

July 2, 2024

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, July 2, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine, 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

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

Public Comment

None

Claims Approval

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Layman presented Q2 Quarterly Payroll in the amount of \$1926.88.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Q2 Quarterly Payroll

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the Q2 Quarterly Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Layman presented Payroll from June 21, 2024 in the amount of \$542,881.89.

Motion/Vote – Approval of June 21, 2024 Payroll

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the June 2, 2024 Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Layman presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$2,108,610.26. Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Layman stated this does include \$1.4 million in lease payments, the expense to Utility Associates from the DEA asset forfeiture, as well as several bond payments.

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.

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Layman presented Water Claims in the amount of \$254,688.94.

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.

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Layman presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$305,779.91.

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.

La Porte Sewage and Water BANs Resolutions

City Attorney Nick Otis introduced Tom Pittman. Mr. Pittman is the attorney that works with the city and specializes in bond financing. Attorney Pittman stated the action presented before the board today is the first step in the legal process of procuring bond funds for the sewer and water projects. Attorney Pittman stated the way this will work is the city will initially do short term financing and these resolutions would have the Board of Works acknowledge the need for these projects and request the City Council takes the actions necessary to secure the funds. A preliminary bond anticipation note is the first step for both utilities in addition to finalizing the initial plans. Once the bond is sold and finalized, each utility will have five-year short-term financing. The city will have up to five years to pay back the funds, and will make interest only payments, with the option to pay principal payments. During this five-year period, the city will be working to go to the market and issue long-term bonds. The long-term bonds are what will repay the bond anticipation note. Because there are projects that have near-term needs that require financing now, and projects that are still a few years out, this is the recommendation, rather than do separate bonds. Typically, with bonds, there is a need for adjustment in utility rates, however, that is not anticipated with the short-term financing. Long-term, there will be conversations about rate-increases. Mayor Dermody reminded the public that the revenue from the monthly utility bills helps pay for these necessary infrastructure upgrades and improvements. Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson stated the Indiana Ave project is a great opportunity to get the water and sewage utility work done at a significantly lessened cost because of the work already being done. In addition, Mr. Jackson stated the headworks rehab treatment plant that was built in the mid-80s is a much-needed infrastructure upgrade. Mayor Dermody asked Mr. Jackson to elaborate on how this will affect residents. Mr. Jackson said the headworks screen the wastewater before it goes for biological treatment, it is the first step in the process and must work. Mayor Dermody recognized and thanked Congressman Irvan's office for securing a million dollars through the Federal Government to help with this project. Water Superintendent Tim Werner listed off the various projects that will be paid for using these funds, in addition to mentioning the grants that they have applied for, for various projects but have been denied and told the city's utility rates are too low and we should raise those rates to get the funds needed for the infrastructure repairs and upgrades.

Motion/Vote – Approval of La Porte Sewage and Water BANs Resolutions

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve La Porte Sewage and Water BANs Resolutions as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Qualls Parcel Tax Payment

Director of the La Pore Economic Advancement Partnership Bert cook presented Qualls Parcel Payment. Mr. Cook stated this is the same process that we have followed in pervious years. The City of La Porte has an outstanding incentive with Quincy Development and the Thomas Rose Industrial Park for the spec buildings that they have constructed. This payment will be the second payment. The window for these payments extends out five years.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Qualls Parcel Tax Payment

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Qualls Parcel Tax Payment as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Department Head Reports

Human Resources: Human Resources Director Andrea Smith reported they will be hosting trench safety and confined space training on Friday July 12th. There are individuals that have already signed up but those that plan to attend should sign up by next week.

City Planner: City Planner Craig Philips reported they are continuing various grant opportunities that are all in various stages of the process. Mr. Phillips stated the Beechwood property will be going back out for public offer very soon, with the anticipation of bringing proposals before the board in September. In addition, they continue to work on the City's Comprehensive and Transportation Plan.

Mayor Dermody recognized CDBG Manager Mary Anne Richards, as well as the individuals in the Engineering Department, for all of the great work they have put into the sidewalks.

Water: Water Superintendent Tim Werner reported the new well field that is being dug is pulling a lot of water, which is a good thing. Mr. Werner stated his hopes with this new water supply is to increase water flow and have a supply in case something goes down, this city will still be able to meet the necessary water demand. Mr. Werner stated the goal is not to be running the wells so hard all the time and to get 50-60 years out of them before they will need replaced.

Wastewater: Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson reported they are working on the McClung Road sanitary. The connection has been made at the existing sanitary at Kebalin and they are taking it north.

Engineering: City Engineer Nick Minich reported everyone should be able to utilize Truesdell Ave as they attend the fireworks on the 3rd. Mr. Minich stated there may still be some daily closures after this event for restoration and different work. In addition. Mr. Minich stated they have received a right-of-way permit for NIPSCO for road closures over the next few weeks. The closures will be daily closures and will be for two to three days at each location.

The work will be done on L Street between 5th and 6th and on A Street between 10th and 12th. NIPSCO will provide traffic control for these closures.

Code: Director of Code Jeff Batchelor reported they have noticed an increase of landlords tossing items from homes to the curbside when tenants have been evicted. Mr. Batchelor stated it is not the city's responsibility to clean up those items, so they have begun fining people for doing this. Mr. Kosior questioned if the fining process has been impactful in getting landlords to do what they are supposed to do. Mr. Batchelor responded by stating yes and no. Those individuals that care about their neighbors and the community are responsive, but they will continue to go to the nuisance houses. Mr. Batchelor stated ultimately, this type of behavior could result in those individuals losing their house but that is not necessarily what they want it to come to.

Police: Chief Buell introduced two new officers that are in training: Officer Rivera and Officer Yettaw. Both Officer Rivera and Officer Yettaw spoke briefly about themselves and expressed their excitement to be working in the City of La Porte.

Fire: Chief Snyder reported they did receive the ISO report that was done last year. We were previously a class three and will remain at that status. Chief Snyder stated it is always good to not go back a class and they are currently reviewing all of the information that has been provided in the report to see what can be done to be moved up to a class two during the next report in five years. Mayor Dermody asked for clarification on what the residents and businesses of 39 North should expect with this rating. Chief Snyder stated they should see an improvement with their insurance now that they are officially part of the city and have the services of the career 24/7 department readily available to them. Mr. Kosior questioned if the residents and business owners should contact their insurance companies and let them know of the classification change. Chief Snyder responded and stated they should definitely follow up with their insurance companies and see what can be done and if any cost savings may be available due to the classification change.

LEAP: Bert Cook Executive Director of the La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership reported that the assisted living facility project they have been working on for 39 N with John English, Ed, and Deb Arnold did move forward at last night's City Council meeting. Mr. Cook expressed his appreciation for the team and their patience and willingness to work with the city to address all necessary items. Mr. Cook also recognized Matt Rear and the County Redevelopment Commission that has agreed to help support some of the infrastructure needs for this project.

Park: Parks and Rec Superintendent Mark Schreiber reported there will be an Independence Day fireworks show at Fox Park on Wednesday night. The event will begin at 6 PM with food trucks in the amphitheater area and the La Porte City Band will begin playing at 7 PM with the fireworks to follow at dusk. Mr. Schreiber stated there are various parking areas available throughout Fox Park in addition to various off-street lots. Mr. Romine questioned if Arts in

the Park will be providing a shuttle. Mr. Schreiber stated because Arts in the Park are not involved with this event, they will not be providing a shuttle. In addition, Mr. Schreiber reported that Friday is Taco Fest. There will be 10-12 food trucks, a DJ, and a beer garden.

Street: Street Superintendent Mike Frazee reported they are cutting trees and getting everything ready for the Fourth of July.

New Business:

Request for Placement: Frederick Mennen Indiana Historical Marker Robert Sieko

Robert Sieko, a middle school teacher at Kesling, presented a request for Frederick Mennen Indian Historical Marker. Mr. Sieko spoke briefly about his students learning about different inventors and food products when they learned Frederick Mennen, from La Porte, invented Jiffy Pop. Mr. Sieko gave a brief history of Jiffy Pop and its impact on La Porte. Mr. Sieko stated he is filling out an application to get a historical marker made for Frederick Mennen and the application requires the approval of the Board of Works. The historical marker will cost \$3,300 dollars and students will be working to fundraise the money. Mr. Sieko stated they would like to see the historical marker placed at Plaza 618 because the mural that is already there does show the popcorn history but ultimately, he believes the placement should be up to the city. Mayor Dermody said he wants to work with the Planning Department to determine where to set the marker. Mr. Kosior commended Mr. Sieko for his work on this and asked where people could donate if they chose to. Mr. Sieko stated the kids will be doing a popcorn fundraiser throughout next year and if individuals would like to donate, they can reach out to himself at rsieko@gmail.com

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request for Placement: Frederick Mennen Indiana Historical Marker Robert Seiko

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Request for Placement: Frederick Mennen Indiana Historical Marker Robert Seiko as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Notice of Use: Holy Family Parish Corpus Christi Procession

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Notice of Use: Holy Family Parish Corpus Christi Procession. Ms. Loeffler stated this is not technically a request for use because they are not asking to close any right of way. They will be having a processional on July 5th that will start at Sacred Heart Church, down Clear Lake Boulevard, up Michigan Ave, and then over to St. Joe Church. They have requested and coordinated help with the police department. Ms. Loeffler reiterated they are not necessarily requesting permission, however just want to make everyone aware of their intentions.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Notice of Use: Holy Family Parish Corpus Christi Procession

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Notice of Use: Holy Family Parish Corpus Christi Procession as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Request to Set Special BOW Meeting to Award Bid: 18th St./Park St. Projects

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Request to set a special Board of Works meeting for Friday July 19th at 9 A.M. to award two bids.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request to Set Special BOW Meeting to Award Bid: 18th St./Park St. Projects

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Request to Set Special BOW Meeting to Award Bid; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Fair Half Day for Employees

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Fair Half Day for Employees. Ms. Loeffler said this request is presented every year for full-time employees to take a half day to visit the La Porte County Fair. It is up to department heads to coordinate with employees to ensure adequate coverage to allow employees to take off. Mayor Dermody said he feels this is an important benefit for employees to reward their dedication and hard work and to get to go out and spend time with their families at the fair.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Fair Half Day for Employees

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

Advertising Agreement

Communications Director Jessica Spoljaric presented Advertising Agreement. This agreement is with Travel Indiana magazine and the city has partnered with them for the last few years. Ms. Spoljaric stated they have been great to work with and always put La Porte first. Ms. Spoljaric is requesting permission to sign the agreement to continue this relationship with Travel Indiana in 2025. Mr. Kosior questioned if we were able to gauge what our return is from this magazine. Ms. Spoljaric stated it is hard to gauge because it is print, however there are approximately 55,000 magazines distributed throughout the state and just outside the state at some travel centers. Travel Indiana is able to track their online or digital items through their Facebook page and e-newsletter, which reaches quite a few people as well.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Advertising Agreement

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve option one Advertising Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Request for Approval of Contract for Fire Training Facility

Chief Snyder presented Request for Approval of Contract for Fire Training Facility. Chief Snyder stated this contract is from WHP Training Towers. This is a follow-up from the previous meeting where Chief Snyder requested permission to accept a \$500,000 grant from HFL. Chief Snyder stated the facility plans are the same as previously discussed with the only changes being to some costs. The timeframe for construction will also be the same as previously discussed. Chief Snyder stated this facility will help with the ISO rating, as they are currently only receiving about half of the available points in the ISO classification for training. Chief

Snyder clarified that it is not due to lack of training, it is due to lack of a proper facility within city limits to do the training. They have not received full credits for their live and associated fire training, which will help with those credits in the future. Chief Snyder emphasized that this facility will be available to the fire department, city and county police departments and other county entities. Chief Snyder said he has been working with the Clerk-Treasurer's office to find funding for the other \$500,000 needed for this project and looking for more potential grant opportunities.

Motion/Vote – Approval Contract for Fire Training Facility

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Contract for Fire Training Facility as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Acceptance of Marquette Alley Plat of ROW

City Engineer Nick Minich presented Acceptance of Marquette Alley Plat of ROW. Mr. Minich stated this typically goes through Redevelopment Commission and Board of Works and was not able to get on the last agenda for Redevelopment Commission. Mr. Minich stated because it has not yet been approved by the RDC, he is requesting pre-emptive approval to be signed when the document is complete. Mr. Minich stated when Newporte Landing was developed, there was some flexibility, and they have seen the need for a public right-of-way on North Madison and the area in the back that will continue to develop, as necessary.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Acceptance of Marquette Alley Plat of ROW

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Acceptance of Marquette Alley Plat of ROW as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Request to Solicit RFQ – City Energy Conservation/Generation Grant Program

City Engineer Nick Minich presented Request to Solicit RFQ – City Energy Conservation/Generation Grant Program. Mr. Minich stated they have submitted multiple projects to the state for a grant, that through IDEM the state is submitting to EPA. Mr. Minich stated they have heard very good feedback on the potential to get funds. This is a greenhouse gas mitigation and resiliency type grant. Mr. Minich stated they are looking at various solar type projects that will help the day-to-day expenses of keeping city facilities powered. Mr. Minich said we need an energy service company on board to do this, so he requests permission to solicit proposals for qualifications. This would go through the state's guaranteed energy savings code to solicit and find a contractor to assist with the project. Assistant City Engineer Tucker King said this was a combined effort between the sustainability commission and the engineering department to get this off the ground and he believes it will help just as it does at the wastewater treatment plant. Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson stated it saves their department approximately \$300,000 a year.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request to Solicit RFQ – City Energy Conservation/Generation Grant Program

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request to Solicit RFQ – Energy Conservation/Generation Grant Program as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Permission to Bid 18th and Park Street Sanitary

Wastewater Director Jerry Jackson presented Permission to Bid 18th Street Sanitary. This is a sanitary sewer system that serves from A Street to I Street. This includes the new development and some existing houses that did not have access to sewer. Mr. Jackson stated they are trying to do this project, and the Park Street Project, at an accelerated pace as far as bidding to keep pace with the development that is currently happening and to get roads in before the end of paving season. This project is approximately 50/50 funded from Civil City and the Wastewater Budget.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Permission to Bid 18th and Park Street Sanitary

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Permission to Bid 18th and Park Street Sanitary as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Permission to Bid Thomas Rose Extension and Park St Water Materials

Assistant City Engineer Tucker King presented Permission to Bid Thomas Rose Extension and Park St Water Materials. Mr. King said due to an error with the advertising for the Thomas Rose and Park Street extension materials list, the bids that were received had to be rejected and he is requesting permission to re-bid for these projects.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Permission to Bid Thomas Rose Extension and Park St Water Materials

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Permission to Bid Thomas Rose Extension and Park St Water Materials as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Permission to Accept INDOT Road Inventory

Assistant City Engineering Tucker King presented Permission to Accept INDOT Road Inventory. Mr. King stated this request is for permission to accept portions of our right of way that are not currently on the state’s inventory for us for community crossing grant eligibility. Mr. King stated there are approximately 10 miles of right of way that we have been maintaining but have never been added to the state’s list. This will help to increase funding for MVH.

Motion/Vote – Approval Permission to Accept INDOT Road Inventory

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Permission to Accept INDOT Road Inventory as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business

Mayor Dermody noted that everything we do within the city requires funding and 30% of our revenue since the property tax caps, which is a wonderful thing for homeowners, stay with the homeowners and no longer comes to the city. Mayor Dermody said there have not been any cuts to programs or services provided by the city as we continue to strive to find new

ways to do things and fund things and will continue to see us seek out grants and other unique ways to fund things. Mayor Dermody reminded everyone that when you see officials running at the state level that promises to cut property taxes, that affects people only at the local level, not the state level, and there are local issues that do come with those cuts. Mayor Dermody invited any state or federal officials to come to La Porte to discuss efficiencies and providing services to the community with tax cuts. Mr. Kosior recognized the efforts of everyone in the community and employees of the city for how hard they work to continue to make the city the best it can be and to always be striving for more.

Other Business:

Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday July 16, 2024 at 9 A.M.

Adjourn

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

Approve: _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: July 16, 2024