

**July 21, 2020**

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday July 7, 2020 at 9:00 AM.

**Present:** Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine and Mark Kosior (via Zoom)

**Absent:** None

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Phil Gushrowski led the Pledge of Allegiance

**Approval of Minutes**

Each member received an advance copy of the minutes from the July 7, 2020 meeting. 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 Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Mayor Dermody read the following statement:

“Before we begin, I would like to talk briefly about our last City Council meeting. Some things were said that are not at all reflective of our goals for the future of our City. La Porte is a welcoming community. We want people of all races, religions, and sexual orientations to feel welcome, safe, and happy here. On behalf of the entire City Council and City leadership team, I apologize. We clearly have more work to do and this has opened our eyes on some of the ways we can improve. Our entire City team will be taking diversity training. We also met with representatives from Out in La Porte and they shared even more ideas of what we can do in the future. We are grateful to these individuals who are willing to come and have an open discussion with us and we are humbled by their unwavering love of this City and their commitment to help it improve. Again, we’ve got work to do, but we are going to continue to do all we can to continue to make La Porte proud.”

**Public Comment**

None

**Clerk-Treasurer**

**Claims Approval**

Clerk-Treasurer Courtney Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$554,311.93.

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

Ms. Romine moved to approve the Civil City Claims in the amount of \$554,311.93; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Mayor Dermody noted that the cost of vehicle repair bills continues to climb for the Police Department and that we are in desperate need of ten Police vehicles, as well as riot gear.

Clerk-Treasurer Courtney Parthun presented July 10, 2020 Payroll in the amount of \$440,039.94.

**Motion/Vote - Approval of July 10, 2020 Payroll**

Ms. Romine moved to approve July 10, 2020 Payroll in the amount of \$440, 039.94; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

The Clerk-Treasurer presented Water Claims in the amount of \$117,796.93.

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

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the Water Claims in the amount of \$117,796.93; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

The Clerk-Treasurer presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$357,657.19.

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

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the Sewage Claims in the amount of \$357,657.19; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Temporary Policy for Extension of Time for Payment**

Clerk-Treasurer Courtney Parthun requested approval from the Board a temporary policy for payment agreements in the Utility Billing Office through December 31, 2020. The current policy is dated October 23, 2007 and allows qualified residents a sixty-day repayment period for delinquent or unpaid utility bills. This temporary policy would extend the repayment period for delinquent or unpaid utility bills for one hundred twenty days through December 31, 2020 and in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to accommodate residents and do what we can to assist them in getting on the right path during these unprecedented times. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun went on to report that we are owed more than \$278,000 in delinquent monies in Utility Billing; 1,100 accounts are currently flagged as past due or delinquent. This is a problem that will be difficult for residents to move past once we are able to shut off water. Lisa Pierzakowski, Center Township Trustee is the grant recipient of \$25,000 from the City of La Porte's CDBG COVID Fund. She will complete the intake and qualify a City resident for possible assistance with their Utility Bill. If the delinquency is not due to unforeseen circumstances related to COVID, we want to be prepared and still be able to help residents get back on track. This Temporary Policy will do just that.

**Motion/Vote - Approval of Temporary Policy for Extension of Time for Payment**

Ms. Romine moved to approve the Temporary Policy; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

**City Hall Drive Through Project/ Invoice Cloud Project/ Drop Box Project**

### **City Hall Drive Through Project**

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun reported that due to the COVID Pandemic, we have had to look for different ways to conduct business at City Hall in an effort to keep residents and employees **safe**. Because of COVID, this drive-through project will minimize the amount of foot traffic coming into City Hall and allow residents to drive through City Hall to make their utility payment or sign necessary paperwork without getting out of their **vehicle**. I have included a proposal as well as information for the drive-up **system**. We will have one station outside and one station inside the Clerk-Treasurer's office with two-way video capabilities between the **stations**. Due to the COVID pandemic, this project is deemed an Emergency and after our conversation with Indiana Finance Authority, this is a cost that is covered by reimbursable relief **funds**. We are hoping to get this project started as soon as possible in hopes that it **relieves much of the foot traffic once we are required to open City Hall to the Public**.

### **Invoice Cloud Project**

Along the same lines, we are looking to innovate the customer experience and make it easier for customers to pay by any means possible outside of coming into City **Hall**. Invoice Cloud is a platform that will accelerate collections, improve security, reduce cost, and enhance the customer **experience**. The goal is to provide our residents with a payment experience not typically found in local government. Residents will be able to easily make a payment 24/7 online, by phone (IVR system) or by text on one platform without us having to point them in 3 different directions depending on how they want to pay.

### **Drop Box Project**

Our current drop boxes outside of City Hall are not secure, outdated and too small for residents. We are proposing a larger, more secure drop box - with room for potential public bids, items dropped off by other departments (such as claims and payroll) and US Mail in addition to resident utility **payments**. This will also mitigate foot traffic inside City **Hall**. The proposal includes a drop box similar in aesthetics to what it is **currently (brick) as this is a historical building and we want it to look appropriate**.

Discussion was held regarding these proposals

### **Motion/Vote - Approval of City Hall Drive Through Project/ Invoice Cloud Project/ Drop Box Project**

Ms. Romine moved to approve City Hall Drive Through, Invoice Cloud and Drop Box Projects; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

### **Department Head Reports**

**Street Department** - Mike Frazee, Director of Street Department, reported crews are currently street sweeping, crack sealing and removing trees.

**Sewage Department** - Lori Stimley, Wastewater/Stormwater Coordinator, reported in Jerry Jackson's absence that crews are working in the Fox Park area, Tyler/State area, as well as obtaining bids for sewer separation in the I Street letter and number area.

**Police Department** - Police Chief Brettin reported that the department is moving forward with the Lexus-Nexis electronic reporting program and will have more information, including a proposal, at the next meeting.

**Park Department** - Mark Schreiber, Director of Parks and Recreation, reported on several projects including Stone Lake Shoreline Improvements along Lakeshore Drive which should be mobilizing this week and construction is scheduled to begin by early next week. Mr. Schreiber reported that tennis court renovations at Kesling Courts, Rumley Park and Allesee Park should be happening on that same timeline. Installation of a new playground at Warsaw Park begins this week. Radar speed signs were installed on Truesdell and Waverly Road and Mr. Schreiber has reported good results with that. Finally, Foodie Tuesday at Unity Park is Moe's Fresh Mediterranean beginning at 10:30 AM.

**Transporte** - Beth West, Transporte Manager, reported that Transporte is running 6 AM - 6 PM, Monday through Friday, and 9 AM - 2 PM on Saturdays. Ms. West reported that she has started the process of getting funding through Medicaid for transportation related to medical appointments. Masks are mandatory on public transit.

**Fire Department** - Fire Chief Snyder reported that the new Fire Station on Dayton Street is in the home stretch and we take ownership in the beginning of August with a move-in date shortly thereafter.

Mayor Dermody congratulated Annette Loeffler's grandson, Brant Loeffler, on receiving the 2020 Chester & Beverly Grys Mental Attitude Award at his Babe Ruth Baseball Tournament last night.

**Engineering Department** - Nick Minich, City Engineer, introduced and welcomes Sarah Nimetz, new to the Engineering Department, who will initially work on a grant for the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Greenway.

#### **New Business**

**Parking Ticket Appeals** - Leslie Ferguson, Traffic Control Monitor, presented evidence supporting the issuance of Ticket 118992 for \$10.00 in violation of the 2-Hour Parking Ordinance. Ms. Ferguson reported taking pictures of marked vehicles is not something she ordinarily does, but that there were issues at the 555 building that spurred her to do so. Ms. Ferguson also added that she was able to speak with Larry Levandoski, Director of Facilities, regarding employee parking which, he noted, is free and ample a few blocks away. Discussion was held about the appeal.

#### **Motion/Vote - Denial of Appeal of Ticket 118992**

Ms. Romine moved to deny the appeal for ticket 118992; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Ms. Ferguson presented evidence supporting the issuance of ticket 118961 which did not have a time noted.

**Motion/Vote - Denial of Appeal of Ticket 118961**

Ms. Romine moved to deny the appeal for ticket 118961; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Courtney Parthun added that Leslie Ferguson has done a phenomenal job with Traffic Violations keeping parking available for people to visit our downtown.

**Request for Use**

La Porte High School Athletics Department is requesting to shutdown C Street for football games as they do an annual basis.

**Motion/Vote - La Porte High School Request for Use**

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the request; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Rock the Block Backpack Drive requests closure of First Street between G and H and G Street between First and Second Street on August 5, 2020 from 6 PM - 8 PM.

**Motion/Vote - Rock the Block Drive Through**

Mr. Kosior moved to approve the request for street closure for Rock the Block Drive Through Event; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

**Resolution for the Sale of a Fire Apparatus**

This Resolution authorizes the City to sell a 1998 Quint Aerial Truck for \$30,000. On October 8, 2019, Board of Public Works and Safety authorized Fire Chief Snyder to hire a brokerage firm to sell a 1998 Quint KME Aerial Tower Truck which was deemed surplus at the time. Proceeds from the sale will be placed into the General Fund and then, according to Clerk-Treasurer Parthun, we will ask for Council's approval to move to the Rainy-Day Fund.

**Motion/Vote - Resolution for the Sale of a Fire Apparatus**

Ms. Romine moved to approve the Resolution for the Sale of a Fire Apparatus; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1-2020-B  
A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY OF THE  
CITY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA FOR THE SALE OF A FIRE APPARATUS**

Board Member, Mark Kosior, left the meeting at 9:55 AM

**Healthcare Foundation of La Porte Water Station Maintenance Agreement for the Chessie Trail**

The City will, at the beginning and end of each park season, turn on and off the water at this water station, as well as provide water for the water station.

**Motion/Vote - Health Care Foundation of La Porte Water Station Maintenance Agreement for the Chessie Trail**

Ms. Romine moved to approve the Health Care Foundation of La Porte Water Station Maintenance Agreement for the Chessie Trail; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Dewatering Well Quotes**

Sewage Department began cleaning Primary Digester 1, a 500,000-gallon tank that converts solids to methane and needs to be cleaned every 5 years. To empty that tank, the groundwater needs to be lowered or dewatered so that the groundwater pressure does not damage the concrete floor of the tank. We need two more wells to complete the project. Two quotes came in for the wells. The first bid was from Mersino in the amount of \$13,451. The second bid was from NAPCO for \$17,000. Mr. Jackson is recommending we move forward with the Mersino quote.

**Motion/Vote - Dewatering Well Quotes**

Ms. Romine moved to approve the quote from Mersino in the amount of \$13,451; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Basement Protection Grant**

Sewage Department presented two basement protection grants for 1302 Walton and 410 Colfax. This is a City program that assists residents with the cost of a system to prevent sewage/stormwater backups. The City will pay the first \$1500 for each grant awarded.

**Motion/Vote - Basement Protection Grant**

Ms. Romine moved to approve both Basement Protection Grants for \$1500 each; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Surplus Equipment Sewage Department**

Sewage Department has a tank made from a railcar purchased in 2007 for \$6000 for solids. This tank is no longer used. Ms. Stimley is requesting to the Board declare this tank surplus equipment with the permission to solicit quotes.

**Motion/Vote - Surplus Equipment Sewage Department**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Surplus Equipment Sewage Department; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Wastewater Mandatory Safety Shoe/Boot Program**

Wastewater Department is requesting permission to establish a policy and procedure for City Wastewater employees to enhance the current working conditions for the employees of the Wastewater Department by providing protection footwear.

**Motion/Vote - Wastewater Mandatory Safety Shoe/Boot Program**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Wastewater Mandatory Safety Shoe/Boot Program; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Volunteer Code Enforcement Policy**

Jen Noll, Director of Human Resources, is requesting a Volunteer Code Enforcement Policy for volunteers to be able to assist our Code Enforcement Department.

**Motion/Vote - Volunteer Code Enforcement Policy**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Volunteer Code Enforcement Policy; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Letter of Resignation**

Police Chief Paul Brettin presented a letter of resignation from Chris Schoof effective July 30, 2020 and asked the Board for Approval to fill the vacancy.

**Motion/Vote - Letter of Resignation**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Letter of Resignation and fill the vacancy; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**2020-2 Street Paving Recommendation for Award**

Nick Minch, Director of Engineering, recommended to award the 2020-2 Street Paving Contract to Reith-Riley Construction in the amount of \$1,696,898.50, which came in under the Engineer's estimate and was the lowest, most responsive bid.

**Motion/Vote - 2020-2 Street Paving Recommendation for Award**

Ms. Romine moved to approve 2020-2 Street Paving Contract to Reith-Riley in the amount of \$1,696,898.50; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Indiana Department of Transportation LPA Contract for Des. No. 1902003-FY22 ADA Sidewalks**

Mr. Minich is requesting approval for INDOT LPA Contract for Des. No. 1902003 for Street Paving which is scheduled to start in July 2022 for FY 2023, in the amount of \$250,000 Federal with a 20% local match required in addition to the \$250,000.

**Indiana Department of Transportation LPA Contract for Des. No. 1902004-FY22 ADA Sidewalks**

Mr. Minich is requesting approval for INDOT LPA Contract for Des. No. 1902004 for ADA Sidewalks which is scheduled to start in July 2022 for FY 2023, in the amount of \$100,000 Federal with a 20% local match required in addition to the \$100,000.

**Motion/Vote - INDOT LPA Contract for Des. No. 1902003/ 1902004 for Street Paving and ADA Sidewalks**

Ms. Romine moved to approve INDOT LPA Contract for Des. No. 1902003/ 1902004 for Street Paving and ADA Sidewalks; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Contract R-37668 Change Order 003-Chessie Trail Phase 1**

Mr. Minich is requesting approval for a zero-dollar change order for flashing beacons used which were not an accepted product from INDOT. This is the process to get them accepted. This does not have an impact on the City, but INDOT needs this to finalize their records.

**Motion/Vote - Contract R-37668 Change Order 003-Chessie Trail Phase 1**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Contract R-37668 Change Order 003 - Chessie Trail Phase 1; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Pay Application 2 for 2020-1 Street Paving - Walsh and Kelly**

Mr. Minich is requesting approval for Pay Application 2 for 2020-1 Street Paving Project for Walsh and Kelly in the amount of \$486,196.28 which is less the 10% retainage.

**Motion/Vote - Pay Application 2 for 2020-1 Street Paving - Walsh and Kelly**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Pay Application 2 for 2020-1 Street Paving - Walsh and Kelly; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Stone Lake Trail Supplement - SEH of Indiana**

Mr. Minich reported with the rebidding of the Stone Lake Trail Project, there was additional engineering work involved to get the project under budget. He advised SEH of Indiana is requesting approval for time worked on the rebidding in the amount of \$6,400. Mr. Minich requested the Board's approval of same.

**Motion/Vote - Stone Lake Trail Supplement - SEH of Indiana**

Ms. Romine moved to approve Stone Lake Trail Supplement - SEH of Indiana; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Recommendation for Award of Contract for Demolition of 404 McCollum formerly known as Tibma Bakery**

Mary Ann Richards, CDBG Manager, reported the City received two quotes for the demolition of 404 McCollum. One quote was over the \$150,000 threshold and the other was significantly lower and after the quotes were received, the contractor with the lowest quote submitted an additional quote which did not meet the quoting requirements. She recommended the Board reject both quotes and move forward with receiving bids for this project.

Discussion was held regarding this matter and if the Board accepted the low quote, it would impact our timeline as the contractor would most likely decline the project and we would have to bid the project anyway. Ms. Richards reported the timeline would be to advertise on July 28 and August 4 with bids due on August 12 and a recommendation to the Board at their August 18, 2020 meeting.

**Motion/Vote - Reject quotes for Demolition of 404 McCollum formerly known as Tibma Bakery and Authorize the Project to be Bid**



Ms. Romine moved to reject quotes for demolition of 404 McCollum formerly known as Tibma Bakery and authorize the project to be bid; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

**Unfinished Business**

None

**Other Business**

Mayor Dermody reported the Police Department has on record, 39 calls to one rental home on Jefferson Avenue, highlighting the needs of the Police Department. All four officers on duty were at this one location the night before and one officer had to arm himself with an Automatic Weapon because of the threat that was reported. Mayor Dermody stated that Chief Brettin and the Police Department met with the La Porte County Drug Taskforce who reported that we do not have big drug dealers in our community. We have a major problem with small users that are dealing to keep their habit up. This results in rental homes turning into what is called "flop houses" that people are going into and using/dealing. We must continue to hold the high standard for our landlords. He advised that he and City Attorney Nick Otis are working on amending the City's Nuisance Ordinance to be able to condemn these properties.

**Adjourn**

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

**Approve:**

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**Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor**

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer**

**Approved: August 4, 2020**