

December 5, 2023

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at 9:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Mark Kosior

Absent: Jessica Romine

Terry Minix 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

Claims Approval

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Payroll from November 24, 2023 in the amount of \$504,862.84.

Motion/Vote – Approval of November 24, 2023 Payroll

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the November 24, 2023 Payroll as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$1,455,819.59.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Civil City Claims

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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$322,521.71.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Sewage Claims

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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Water Claims in the amount of \$205,455.39.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Water Claims

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

Department Head Reports

Park: Recreation Director Pam Carroll reported the Senior Expo that was held on November 9, 2023, was a successful event with over 257 attendees. Ms. Carroll recognized the following headline sponsors: The Healthcare Foundation of La Porte, Northwest Health, and Centers for Hospice Care. Ms. Carroll stated the Park Department took over the Senior Center in April of 2021 and there were 45 members. Today, there are 128 members as it continues to grow. Ms. Carroll reported there were over 90 skaters last weekend at the ice rink. The ice rink will continue to be open weekends until the Holidays and Christmas break, and then it will be open daily. In addition, Ms. Carroll reported the deadline to submit for Santa letters is Friday. The form can be found on the Parks and Rec website and can be submitted via email or dropped off at the park office. Mayor Dermody recognized Ms. Carroll on her upcoming retirement from the city after 41 years and thanked her for her commitment to community.

Water: Water Superintendent Tim Werner reported approximately one week ago there was an issue with the Kankakee number one well. The well had a bad vibration in the pump which caused the column piping to come unscrewed. Mr. Werner stated this is a very rare occurrence. Peerless Midwest, who takes care of wells all over the country, has only seen this happen twice. Mr. Werner stated unfortunately this is a very expensive fix. While the parts are pulled out for replacement, they will be cleaning the well. Mr. Werner stated this was an emergency and therefore they did not bring any quotes before the board. Mr. Werner estimated the total cost to get the well back up and running to be approximately between \$40,000 and \$50,000. There was no damage to the well, just the pump and column piping. Mr. Werner stated they are currently waiting for the arrival of the column piping but anticipate the well to be working properly again in January. In addition, Mr. Werner stated he wanted to make the public aware they have put in two gravel roads to the well sites at Soldiers Memorial Park. Those wells will be dug at the end of January or beginning of February. Once it is known what those wells will produce, then the pipeline work will begin. Mr. Kosior questioned how old the equipment in the Kankakee well is. Mr. Werner stated the equipment is not that old. The well was drilled in the 80s and replaced a well from the 50s and a new pump was just put into the pump in 2021. Mr. Kosior questioned if there was any potential for this to be warranty work. Mr. Werner stated a one-year warranty is standard on this type of equipment. Mayor Dermody questioned where the money would come from to pay for this. Mr. Werner stated they have a budget for well maintenance and there is enough in there to cover the cost of the repair.

Wastewater: Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson reported the flowable pumping system that has had ongoing work for the past couple months will be started up next Thursday. In addition, Mr. Jackson reported they are currently working with Surf to test seven sights and get them set up with fiber. These sights are a combination of water and sewage

sights. Mr. Jackson stated if these sites work out well, there are a total of 35 sites that will be set up.

Legal: City Attorney Otis stated he did not have anything to report on legal but took a moment to recognize Pam Carroll and her years of service to the City of La Porte. In addition, Attorney Otis stated he attended the meeting at Beechwood Golf Course regarding the projects happening there and commended Kyle Cashmer and Mark Schreiber for their ideas and commitment to keeping the course the best it can be.

Street/Code: Director of Streets and Code Jeff Batchelor reported they have started their second round of leaf pickup and anticipate completion of that this week if the weather allows. In addition, Mr. Batchelor reported he has been working with Chief Brettin to take over animal control calls during the day. Mayor Dermody stated the best animal control is individuals taking care of their own animals.

Police: Chief Brettin reported with the pending snow, they will be picking up the 24-hour violations so the plows can get around. In addition, Chief Brettin urged residents to clear the snow off their cars before driving as they have seen an increase in accidents.

Fire: Chief Snyder reminded the public that this time of year the department sees an increase in home fires and asks that residents take extra care with the holiday decorations and space heaters. Mayor Dermody recognized the great work from the Fire Department with the two fires that happened recently at Maple Tree Apartments. Chief Snyder stated there were eight people in each apartment that lost pretty much everything and there have been several people that have reached out wanting to make donations to help out those families. Chief Snyder stated anyone that would like to help can reach out to the fire department at 219-362-3456.

City Planner: City Planner Craig Phillips reported they are continuing to work on negotiations with consultants for the City's Comprehensive Plan project. The anticipation is to bring this to the next Board of Works meeting for approval. Mr. Phillips stated work continues on several grant opportunities that will potentially bring additional housing opportunities to the city. Mr. Phillips stated the bid packet for Beechwood Lakes property has been put out and is due back at the second Board of Works meeting in January.

Human Resources: Human Resources Director Andrea Smith reported signups for wellness screens have started. Those interested in participating should contact Andrea or Corinne. Everyone will need to provide their email address and phone number and NorthShore will be reaching out to people directly to schedule.

Communications: Communications Director Jessica Spoljaric reported there are a lot of upcoming holiday events. Ms. Spoljaric stated there is a guide to weekend holiday events that is posted on the Facebook page every Friday. Ms. Spoljaric encouraged anyone looking for holiday related events to check out the Facebook page or visit livingthelakelife.org.

New Business:**Right of Entry Agreement-Truesdell Parcels**

City Attorney Nick Otis presented Right of Entry Agreement-Truesdell Parcels. Attorney Otis stated this is a right of entry to do some environmental testing and soil testing on two parcels the city owns. This agreement is so a third party can do the necessary testing. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated she sees this agreement is with RDC and questioned if that is who would be paying for this. Attorney Otis stated this is just an agreement to allow them to do the testing and does not cost anything. City Engineer Nick Minich stated this would normally be approved by RDC, however, in this case it is a redevelopment site, and the ownership says City of La Porte. This is a formality based on the deed.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Right of Entry Agreement-Truesdell Parcels

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Right of Entry Agreement-Truesdell Parcels as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

FOP Collective Bargaining Agreement

City Attorney Nick Otis presented FOP Collective Bargaining Agreement. Attorney Otis requested Mayor Dermody to speak briefly about this as he has met with the FOP and Fire several times regarding the CBAs. Mayor Dermody stated he has been working diligently with the police to come to this agreement. Mayor Dermody stated together they looked at a variety of options and believes some will be brought back in the future, however, the focus and the goal is to have the police and fire committed to the City of La Porte and the community. Mayor Dermody stated one thing they went back and forth on is a four-by-four schedule, four days on and four days off, to provide a better quality of life. Unfortunately, they were not able to come to an agreement regarding this but will continue to look at ways to do things differently and may be able to come to an agreement in the future.

Motion/Vote – Approval of FOP Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve FOP Collective Bargaining Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Drone Quotes

Chief Brettin presented Drone Quotes. Chief Brettin stated they are looking to expand their drone program. The first drone was purchased approximately three years ago and has been such a valuable tool. Chief Brettin stated they have several operators now and are looking to expand to have someone on all shifts so there is no need to call someone in. Chief Brettin stated Office Pflughaupt is in charge of the drone program and invited him to speak about it. Officer Pflughaupt stated they are requesting two DJI Mavic 3 enterprise editions. These highly capable drones have thermal capabilities that allow changes in image quality to be made to better enhance images. In addition, the AI systems that are built in make these drones easier and safer to fly allowing the focus to be on the mission and the images being shown rather than where the drone is specifically flying. Officer Pflughaupt also stated these drones come with a flood light. Once a subject is found, the flood lights can be turned on,

leading officers directly where they need to go. Drones allow the ability to search a large area in a minimal amount of time and not have to have five or six officers searching an area. This saves on manpower and helps protect officers and K9s by being able to send in a drone instead of someone into an unknown situation. Mayor Dermody questioned if these funds will come from the police budget. Chief Brettin stated they will.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Drone Quotes

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

Equipment Quotes

Chief Brettin invited Property and Evidence Technician Tony McClintock to speak about the equipment quotes. Mr. McClintock first spoke about a diagramming software program from Trancite Logic Systems. This is a desktop software that is capable of creating scaled diagrams for a multitude of different situations; fire scenes, crime scenes, burglary/robbery scenes. The way that the program works is an officer would measure the crime scene and enter those numbers into the program and it will create a scale diagram of that crime scene that can be presented in court for exhibits. The cost is for three licenses and additionally there is a yearly maintenance fee for each license which is approximately \$224. That cost will cover updates and upgrades for these licenses. The second piece of equipment is a crime scope. This is a piece of equipment from Ariba Scientific and Spec Forensics out of New Jersey. This piece of equipment is a completely portable electronic unit that plugs into a standard receptacle. This can be taken to crime scenes to aid in the search for evidence and can also be used in house. Mr. McClintock stated this piece of equipment is equipped with 15 different light settings and has the capabilities of examining for stains, fingerprints, and powder stains. Mayor Dermody questioned Director of IT Roscoe Hoffman if this software is compatible with our current IT equipment. Mr. Hoffman stated it is. Mayor Dermody recommended approving only the Trancite Logic Systems Software at this time as they did not receive all the information for the crime scope for review prior to the meeting.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Trancite Logic Systems Software Quote

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Trancite Logic Systems Software Quote as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Industrial Permit Renewal – New York Blower Co

Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson presented Industrial Permit Renewal – New York Blower Co. Mr. Jackson stated they produce wastewater from cleaning the metal they use to make their fans. They use a phosphorous solution, so zinc and copper are a concern. Mr. Jackson stated they are not a large discharger, and a sample is collected and tested a couple times a year and they are always in compliance. The renewal would be for three years and there may be modifications if their processes are changed. Mr. Jackson stated they are a great partner and recommends payment.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Industrial Permit Renewal – New York Blower Co

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Industrial Permit Renewal – New York Blower Co as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Change Orders: #1, #2, #3 – Contract No: T-44009

City Engineer Nick Minich presented Change Orders: #1, #2, #3 - Contract No: T-44009. This is the emergency vehicle preemption. Mr. Minich stated all of the Opticom system has been installed and the bulk of these change orders is 75 additional vehicle units so we can get more vehicles online with the Opticom system. Mr. Minich stated the Opticom system is a GPS-based emergency vehicle preemption system, which means if a fire truck approaches a signal, and their truck is active it will change the signal so they can get to a situation faster. Currently all of the fire trucks are equipped with this equipment, but the police department is not, and EMS is not. Chief Snyder stated it has only been in effect for 3-4 months and it has been working exceptionally well. This is not only giving the fire trucks the right-of-way, but also making it safer for those traveling through the lights as well. The system takes into consideration the flow of traffic and may not grant access to the emergency vehicle if it is not safe to do so. Chief Snyder stated when there is a white light on each of the cross arms on the traffic signals in town, that indicates there is an emergency vehicle within range that has asked for permission to have the preemption activated to get through the signal first. Mayor Dermody questioned if the County or EMS have offered to participate financially in this. Chief Snyder stated the County and EMS directors have been sitting in on their meetings and have agreed to be participative financially to equip their necessary vehicles. Chief Snyder stated there is hope for the future for county wide participation. Mr. Kosior questioned if in the future other parts of the county join in, would all devices work together. Chief Snyder stated it would all work together.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Change Orders: #1, #2, #3 – Contract No: T-44009

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Change Orders: #1, #2, #3 – Contract No: T-4409 as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business

Motion/Vote – Un-table Quotes for Lease

Mr. Kosior made a motion to un-table Quotes for Lease; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Quotes for Lease

Chief Brettin presented Quotes for Lease. Chief Brettin stated they will be returning 9, 2018 Dodge Durango's that they have been having electrical and other issues with and getting chargers. Additionally, the chargers are better on gas and Chief Brettin personally believes they make better police vehicles. Mayor Dermody asked for clarification on our understanding on where these vehicles will be paid from after the two and half years of credit is up. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated Chief Brettin has line itemed in his budget where these vehicles will be paid from once the credit has been exhausted. The total lease payments will be approximately \$125,000 from the police budget in two and a half years. Mayor Dermody

made it clear that the commitment of \$125,000 will be taken from the police budget. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated we need permission to sign the lease agreement and to trade in the Durango's.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Quotes for Lease

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Quotes for Lease as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Motion/Vote – Un-table Farmed and Forged Agreement

Mr. Kosior made a motion to un-table Farmed and Forged Agreement; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Farmed and Forged Agreement

Mayor Dermody stated this was discussed at the last Board of Works meeting and we know the success that it has had. This is an agreement for next year. Mayor Dermody recognized Mandy for doing a wonderful job and stated there are items in the agreement that should not be there. The City of La Porte will drop off barricades and picknick tables at the beginning of the season but will not be responsible for picking them up every week, the city will not provide any storage, and the city will not provide any staffing for set up or tear down. Attorney Otis recommended tabling this item until these items can be updated or approve pending finalization of these items by legal. Attorney Otis stated the financial amounts will not be changing. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun questioned if the UEA would be paying for this. Mayor Dermody clarified that the UEA would make a payment to the City of La Porte and the City of La Porte would make a payment by the end of the year. Mayor Dermody stated the agreement is in the amount of \$15,000 per year for two years. Chief Brettin stated there is a lot of manpower involved in placing the no parking signs for these events and they always have issues if it rains. Jeff Batchelor stated they are working on getting permanent signs that will have the ability to fold down during the week and flipped up when needed.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Farmed and Forged Agreement

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Farmed and Forged pending finalization of necessary items by legal; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Motin/Vote – Un-table Intern Agreement

Mr. Kosior made a motion to Un-table Intern Agreement; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Intern Agreement

Mayor Dermody stated this was discussed and tabled at the last meeting. This agreement is for a student that would like to intern at the Police Department and the biggest concern is the potential for medical related issues that may arise having someone in the field with the officers. Attorney Otis stated we have a waiver that has been reviewed by legal and alleviates the city from being responsible for injury that may be acquired during the internship. Human

Resources Director Andrea Smith stated she forwarded the waiver from Tokyo Marine to Attorney Otis, and he has reviewed and approved it.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Intern Agreement

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

Other Business:

IT Department Report: IT Director Roscoe Hoffman reported he has been working with the PD and switching their forms from Omni Forms to SharePoint, which is a program we already have access to in our Microsoft 365 account. This change allows for these forms to be fillable PDFs which will help make the processes for the officers more time efficient. The next step is putting things into the RMS system which will really help move the police department forward at a quick speed. Mr. Hoffman stated the next item they will be working on is the GPS systems. They are not currently able to see some officers' GPS, which is a safety concern. In addition, Mr. Hoffman reported he did some work on a PC at the Civic that they wanted to replace. Mr. Hoffman was able to take a second look through the PC and found an issue within a program that he was able to correct, and it is working as it should, ultimately saving the Civic money. Mr. Kosior questioned if the GPSs spoken about previously were located on the officer or on the vehicle. Mr. Hoffman stated that currently the GPS is in the vehicles, so we can locate all the vehicles quickly, however, the camera systems have GPS capability, and they will be working to set those up. These GPS' in the cameras are excellent if an officer ends up in a foot pursuit.

Mayor Dermody recognized Brett Binversie for a job well done at the Christmas popup market event at the Civic Auditorium over the weekend as well as all the events hosted by the Civic that keep people coming in and out of there on a regular basis. In addition, Mayor Dermody stated on December 8th, many of the businesses will have extended hours for holiday shopping and ice skating will be available during the weekend.

Development Agreement

City Attorney Otis presented Development Agreement. Attorney Otis stated the resolution approving the development agreement for Park Street was approved last night. Attorney Otis stated this does involve a contract and requests the Board of Works also approve the development agreement. This is for the development of property that the City Council annexed earlier this year along Park Street and Seivers Road for a significant residential development of 34 acres. The city agrees to provide significant water and wastewater infrastructure for this project and in exchange the developer agrees to start construction by September 1, 2024. Attorney Otis invited Bert Cook to further speak about this agreement. Bert Cook expressed his excitement to be able to put to use property that was annexed into the city. The end product will be 118 townhomes and 19 single family homes. Mr. Cook stated there was good conversation at last night's council meeting about driving the prices of those homes down, if possible. Mr. Cook stated the developer was there and stated if the interest rates improve and the costs of goods go down, they will be able to keep the homes in the

\$300,000 price range. Water Superintendent Tim Werner stated they will be able to extend utilities to this area as part of the infrastructure to 39 N. Mr. Cook stated they worked together to find a product mix that results in a cheaper and more affordable unit for the individuals but also serves that greater need that we have within our community. Mr. Cook expressed his appreciation for Matt Hagenow, attorney for the Redevelopment Commission, Bill Nelson, attorney for the developer, and Jim Kaminsky, attorney for the property seller. They all worked well together to get this agreement in place. Mayor Dermody reminded everyone that housing has been a priority and a focus for this administration. Not only affordable housing but housing for all. Mayor Dermody stated a lack of higher end housing affects the moderate housing need. Those individuals that can afford to live in a more expensive home are purchasing moderate homes and taking those away from individuals who may not be able to afford a more expensive home. City Planner Craig Phillips expressed his excitement to work with this developer and further add to the mix of overall housing needs within the city.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Development Agreement

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

Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday December 19, 2023 at 9 A.M.

Adjourn

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

Approve: _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: December 19, 2023