PROCLAMATION NO. 22-01 DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY
CITY OF PORTAGE – COVID-19 RESPONSE

WHEREAS, Columbia County Public Health has issued a warning that COVID-19 infection rates are critically high, and

WHEREAS, hospitals throughout the state are experiencing a surge of COVID-19 patients and are at or over capacity in accommodating treatment, and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services has issued a severe health advisory and recommended certain measures to protect from the Omicron variant of COVID-19, and

WHEREAS, the City of Portage Code of Ordinances, in Section 2-44, requires in-person attendance of alderpersons at Common Council and committee meetings, and no provision currently exists for remote attendance of any City public meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Justice issued guidance in the "Wisconsin Open Meetings Law Compliance Guide" (May 2019) that telephone and video conference calls that include a means for public monitoring and/or participation of the meeting are an acceptable alternative means of satisfying the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, which was confirmed and clarified by Wisconsin Department of Justice Advisories dated March 16, 2020, March 20, 2020 and March 15, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, pursuant to Chap. 323.11 and 323.14(4)(b), Wis. Stats., that the City of Portage declares a local State of Emergency through March 1, 2022, unless otherwise extended or rescinded by the Common Council.

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED that that all meetings of the Common Council, standing committees of the Common Council, as well as all meetings of appointed boards, commissions and committees for the City of Portage may be held via telephone and video conference call methods in lieu of in-person meetings provided such alternative meeting methods include an effective means for public monitoring and/or participation of such meetings.

Issued this **14th** day of January, 2022.

CITY OF PORTAGE

Rick Dodd, Mayor