

FEBRUARY 1 , 2021

The Common Council of the City of LaPorte met in regular session via Zoom Web Conferencing on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.

Councilman Franke led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Konieczny, Feikes, Galloway, Cutler, Franke, Vincent, and West

Minutes

Mayor Dermody stated each Council member received an advance copy of the minutes from the previous meeting and asked if there were any corrections or additions. Councilwoman Feikes moved to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Councilwoman West and unanimously carried.

Petitions & Comments

Mayor Dermody opened public comment and asked City Attorney Nick Otis to field questions and comments on Facebook Live. Center Township Trustee Lisa Pierzakowski stated she has concerns regarding the annexation process and being forced to sign a waiver. Ms. Pierzakowski stated that if her well or septic were to fail the County Health Department would force her to tap into City water because water service is now in front of her house.

Standing Committee Reports

School Board: Councilman Franke reported the School Board will hold its next meeting Monday, February 8, 2021.

Redevelopment Commission: Councilman Franke reported that the Redevelopment Commission met Wednesday, January 27, 2021. They discussed the issuance of bonds. The next meeting will be February 24, 2021.

Airport Authority: Councilwoman Konieczny reported the Airport Authority will meet Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 5:15 P.M.

Tree Commission: Councilwoman Konieczny reported that the Tree Commission met on January 18, 2021 via zoom at 5:00 P.M. There were four main points of discussion at the meeting. The first was the review of the amended ordinance that will be presented later this evening. The second item was the need to apply for various grants. The grants would be used to properly train designated city employees. The training would have an emphasis on education and safety with the goal to eventually be done in house. The third item discussed was the Arbor Day Celebration which will be held April 30, 2021. The last item the Tree Commission discussed was a presentation they plan to bring in front of the Common Council on the current tree canopy.

Police Merit Commission: Councilman Galloway reported the Police Merit Commission will meet February 9, 2021 at 2:00 P.M. at the Police Department.

Business Improvement District: Councilwoman Cutler reported that the Business Improvement Board will meet February 11, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. via zoom.

Urban Enterprise Association: Councilwoman Cutler reported the Urban Enterprise Association met and the Board elected to continue with its current slate of officers. The Zone Consultant contract was approved for Mary Ann Richards and going forward in 2021, the Office of Community Development and Planning will be overseeing the administrative duties of the UEA. The residential committee reported that funding in the amount of \$55,000 from 2020 was encumbered into 2021 for the four approved residential projects in the Zone. If funds remain after completion of the four projects, new applications from the waitlist will be considered. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 4:00 P.M.

Plan Commission: Councilman Vincent reported the next Plan Commission meeting will be held February 9, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.

Fire Merit Commission: Councilwoman West reported the Fire Merit Commission will meet Wednesday February 3, 2021. Points of discussion at the meeting will be the upcoming promotional testing and choosing a company to administer those tests.

Park Board: Councilwoman Feikes reported the Park Board met remotely at 4:00 P.M. via Zoom on January 20, 2021. Election of officers for 2021 resulted in Mitch Feikes as President, Nicole Messacar as Vice President, and Roberta Mumaw as Secretary. Huber's Marine agreed to the new terms of the contract for Pine Lake boat docks and launch. A proposal was brought to the board regarding a nine-hole disc golf course at Kesling Park. The course would be laid out in the open area within the walking trail. Any questions can be directed to Park Superintendent Mark Schreiber at mschreiber@cityoflaportein.gov. The Board gave approval for the Park Department to acquire a gaming license in order to hold raffles that will raise money for youth sports programs.

Traffic Commission: The Traffic Commission will be meet February 2, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.

Second and Final Reading of an Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 12-2013, an Ordinance Setting Requirements for Mobile Vendors of the Municipal Code of the City of La Porte, Indiana

Councilwoman Cutler moved to read the Ordinance for the second time by title only; motion seconded by Councilman Franke and unanimously carried. Councilwomen Cutler read an Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 12-2013, an Ordinance Setting Requirements for Mobile Vendors of the Municipal Code of the City of La Porte, Indiana for the Second and Final time by title only. Mayor Dermody noted that this was being done to make the price fair and competitive for all vendors. Councilwomen Cutler stated that the vendors setting up at the Farmers Market were paying far more each weekend then vendors who were paying yearly vendor fees. Councilman Franke asked who would be enforcing the Amended Ordinance. Mayor Dermody let the Council know that Code Enforcement and/or the Police Department will be enforcing this Ordinance. Councilwomen Feikes made a motion to approve the Ordinance; motion was seconded by Councilwomen Cutler and unanimously carried.

Second and Final Reading of an Ordinance of the City of La Porte Concerning Outside City Water and Sewage Collections Services

Councilwomen Feikes moved to read the Ordinance for the second time by title only; motion seconded by Councilwomen Cutler and unanimously carried. Councilwomen Feikes read an Ordinance of the City of La Porte Concerning Outside City Water and Sewage Collection Services by title only. Councilwoman Feikes moved to approve the Ordinance; motion was seconded by Councilwomen Cutler and unanimously carried.

Discussion took place on the voluntary annexation concerning Outside City Water and Sewage Services. City Attorney Nick Otis stated that this was an entirely voluntary annexation between property owners and the City of La Porte. In 2016, the City Council passed an Ordinance to prohibit providing water and sewage services outside City limits. Mr. Otis stated this ordinance pertains to those individuals who are not in the City and wish to connect to City sewer and or water. To obtain City utilities, an annexation waiver would need to be signed.

Ms. Ludwig inquired if there were any plans to annex her subdivision, Sunnyside Subdivision. Ms. Ludwig stated that herself and many others in Sunnyside Subdivision do not want to be annexed into City limits. Mayor Dermody stated that there are no current annexation plans and at this point the focus is on those who want City water and sewage.

Introduction of an Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 5-2009 Amending Provisions to the City's Ordinance Regulation Trees, Shrubs and Other Plants

Councilwoman Konieczny moved to Introduce an Ordinance by reading the amended language only; motion was seconded by Councilwomen Feikes. Councilwoman Konieczny read an Amending Ordinance No. 5-2009 Amending Provisions to the City's Ordinance Regulation Trees, Shrubs and Other Plants. Councilwomen Cutler and Councilwomen Feikes asked for clarification of fines that were read in the Ordinance. City Engineer Nick Minich stated the fine is up to \$1000. The revision of the Ordinance updates our current Ordinance and allows City staff to do more of the enforcement and allow our Tree Commission to focus more on the promotion of our Urban Canopy. Councilwomen Konieczny noted that Project Engineer Sarah Nimetz is a great asset to not only the City of La Porte but also the Tree Commission with her knowledge and love for trees. Councilman Vincent also addressed the \$1000 fine and has asked for more clarification. City Attorney Nick Otis stated he will get with City Engineer Nick Minich and Sarah Nimetz to clarify the language before the Second and Final Reading. Second and Final reading will take place at the next meeting on February 16, 2021.

Introduction of a Resolution of the Common Council of the City of La Porte, Indiana, Approving the Issuance of Bonds of the City of La Porte Redevelopment Commission, and Related Matters

Councilman Franke moved to Introduce a Resolution in its entirety; motion was seconded by Councilman Vincent and unanimously carried. Councilman Franke read an Introduction of a Resolution of the Common Council of the City of La Porte, Indiana, Approving the Issuance of Bonds of the City of La Porte Redevelopment Commission, and Related Matters. Bond Counsel for The City of La Porte, Tom Pitman and Dustin Meeks were in attendance to clarify the resolution and answer any questions. Mr. Meeks stated these Bonds are Redevelopment District Bonds which will be issued pursuant to a Bond Resolution adopted by the Redevelopment Commission of the City, the Redevelopment Commission under IC 36-7-14-

25.1 needs the Common Council to adopt a resolution specifying certain information about the Bonds and authorizing the Redevelopment Commission to proceed with issuing the Bonds. This resolution hits the statutorily required items and tells the Commission it is permitted to proceed with issuing the Redevelopment District Bonds. Councilwomen Feikes motioned to accept the resolution as presented; motion was seconded by Councilman Franke and unanimously carried.

Other Business:

Drew Mullen commented via Facebook Live “The Strong Towns movement opposes any continued horizontal expansion, especially in cities that currently struggle to maintain existing infrastructure”. Mayor Dermody stated that we have been providing water and sewage to non-residents for a long time and for that to continue we will have to require annexation down the road.

Mayor Dermody stated that Sam Maule commented via Facebook Live that he would gladly volunteer his property for City limits. The money he will save in insurance costs alone will offset additional costs.

Also, via Facebook Live, Tim Gust asked where the money for these new potential annexations will come from; running sewer and water lines will be astronomically expensive. Mayor Dermody asked City Engineer Nick Minich for some clarification on this topic. City Engineer Nick Minich stated that the water and wastewater departments would work together with whomever is wanting utility services. It is not an easy process and the City of La Porte is not looking to start running water and sewer lines all over the County. We are looking to build off our existing infrastructure for people who want City services while doing it in a responsible way.

Tammy Lidgard, via Facebook Live, asked when sidewalks on I Street would be addressed. Mayor Dermody said they would be addressed sometime this year and asked City Engineer Nick Minich to elaborate. Mr. Minich stated that most of I Street is on our priority list for 2021.

Tiffany Marie commented via Facebook Live that she needs a tree removed. Mayor Dermody referred Tiffany Marie to the Engineering Department to discuss her concerns.

Mayor Dermody stated that he and City Engineer Nick Minich will be meeting with the County in the near future about the North/South Connector.

Mayor Dermody stated that the La Porte County Solid Waste District is currently reviewing costs. They have been running at an \$800,000 loss each year. In years past, La Porte County Solid Waste District have been able to use tipping fee funds to cover the loss. Unfortunately, they have used up all of these funds and are reviewing all options but are considering a \$2.00 a month increase for curbside service.

Mayor Dermody encourages anyone who has questions or concerns about annexation to reach out to him personally at 219-363-7293.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Councilwoman West moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Councilman Franke and unanimously carried.

Approved _____
Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____
Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: February 16, 2021