

July 6, 2022

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at 9:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine, Mark Kosior

Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance

Matt Drangmeister led the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Each member received an advance copy of the minutes. Mayor Dermody asked if there were any additions or corrections.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Minutes

Ms. Romine moved to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior

Public Comment

None

Claims Approval

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Payroll from June 24 in the amount of \$482,321.84

Motion/Vote – Approval of 6/10 Payroll

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the 6/24 Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented quarterly Payroll, merit pay for Fire and Police, from June 24 in the amount of \$1,926.88.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Civil City Claims

Mr. Kosior moved to approve 6/24 Quarterly Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims, including 2020 G.O. Bond payment, Fire Truck Lease Purchase Payment, and Repayment of Temporary Loans for Fire and Police Pensions, in the amount of \$749,667.84.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Civil City Claims

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the Civil City Claims as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer presented Water Claims, including two Water Bond Payments, in the amount of \$362,927.44.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Water Claims

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the Water Claims as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$40,669.09.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Sewage Claims

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the Sewage Claims as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Paylocity Agreement

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented a request to re-approve the Paylocity Agreement, as previously approved, with a change to the dates of the agreement. Due to various challenges, the previous agreement dates were exceeded.

Motion/Vote – Paylocity Agreement

Ms. Romine moved to approve Paylocity Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Amend Agreement for Services-Civic Director

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented an amendment agreement for the Civic Director which will allow CVB to pay us \$18,000 for Brett Binversie's salary, which is split three ways.

Motion/Vote – Amend Agreement for Services-Civic Director

Mr. Kosior moved to approve Amend Agreement for Services-Civic Director as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Department Head Reports

Human Resources

Human Resources Director Andrea Smith made two announcements: Free Hernia screenings for City employees will take place July 27, at WellPorte. To schedule a screening please call 326-2048. July 13, free Medicare Lunch and Learn at 11:00 am at City Hall.

Code: Dan Drake reported there are currently 2,100 violations for the year. Mr. Drake stated they did one condemnation last week for electrical and sewage violations and are working on a couple more. Mr. Drake stated there is currently an order for demo for a house on Monroe.

Mayor Dermody stated we do receive a lot of calls from the community about grass violations and dilapidated houses, which are not always within the City's control as insurance companies are often involved.

Planning: Director of Community Development and Planning Craig Phillips reported the public offering for the Don George property went out; approximately 45 days has been given to submit bids for this property and will be presented at the August 16 meeting. Mr. Phillips also stated they are starting to work on the necessary steps to get the 18th Street property out for bid. Mr. Phillips reported work on the parking study is on-going and he has received some initial feedback and information based on the inventory and counts that were taken. Work is currently being done to compile that information and then the focus will switch to the management phase. In addition, Mr. Phillips reported work continues on the first phase of the Monroe Street Streetscape Project. Mr. Phillips also stated himself and Jeff Batchelor are still working in conjunction with the consultants they are partnered with through the Healthcare Foundation on the housing study, looking at core areas of the City.

Street: Mike Frazee reported they are still grinding and will be completing Division, Bond, and North today and then tomorrow, Darlington from the tracks to Factory Street. Mr. Frazee also reported they are patching.

Mayor Dermody stated we have received a lot of compliments on the roadwork being done and thanked the entire team for their hard work.

Transporte: Transporte Manager Beth West reported their summer promotional, Orange Summer Fun Pass, is still being sold; as of this morning, 184 passes have been sold. Ms. West stated 17 passes have already been used. Ms. West reported over the Holiday weekend, July 1-2, there were over 230 riders. Ms. West also reported there were 3,112 riders in June, which exceeded the number of riders in June 2019, pre-COVID. Ms. West reported she has met with the Director of the Fair Board and the buses will be able to drop off and pick up at the Fair within a reasonable timeframe; there will be a designated area for drop off and pick up. Ms. West reminded everyone this is not a shuttle service and rides do still need to be scheduled. Ms. West stated they will have normal hours, 6 A.M. – 6 P.M. but if there is a lot of interest, there will be discussion for extended hours for the Fair in 2023. Ms. West stated the Fair is providing a free six-person golf cart shuttle service inside the Fair.

Park: Park Director Mark Schreiber clarified the Civic Director Salary is paid 30% by the CVB and the remainder is paid by Civic Non-Reverting; the revenues the Civic creates pays the remainder of the salary. Mr. Schreiber thanked everyone for their contributions and participation with the Fourth of July fireworks at Fox Park. Mr. Schreiber reminded everyone that the next Night Bike Ride is Friday starting at the Park Office. Registration can be done in advance or that night, starting at 8 P.M.; the 13-mile ride begins at 9 P.M. In Addition, Mr. Schreiber reminded the public of the Free Summer Playground Program; there is approximately four weeks left. The days and times for this program can be found on the park website, laporteparkandrec.com. Mr. Schreiber recognized the lifeguards for their tremendous job with the increased number of visitors to the beach.

Mayor Dermody thanked Mr. Schreiber and everyone for their hard work through the Fourth of July festivities; he has not received a single complaint, which is not typical.

Communications: Communications Director Jess Bruder stated the summer issue of Travel Indiana Magazine has been released. This is a festival issue, and it features Lake Fest as well as Sunflower Fair in addition to other scheduled ads; several thousand copies are distributed throughout the state. Ms. Bruder stated Taco Fest is on Friday from 6 P.M. - 10 P.M. and thanked Arnett Construction for being the sponsor.

Mayor Dermody thanked Police and Fire for their amazing efforts to keep everyone safe on the Fourth of July. Mayor Dermody requested a moment of silence in honor of those who lost their lives during the Highland Park Fourth of July Parade. Mayor Dermody stated we need to continue to be proactive, regardless of politics, to keep our community safe. Mayor Dermody stated we need to come together, across the board, to create ideas and discussion that sets a standard for safety that other communities can model after.

Fire: Fire Chief Andy Snyder reported they had an unusually quiet Fourth of July but yesterday they had both a house fire and a three-car accident with extrication. Crews were able to adequately handle both situations. Chief Snyder reported the Edith House will be staffed at the Fair all week long, so stop by and see them!

Police: Chief Brettin reported the department had a busy weekend with events. Red Wine and Brew was Saturday night with approximately 6,500 people in attendance; 12 Officers volunteered their time for this event. Chief Brettin stated there were no events on the Fourth or at the fireworks, there was an incredibly positive crowd. Chief Brettin stated they have begun discussions about next year and how to keep everyone safe, referencing the Highland Park event. Chief Brettin also stated they will have officers working at the gates of the Fair.

Mayor Dermody stated he noticed a lot more Officer coverage, with E Bikes constantly up and down the route. Mayor Dermody thanked the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte for the bikes. In addition, Mayor Dermody stated they have passed the LIT, Local Income Tax for Public Safety, and have asked Chief Snyder and Chief Brettin to put together a plan of what these dollars should be used for. Collection for this tax will begin in October, with the first installment coming in January and then monthly thereafter. Mayor Dermody stated with these funds, from a Police perspective, he would like to see more Officers walking and e-biking neighborhoods, kicking in doors when necessary, and having enough officers to do this. From a Fire perspective, this will allow an even quicker coverage time when services are needed.

Legal: City Attorney Nick Otis stated there is nothing specific since the previous meeting but stated the NIBC Tournament took place recently and two Lalumiere players were drafted in the top 10 in the NBA.

Mark Kosior asked for the dates of the NIBC Tournament and Mark responded by stating the first week of January.

Engineering: City Engineer Nick Minich reported street paving will continue and recognized Mike Frazee, Jeff Batchelor, and the Street Department team for hauling millings and such as this is saving money.

Mayor Dermody also recognized the Street Department for fixing a sidewalk issue on Ohio. Mayor Dermody stated they are looking to see what other sidewalk work, potentially in the fall, may be able to be completed by the street department instead of bidding the work out.

Wastewater: Wastewater Director Jerry Jackson reported they have received a call from the National Guard out of Indianapolis, they are interested in extending water and sewer to the detachment on State Road 2. They are currently budgeting, and the project is approximately three years out. This allows for a potential for homeowners in this area outside of City limits to be connected if there is interest.

Mayor Dermody stated with residential homeowners, due to the property tax caps, they will pay less than what they are paying for property taxes in the county. This benefit may interest homeowners in this project.

In addition, Mr. Jackson reported they had a lightning strike on the CSO pump station at the treatment plant; it took out most things connected to the lagoon. Mr. Jackson stated it took out four drives that run the pumps; the pumps are okay but the drives are \$5,000-\$6,000 each and he is currently having issues locating replacements due to delivery issues. Mr. Jackson stated some temporary work has given them enough pump running; they are still able to empty the lagoon after a rain. The lightning strike took out two emergency valve operators, which if needed can be operated by hand. Mr. Jackson stated he is still currently looking for parts for the drives and evaluating the valve operators as he is unsure of what exactly was burnt internally. Mr. Jackson stated they are working with insurance to see what may be covered.

Water Department: Water Superintendent Tim Werner reported they will be reinstalling the well pump at EPB; it was cleaned and there was pump damage, therefore it took some time to get it back. Once reinstalled, all wells will be back up and running. Mr. Werner also stated the well pump and test flows are being scheduled, this will help determine what wells will be cleaned in the fall and winter. Additionally, Mr. Werner stated they are still working ahead of the paving list and keeping up on valve replacements.

Mayor Dermody thanked Mr. Werner for his support of Tucker King's additional new position, Float Chairman. Kawanis has asked for additional floats for next year's parade and Tucker has taken on this task to enter a City of La Porte float. Mayor Dermody stated he has Challenged Mayor Perry of Michigan City to enter a float and has made a commitment to have the La Porte float in Michigan City's parade as well.

New Business:

Request for Use: Maple & Rye

Brandon Lowery, 709 Michigan Ave, presented a request to use the sidewalk and parking spaces outside of Maple & Rye to host an event on July 28, with live music and food served outside. The parking spaces will be utilized to bring classic cars to display. Mr. Lowery stated he would like to promote this event to surrounding communities to hopefully bring new business to the area. Mr. Lowery stated Maple & Rye would like to potentially host these types of events monthly if it goes well.

Craig Philips stated to keep the sidewalk ADA accessible it may be best to move the music set up to one of the parking spaces. City Engineer Nick Minich responded by stating engineering has an ADA Coordinator that can review the area and approve the music set up to make sure everyone has safe access to the sidewalk.

Mr. Kosior questioned who would manage the parking spaces to make sure people are not parking where they should not be, as this may potentially cause people to become upset. Chief Brettin responded by stating they can provide no parking signs that can be posted for this event.

Ms. Romine questioned when the event would start. Mr. Lowery responded by stating they would start the event at 5:30 P.M. after the bank closes. City Ordinance allows the live music to go on until 11 P.M.

Mayor Dermody questioned if Maple and Rye serves alcohol. Mr. Lowery responded by stating they may ask Bare Bones to serve alcohol. Mr. Lowery was advised that if alcohol were to be served, it would need to be approved and a plan indicating where the bar would be located would need to be submitted downstate for approval.

Mayor Dermody stated he will request a meeting with Engineering immediately for the ADA compliance and asked Mr. Lowery to come to the July 19 BOW meeting to provide an update. Mr. Lowery was advised to reach out to the Downtown Coalition, Charity at Hot Spot, to help promote the event. In addition, Mayor Dermody advised Mr. Lowery to think about seating and trash.

Motion/Vote – Approve Request for Use

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Request for Use based on Engineering approval; motion was seconded by Mark Kosior and unanimously carried.

½ Day Fair Day for Employees

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented a request for full time City employees to take a ½ day to attend the fair at the department heads discretion.

Mr. Kosior questioned if there have ever been any issues with employees within the departments not being able to get the day they want to take off. Ms. Loeffler responded by stating there have not been any issues that she is aware of.

Motion/Vote – Approve ½ Day Fair Day for Employees

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request for ½ Day Fair Day for Employees as presented; motion was seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Paul Brettin: Lease Agreement

Chief Brettin presented a lease agreement from La Porte Chrysler to upgrade from a Charger to a Durango for a Detective that has recently become an Evidence Tech. There are no monetary changes, it is just an updated lease with the new vehicle.

Motion/Vote – Lease Agreement

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve the Lease Agreement as presented; motion was seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Jerry Jackson: Primary Scum Pump Quotes

Wastewater Director Jerry Jackson presented replacement quotes for the scum pump. Mr. Jackson stated he received responses from three vendors, one which stated they did not have a suitable pump. Gasvoda, GAI, quoted a Von Pump in the amount of \$33,940. Xylem quoted a dry pit submersible pump, which is permanently mounted but will not become damaged if submerged, in the amount of \$25,880. Xylem also quoted a submersible pump, for a wet pit, in the amount of \$26,958.65. Mr. Jackson stated he recommends the Xylem submersible pump, as it is readily available, and the current pump is out.

Motion/Vote – Primary Scum Pump Quote

Mr. Kosior moved to approve Scum Pump Quote as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Andrea Smith: Amend 3-TransPorte Job Descriptions

Human Resources Director Andrea Smith presented a request to update three TransPorte job descriptions. The first update request is to change from Manager to Director of TransPorte. Currently, the manager conducts performance reviews, prepares budgets, produces plans for efficiencies, and tracks the department's overall performance. Ms. Smith stated these metrics clearly indicate why the position needs to be renamed director, in addition to TransPorte being the only department with a department head that is referred to as a manager, not a director. The second update request is to change the Dispatch/Shift Leader to Assistant Director/Dispatcher. Ms. Smith stated most of the Directors have an assistant or back-up; TransPorte does not and is currently utilizing a dispatcher to cover those duties when the manager is out. Ms. Smith stated this position was presented at the Council Meeting for a pay increase.

Mr. Kosior questioned what the pay increase would be for this position. Ms. Smith responded by stating it is approximately \$8,000.

The final update request is to change Dispatcher to Part Time Relief Dispatcher. The change in Assistant Director Dispatcher facilitated the change in this position. The use of a Part Time and Relief Dispatcher will help fill voids that may occur when the Assistant Director/Dispatcher is unable to dispatch. Ms. Smith stated these changes will enhance TransPorte communication and assist with breakdowns, accidents, and routes changes or any other emergencies that may occur. This is a title change only and does not include any monetary changes. Ms. Smith reiterated the only monetary change is moving from Dispatch/Shift Leader to Assistant Director/Dispatcher. Ms. Smith stated TransPorte is on its way up and these updates support this.

Mayor Dermody recognized the work Beth West has done the past several years and is ready to make TransPorte a viable option for all citizens in La Porte.

Motion/Vote – Amend 3-TransPorte Job Descriptions

Ms. Romine moved to approve TransPorte Job Description changes as presented; motion was seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Mr. Kosior congratulated all the volunteers for the Fourth of July Parade for an overall great event.

Public Comments:

Nick Otis reported online comments: Brett Binversie commented January 5-7, Thursday – Saturday, for NIBC. Mr. Otis stated NIBC is definitely these dates, but additional teams may add days, but this is very tentative at this time. Chris Clinard commented that he loves seeing Maple and Rye trying to bring new things to downtown.

Unfinished Business

None

Adjourn

There being no further business, Mr. Kosior moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Approve: _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: July 19, 2022