

April 1, 2024

The Common Council of the City of La Porte met in regular session Monday, April 1, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. in Council Chambers.

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilwoman West led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Galloway, Buchanan, Konieczny, Franke, Huffman, West

Absent: Feikes

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Dermody stated each member received an advance copy of the minutes from the previous meeting and asked if there were any corrections or additions. Councilwoman Konieczny moved to approve the minutes as presented, motion was seconded by Councilwoman West and unanimously carried.

Petitions and Comments of Citizens

Rick Ogle, 1902 Indiana Avenue, inquired if the Coke Building project and the Indiana Avenue project will be abiding by City Ordinance not to start construction before 7:00 a.m. He reported according to the construction manager for INDOT they normally start construction between 6-7 a.m. Mayor Dermody stated although Public Comment is not a question-and-answer session, he advised the City has made it clear to INDOT that the City does not want construction to begin before 7:00 a.m. and the Coke Building Project will not be starting before that time either.

Sierra Sue Jesch, Jefferson Avenue, addressed the Council regarding the sidewalks and benches in the downtown area. She said this is the third year in a row that downtown sidewalks are not level and smooth.

Jackie Dermody announced that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. If anyone suspects that a child is being abused, they should call 1-800-800-5556. Mrs. Dermody passed out Child Abuse Prevention Month lapel pins for the Council.

Standing Committee Reports

Redevelopment Commission:

Councilman Franke reported the Redevelopment Commission met on March 27th at which time the sale of the Don George property was approved. The Commission also approved agreements with Karnerblue Era, LLC and SEH to assist the City in obtaining grants.

Police Merit Commission:

Councilman Galloway reported the Police Merit Commission met on March 19th with new member Mike Kellems in attendance. He stated the Police Department is down to 41 officers and discussion was held regarding wanting to get that number up to 60. He advised the Police Department will be having promotional school this year.

Traffic Commission:

Councilwoman Konieczny reported the Traffic Commission will be meeting tomorrow, April 2nd at 5:00 p.m. at the Police Station.

Airport Authority:

Councilwoman Konieczny reported the Airport Authority will be meeting next Wednesday, April 10th at 5:15 p.m. at the Airport.

Urban Enterprise Association:

Councilwoman West reported the Urban Enterprise Association met on Wednesday, March 20th at which time a special grant request was approved to address some of La Porte YMCA's aging building components. The last major construction project on the YMCA was completed in 2021. The new YMCA CEO, Scott Helkamp and Brian Larson from Larson-Danielson spoke regarding the needed repairs and project specifics. The UEA approved grants for JL Lawn Care and Molly Lemmons for her new business, Hoosier Momma, and a residential grant was approved for interior and exterior improvements on a rental project. The next UEA meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. She reported that the UEA is looking forward to updates on the City's Downtown Alley Redevelopment Project.

Business Improvement District:

Councilwoman West reported the next Business Improvement District meeting will be held Wednesday, April 8, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Fire Merit Commission:

Councilwoman West reported the Fire Merit Commission will meet this Wednesday, April 3rd at 6:30 p.m. at the 18th Street Fire Station. Councilwoman West reported she has some exciting news to share about one of the City's firefighters. Sam Doig just completed the Indiana Smoke Diver course, which is a six-day, sixty-hour program, designed for experienced firefighters who desire realistic and advance training. Their mission is to prevent death and injury by training firefighters to be adaptable and to develop critical decision-making skills in high stress

environments. Councilwoman West invited Andy Smith, Fire Chief, and Doug Biernacki, Battalion Chief, to come forward and give a little more information about the program and Firefighter Doig's commitment to the City's safety.

Redevelopment Commission Annual Report

Craig Phillips, Director of Community Development and Planning, advised the Council on a yearly basis the Redevelopment Commission is required to submit an Annual Report to the Council. He stated a copy of the report was included in the Council's packet. Mr. Phillips gave an overview of projects that happened in the four different TIF areas in 2023 and noted in 2024 the City will be establishing a TIF District for 39North. Mr. Phillips answered questions from the Council.

Other Business

Mayor Dermody stated today is Dyngus Day and encouraged everyone to be responsible and safe.

Adjourn

Councilman Galloway moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Councilwoman Huffman and unanimously carried.

Approved: _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: April 15, 2024