

City of LaPorte Board of Public Works and Safety

April 28, 2010

Convene

City of LaPorte Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on April 28, 2010 at 9:00 am. Attendance: Mayor Chroback, Present: Mr. MacLennan, Present: Mr. Rosenberg, Absent.

Pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Chroback.

Minutes

As each member of the Board received an advance copy of the minutes prior to the meeting, Mayor Chroback stated she would dispense with the reading of same and asked for any corrections or additions.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Minutes from April 21, 2010

Mr. MacLennan made a motion to approve the regular and Executive Session minutes from April 21st as presented; Mayor Chroback seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Mayor Chroback (Yes), Mr. MacLennan (Yes), Mr. Rosenberg (Absent).

Public Comment

Greg Hofer, 609 Michigan Avenue, is remodeling his building and requested permission from the Board to block off three to four parking spaces on days the lift truck will be in front of his business doing their work. Dale Clingerman, Director of Engineering and Building Services has already looked at the scope of work and given his approval. Mr. Hofer explained the work will be done only on the weekends so Saturday and Sunday are the only days the parking spaces will be blocked. For safety reasons, Mr. Hofer stated he will also put up barricades to protect pedestrian traffic while the building is being power washed and painted. He expects the project to begin this weekend. He advised he will let the Engineering Department know when the work is complete.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve the request to block off the sidewalk and parking spaces; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Bob Pointon, 445 Pine Lake Avenue, stated he was unhappy that motorists throughout the City, especially Pine Lake Avenue, do not obey speed limits or traffic signs and encouraged everyone to be more diligent while driving.

Jim Stahl, 1710 Weller Avenue, stated he is aware the City is moving up their plan to install City Sewer between 1st and 2nd Streets, specifically at the 1700 block of Weller Avenue. Mr. Stahl wanted to gather more information about the proposed project as well as ask several questions. Mayor Chroback stated the matter will be addressed later in the meeting.

Clerk Treasurer

Claims Approval

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve Civil City Claims in the amount of \$24,639.45; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried. Mr. MacLennan noticed a claim for the 1st Quarter Transit Local Match and asked Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Joanne Layman if the City would be matching the same amount each quarter. Mrs. Layman stated the local match differs each time, depending on how much money is received from the State and NIRPC with the City paying the balance. She stated the City has budgeted \$154,000.00 for the City's local match to TransPorte.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve Payroll Claims for April 30, 2010, in the amount of \$303,380.63; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve Wastewater Claims in the amount of \$48,316.16; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve Water Claims in the amount of \$48,359.32; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Contractor Registration

The following contractor registration was presented for the Board's approval:

1. Oatsvall Construction Galien, MI

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve the contractor registration as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

New Business

Traffic Appeals

Two appeals were presented. The first appeal was originally tabled from last week. The appeal was for a ticket issued by a Police Officer for parking on the tree lawn. The resident stated they did not park on a tree lawn, but on asphalt instead. Mayor Chroback stated she was out in the area of Weller Avenue where the ticket was issued but didn't have the exact address and would like another week to look into the matter. The appeal remained tabled until the Board meeting next week.

The second appeal was for after hours in the park. The resident appeared before the Board to explain his appeal. Dakota Euler, 301 Pine Lake Avenue, stated he is a young driver who was following a friend home from work and was not familiar with the area of Fox Park. He stated he never saw the sign that stated no parking after 10:00 p.m. in City Parks and suggested the City place another sign that would be visible from the opposite direction. Assistant Police Chief, Tom Heath, stated the Police Department has taken a zero tolerance position on after-hours parking because of the repeated vandalism in the parks last year. Mayor Chroback added there is no real reason to be in the parks after 10:00 p.m. and the area is not a through street. Mr. MacLennan stated he was not inclined to void the ticket but due to the fact this was a young driver and his first offense, he was in favor of reducing the ticket. Mayor Chroback concurred. Mr. MacLennan moved to reduce the ticket from \$50.00 to \$25.00; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Health Insurance Changes

Matt Cook, Director of Human Resource, presented the Board with a list of insurance changes that need to be approved by the Board in order to implement by May 1, 2010. Mr. Cook stated the changes were expected to save the City approximately \$950,000.00. Some of the key changes to the existing policy are as follows:

1. Cancellation of the "Plus Plan"
2. Increasing the HDHP Deductibles to \$5,950.00 for individuals, \$11,900.00 for families
3. Out of Pocket expenses will match deductibles
4. Prescription Benefits are non-existent until deductibles have been met
5. Amendment of Insurance Plan Year to 5/1-4/30

Mr. Cook advised supplemental insurance will be offered to employees but they would not be eligible for the Health Savings Plan if they decide to sign up. The premiums employees will have deducted from their paychecks will also change to \$20.00 per pay for single coverage and \$25.00 per pay for family coverage.

The Mayor stated she was very unhappy the City was forced to make such drastic changes to their insurance program and regretted employees were suffering for the County's lack of due diligence in their assessment process. Mr. MacLennan asked Mr. Cook if the financial situation should improve for the City in the near future, could the plan be changed again. Mr. Cook stated a plan change mid-year is very difficult as the City is currently experiencing, and if any additional changes were to be made it would have to be after a plan year has expired. He added if a better insurance plan were available to employees in the near future, that is a problem he would welcome.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Health Insurance Changes

Mr. MacLennan made a motion to approve the insurance changes as recommended; Mayor Chroback seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Mayor Chroback (Yes), Mr. MacLennan (Yes), Mr. Rosenberg (Absent).

Brighton Street Closure

Todd Taylor, Director of Water Department, reported AT&T is ready to install their infrastructure on the Brighton Street Water Tower, per their agreement with the City. AT&T has requested to close Brighton Street during the installation on May 5, 2010, for a couple of hours.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve the street closure as requested; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Water Works Projects

Mr. Taylor reported the water main installation on Crescent Drive has gotten underway and he was happy to report his department was able to procure some of the materials at a reduced rate.

Mr. Taylor stated the bids for painting the Webber Street Water Tower will be before the Board on May 5th.

Mr. Taylor reported the water system flushing is almost complete without any major complications other than the replacement of a few hydrants which is normal.

Mr. Taylor advised well drilling on the east side of town should begin sometime next week.

DWSRF Loan Program-Resolution

Mr. Taylor reported he is in the process of rapid design work for some improvements that will be funded by the State Revolving Fund. He advised the State is interested in extending water to the Summit Farm in the County and if the City can jump on board with the project they can offer financing to the City at great rates they would otherwise be unable to procure for future projects. Mr. Taylor stated although it is a scramble to pull everything together on such short notice, it is a worthwhile effort. Don Baugher, City Attorney, presented the Board with a Resolution that authorizes Mr. Taylor to move forward with the application process. Mr. Baugher stated this isn't a guarantee the City will get the loan, merely an authorization to complete the application process.

Mr. MacLennan read the Resolution in its entirety and moved to approve same; motion seconded by Mayor Chrobak and unanimously carried.

Quotes were received for Lead Hazard Reduction for thirteen houses participating in the Community Development Block Grant Program and they are as follows:

Greentree Environmental		Vic Butcher
1. 103 Virginia	\$9,063.00	\$6,500.00
2. 105 K Street	\$31,575.00	\$18,390.00
3. 108 Grandview	\$3,150.00	\$3,860.00
4. 113 Erie	\$2,865.00	\$880.00
5. 114 Warsaw	\$6,110.00	\$2,435.00
6. 318 Planett	\$14,395.00	\$10,300.00
7. 236 E. Lincolnway	\$19,820.00	\$11,745.00
8. 513 Grove	\$18,568.00	\$13,665.00
9. 708 5th Street	\$53,375.00	\$21,475.00
10. 716 Weller	\$1,500.00	\$610.00
11. 1005 Harrison	\$34,430.00	
12. 1212 Scott	\$10,420.00	\$9,990.00
13. 1313 2nd Street	\$39,940.00	

Mr. MacLennan moved to refer the quotes to the Engineer and City Attorney for their review and recommendation; motion seconded by Mayor Chrobak and unanimously carried.

PAF Request

Mayor Chrobak read a letter from Carl Scott with Parents and Friends, who care for mentally challenged adults. The letter stated they are ready to build another group home on Andrew Avenue next to the homes the group has built in the last couple of years. They are requesting the City waive the building permits and system development fees as they have before, since this is a Non-Profit organization.

Mr. MacLennan moved to waive the fees as requested; motion seconded by Mayor Chrobak and

unanimously carried.

Police Cars

Mayor Chroback reported the City has been leasing ten vehicles from LaPorte Chrysler for the Detective Bureau and is presenting a new lease-to-purchase agreement from Chrysler for the Board's approval. The new agreement will include only six vehicles and at the end of the five year agreement the City will own the vehicles outright. The Mayor advised the payments will change but they will not affect the budget at all. Mayor Chroback also advised the City purchase the 2006 Dodge Van used by Animal Control instead of leasing, as LaPorte Chrysler has offered a very reasonable purchase price of \$6,740.00. The vehicle has only 15,000 miles on it and this would be a smart move for the City. Detective Paul Brettin spoke in favor of the purchase of the van as he stated the Police Department uses the van for various uses such as transporting their bicycles for bike patrol officers.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Lease-to-Purchase

Mr. MacLennan made a motion to approve the new lease-purchase agreement with LaPorte Chrysler, as well as the purchase of the 2006 Dodge Van; Mayor Chroback seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Mayor Chroback (Yes), Mr. MacLennan (Yes), Mr. Rosenberg (Absent).

Unfinished Business

Weller Avenue Septic

Jerry Jackson, Director of Wastewater, reported the extension of sewer services to Weller Avenue has been on his project list but recently got moved up to the forefront because of the septic system that failed for one of the homeowners. Mr. Jackson stated the options before him at this time are to attempt to repair the sewer now and do the installation at a later date, or go ahead with the entire sewer extension project for Weller Avenue. The issue the homeowners have raised is the cost differential between the gravity sewer system and the low-pressure grinder systems. Discussion was held regarding the pros and cons of each. Jim Stahl, who addressed the Board earlier during public comment, spoke again as did Dave Wainscott, 1712 Weller Avenue, the homeowner whose septic system has failed. Both residents have expressed taking the path of least resistance with the lowest cost to homeowners. Mr. Jackson stated the City has been using the grinder pump systems for the last ten years and have found them to be easy to work with. Mr. Jackson stocks the pumps at the treatment plant and can easily replace them for homeowners when needed. In addition, the City maintains those grinder pumps for residents.

Mr. Jackson reported he did a survey with 11 other cities to get some feedback on their sewer connection capabilities and they are as follows:

1. 11 out of 11 extended services to the property line
2. 11 out of 11 charge the homeowner to hook up from their house to the street
3. 8 out of 11 use the grinder system
4. 7 out of 8 require residents to pay to maintain the pumps

Mr. Clingerman, Director of Engineering and Building Services, reported the gravity system is going to be delayed by four to six months because of the permit needed from the railroad for the right of way. He advised the cost of the gravity system is approximately \$150,000.00 with a cost to the City of \$122,350.00; the grinder pump system will cost approximately \$78,600.00 with a cost to the City of \$42,660.00. Mr. Clingerman explained if the low-pressure grinder system was the direction the City went in, and if the

homeowners bought the pumps the City currently uses, the City will maintain the pumps for the homeowners. Mayor Chrobak asked Mr. Clingerman what the cost difference to the homeowner would be between the two systems. Mr. Clingerman stated it would be approximately a \$1,000.00 difference. Mr. Clingerman pointed out that each home is going to be different because of where their sewer is located in relation to their plumbing. Mr. Clingerman noted Fred Larmore, from Beam, Longest & Neff was in the audience today and asked if he would like to recommend one system over the other. Mr. Larmore stated as he is an Engineer and not a design consultant, he would defer to Mr. Clingerman's expertise.

Mr. Jackson stated in answer to Mr. Stahl's list of questions of whether the sewer lines can be ran to Stone Lake Drive instead, he stated the lines would have to be run over the hill which would be very difficult. Mr. Stahl also wanted to know if there were any complaints over the storm drains installed when new lines are ran and Mr. Jackson stated he hasn't received any complaints so far. Mr. Stahl asked for an explanation about the pumps used in the grinder system. Mr. Jackson reported they are easy systems that sit down in a little vault and operate on a float system. They are 1 HP and cost approximately \$8.00 per year to run in electrical costs. The pumps are projected to last five years but have traditionally lasted ten years.

Mayor Chrobak reminded everyone of the problems and pitfalls in running sewer lines every which way through backyards and under foundations, which was the case discovered during the Monroe Street Project last year. It is imperative to have sewer connections that run out to the street in an easy and orderly fashion so residents aren't forced to tear up their neighbors' back yards when they experience their own sewer problems.

After much discussion, Mr. Clingerman advised Mr. Stahl to meet with him in his office so he could explain the process in greater detail. Mr. MacLennan asked Mr. Jackson for his recommendation. Mr. Jackson stated he agreed with Mr. Clingerman that the low-pressure grinder system was the way to proceed, as it sets the precedent for the future sewer separation projects the City has yet to complete.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve the recommendation of the City Engineer and Director of Wastewater to proceed with the installation of the low-pressure grinder pump system on Weller Avenue; motion seconded by Mayor Chrobak and unanimously carried.

Traffic Commission-Child at Play Signs

Mike Frazee, Director of Street Department, reported as requested by the Board last week, he has determined the signs requested by a resident that say "Children at Play" are to be installed on the triangle areas between Virginia and Rose Street facing in each direction.

Mr. MacLennan moved to approve the placement of the signs; motion seconded by Mayor Chrobak and unanimously carried.

Department Reports

Police

Assistant Chief of Police, Tom Heath, reported the Police Department is happy the 4th of July Parade will continue this year even though the City is unable to pay overtime for the Police Officers to work it. He wanted to clear up any misinformation the public might have about this issue as no officers were asked to volunteer their time for the parade. He stated he was aware the Mayor asked Sheriff Mollenhauer if he could find volunteers within his department to provide security for the parade so it wouldn't be in danger of being cancelled. Mayor Chrobak stated she did ask the Sheriff for assistance and was happy he offered

volunteers.

City Attorney

Mr. Baugher reminded everyone there was an Executive Session scheduled today immediately following the regular Board meeting and requested the Board set one for next week to discuss litigation.

Mr. MacLennan moved to set an Executive Session for Wednesday, May 5th, following the regularly scheduled meeting to discuss litigation; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Wastewater

Mr. Jackson informed the Board he has applied for a grant to replace the lighting outside of the treatment plant to LED lighting.

Engineering

Mr. Clingerman reported the Kabelin building has been demolished and the final loads are being hauled away. He stated a tree had to be removed in the process and a new pole was installed by NIPSCO.

TransPorte

Janet Lantz, Director of TransPorte, reported the new minivan is outside if anyone would like to see it after the meeting. Mayor Chroback stated this minivan was purchased with CMAQ Funds and is an E-85 vehicle.

Mayor

Mayor Chroback reminded the public City Hall will be closed on Tuesday, May 4th for the primary election.

The Mayor announced Spring Clean Up is set for May 10th through May 14th and noted the Herald Argus will print a list of items that are acceptable to be put out for pick up.

Mayor Chroback congratulated Tim and Laura Gropp on the arrival of their new baby boy. Laura is the Administrative Assistant for the Community Development and Planning Office and Tim is the Director of GLEDC.

The Redevelopment Commission meeting has been cancelled for this evening, April 28th. The Traffic Commission will not meet on Tuesday, May 4th due to the election.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. MacLennan moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Mayor Chroback and unanimously carried.

Signatures

APPROVED: _____
Kathleen Chroback, Mayor

APPROVED: _____
Teresa L. Ludlow, Clerk-Treasurer
May 5, 2010