

September 4, 2024

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

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine, Mark Kosior

Absent:

Mike Frazee 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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Payroll from August 30, 2024 in the amount of \$525,466.33.

Motion/Vote – Approval of August 16, 2024 Payroll

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the August 30, 2024 Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$354,564.09.

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 \$495,147.80.

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 \$293,752.37.

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.

Department Head Reports

Street: Street Superintendent Mike Frazee reported they are patching, cutting trees, and getting things set up for Roof Sit on Friday. Mayor Dermody reminded everyone that Roof Sit is this Friday and is great for the kids around Christmas time. Mayor Dermody encouraged anyone that has a few dollars to spare to stop by on Friday and donate, they will be there all day.

Park: Parks and Recreation Superintendent Mark Schreiber reminded everyone of the upcoming rescheduled night bike ride. Mr. Schreiber reported the Dunebook Boat Races will take place this Saturday at Stone Lake Beach. There are 21 teams competing on the water, kids' zones, and food trucks. Mr. Schreiber encouraged everyone to attend and support a worthy cause. In addition, Mr. Schreiber stated there are also a couple of local organizations that will be doing their fundraisers at the Civic Auditorium. The Boys and Girls Club will do their Blue Bash Gayla on October 11th and Meals on Wheels will have their trivia night on October 12th.

IT: IT Director Roscoe Hoffman reported he is diligently working to review the agreement with the current IT vendor to hopefully save some dollars for the city.

Fire: Chief Snyder reported they are still investigating the house fire from yesterday and have requested the help of the State Fire Marshall due to some circumstances surrounding the fire.

Police: Chief Buell reported the air handler at the department went out and they are looking into getting it replaced. Chief Buell stated it will be expensive to fix and they did get an estimate for replacement in the amount of \$69,990. This estimate does include all labor, parts, and removal and disposal of the old equipment. Chief Buell noted that the air handler works during the summer and winter for heating and cooling purposes, and they are deciding what to do.

Code: Code Director Jeff Batchlor reported the two things they are currently working on are properties that landlords are not taking care of and vehicles alongside the road that have not moved.

Mayor Dermody recognized Clerk-Treasurer Parthun and her team for doing a great job on budgets. Mayor Dermody recognized that it is not easy to provide appropriate raises for individuals to show appreciation for their hard work and effort when there are zero dollars to transfer to make that happen. Mayor Dermody stated we are going to continue to have a structurally balanced budget in the general fund, meaning if increases in pay are given there will need to be a reduction in other areas.

Engineering: City Engineer Nick Minch reported they did have the Truesdell final walkthrough for the punch list items. Mr. Minich stated the contractor will finish those up and they do recognize there have been some issues with mowing and once the contractor gets through the punch list items, they will work that all out. Mayor Dermody thanked the public for the calls of support with compliments on Truesdell and how much they enjoy Fox Park.

Water: Water Superintendent Tim Werner reported the construction crew has started installing the water main on Park Street and will be closed from Park Street to Seivers. Once that area is complete, the crew will move onto Seivers and there will be 63 working days to complete this project. This main will ultimately run to the lift station on 39 N. Mayor Dermody stated this is a reminder to the residents of 39 N that they are in good hands, and we are doing what we promised we would do, even though we have not received the financing yet.

New Business:

Request to set new time for Trick-or-Treat

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented a request to set a new time for Trick-or-Treat. The newly proposed time is from 5 PM to 7 PM, moving the start time up one hour. Ms. Loeffler noted all the surrounding communities have a start time of 5 PM. Mayor Dermody encouraged anyone that had any concerns to speak up about this because it is a big deal, but he thinks it is fair for the smaller children to get to be out for a little bit in daylight versus complete darkness. Ms. Romine noted the later start time may be harder for those working parents that cannot get off early to get their children ready, however, the time can always be switched back if the feedback isn't good.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request to set new time for Trick-or-Treat

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request to set new time for Trick-or-Treat as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Parking Appeals: Three (3) Ticket #s 24-2411, 24-2429, 24-2379

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler requested this item to be tabled because the police department did not have ample time to review and look at the situation and therefore, she did not feel it was fair to address this today.

Motion/Vote – Table Parking Appeals: Three (3) Ticket #s 24-2411, 24-2429, 24-2379

Mr. Kosior made a motion to table Parking Appeals: Three (3) Ticket #s 24-2411, 24-2429, 24-2379; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Federal Operating Assistance Agreement Amendment #2

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Federal Operating Assistance Agreement Amendment #2. This is an amendment to change the dates and once it is signed, we will be back in compliance with dates.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Federal Operating Assistance Agreement Amendment #2

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Federal Operating Assistance Agreement Amendment #2 as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

39N Agreement

City Attorney Nick Otis presented 39 N agreement and inter local agreement. Attorney Otis said this purchase agreement is to purchase all the utility assets of 39 N. By law, the property owners cannot be paid directly with cash payments, so they will receive utility credits as compensation. The City of La Porte is paying \$2 million in utility credit and receiving \$500,000 cash from the 39 North Conservancy District. Attorney Otis stated the Conservancy District has approximately \$640,000 and will retain approximately \$140,000. The interlocal agreement deals with the Conservancy District's ability to enforce the contract if the city is not doing something they said that they would. Attorney Otis stated Appendix V breaks down the credits for each property owner. Who receives what credit was determined and outlined by the Conservancy District. Attorney Otis stated they will be working with Bakertilly and the Clerk-Treasurer's office to ensure that credits are calculated and applied correctly, and everyone understands how they work. Attorney Otis noted that although the credit length depends on usage, the intention when setting this up was for the credits to not last longer than 15 years. Ms. Romine questioned if there would be any statement annually sent to the property owners to let them know where they stand with their credit. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated the credit information should be seen on their monthly statement. Attorney Otis stated 39 N should have this item on their agenda for their meeting on Friday and the closing should be scheduled for some time this month.

Motion/Vote - Approval 39N Agreement

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve 39N Agreement and the Inter Local Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Bid Opening for Public Offering – Beechwood Lakes Property

Director of Community Development Craig Phillips presented Bid Opening for Public Offering - Beechwood Lakes Property. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented the affidavit of publications: This public offering was published in the Herald Dispatch on July 19, 2024, and July 26, 2024. Mayor Dermody requested Mr. Phillips to state what Beechwood Lakes is. Mr. Phillips stated Beechwood Lakes is an approximate 50-acre property donated to the City of La Porte for redevelopment and other uses. 35 Acres was made available for development of a mixture of housing types and the remaining 15 acres will be utilized for other uses. One bid was received from Sloan Avenue Development and Redstone Homes Joint Venture. The official bidder firm is Park Street Community LLC. The following two bid options were given.

Option A: Purchase of the land for \$1,870,000 and the City of La Porte funds water and sewer infrastructure for envisioned residential site plan. This is approximately 50% of the estimated infrastructure costs.

Option B: Purchase of Land for \$2,510,000 and the City of La Porte funds water and sewer and road infrastructure for the envisioned residential site plan. This is approximately 75% of the estimated infrastructure costs.

Mr. Kosior questioned if providing two different options was a requirement of the bid. Mr. Phillips said it was not a bid requirement, but there was a minimum bid required, and they met the minimum bid requirement with either option. In addition, Mr. Phillips noted they did provide sample floor plans and a marketing study. Mr. Phillips stated they will take the bid under advisement and review with the attorney to ensure all aspects of the bid have been met and hopefully bring a recommendation back to the Board of Works at the next meeting.

Request to Sign AOR Letter

Human Resources Director Andrea Smith presented a Request to Sign AOR Letter. Ms. Smith stated there have been many meetings regarding this with Mayor Dermody and Clerk-Treasurer Parthun and is requesting approval from the Board of Works to utilize Brown and Brown as the City's agent of record on insurance matters including medical, dental, vision, life, and disability. Ms. Smith stated Richard Sutton and other representatives, Diane and Nick, from Brown and Brown are present at today's meeting and invited them up to speak. Mr. Sutton stated Brown and Brown is the seventh largest broker in the country, and they are with the public entity division. Mr. Sutton stated a unique thing about Brown and Brown is the fact that they are fee based, not commission based, and their fee is typically far less than what a commission would be. Mr. Sutton stated they have recently done a survey and recommends we make a switch of our health insurance from UMR to Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield; The savings is roughly half a million dollars for the same level of benefits. Mr. Sutton introduced his team, Diane Tichnell and Nick Napier. Ms. Tichnell expressed her excitement to be working with the City of La Porte and explained their passion for helping people, especially government entities, save money. Mayor Dermody stated that the city's goals with this change are to improve the health of the employees and receive the best care possible, while reducing costs. Nick Napier spoke briefly and expressed his excitement to be working with the City of La Porte. Nick will be the account executive for the city. Mr. Kosior questioned where the savings would be coming from. Mr. Sutton stated the fixed charges, such as admin fees and other things, are all lower across the board, in addition to claims projections will be less because of the leverage Anthem has in the state of Indiana. Because Anthem does a lot of business in Indiana, they demand better discounts from doctors and hospitals. All these things add up to approximately \$500,000 in savings. Mr. Kosior questioned if the analysis done showed a match for doctors, prescription coverage, and things like this because those are the big concerns when switching insurance carriers. Mr. Sutton stated there was a 99% match and Anthem's network is very broad with deep discounts so there are no concerns there. Mayor Dermody questioned how many school corporations utilize the services of Brown and Brown. Mr. Sutton stated there are about 293 public school corporations in the state of Indiana and 190 of them are clients of Brown and Brown.

Ms. Smith thanked Menny and his staff at GIS for the services they have provided us. We will continue to work with General Insurance Services for our liability and workers' compensation

claims. Ms. Smith stated GIS has been top notch to work with and looks forward to working with Richard and his team having the same type of service. Mayor Dermody clarified that just because we are making these changes and seeing those savings, this does not mean those dollars automatically go into raises for everyone or other things. These funds will remain within the health plan to ensure the future structure of the health plan is financially viable. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun also noted that the premiums employees pay are minimal and will not be changing and have not changed in the previous four years. Ms. Smith stated we will also be changing dental carriers in 2025 and with those changes employees will see better benefits are more dentists located in La Porte.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request to Sign AOR Letter

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request to Sign AOR Letter as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

McClung Road Sanitary Sewer Pay Request #3

GIS Technician Melissa Mischke presented McClung Road Sanitary Sewer Pay Request #3 in the amount of \$182,813.48 payable to TGB Unlimited. This brings the project to approximately 73% completion.

Motion/Vote- Approval of McClung Road Sanitary Sewer Pay Request #3

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve McClung Road Sanitary Sewer Pay Request #3 as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunters Woods – Change Order #1

GIS Technician Melissa Mischke presented N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – Change Order #1 in the amount of \$19,798.81. This change order changes the sewer pipe to a thicker wall to accommodate the depth of the sewer. Ms. Romine questioned if this is within the budget of the project. Ms. Mischke stated it is still within the budget.

Motion/Vote – Approval of N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – Change Order #1

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – Change Order #1 as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

18th Street Sanitary Construction Contract with Woodruff

GIS Technician Melissa Mischke presented 18th Street Sanitary Construction Contract with Woodruff. This area services the Steiner development and the existing residences between A and I Street. Woodruff was the low bid, the bid was approved in July and this is the contract that resulted from that. The contract is in the amount of \$1,040,953.88. Mayor Dermody noted the first Steiner home is up and it has been generating a lot interest.

Motion/Vote – Approval of 18th Street Sanitary Construction Contract with Woodruff

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve 18th Street Sanitary Construction Contract with Woodruff as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – JPR Additional Services

GIS Technician Melissa Mischke presented N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – JPR Additional Services. This is for construction, administration, and inspections. The additional services request is in the amount of \$42,000 plus a \$2,000 reimbursable.

Motion/Vote - Approval of N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – JPR Additional Services

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve N Park Road Sewer Extension to Hunter Woods – JPR Additional Services as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Wastewater Hauler Permit: Krupa's Port a Pots

GIS Technician Melissa Mischke presented a new wastewater hauler permit from Krupa's Port a Pots, LLC. Ms. Mischke stated Krupa's took over a former hauler, Huhnke's, and this is a new agreement.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Wastewater Hauler Permit

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Wastewater Hauler Permit as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

North Park Road Sewer Extension Agreement with HRP

Assistant City Engineer Tucker King presented North Park Road Sewer Extension Agreement with HRP in the amount of \$434,890. This agreement is for the installation of the interior portion of Hunter Woods Subdivision. Mr. King noted this came in significantly under budget as they had initially planned it to cost approximately \$1.1 million.

Motion/Vote – Approval of North Park Road Sewer Extension Agreement with HRP

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve North Park Road Sewer Extension Agreement with HRP as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

USI Agreement

City Engineer Nick Minich presented USI Agreement. Mr. Minich stated this agreement is to assist with the 2004 Systemic HSIP Grant Assistance. The city has been working with both INDOT and USI to address safety concerns in the area where 39 and 35 split on Pine Lake Ave and at Johnson Road and US 35 with a state project. The intention is to apply for a grant with the state for some necessary safety improvements. Mr. Minich stated to apply for this grant, they are utilizing USI to help with this grant because they have an excellent track record of helping to secure HSIP funding. The agreement is in the amount of \$8,000 and will be paid from Engineering Professional Services. Mr. Minich stated these grant funds would assist us in making additional pedestrian access throughout Pine Lake Ave. Mayor Dermody stated there have been issues with individuals not being able to walk along the condos on Pine Lake because individuals that live in the condos have not been allowing that to happen. Mayor Dermody questioned if there was anything that could be done, as far as eminent domain, to remove some of the landscaping that is there to put in a sidewalk. Mr. Minich replied by

stating the majority of the landscaping is in the state’s right of way, so eminent domain would not be necessary. Mr. Minich stated what they have contemplated, and believes the state is in the same mindset, in order to have safe crossing in that area, there needs to be improvements to the roadway to narrow and channelize the road to make more room for a sidewalk. Mr. Kosior questioned if they have an idea of what is anticipated to go in for pedestrians where Pink Lake and 39 split. Mr. Minich stated they see the opportunity for traffic improvements at this intersection in the future and therefore do not believe that a pedestrian crossing in this location is appropriate but instead intend to initiate safety improvements along the whole corridor. Their intention is to put a pedestrian crosswalk closer to the end of Kiwanis Teledyne Park and extend the sidewalk beyond that.

Motion/Vote – Approval of USI Agreement

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

Unfinished Business

Mayor Dermody recognized the hard work that not only the department heads and the employees put into making this city great but also the individuals that give back and want to see our community improve. Mayor Dermody recognized and thanked the Luck and Hiler families for donating the Beechwood Lakes property because without that none of the housing development would be possible.

Other Business:

Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday September 17, 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: September 17, 2024