September 16, 2026

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in special session in the Council Chambers on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at 1:00 P.M.

Kaite Bowen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine, Mark Kosior
Absent: None

Swear in Councilwoman Kaite Bowen
Judge Greta Friedman swore in Councilwoman Katie Bowen. Ms. Bowen introduced her family, spoke briefly about herself, and expressed her excitement to be a Councilwoman for the City of La Porte.

Public Comment
None

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun introduced Tracy Doyle and Joe Gross of Synergy Disaster Recovery, who were engaged by the City through an emergency contract to assist with disaster recovery consulting and FEMA reimbursement. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun explained that Synergy would serve as a liaison between the City and FEMA, assisting with documentation and federal compliance requirements to maximize eligible reimbursement.

Ms. Doyle provided a brief overview of all the items they would help the city with during this recovery process. Mayor Dermody asked for an explanation as to why the city cannot send out crews to pick up various debris at the request of citizens. Mr. Gross explained that you cannot pick up one resident's debris without picking up everyone's debris. The debris removal will be strategically organized, with public notice provided before collection begins and likely multiple passes through affected areas. Residents should not place disaster-related debris in plastic bags, as it may not be identifiable or eligible for FEMA reimbursement. Debris should be placed in the public space between the roadway and property, but not in the street or near fire hydrants, mailboxes, power lines, or drainage infrastructure.

The City is still working with the State and other entities to finalize contracts, funding arrangements, cost shares, and responsibility for coordinating debris removal. Officials expect those details to be clarified within approximately the next week. Vegetative debris and construction/demolition debris should be separated, as they will likely be collected during separate passes. Residents using private contractors for storm-related repairs were advised to ensure the contractor properly disposes of the resulting debris rather than leaving it at the curb for the City to handle.

New Business:

Avenew Contract

Mayor Dermody announced a significant upcoming road paving program and thanked Street Supervisor Ian Eldridge for his work on the project. Street Supervisor Eldridge stated that the City has been preparing for the project and is nearing the start of construction, working with Travis Underhill, Avenew, and Milestone to move the paving projects forward. City Attorney Nick Otis explained that the City is utilizing a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) financing and project delivery option authorized by the State in 2022. The arrangement allows the City to avoid many of the costs associated with traditional borrowing, including bond counsel and financial analysis expenses. Under the agreement, the vendor is also responsible for project costs exceeding the agreed amount. Attorney Otis noted that the City has previously considered this type of project. Mayor Dermody emphasized that traditional funding sources such as CCMG are not sufficient to address the City's ongoing road infrastructure needs.

The initial construction is expected to begin in the fall, with another round planned for the spring. Each project associated with the program must return to the Board of Works for approval. Mr. Eldridge stated that the City hopes to pave a minimum of approximately 15 miles between the fall and spring projects, with the possibility of more. Although some selected roads are wider than typical streets and may reduce the total mileage, the improvements are expected to be substantial.

Mr. Kosior raised questions regarding pricing and the competitive nature of the process. It was explained that the City requested proposals earlier in the year and selected the proposal recommended by the administration. Travis Underhill added that the project team conducts internal reviews to ensure pricing is consistent with previous years and provides value to the community. He also noted that the arrangement can reduce professional-service costs because Avenew has in-house engineering and surveying capabilities. Mr. Underhill discussed the financial savings associated with the BOT approach compared with traditional municipal borrowing, including reduced costs for bond counsel and financial analysis. Mr. Underhill expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with the City and stated that the program is intended to help communities complete road projects more quickly.

Mr. Eldridge stated the contract is in the amount of $4.2 million with an adder of 1.8.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Avenew Contract

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

Invoice(s) Independent Contractors: Storm

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun requested approval to pay invoices for independent contractors and vendors who assisted with storm cleanup following the August 11 storm. Independent contractor invoices included $1,560 for Blake King and $15,000 for James Stannic. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun confirmed that the required independent contractor agreements, workers'

compensation waivers, W-9 forms, and other documentation were on file. Additional storm debris cleanup invoices included $10,160 from Pavey Excavating, $54,763 from PR's Lawn Care, and $849.01 from WM for two or three 30-yard roll-off dumpsters used at the Civic Auditorium. Approval was requested for payment of all listed invoices. Mayor Dermody noted that these are all potential reimbursable costs.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Invoice(s) Independent Contractors: Storm
Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Invoice(s) Independent Contractors: Storm as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Fairfield Subdivision Storm Water Improvement Contract
Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented the contract for the Fairfield Subdivision stormwater improvement project, which was awarded to Reith Riley at the previous Board of Works meeting. The contract, received from Reith Riley, totals $547,740.10. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun requested Board signatures on the contract.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Fairfield Subdivision Storm Water Improvement Contract
Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Fairfield Subdivision Storm Water Improvement Contract as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Land Application
Mayor Dermody discussed a wastewater land application matter and requested to table the item while the City reviews how it will address PFAS in the future. Wastewater Director Jerry Jackson noted that federal guidance regarding PFAS and land application remains uncertain and that practices vary by state. Michigan regulates land application based on PFAS concentrations, while Maine has prohibited the practice. The Board agreed that additional review is needed to understand the evolving regulatory environment and preserve future options.

Motion/Vote – Table Land Application
Mr. Kosior made a motion to table Land Application as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business
Mayor Dermody reminded everyone that the Sunflower Fair is this Saturday and encouraged everyone to attend. In addition, Mayor Dermody noted that anyone that missed AC/DC playing at Notre Dame could come to the Civic on Friday night and enjoy an all female AC/DC cover band.

Other Business:
The next Board of Public Works meeting will be held on Tuesday September 22, 2026 at 9:00 AM in Council Chambers.

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

A brief reception for new Councilwoman Bowen was held following adjournment.

Tabled 07-21-2926: Notice to Terminate
08-04-2026: Permission to Replace Emergency Generator
08-18-2026: Permission to Purchase Loader
08-18-2026: Change Order Boyd Blvd Storm Sewer

Approve: _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: September 22, 2026