

The Common Council of the City of LaPorte

June 21, 2010

Convene

The Common Council of the City of LaPorte met in regular session in the Council Chambers on June 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. Attendance: Councilman Logwood, Absent: Councilwoman Renner, Present: Councilwoman Hammons, Present: Councilman Heichel, Absent: Councilman Schmitt, Absent: Councilman Luscomb, Present: Councilman Pressler, Present.

Pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Renner.

Minutes

As each Council member received an advance copy of the minutes from the previous meeting, Mayor Chrobak stated they would dispense with the reading of same and asked if there were any corrections or additions.

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Pressler moved to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Councilwoman Hammons and unanimously carried.

Petitions & Comments

Bob Pointon, 544 Fremont, stated on previous occasions he has brought up the fact the City sends out fire trucks on EMS calls and wonders why this continues to happen when the City has an SUV that could be used which would save gas and money. He stated to his knowledge the County has never asked the City to respond to EMS calls. Mr. Pointon stated he understood the Fire Department responding to an accident but not for slip and fall or tummy ache type calls.

Standing Committee Reports

Airport Authority: Councilman Luscomb reported the Airport has begun the process of preparing a twenty year Master Plan. A committee, which will include the Mayor, Chamber of Commerce, will be formed with input from the community. He stated he will keep the Council apprised of the progress made regarding this matter.

NewPorte Landing: Mayor Chrobak reported the NewPorte Landing Committee met a few weeks ago with several items discussed. She noted a gentleman approached the committee and indicated he was interested in developing the property across the street on Truesdell for a girls fast pitch softball program.

Park & Recreation: Councilman Pressler stated at the last meeting Fran Milo presented the Council with a list of volunteers who are willing to help with mowing in the Park Department. He reported Dean Heise, Director of Parks & Recreation, is in the process of organizing the volunteers and setting a schedule.

School Board Liaison: Councilman Pressler reported he was unable to attend the last School Board meeting and deferred to Councilman Luscomb who attended in his place. Councilman Luscomb reported an update was given on the improvements at Handley Elementary School and the construction should be done before school starts in August. He reported the School Board was pleased with the ISTEP scores which were above the State average in most areas.

Traffic Commission: Councilman Pressler reported the next Traffic Commission is scheduled the same night as the Council meeting. He stated he is in the process of moving the meeting to an earlier time and will have the Clerk-Treasurer post the new time once it is set.

Joint Ordinance Steering Committee: Mayor Chroback reported the County wide meetings are completed. She stated the committee will reconvene and begin the final stages of the plan. Don Baugher, City Attorney, reported the City Engineer met with Dave McCain, Plan Commission Attorney, and himself last week to discuss the zoning map which is a critical part of the plan.

Clerk-Treasurer's Report

Teresa Ludlow, Clerk-Treasurer, reported she attended the State Board of Accounts Clerk-Treasurer's school last week. She reported the DLGF has not determined the growth factor for 2011 budgets and was told to use 3.5% as an average to begin the budget process. The Clerk-Treasurer advised the State is again changing the annual report, which will be web-based. The City has offered to be a pilot test site for the 2010 annual report. The Clerk reported beginning with 2012; budgets will be submitted to the DLGF via their website, they will no longer accept paper budgets.

Second & Final Reading of an Ordinance Amending Police Merit Commission Ordinance

Councilman Luscomb moved to read an Ordinance for the second and final time by title only; motion seconded by Councilwoman Renner and unanimously carried. Councilman Luscomb read an Ordinance Amending the Police Merit Commission Ordinance by title only.

Councilman Pressler inquired if this basically adds another step to the promotion process. The City Attorney explained the change mirrors the State Statute plus it will be identical to what is being done at the Fire Department.

Motion/Vote - Adopt Ordinance No. 16-2010

Councilman Luscomb made a motion to adopt the Ordinance as presented; Councilwoman Renner seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Councilman Logwood (Absent), Councilwoman Renner (Yes), Councilwoman Hammons (Yes), Councilman Heichel (Absent), Councilman Schmitt (Absent), Councilman Luscomb (Yes), Councilman Pressler (Yes).

ORDINANCE NO. 16-2010 ORDINANCE AMENDING POLICE MERIT COMMISSION ORDINANCE

Introduction of a Resolution Approving PER (Preliminary Engineering Report)

Councilwoman Renner moved to introduce a Resolution; motion seconded by Councilman Luscomb and unanimously carried. Councilwoman Renner read a Resolution Approving PER (Preliminary Engineering

Report) in its entirety.

Terry Hodnik, NIES Engineering, informed the Council a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) is a look at all the aspects of a project without actually doing the final design it would take to bid and construct the project. He stated the remaining elements of the project to be completed would be to finish the design, receive bids, and proceed with the financing through bonds which is the time a serious commitment about going forward with the project would be made. Mr. Hodnik gave a slide show presentation regarding the proposed improvements to the LaPorte Water System using State of Indiana Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund outlining the project locations, why each project is needed, recommended solutions, environmental impacts and the benefits to the City.

The projects include:

- Lake Street Water Plant Improvements
- East Water Plant Improvements
- Water Mains Near Civic Auditorium
- Camp Summit Water Main and Booster Station (to be paid by the State)
- City Wide Water System Mapping

Buzz Krohn, O.W. Krohn & Associates, LLP, gave a presentation regarding the financial impact for the above listed projects. He reported the Camp Summit Project is estimated to cost \$2,083,300 and will be done with a Forgivable Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) which will be paid by the State. The cost estimate for the City projects is \$3,440,000 and will be financed through a State Revolving Fund Loan. He reported because the project includes the Camp Summit Project and the State is treating the financing similar to stimulus money, they have prioritized the entire project to the top of the list regarding financing opportunities. Mr. Krohn advised the Water Department has an existing bond that will be paid off in July, 2012. He stated the principal payments for the new State Revolving Loan will begin after the current bonds are paid off with interest payments in the interim. Mr. Krohn reported the State Revolving Fund administrators understand the situation regarding the City's debt service coverage. He reported the cash flow projections do not indicate there is a need for a rate increase for this project. He reported they have not factored in any type of cost of living type increases that might be considered at some point which would be a totally separate matter. Mr. Krohn gave a summary of the City's water rates compared to other communities. He stated overall the City has very competitive water rates.

A hand out of the slide show presentation and the financial report were made available to the Council.

Todd Taylor, Director of Water Department, stated he believes all of these projects are important. He stated from his point of view, a really important aspect of the projects is developing the new well fields and installing the generator. He stated last week the City has a major thunderstorm and there were many power outages. The generator will allow the City to continue water service to customers during a crisis. Mr. Taylor reported the City's well capacity has declined over time, with one of the wells dating back to 1962. He reported production can decline in wells over time and some of that production can't be restored. Mr. Taylor stated the new well fields will not only help with water capacity it will help with economic development.

Councilman Pressler inquired if there will be any impact on rates with regard to the current bond issue to the new bonds. Mr. Taylor advised the new State Revolving Loan for these projects will not require a rate increase.

Mr. Taylor thanked the Council for the time they spent in meeting with him regarding this matter.

Mayor Chrobak advised the Council if the Resolution passes this will begin the process of moving forward with the projects. The City Attorney informed the Council there are two critical issues regarding these projects. The first is that the BAN (Camp Summit Project) is actually forgiven by the State which will be negotiated by contract. The other is to negotiate with the State rates the City is satisfied with in terms of providing service after the facility is in. He stated if agreements cannot be reached with the State on those two terms the City will not pursue the SRF Bond.

Motion/Vote - Adopt Resolution R-6-2010

Councilwoman Renner made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; Councilman Pressler seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Councilman Logwood (Absent), Councilwoman Renner (Yes), Councilwoman Hammons (Yes), Councilman Heichel (Absent), Councilman Schmitt (Absent), Councilman Luscomb (Yes), Councilman Pressler (Yes).

RESOLUTION R-6-2010 RESOLUTION APPROVING PER (Preliminary Engineering Report)

Ordinance Limiting Capital Expenditures Within the Water & Wastewater Departments

Mayor Chrobak stated as Councilman Logwood requested this Ordinance be drafted and he is not present tonight due to an illness, he has requested the Ordinance not be introduced and be placed on the next Council agenda.

Other Business

Councilman Pressler stated unfortunately the weather did not cooperate with Cruise Night and inquired if it will be rescheduled. Mayor Chrobak stated she doubted that would happen as those who participate have commitments the rest of the summer. She asked Mr. Pointon if he could address the issue. Mr. Pointon informed the Council the Cruise Committee has met but he has not heard the outcome of their meeting. He stated to reschedule the event would be very difficult because as the Mayor pointed out participants are already booked throughout the summer and they would have to get approval from the State to close Lincolnway. Mayor Chrobak state it is a very unfortunate situation as many people participate in the event and it is well attended.

Councilman Pressler thanked City employees for their quick and prompt response during last Friday's storm. He stated he knows several Street Department employees were called in to help as well as the Police and Fire Departments with many calls from citizens.

Councilman Pressler stated in response to Mr. Pointon's comments earlier about fire trucks responding to EMS calls he has talked with Mr. Pointon several times in the past regarding this issue. He stated while it may not change Mr. Pointon's mind, he stated it is important to clear up a few things. Councilman Pressler reported for some time prior to running slip and fall calls, as Mr. Pointon calls them, the City of LaPorte and Michigan City were the only departments in LaPorte County not running those calls. It came to the attention of the administration at that time that a lady who lived in the Ruth Sabin Home was feeling ill and called for an ambulance. The call came through the 911 dispatch as a sick person. He reported the lady confused her indigestion for a heart attack and expired. Councilman Pressler reported the two ambulances

that serve the City of LaPorte were busy at the time of the call. If the Fire Department had been dispatched to the call they could have saved her life. At that time it was decided it would be wise for the City of LaPorte Fire Department to respond to those types of calls. He stated just this past January station three was dispatched to a slip and fall at Wal-Mart and when they arrived on the scene they found a lady in full arrest. They were able to save her life. The person who called 911 told the dispatcher the lady had slipped and fell and that is the information that is dispatched out. Councilman Pressler stated if that is the only time the Fire Department saves a life then he believes it is worth the fuel.

Councilwoman Renner stated when her husband had a seizure and his heart stopped it was the firefighters who saved him because they got there first. The firefighters were the ones who carried her husband down the stairs to the ambulance because the EMS responders were in no condition to carry him down the small stairs.

Councilman Luscomb added the fire trucks are equipped so they are ready to go to the next call, no matter where they are. He stated the information the 911 dispatcher receives is from a confused, excitable person on the other end of the line. Councilman Luscomb reported he has responded to calls for indigestion that turn out to be chest pains. He stated when a fire truck pulls up to a house and a baby isn't breathing or a spouse is having a heart attack the person doesn't ask how many miles per gallon you got on the way there, they are just grateful that you have arrived and are there to help. Councilman Luscomb reported the Fire Department has firefighters who are EMTs or first responders and are highly trained and dedicated to do their job.

Mr. Pointon stated he did a survey a while back on volunteer fire departments and almost every one use either a pick-up truck or SUV. Councilwoman Renner stated if that were the case and the Fire Department received a call for a fire, they would have to go back to the station to get the fire truck which in the end would use up more gas and time.

Adjourn

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

Signatures

APPROVED: _____
Kathleen A. Chroback, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Teresa L. Ludlow, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: July 6, 2010