

**December 6, 2022**

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, December 6, 2022, at 9:00 A.M.

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

**Absent:**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Dudley Byler 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 moved to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Mark Kosior and unanimously carried.

**Public Comment**

None

**Claims Approval**

Clerk-Treasurer presented Payroll from November 25, 2022 in the amount of \$472,529.67

**Motion/Vote – Approval of November 25, 2022 Payroll**

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the November 25, 2022 Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$566,435.69.

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

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

Clerk-Treasurer presented Water Claims in the amount of \$459,499.09.

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

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

Clerk-Treasurer presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$418,727.08.

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

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

**New Business:**

**Traffic Ticket Appeal**

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented a parking ticket appeal. Ms. Loeffler stated the appeal is from an individual that lives above Downtown Delights and with their residential pass, they can park in front of that area in the two-hour parking, where they can safely load their children to take them to school, but due to the fencing around the collapsed building they were not able to park there. The individual parked on Monroe Street but on the wrong side of the road. Ms. Romine stated these are not typical circumstances and because there is a safety concern involved, she would consider the appeal on a one-time basis with the understanding that this will not be a perpetual thing. Mr. Dermody questioned if an official letter could be provided to this individual to inform them that this will be a one-time approval and if future tickets are received, they will not be approved for appeal. Ms. Loeffler responded by stating a letter could be sent.

**Motion/Vote – Approve Traffic Ticket Appeal**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Traffic Ticket Appeal as presented; motion was seconded by Mark Kosior and unanimously carried.

**Paul Brettin: Officer Resignation Letter and Permission to Hire**

Chief Brettin presented a letter of resignation from Officer Brian Lenig and asked for the Boards approval of the resignation, promotion to Corporal as Office Lenig is currently a Corporal, and permission to hire.

**Motion/Vote – Approve Officer Resignation Letter and Permission to Hire**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Officer Resignation Letter and Permission to Hire as presented; motion was seconded by Ms. Romine.

Mayor Dermody questioned if Officer Lenig would be keeping the K-9. Chief Brettin stated Officer Lenig would understand either way but would like to keep the K-9 if approved. Chief Brettin stated the dog is six years old and it would cost the department approximately six to seven thousand dollars to retrain another Officer with the dog. Ms. Romine questioned if this meant the department would have to get another dog. Chief Brettin stated they would eventually get another K-9, however, it is not currently in the budget. The department has \$9,000 out of the approximate \$15,000 it would cost to get another dog and train it with an Officer.

Mayor Dermody thanked Office Lenig for his service and recognized him as being an excellent officer.

**Motion/Vote - Amend Officer Resignation Letter and Permission to Hire**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to amend Officer Resignation Letter and Permission to Hire and Office Lenig retaining ownership over the K-9; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Andy Snyder: Officer(s) Retirement Letter(s) and Permission to Hire**

Chief Snyder presented retirement letters from three of the most senior firefighters: Wayne Seymour, Eugene Smith, and Steve Luscomb. Combine these firefighters have over 105 years of service to the City of La Porte. Chief Snyder stated these firefighters have entered the drop program and the drop date is coming mature on January 6, 2023. January 6, 2023 will be their last day with the City and their first day of retirement will be January 7, 2023. Chief Snyder request approval of the retirement letters and authorize the Merit Commission to fill the department positions as well as their promotional ranks.

Ms. Romine questioned how many firefighters this would bring the department down. Chief Snyder stated four. Mr. Kosior questioned what the interest from the community looks like in terms of filling these vacant positions. Chief Snyder stated they are currently working from their current hiring list. Chief Snyder stated the first couple candidates did not make it through the process for the current vacant position and with the additional vacancies it is likely to go through about half the remaining candidates before filling the positions. Mr. Kosior questioned what the timeline would be from the first candidate selection until they are ready to begin. Chief Snyder stated they are currently running background checks and if everything goes as it should, they may have the positions filled by March or April.

Mayor Dermody wished these firefighters well in their retirement and thanked them for their years of dedication and service.

**Motion/Vote – Approve Officer(s) Resignation Letter(s) and Permission to Hire**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Officer(s) Resignation Letter(s) and Permission to Hire as presented; motion seconded by Mark Kosior and unanimously carried.

**La Porte Fire Station Building Corp. Easement Agreement**

Chief Snyder presented La Porte Fire Station Building Corp. Easement Agreement. Chief Snyder stated NIPSCO has requested an easement at the new fire station on 710 Daytona Street. There were two pieces of property the fire station was constructed on; one that the City owned and another that was purchased during just prior to construction through the Fire Station Building Corporation. The purchased property is the location NIPSCO is trying to obtain an easement through. Chief Snyder stated it is very straight forward and the easement does not affect the departments operations at all, but it does need the Boards approval. Chief Snyder stated NIPSCO has indicated they will provide a payment of \$1,000 to one of the department's non-reverting funds which can be used for equipment or training and things like that.

**Motion/Vote – Approve La Porte Fire Station Building Corp. Easement Agreement**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve La Porte Fire Station Building Corp. Easement Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Addendum to Agreement Dated September 14, 2021 with Paragon Marketing Group**

Park Director Mark Schreiber presented an addendum to the agreement with Paragon Marketing Group. Mr. Schreiber stated the addendum is for an additional game in La Porte that will not cost the City any funds. Mr. Schreiber stated Paragon contracted with Cathedral in Chicago to play a boys basketball game that was to be televised and decided to bring it to La Porte instead of arranging TV and everything to be in one of their gyms. Mayor Dermody questioned if this is the game that is supposed to be aired on ESPN2. Mr. Schreiber responded by stating it has not currently been announced but yes, this game will be televised on ESPN2.

**Motion/Vote – Approve Addendum to Agreement Dated September 14, 2021 with Paragon Marketing Group**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Addendum to Agreement Date September 14, 2021 with Paragon Marketing Group as presented; motion was seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Jerry Jackson: Monroe Manor Pay Application #12**

Wastewater Director Jerry Jackson presented Monroe Manor Pay Application #12 in the amount of \$181,151.75 and does include the major change orders. This brings the project to 97 percent. Mr. Jackson stated the remaining balance is essentially retainage and a few cleanup items and recommends payment.

**Motion/Vote – Approve Monroe Manor Pay Application 1589-12**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Monroe Manor Pay Application 1589-12 as presented; motion was seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

**Craig Phillips: Steiner Homes Proposal 18<sup>th</sup> Street Greenway Infill Project**

Craig Phillips presented a proposal from Steiner Homes for the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Greenway Infill Project in the amount of \$171,700. Mr. Phillips stated the bid was received at the first November meeting and they have had time to review and discuss the bid internally and recommends the board consider this favorably. The bid is subject to a detailed development agreement and that agreement would come back to the board for approval. This is where the specifics would be laid out in terms of what the City is responsible for and what the developers would be responsible for. Mr. Phillips stated they are proposing to build 11 paired homes for a total of 22 individual units with an anticipated market value in the mid 300s to mid 400s. Steiner Homes intends to make a \$10,000 deposit upon acceptance of the agreement and request 180-day due diligence period. Mr. Phillips states he is request the board to accept the bid and allow him to enter into negotiations for a development agreement.

Mayor Dermody invited Adam Steiner to speak a little about himself and Steiner Homes. Mr. Steiner stated he has been designing homes in Northwest Indiana for 20 years and Steiner Homes has been in the area for much longer than that. Mr. Steiner expressed their excitement for this project and believes their design and style really lends itself to the character that is already in La Porte. Mr. Steiner stated their goal is not to fit as many homes as possible in the

space but rather build homes that have character and quality fixtures and finishes because they take great pride in their work and building quality homes. Mr. Romine questioned what the timeframe would look like for completed homes for sale, if this were to be approved and everything goes smoothly. Mr. Steiner responded by stating they would begin developing as soon as possible but cannot provide a specific timeline at this time. Mr. Kosior questioned if the plan would be to sequentially build or build all units at one. Mr. Steiner stated sales would dictate this because they do not want to have a bunch of empty units sitting there for a long time but would but believes it will move quickly. Mr. Kosior questioned how soon potential buyers would be able to look at what the options are and make decisions to potentially buy. Mr. Steiner responded by stating during the due diligence period they will be fine-tuning the details of the site so they will be able to get specific on what floor plans they will be building; preliminary floor plans were included in the packet.

**Motion/Vote – Approve Steiner Homes Proposal 18<sup>th</sup> Street Greenway Infill Project**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Steiner Homes Proposal 18<sup>th</sup> Street Greenway Infill Project as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

**Open Bids for Public Offering of 910 State Street**

Craig Phillips presented proof of publication in The Herald Dispatch. Mr. Phillips presented a bid from Susan and Dudley Byler in the amount of \$200,500.00 and all required documents. Mr. Phillips requests the board's approval to review this proposal and present it at a future meeting.

**Motion/Vote - Approve 910 State Street Bid for Review by Planning, Engineering, and Legal**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve 910 State Street Bid for Review by Planning, Engineering, and Legal as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Open Bids for Demolition of 1108 Clay St**

City Engineer presented two quotes that were received. The first quote is presented from J Shoffner General Contractors in the amount of \$23,480. The second quote is presented from Pave Excavating in the amount of \$23,270. Jeff Batchelor stated the current owner of the home has agreed to pay for half of the cost of the demolition. Ms. Romine questioned if there were any liens or encumbrances on the property. Mr. Batchelor stated there are none.

**Motion/Vote - Approve 1108 Clay St Bids for Review by Engineering**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve 1108 St Bids for Review by Engineering as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

City Engineer Nick Minich stated the bid would need to be approved prior to the next Board of Works meeting because encumbrances will be approved at the Council meeting the day before the next Board of Works Meeting.

**Amended Motion/Vote - Approve Pavey Excavating Quote for Demolition of 1108 Clay Street Upon Review by Engineering and Legal**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve amended motion to approve Pavey Excavating Quote for Demolition of 1108 Clay Street Upon Review by Engineering and Legal as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

#### **Beth West: 2023 TransPorte Holiday Schedule**

TransPorte Director Beth West presented the 2023 TransPorte Holiday Schedule. Ms. West stated the Holidays listed are the ones TransPorte would like to remain open, even though City offices will be closed. Ms. West stated there are two less Holidays due to lack of manpower and the Holiday's that were omitted were the slower days.

#### **Motion/Vote – Approve 2023 TransPorte Holiday Schedule**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve 2023 TransPorte Holiday Schedule as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

#### **TransPorte Advertising Policy Resolution**

TransPorte Director Beth West presented TransPorte Advertising Policy Resolution. Ms. West stated this is for outside advertising where the buses will be wrapped with the advertisement. Per NIRPC guidelines, the City must have guidelines in place before advertising can begin. Ms. West presented modeled the guidelines after the City of Valparaiso with the help of City Attorney Nick Otis. Ms. West stated the advertising agency does all of the work: They are responsible for soliciting the advertising and wrapping the busses. Once the advertisements have been solicited, they bring them to TransPorte for approval to determine what is appropriate for the buses. Mr. Kosior questioned if there was a ballpark figure as far as what revenue this may bring. Ms. West responded by stating that the goal is \$25,000 with the hope of more. Mr. Romine questioned if an agreement with the advertising company had already been approved. Ms. West stated they have not; the Advertising Policy Resolution is the first step in the process.

#### **Motion/Vote – Approve TransPorte Advertising Policy Resolution**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve TransPorte Advertising Policy Resolution as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

#### **Nick Minich: Accept Bids for Propane**

City Engineer stated bids for propane were opened on December 2, 2022. Two bids were received; one from Feral Gas and one from Co-Alliance. Mr. Minich stated this is a Federal Transit Grant through NIRPC therefore there is more in the bid package than our typical bid packages. Mr. Minich stated there were minor deficiencies and requested to go to both contractors and ask them to correct those deficiencies and then come back with a recommendation at the next meeting. Mr. Minich requests the board to approve these bids and allow the deficiencies to be corrected on both bids. Mr. Minich stated they have been working with NIRPC and believe this to be the fairest way to proceed with the bid.

#### **Motion/Vote – Approve Bids for Propane and Correct Deficiencies**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Bids for Propane and Correct Deficiencies as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

#### **Schneider Electric-Civic Pay App #1**

City Engineer Nick Minich presented Schneider Electric Pay App #1 in the amount of \$902,510.82. This amount includes the 20 percent mobilization fee, which covers the equipment that has already been ordered, minus retainage per the contract agreement.

#### **Motion/Vote – Approve Schneider Electric-Civic Pay App #3**

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Schneider Electric-Civic Pay App #1 as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

#### **Approval of Local Trax plan Set for Final Tracings Submittal**

City Engineer Nick Minich presented the final Trax Plan from USI consultants. Mr. Minich stated the INDOT consultant that has been working with the USI consultants is ready to present the final plan. Mayor Dermody questioned when everything will be completed. Mr. Minich stated potentially 2024 but more than likely it will be 2025. It will be broken into phases because of the size of the project.

#### **Motion/Vote – Approval Trax Plan Set for Final Tracings Submittal**

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Trax Plan Set for Final Tracings Submittal as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

#### **Department Head Reports**

**Human Resource:** Human Resources director Andrea Smith reported flu shots for dependents that are enrolled in the City's healthcare coverage are now available for 6 months to 17 years old at the WellPorte Clinic. Ms. Smith stated she did reach out to the County Health Department for pediatric flu shots and was informed they are only available for the uninsured or individuals on Medicare. Ms. Smith stated anyone that has paid for a pediatric flu shot can be reimbursed and should reach out to Ms. Smith for that reimbursement.

**Communications:** Communications Director Jess Bruder stated the State of the City is behind us and thanked Bert Cook and everyone at leap for all their efforts to put on another successful event this year. In addition, Ms. Bruder also thanked Duneland Media for all the work they did to get this broadcast live for those that were unable to attend in person. Ms. Bruder noted we are partnering with greatnews.life to provide free professional headshots for City employees. They will be at City Hall Wednesday December 14, 2022 from 11:30 A.M. until 1:30 P.M., no appointment is necessary. Ms. Bruder stated there is no dress code, but business casual or business professional is encouraged.

**Park:** Park Director Mark Schreiber reported the ice rink is up and the ice is being made today and tomorrow and will be open on Friday from 4 P.M. to 10 P.M., Saturday 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., and Sunday 1 P.M. to 8 P.M. Skating will be \$5 and skate rentals are \$3. Mr. Schreiber

stated they are still soliciting sponsorships for the ice rink, and anyone interested in being a sponsor should reach out to the Park Department at 219-326-9600. Mr. Schreiber encouraged those that want to skate to register to do so ahead of time to ensure you have a spot to skate in addition to speeding up the process.

**Street/Code:** Jeff Batchelor reported they have finished the first round of leaves and the second round started yesterday.

**Engineering:** City Engineer Nick Minich reported there is now a kiosk in the Engineering department for building permits. Mr. Minich stated they are working on transition to Open Gov and trying to ensure the process for acquiring permits is easier and more efficient.

**Wastewater:** Wastewater Director Jerry Jackson reported they have gotten their land application for solids done; this is done in the fall and spring. Mr. Jackson stated they are planning to clean the secondary digester in the spring. Mr. Jackson stated they should be receiving the information on the paving grant today which will allow them to move forward and bid the letters and number streets in early June.

**Planning:** Director of Community Development and Planning Craig Phillips reported they have received a significant amount of initial grant money toward the Chessie Trail 3 project and will begin working on this after the first of the year. Mr. Phillips stated they are working on a couple significant annexations that will come before the City Council at the next meeting. The work on the Trails, Greenways, and Blueways masterplan continues. A public hearing was held where valuable input was received. Mr. Phillips reported they are close to finalizing the parking study. There are a few items that need to be met internally in order to get this complete. The goal is to have a presentation to the public by early January.

**Unfinished Business**

The next meeting will be held Tuesday December 20, 2022.

**Adjourn**

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

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

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

**Approved: December 20, 2022**