

**City of Portage
Common Council Committee of the Whole
Council Chambers
September 11, 2013, 8:00 p.m.**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

A moment of silence was held to commemorate the anniversary of September 11.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

2. Roll Call

Present: Ald. Ebnetter, Garetson, Hamre, Havlovic, Klapper, Maass, Miller

Excused: Ald. Dodd, Oszman

Also Present: Mayor Tierney, City Clerk Moe, City Administrator Murphy, City Attorney Spankowski

Media Present: Craig Sauer from Portage Daily Register, Bill Welsh from Cable TV

3. Election of President Pro-Tem

Klapper nominated Havlovic, seconded by Garetson. Havlovic nominated Ebnetter, seconded by Miller. There were no other nominations; so nominations were closed. Ald. Havlovic was elected President Pro-Tem on a 4 to 3 vote on call of roll. Voting for Havlovic – Ebnetter, Garetson, Klapper, Miller. Voting for Ebnetter – Hamre, Havlovic, Maass.

4. Discussion on proposed Visitor Center

Mayor Tierney stated that the purpose of the meeting was to reach some decisions as to the direction the council was looking to go on the project.

The terms of the grant were reviewed. The grant is for an amount not to exceed \$323,110.00 in project costs, with a cost share split 80% federal, 20% local. Any costs exceeding the grant award are the responsibility of the city. The size of the facility was reduced from 2933 square feet to 2565 square feet after the initial cost estimate came in at \$517,000.00. The revised cost estimate is \$420,200.00. The Chamber of Commerce would lease space including the two offices, display area, conference room and restroom accessed from within the building (65% of the building). The common areas including the mechanical room, storage room and restroom accessed from the outside would be the responsibility

of the city (35% of the building). Estimated annual operating costs are \$15,842.50, of which the Chamber would be responsible for approximately 65%.

City Administrator Murphy and Mayor Tierney will be meeting with the Chamber of Commerce Board next week to discuss the facility and the Chamber entering into a lease agreement.

There was discussion as to the changing costs of the project; whether the city would be able to afford maintaining their share of the facility; and wanting a commitment from the Chamber that they will be leasing the space.

The city can still reach a decision to not proceed with the project. If the project does not proceed, any costs would be the responsibility of the city. Approximately \$27,000.00 has been spent to date for the design work and archeological study. If the project was bid and costs came in high; a decision could be made to not continue with the project. It was estimated that there would be approximately \$40,000.00 in costs that would be the responsibility of the city.

It was the consensus of the council to proceed with getting bids for the project; at which time a decision will be made whether or not to proceed with the project.

5. Adjournment

Motion by Miller, second by Hamre to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously on call of roll at 9:20 p.m.

Marie A. Moe, WCPC, MMC
City Clerk