

June 17, 2025

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 9:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine

Absent: Mark Kosior

Andrea Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Each member received an advance copy of the minutes. Mayor Dermody asked if there were any additions or corrections.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Minutes

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Public Comment

Dean White, 3066 N Highway 35, expressed his concerns regarding the large orange construction signs placed by INDOT in the 600, 700, and 800 blocks. Mr. White stated they have been there for almost two months, and he has spoken with the building department, who replied that they are waiting on an inspection and recommended speaking to INDOT as a business owner. Mr. White stated he has made complaints to INDOT regarding signs in other areas and they do not listen, and he is looking for help from the city to get rid of the signs because they are unsightly and placed right in front of businesses. Mayor Dermody asked City Engineer Nick Minich to mention this issue at the next business meeting with INDOT. Mr. Minich stated that he would do that but also noted that INDOT was doing work yesterday with some of the striping and this is sometimes what delays the removal of the construction signs. Mr. Minich emphasized the signs are often left after the project appears to be complete because they are necessary for those individuals doing final inspections.

Claims Approval

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Payroll from June 6, 2025 in the amount of \$568,073.37.

Motion/Vote – Approval of June 6, 2025 Payroll

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve the June 6, 2025 payroll as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$589,828.43.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Civil City Claims

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve the Civil City Claims as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$525,153.28.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Sewage Claims

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve the Sewage Claims as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Water Claims in the amount of \$217,981.05.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Water Claims

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Water Claims as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

INDOT Invoice #000088567

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented INDOT Invoice #000088567 in the amount of \$2,318,473.03. This is for the local tracks project. Mayor Dermody stated this is for the overpass as that project continues.

Motion/Vote – Approval of INDOT Invoice #00008567

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Invoice for Linda Ensign as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Department Head Reports

Water: Water Superintendent Tim Werner reported they will be at the fire training facility preparing that site for excavation next week to run the water main. Mr. Werner estimated that work to take approximately one week. In addition, Mr. Werner reported their permit for the 20th for the 11th Street project is ready and they will be waiting for Milestone to mill that to complete the main replacement. This project should start the week of the 4th and should take approximately one week.

Wastewater: Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson reported they have received the electric mini truck at the treatment plant. Mr. Jackson stated this was purchased as part of the grant for electric vehicles.

Engineering: City Engineer Nick Minich reported we issued a notice to proceed with Dogwood Hills Nursery. Previously the Board of Works had accepted and awarded their bid for approximately 80 trees and then the Federal Grant was revoked. Mr. Minich emphasized Dogwood Hills has been a great supplier and partner and does not want to put them in a bad position as they already had the 80 trees ready to go. Dogwood Hills was able to find new buyers for some of the trees and the City of La Porte will use some available funds within the budget to purchase 18 trees.

City Attorney Nick Otis questioned if the stumps from the trees removed on Indiana Ave would be removed. Mr. Minich stated the stumps will be removed during the construction process. Mr. Minich said it made sense for the company to removed all of the trees at one

time and rather than have holes where the stumps were until construction, the stumps will remain until the construction process begins in those areas. Mr. Minich emphasized that the trees on Indiana Ave are not part of the tree grant that was revoked. The Indiana Ave project is the state's project that is funded by State and Federal funds.

Clerk Treasurer: Clerk-Treasurer Parthun reported there is a new agenda format across the board. The new agenda keeps us in compliance with House Bill 1509 that states as of July 1, 2025, all appointments for any board or commission must be listed on the public notice and most of the public notices are the agendas. In addition, Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated the State Board of Accounts audit is wrapping up and is currently in review status.

Code: Code Enforcement Director Jeff Batchelor reported at last night's City Council meeting a couple changes were made to the dumpster program. A couple weeks ago, two U-Haul trucks came and unloaded their stuff at the dumpsters and filled them up within a couple hours, whereas it typically takes approximately five hours before they are full. Mr. Batchelor stated residents are now only allowed to dump once per day and no businesses or contractors are allowed to dump.

Police: Assistant Chief Ferguson reported a social media post will be going out soon letting everyone know of the upcoming one-day hiring process to fill a vacant position. In addition, Assistant Chief Ferguson reported this year they will be hosting the first annual youth field day at the Kesling football field. This event will be held on August 16th from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. The La Porte City Police Department will be partnering with Michigan City's Police Department and La Porte County Sheriff's Department to host this event. This event is for youth ages 10-17 years of age. The children participating will be partnered with officers from each respective department and go head-to-head in obstacle courses, ring toss, dodgeball, and other various activities. This event will replace the Rescue Reelers Fishing event hosted in past years.

Fire: Chief Snyder reported the department has received a small grant from the Health Foundation of La Porte in the amount of \$9,949 to continue the vehicle safety seat program. Chief Snyder stated this program has been in effect for several years, however they have been short on funds, and this will keep them with enough car seats and booster seats to get them through next year.

Street: Street Superintendent Mike Frazee reported they will begin road painting this week, getting ready for the fourth, in addition to patching, fixing water cuts, and watering trees.

Mayor Dermody recognized and thanked Jim Roy for supplying flags for downtown La Porte and Michigan City for over 24 years. Mayor Dermody stated today is Jim Roy Day and encouraged anyone that sees him to thank him for his commitment to our community.

New Business:**Request Half Day for Employees to Attend LP Co Fair**

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Request for Half Day for Employees to Attend LP Co Fair. Ms. Loeffler stated this is for all full-time employees to be able to attend the fair.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request for Half Day for Employees to Attend LP Co Fair

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Request for Half Day for Employees to Attend LP Co Fair as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Request for Use: Dunebrook Dragon Boat Race

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Request for Use: Dunebrook Dragon Boat Race. The request is for closure of a section of Grangemouth in addition to taking up the entire beach area. Ms. Loeffler stated they do work with the Park Department on the closures for this event.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request for Use: Dunebrook Dragon Boat Race

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Request for Use: Dunebrook Dragon Boat Race as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Lincoln Walk Project Agreement

City Engineer Nick Minich presented Lincoln Walk Project Agreement. Mr. Minich stated we did receive feedback from INDOT on the Lincoln Walk Project and they have requested a maintenance agreement that will remove the bollards from November 1st until May 1st for plowing operations. Mr. Minich stated the bollards are being installed on butyl pads, which is essentially a very strong sticker, and should not be an issue to remove them and replace them. Mr. Minich stated he recommends we enter into this agreement with INDOT to be able to move forward with this project.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Lincoln Walk Project Agreement

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Lincoln Walk Project Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Change Order Des #2001885 Indiana Ave

Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson presented Change Order Des #2001885 in the amount of \$151,585.69 for the Wastewater portion, 7.7% of the contract, and Change Order Indiana Ave in the amount of \$10,086.10 for the Water portion, 3.2% of the contract. This is for changes primarily in the storm system. The changes include two larger, deeper connections off of the storm system on Weber and Kingsbury for future sewer separation work, a better connection at Jefferson and Indiana, and the connection to the Lincolnway storm sewer instead of going through the alley. Mr. Jackson emphasized it was a struggle getting to this point with Engineering and INDOT review, but he does believe it is well worth spending the funds. Mr. Jackson stated even with this change order, they are still well below the original budgeted amount for this project because the bids came in much lower than what was budgeted. Mayor Dermody questioned how much below budget this will keep us. Mr.

Jackson stated \$2.3 million was budgeted and the low bid came in at \$1.9 million so with the addition of the change order we are still a few hundred thousand dollars under budget. Clerk Treasurer Parthun questioned where this will be paid from. Mr. Jackson stated they have been paying all of this out of the BAN.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Change Order Des #2001885

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Change Order Des #2001885 as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Permission to Revoke D&M Excavating Hauled Wastewater Permit and Approval to Pursue Claim

Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson presented Permission to Revoke D&M Excavating Hauled Wastewater Permit and Approval to Pursue Claim. Mr. Jackson stated they have been perpetually late with their payments and their discharge permits have already been revoked on a temporary basis at the treatment plant three times in the last two years. They are currently \$7,514.38 behind in payment and it has been difficult to deal with this issue. City Attorney Nick Otis emphasized that this was not a decision that was made lightly and reiterated the difficulty the Wastewater staff has had trying to manage this situation.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Permission to Revoke D&M Excavating Hauled Wastewater Permit

Mayor Dermody made a motion to Revoke D&M Excavating Hauled Wastewater Permit as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk Treasurer Parthun questioned if the motion made included a motion for permission for a judgment for the amount owed. Attorney Otis stated the city would have to take legal action for that and we could initiate a small claims proceeding against them for the balances owed. Mayor Dermody stated he would make an amended motion. Mayor Dermody asked that someone reach out to them to let them know that they have until 4 P.M. on Friday to pay in full all past due balances or legal action will be taken. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated they have received several notices and final notices, the same as utility billing would send out, and we are setting a standard. The city does not want to put people in a bad position, however, we cannot continue to put ourselves in a bad position and have outstanding balances that large.

Amended Motion/Vote – Permission to Revoke D&M Excavating Hauled Wastewater Permit and Pursue Legal Action

Mayor Dermody made an amended motion to approve Permission to Revoke D&M Excavating's Hauled Wastewater Permit and Pursue Legal Action if past dues balances are not paid in full by 4:00 P.M. on Friday June 20, 2025; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

LPA - Consulting Contract Amendment 1

Community Development and Planning Director Craig Phillips presented LPA – Consulting Contract Amendment 1. Mr. Phillips stated this for the LPA Agreement with Rundell Ernstberger Associates for the city’s comprehensive plan process. This is a request for a time only amendment to extend the timeframe for the term of the existing contract to no later than December 31st, 2026. The extension is needed to allow time for the city and consultants to work with NIRPC regarding some issues that have come up with the traffic model. Mr. Phillips stated it was found that the traffic model is not working for the city or the consultants, resulting in the need to extend the contract to come up with a solution.

Motion/Vote – Approval of LPA - Consulting Contract Amendment 1

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve LPA – Consulting Contract Amendment 1 as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Amended Development Agreement

Community Development and Planning Director Craig Phillips presented Amended Development Agreement. This is an agreement between the City of La Porte and HRKDE and the Redevelopment Commission. Mr. Phillips stated this is for property acquisition of property owned by the City of La Porte and the Redevelopment Commission for what was known as Full Tilt and is now known as the Pin Fusion Project. Mr. Phillips stated the need for this request comes from the lender involved in this transaction. There was a requested extension of time related to the development agreement and as a result it is necessary to revise the construction start date from August 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025 and to update the name from Full Tilt and the other partnership to HRKDE LLC.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Amended Development Agreement

Ms. Romine made a motion to Amended Development Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

OCDETF Agreement

Assistant Chief Jim Ferguson presented OCDETF Agreement. This is an agreement from the DEA’s Organized Crime Drug Enforcement for the approval of \$1,500 to be used for any overtime or other authorized expenses regarding the officer that is embedded with the Metro County Drug Task Force. This is to be used for overtime and expenses on a specific case or operation that they are working.

Motion/Vote – Approval of OCDETF Agreement

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve OCDETF Agreement as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Dermody and unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business

Other Business:

Mayor Dermody said his prayers and thoughts go out to all of the families involved this past weekend in Minnesota with the elected officials that were murdered and shot. Mayor Dermody emphasized we must all come together and work together and respect each other's opinions and compromise. He encouraged everyone to stay safe.

Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday July 8, 2025 at 9 A.M.

Adjourn

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

Tabled 04-08-2025: - Conflict of Interest: Jessica Romine

-Engagement Letter for Accounting Services: Cornerstone Accounting

Tabled 04-22-2025: - Quote for Engine

-Maintenance Agreement with Villas of Briar Leaf

Approve: _____

Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____

Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: July 8, 2025