**June 2, 2025**

The Common Council of the City of La Porte met in regular session Monday, June 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Councilman Buchanan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Franke, Huffman, Feikes, Konieczny, Buchanan, Galloway, West

Absent: None

**Approval of Minutes**

Mayor Dermody stated each 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 and Comments of Citizens**

Chris Moryl, 812 E. Jefferson Avenue, addressed the Council regarding regulations for golf cart vehicles. Councilman Franke state there is a permit process that includes an inspection and fee. If everything is checked out they are issued a permit which allows them to drive on City streets, but they are not allowed on State roads.

**Standing Committee Reports**

**Redevelopment Commission:** Councilman Franke reported the Redevelopment Commission met last Wednesday at which time quotes were received for a sewer extension project in NewPorte Landing. Only one quote was received from Pavey Excavating. The Commission approved soliciting bids for 1,406 cubic yards of soil not to exceed $70,000.

**Traffic Commission:** Councilwoman Feikes reported the Traffic Commission will be meeting tomorrow, June 3, 2025, 5:00 p.m. at the Police Department.

**Park & Recreation:** Councilwoman Feikes reported the Park Board met on May 21st, 2025, at the Park Office. John Ruble from PEA (Planned Environmental Associates) presented a draft for the Pickle Ball Master Plan for Board feedback. Once those are turned in, a final plan should be ready for review at the Board’s June meeting. The Park Board gave permission to Greg Pietsch, Civic Auditorium Director, to sign a three-year contract with Pepsi to feature their products at future Civic events. The Urban Enterprise Association reached out to Mark Schreiber, Superintendent of Park & Recreation, to inquire if the Park Department would be interested in a statute for Fox Park. The UEA has secured a two-year lease where they have possession of various different artwork. The Park Board approved the placement of a statute in Fox Park. The first installment piece will be a seven-foot statute named “Evance”. Councilwoman Feikes reported the Dunes Air Painters will be submitting artwork to the Park Department to produce a concept for a wrap to be installed on the kayak launch lockers at Stone Lake Beach. The next Park Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. at the Park Office.

**Mayor’s Veterans Committee:** Councilman Galloway reminded everyone the Annual Brick Dedication will be held on Saturday, June 7, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at Soldier’s Memorial Park.

**Historic Preservation Commission:** Councilman Buchanan reported the Historic Preservation Commission held a presentation jointly with Preserve Historic La Porte on May 27th to discuss and answer questions regarding the upcoming Indiana Avenue/Highway 35 reconstruction. Th event was well attended with nearly seventy residents. An overview of the project and projected timeline were given, and questions/concerns were heard. The overall major concerns that came up from residents were slowing cars and trucks down through town and concerns regarding possible damage to homeowner-owned portions of underground utilities caused by the large-scale project.

**Airport Authority:** Councilwoman Konieczny reported the Airport Authority held a dedication for their solar project and are expecting a return in their investment in eighteen to twenty-four months. The Airport Authority meeting will be held on June 11, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. at the Airport.

**Public Hearing and Introduction of an Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of La Porte, Indiana, for the Purpose of Establishing Councilmanic Districts**

Councilman Franke moved to introduce an Ordinance for the first time in its entirety; motion seconded by Councilwoman Huffman and unanimously carried. Councilman Franke read an Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of La Porte, Indiana, for the Purpose of Establishing Councilmanic Districts in its entirety.

Mayor Dermody invited Brian, Bosma from Kroger Gardis & Regas, LLP Attorneys to come forward and explain the processes for redistricting. Mr. Bosma summarized the process of redistricting and what this means for the residents of the City of La Porte. Mr. Bosma advised there were two (2) plans submitted, one from Councilor Tim Franke and the other from Julia Vaughn who is in the audience. He stated their recommendation is for the Council to adopt the plan submitted by Councilman Franke.

As this Ordinance requires a public hearing, Mayor Dermody declared the public hearing open at 6:22 p.m. Nick Otis, Attorney for the City, presented proof of publication in the La Porte Herald Dispatch on May 9th and May 16th, 2025. The Mayor asked if there was anyone present who wished to address the Council regarding this Ordinance.

Julia Vaughn, Executive Director of Common Cause of Indiana, and resides in Indianapolis, came forward to address the Council regarding this Ordinance. She stated they had hoped more proposals would be submitted as they held a webinar regarding this topic a couple of weeks ago. She explained their process in preparing and submitting their plan and thanked the City for their openness and transparency for this process.

Mayor Dermody asked if there was anyone else that would like to address the Council regarding this matter. As no one came forward, he declared the public hearing closed. The second and final reading of this Ordinance will take place at the June 16th meeting.

**Other Business**

Mayor Dermody stated the City is trying to reach out to the public on how the City works and the different departments and programs available in the City. The Mayor invited Mike Riehle, from LEAP to give a brief presentation on the Urban Enterprise Association (UEA) and what they do for the City and its residents. Mike Riehle stated that the UEA as it pertains to the City is a geographical area, such as a neighborhood within the City, where a government authority grants special tax or regulatory exemptions in order to promote local economic development. The Enterprise Zone was established in 2002 for the purpose of creating jobs and new business opportunities, while raising the quality of life within the community. The Zone covers close to a four-square mile designated portion of land within the City of La Porte. Within its borders there are more than 450 businesses and a population of over 6,200 residents. The UEA is governed by a board of directors made up of Zone business representatives as well as residents within the Zone. Some of the programs the UEA facilitate are Zone tax incentives for businesses, traditional business grants, historic grants, 80/20 grants, 50/50 grants, residential grants just to name a few. Over the past ten years the UEA has made a $9.7 million impact on the City of La Porte.

Mayor Dermody reminded everyone that the official cruise night will be this Saturday, June 7th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Participants need to be at the fairgrounds by 5:30.

The Mayor encouraged everyone to attend the Brick Dedication at Soldiers Memorial Park on Saturday, He stated it is a brief ceremony that recognizes individuals you have or are serving in the military.

Also, a shout out to the Airport for thinking outside the box on the addition of solar energy to save money.

**Adjourn**

Councilman Galloway moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Councilman Buchanan and unanimously carried.

**Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor**

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

**Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer**

**Approved: June 16, 2025**