

June 4, 2024

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine (arrived late), Mark Kosior

Absent:

Bruce Johnson 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

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

Public Comment

Bruce Johnson, 2012 S. Village Road, advised the Council that he has spoken with Bob Sieko, Nutrition Teacher at Kesling Middle School, regarding a project his 8th grade class is working on for an historic marker honoring Fred Mennen, the founder of Jiffy Pop Popcorn. He reported Mr. Sieko suggested the historic marker be placed at 506 Clay Street, where it was founded, or the corner of the Courthouse lawn. Mr. Johnson stated his thoughts would be to place the marker at Plaza 618 as the City already has a mural highlighting the City's history. Discussion was held and it was decided this should go before the Historic Preservation Commission, the City Engineer and the City Planner. Mayor Dermody stated this is a worthwhile project and wants the students to be involved with wording as well as the placement of the marker. This will come back to the Board of Works once there is more information.

Claims Approval

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Payroll for May 24, 2024 in the amount of \$529,139.99.

Motion/Vote – Approval Payroll for May 24, 2024

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the May 24, 2024 payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$787,936.71.

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 Sewage Claims in the amount of \$221,938.11.

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.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Water Claims in the amount of \$155,278.31.

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.

Temporary Loan for Police Pension Fund

The Clerk-Treasurer requested the Board's approval for a temporary loan from CEDIT to the Police Pension Fund in the amount of \$13,000. She advised when calculating the amount needed in the pension funds until the City receives payment from INPRS the end of June, we do not add death benefits and unfortunately there have been two deaths this year.

Motion/Vote – Approve Temporary Loan for Police Pension Fund

Ms. Romine moved to approve the request; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Approval of Claim

The Clerk-Treasurer presented a claim in the amount of \$1,000 for Nicholas Smith that was not included on the claim docket as she was waiting for some guidance from the State Board of Accounts.

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the claim; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Department Head Reports

Street Department: Mike Frazee reported the County contacted him this morning requesting to close Waverly Road for tree and brush trimming and mowing. Ms. Romine moved to approve the request to close Waverly Road; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Park: Parks and Recreation Superintendent Mark Schreiber stated things are starting to kick off for the summer season starting with the La Porte City Band this Wednesday at the Dennis F. Smith Amphitheater in Fox Park. Arts in the Park will start this Thursday and will have concerts every week through August 29 with the exception of Fourth of July and that concert has been moved to July 2nd. Mr. Schreiber announced the first Friday Night Live will take

place on June 7th with a 50's Cruise In. On Sunday there will be the Annual Chain of Lakes Paddle which is sponsored by Northwest Indiana Paddling Association. On Friday June 14th will be the first "Movies in the Park". This will occur on five different Fridays throughout the summer. The first Night Bike Ride will take place on June 21st. Mr. Schreiber advised all this information can be found on LaPorteParkandRec.com. Mr. Schreiber stated the Park Board normally meets the third Wednesday of the month but due to the Juneteeth Holiday the meeting has been moved to Wednesday, June 12th at 4:00 p.m. at the Park Office.

LEAP: Bert Cook, Executive Director of the La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership, reported last night was an exciting time for the City of La Porte with the announcement of the Microsoft Project at the City Council meeting. Mr. Cook stated this is a \$1 Billion investment by Microsoft into the City of La Porte to build a datacenter campus along Boyd Boulevard at the southern edge of the City of La Porte. The project will create 200 high paying jobs in our community.

Mr. Cook stated at last night's Council meeting, the Council approved a Resolution authorizing Microsoft to claim the Date Center Exemption, created by State Statute to provide relief from personal property tax liability for forty years. With this, the savings Microsoft will refund, in the form of a PILOT, up to \$2,500,000 annually for forty years to support local projects benefitting the Redevelopment Commission and the La Porte Community School Corporation.

Code Enforcement: Jeff Batchler, Director of Code Enforcement, introduced Paula Stokes as the City's new Code Compliance Officer with a focus on animal control. He reported Ms. Stokes has gone through training and is certified.

Water Department: Tim Werner, Director of Water, reported they have started drilling the Soldier's Memorial well yesterday. He stated they started with number eleven which is closest to Orchard Bluff. He stated the drilling takes about a week and then they will move on to the well just east of the boat launch. After the wells are drilled, they will start developing the wells. Mr. Werner stated as these are new wells, they will have to run a seventy-two-hour test and with that there will be a lot of ground water in those areas. He advised they have taken the necessary precautions to keep the water off the roads and into the lake. Once that is completed the process will move forward with bidding the pumping equipment and pipe needed for the wells.

New Business:

Annette Loeffler, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, stated as Mr. Schreiber reported Friday Night Live starts this Friday and she wanted to update the Board on the events that are planned as follows:

- Friday, June 7th – "50's Cruisin"
- Friday, July 5th – "Taco Fest"
- Friday, August 9th - "Cheeseburger in Paradise"

Ms. Loeffler reported that in past years, these events were held on Monroe Street (La Stitch) and will continue in the same place.

In connection with the Sunflower Fair an event is planned for Friday, September 20th on Michigan Avenue, from Lincolnway to Maple. She stated this is for information purposes and no action is necessary by the Board.

Purchase Option Agreements for Scott Field & Boyd Blvd. Property

Nick Otis, on behalf of Craig Phillips, presented to the Board a purchase option agreement for Scott Field and property on Boyd Blvd. with Advantix Corporation for potential low-income housing. Mr. Otis stated, as you are well aware of, State Statute has strict guidelines when a government unit sells property. There are twenty-five exceptions and one of those is when a City or governmental entity disposes of residential structures or improvements without consideration to a non-profit corporation that is organized to expand the supply for good quality affordable housing for low to moderate incomes. The option agreements are for twelve months and can be extended. Discussion was held regarding this matter, and it was noted there are two parcels at Scott Field and this will not impact on the playground area. Mr. Otis stated the reason for the option instead of outright purchasing the properties is because they have applied for grants and want to make sure they qualify.

Motion/Vote – Approve Purchase Option Agreements for Scott Field & Boyd Blvd. Property

Mr. Kosior moved to approve both agreements based on Advantix securing the grants they have applied for; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

La Porte Artwork Memorandum of Understanding

Bert Cook stated at the last meeting the Board approved an MOU for a piece of sculpture to be placed in Plaza 618. He stated between the time it was approved and he was able to notify the artist the piece was sold to another community. This MOU before the Board is with a different artist who has several pieces to choose from. The Art Committee has chosen a sculpture that has many similarities to the first one.

Motion/Vote – Approved Artwork Memorandum of Understanding

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

Esri Small Municipal and County Government Enterprise Agreement (SGEA)

Melissa Mischke, GIS Coordinator, presented for Board approval an agreement with Esri Small Municipal and County Government Enterprise (SGEA). She stated this program will allow access to Esri software. Access to this software will benefit the City 's GIS program, will allow for a better inventory of City trees and will allow access for users City wide. Ms. Mischke reported this will be paid from the Tree Grant which is one hundred percent reimbursable.

Motion/Vote – Approve Esri Small Municipal and County Government Enterprise Agreement (SGEA)

Ms. Romine moved to approve the agreement with Esri Small Municipal and County Government Enterprise (SGEA) for two years; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Basement Back-Up Grant – 111 Stanley Court

Jerry Jackson, Director of Wastewater, presented to the Board for approval a basement back-up grant for 111 Stanley Court in the amount of \$8,260. He stated the City’s portion would be \$6,445 and the homeowner will pay \$1,815. Mr. Jackson reported he contacted the contractor regarding the cost and in order to correct the problem the washer, dryer and sink have to be moved. Discussion was held regarding the City’s policy to only pay up to \$5,000.

Motion/Vote – Approve Basement Back-Up Grant for 111 Stanley Court

As there is a cap of \$5,000 the City will pay, Ms. Romine moved to approve the request not to exceed \$5,000; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business

None

Other Business:

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday June 18, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers.

Adjourn

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

Approved: _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: June 18, 2024