup costs and repairs to City structures total approximately \$248,000 of which approximately \$98,000 will be reimbursable through

insurance monies. Today's declaration by the Governor makes the City eligible for up to \$100,000 in aid from the State.

City Manager Gorman also reported that ADM Alliance Nutrition will begin demolition of the silos on the corner of Grand River Ave. and Divine Hwy. on Monday, July 13, 2015. For safety reasons all lanes on Divine Hwy. will be closed during the 3-week demolition process. Emergency vehicles will use the back of the ADM Alliance Nutrition property for access to those areas accessed by the detour route that will be posted by the Ionia County Road Commission.

City Manager Gorman also reported that The WODA Group was awarded funding by MSHDA for its redevelopment project of Old School Manor at 306 Brush St. The next step is to consider the environmental issues and other matters before work can begin. Preliminary plans call for construction to begin in October. This project will potentially be a \$6-7 million investment in the community.

Under New Business, the Council considered Resolution 15-49 to impose a moratorium on the enforcement of Section 42-306 (c)(2) of the City of Portland Zoning Ordinance to accommodate reconstruction in the City after the destruction caused by the tornado on June 22, 2015. This section currently states that non-conforming structures be brought into compliance when being rebuilt after being destroyed by an act of God.

City Manager Gorman stated that the proposed moratorium would allow reconstruction of structures in the same building footprint for a period of 90 days. If needed the moratorium can be extended.

Mayor Barnes stated that he had spoken with Planning Commission Chair Grapentien and he stated his pleasure with the consideration of this moratorium under the current circumstances.

Motion by Fitzsimmons, supported by Baldyga, to approve Resolution 15-49 to impose a moratorium on the enforcement of Section 42-306(c)(2) of the City of Portland Zoning Ordinance to accommodate reconstruction in the City.

Yeas: Fitzsimmons, Baldyga, VanSlambrouck, Clement, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Charlene Lazette of 134 S. Grant St. asked for clarification of the moratorium and the time frame for obtaining permits for demolition and reconstruction.

There was discussion.

It was clarified that a property owner, after filing for the proper permits, will be allowed to demolish and rebuild a structure damaged by the tornado on June 22, 2015 in the same footprint as previously constructed.

The Council considered Resolution 15-50 to approve Pay Request No. 4 to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for work performed on the Cutler Road Project in the amount of \$121,651.16. The City Engineer on the project has reviewed the pay request and is recommending its approval.

Motion by VanSlambrouck, supported by Clement, to approve Resolution 15-50 approving Pay Request No. 4 to the Michigan Department of Transportation for work performed on the Cutler Road Project.

Yeas: VanSlambrouck, Clement, Fitzsimmons, Baldyga, Barnes
Nays: None
Adopted

Motion by Clement, supported by Baldyga, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes and Synopsis from the Regular City Council Meeting held on June 15, 2015, payment of invoices in the amount of \$327,700.03 and payroll in the amount of \$241,910.60 for a total of \$569,610.63. Purchase orders to Fleis & VandenBrink in the amount of \$12,617.32 for Kent Street engineering services, Timber Tree Service in the amount of \$31,085.00 for tornado cleanup, Cook Brothers Excavating in the amount of \$36,842.50 for tornado cleanup, and Hydaker-Wheatlake Co. in the amount of \$31,957.36 for tornado cleanup were included.

Yeas: Clement, Baldyga, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Barnes
Nays: None
Adopted

Under City Manager Comments, City Manager Gorman commented that the 4th of July was well attended and was a great celebration of the community of Portland.

He further stated that the DPW continues to pick up brush placed in the curb lawn. Residents can also place brush on the piles near the horse arena at the Bogue Flats area.

City Manager Gorman also stated the Portland Community Fund Association is providing grants to properties in the Portland School District that incurred damage as a result of the tornado. Grant applications are due by July 15, 2015.

Under Council Comments, Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck thanked the community volunteers for their assistance in the tornado recovery efforts. He also thanked Team Rubicon for their efforts in assisting the community of Portland.

Mayor Pro-Tem VanSlambrouck further stated that the VFW 4090 will host a community benefit on Saturday, July 11th from 3:00 to 8:00 P.M.

Mayor Barnes also expressed his appreciation to Team Rubicon for their assistance in harnessing the volunteer efforts in Portland. They were amazed at the cleanup effort that had already taken place when they arrived in the community. He further expressed his thankfulness that no one was seriously injured by the tornado.

Council Member Clement commended Portland resident Amy Kahn for creating the “Portland Strong” Facebook page which had a tremendous impact in organizing the volunteer efforts in the community.

Council Member Baldyga thanked the Council for their support in appointing him to serve on the City Council. Further, he echoed the sentiments of the other Council Members in regard to the amazing community effort following the tornado. His home was one of the ones damaged by the tornado.

Council Member Fitzsimmons commented on the amazing effort by the employees of the City. There was a quick response by all departments.

Mayor Barnes stated that he is proud of the City employees and City Manager Gorman and that he appreciates the effort made by everyone.

Doug Devries, Emergency Management Coordinator for Ionia County, commented on the incredible staff in place in the City of Portland. He further stated the recovery is moving quickly, the focus now will be on aiding the long-term recovery.

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

Yeas: Clement, VanSlambrouck, Fitzsimmons, Baldyga, Barnes

Nays: None

Adopted

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Barnes, Mayor

Monique I. Miller, City Clerk