

**March 5, 2024**

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.

**Present:** Mayor Dermody, Mark Kosior, Jessica Romine

**Absent:** None

Jim Ferguson 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 made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

### **Public Comment**

Mayor Dermod asked if there was any public comment. Member Kosior stated he would like to make a comment. Mr. Kosior remarked he often watches the City Council meetings and has noticed a lot of the comments. Mr. Kosior stated these meetings, as well as all governmental or quasi-government meetings, are not public meetings, they are in fact private meetings that are held in public spaces. Therefore, public comment is limited in time and to some degree quality to limit redundancy of comments and can be ended by the Mayor or President of whatever board the meeting is being held by. Mr. Kosior stated this does follow state code and is allowable and sometimes necessary. These types of meetings, although private, are held in public spaces to allow the public to see the work that is going on and the decisions that are being made. City Attorney Nick Otis noted that he agrees with Mr. Kosior and stated sometimes the balance can be difficult at times, especially with hot button topics, but that does not mean the public can take 90 minutes or two hours with comments. Mr. Otis stated as long as individuals are not being limited on their viewpoint, if they choose to be negative, they have the right to do so.

### **Claims Approval**

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Payroll from March 1, 2024 in the amount of \$520,642.93.

### **Motion/Vote – Approval of March 1, 2024 Payroll**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the March 1, 2024 Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$811,520.50.

**Motion/Vote – Approval of Civil City Claims**

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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Water Claims in the amount of \$196,771.42.

**Motion/Vote – Approval of Water Claims**

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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$251,263.54.

**Motion/Vote – Approval of Sewage Claims**

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

**Department Head Reports**

**Park:** Parks and Rec Superintendent Mark Schreiber reported Beechwood Golf Course opened for the season yesterday and there was a nice crowd for opening day. The deadline for both boys and girls slow pitch and fast pitch softball has been extended to Friday. Any registrations after Friday are subject to a late fee and there are no guarantee rosters will not fill up. Mr. Schreiber encouraged anyone that would like to get signed up to please do so as soon as possible. You can sign up at [laporteparkandrec.com](http://laporteparkandrec.com), at the park office, or by calling 326-9600. In addition, Mr. Schreiber reported that Beechwood Golf Course has been rated the number nine public golf course in Indiana by Golf Now. Mr. Schreiber gave credit to Beechwood Director Kyle Cashmer and his staff for all their hard work and creating a great environment. Lakefest this year will be held July 26, 27, and 28. There are lots of events planned this year for Lakefest.

**Streets/Code:** Director of Streets and Code Jeff Batchelor reported the crew is out clearing the drains and picking up branches throughout the city. Mr. Batchelor requested permission to scrap the three damaged plow trucks. Mr. Kosior questioned how that will affect the remainder of the snow season. Mr. Batchelor stated it should have no effect on the rest of the snowy season, as they have been making do without them.

**Motion/Vote – Approval to Scrap Three Damaged Plow Trucks**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Scrap Three Damaged Plow Trucks as requested; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

In addition, Mr. Batchelor stated anyone that needs assistance getting items to the dumpsters should reach out to the Street Department or himself directly at 219-775-3610. Mr. Batchelor noted he saw on Facebook that an individual was offering to pick up items for people and take them to the dumpster for a fee. Mr. Batchelor reiterated that the dumpster program is free for residents of La Porte and is available at no cost to the city because of a grant that was

received from LEAP. This is not a program for people to make money from residents. Mr. Batchelor stated the dumpster is located inside the fence at the Street Department because it was being abused when placed on the outside of the fence. Mr. Batchelor stated the dumpster is currently available during working hours and they are trying to work something out, so it is available for a few hours on a Saturday, once per month.

**Engineering:** City Engineer Nick Minich reminded everyone that INDOT has a public hearing for the US 35/Indiana Ave project at the Health Foundation, located at 140 East Shore Parkway, tomorrow from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M. with the presentation starting at 6 P.M. This is an INDOT project that the city will be involved in.

**Wastewater:** Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson reported they had the new vac truck out because we received 8/10 of an inch of rain and it is working phenomenal. In addition, Mr. Jackson reported there was at least one basement backup that happened during the rain that they are aware of.

**Water:** Water Superintendent Tim Werner addressed a comment that was made at last night's City Council meeting regarding a fire hydrant that is out of service on the 900 block of Virginia. Mr. Werner stated that style of hydrant was made in the 50s, and they did try to save some money by ordering parts to get it fixed. Unfortunately, they were unable to get the parts to fix it and therefore will be installing a new hydrant at that location. Mr. Werner stated when a hydrant is taken out of service it is communicated very well to the Fire Department so they know it cannot be used. Mr. Werner stated the replacement of a hydrant is a line stop and they do like to wait until the weather breaks to do hydrant replacements because of the process involved. Chief Snyder stated no one is in danger and the City of La Porte is very fortunate in the spacing of their hydrants and there are other hydrants that are very close by with the same waterflow. Chief Snyder stated he appreciated the comment made by the individual at last night's meeting, who said he does not want the department to have to work harder, however, they like to work smarter not harder, and the trucks automatically unload the hose directly to the hydrant. Chief Snyder stated he appreciates the Water Department and the processes they have in place because it makes the department's job easier.

**New Business:**

**Request for Use: Red Door**

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Request for Use: Red Door. Ms. Loeffler stated this request is for Saturday April 27, 2024. The request is to use the area of Monroe Street between Lincolnway and State Street for a wine and beer tasting ticketed event. This is the same location used for the Friday Night Live events. Ms. Loeffler stated the request also includes permission to use the plug-ins for speakers. A copy of their insurance has been provided. Moe from Red Door spoke briefly about the event. Moe stated they hope to make this an annual event and will tie it in with a specific cause. This year proceeds from the event will go to Play for Jake. Mayor Dermody questioned if there would be food. Moe stated there will be pizza and other food available.

**Motion/Vote – Approval of Request for Use: Red Door**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request for Use: Red Door as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit Renewal: Lewis Baking**

Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson presented Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit Renewal: Lewis Baking. Mr. Jackson stated this is a three year permit and they have been a great client with no wastewater issues and recommends renewal of the permit.

**Motion/Vote – Approval of Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit Renewal: Lewis Baking**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit Renewal: Lewis Baking as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Citizens Award: Anthony McClintock**

Chief Buell invited Chief of Detectives Jim Ferguson and Anthony McClintock to the podium. Detective Ferguson stated he is not typically one to give out awards, and this may be the first award he has nominated anyone for; however, he believes it does merit recognition. Captain Ferguson briefly shared a heroic story involving Mr. McClintock witnessing a head on collision, stopping to assist and staying with a 17-year-old driver until they were extricated from the vehicle. Mr. McClintock accepted his award and briefly spoke about the situation and expressed his hope that the individuals involved in the accident are recovering well. Mayor Dermody expressed his appreciation for Mr. McClintock and how lucky we are to have him working with the City of La Porte.

**Independent Contractor Agreement with Todd Taylor**

Water Superintendent Tim Werner presented Independent Contractor Agreement with Todd Taylor. Mr. Werner stated he was the previous superintendent for the Water Department for 41 years. Mr. Taylor will be working with the department on the new well field, he will be the on-site inspector. Mr. Werner stated the department will save a little money with Mr. Taylor being the inspector in addition to having the years of knowledge and experience Mr. Taylor will bring to the project. Mr. Kosior questioned if there was an hourly rate. Mr. Werner stated there is no hourly rate, this is a monthly payment that is made, regardless of the number of hours that are worked. This will be the second or third year for this contract that will go through to the end of the year.

**Motion/Vote – Approval of Independent Contractor Agreement with Todd Taylor**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Independent Contractor Agreement with Todd Taylor as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

**Unfinished Business**

Mayor Dermody reported he had a conference call with Norfolk Southern regarding train horns still blowing even though we have implemented the quiet zone. Mayor Dermody stated some of the train engineers have been there for 30 years and they are used to blowing horns

in certain areas but Norfolk Southern has taken the request seriously and they are working with those engineers to not blow horns through the quiet zone. Mr. Romine noted that as a member on the board at the hospital that it was brought up that they have really noticed a difference and it has been well received.

**Other Business:**

Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 9 A.M.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, Mr. Kosior made a motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Approve:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor**

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer**

**Approved: March 19, 2024**