

August 5, 2025

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 9:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Dermody, Jessica Romine, Mark Kosior

Absent:

June Lenig 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 Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Public Comment

None

Proclamation: Paint The Town Purple Day

Mayor Dermody stated today is the American Cancer Society Paint the Town Purple Day. He recognized June Lenig, Karen Irk and Mason Phillips for all the hard work they do for this organization and invited them to speak. Ms. Irk invited everyone to their upcoming relay on August 23rd to celebrate the survivors. There will be lots of fun things to do including a fire truck pull, cornhole tournament, activities for kids, and a survivor luncheon at 2:30. After the luncheon the relay will kick off. Ms. Irk stated in Indiana alone, the American Cancer Society has determined that approximately 42,000 people will be newly diagnosed with cancer this year. Mr. Phillips noted that this year is the 40th Anniversary of Relay for Life. Mayor Dermody asked how people can make donations. Ms. Irk stated checks can be given to June Lenig or Brian Phillips or they will be posting flyers around town with more information on how to donate.

Member Romine read Paint The Town Purple Day proclamation in it's entirety, proclaiming Wednesday August 6, 2025 as the American Cancer Society Paint the Town Purple Day.

Claims Approval

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented payroll from August 1, 2025 in the amount of \$591,650.19.

Motion/Vote – Approval of August 1, 2025 Payroll

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve the August 1, 2025 payroll as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Civil City Claims in the amount of \$766,303.20.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Civil City Claims

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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Water Claims in the amount of \$279,479.93.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Water Claims

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

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Sewage Claims in the amount of \$979,430.85. This does include bond payments.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Sewage Claims

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

Permission to Pay WEX Payments

Clerk-Treasurer Parthun presented Permission to Pay WEX Payments. The invoices for these payments were cut at the end of the month and therefore there was not enough time to get the payments onto the docket for this meeting. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated the claims will be seen on the docket for the next meeting; however, she is requesting permission to be able to make the payment before the next meeting.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Permission to Pay WEX Payments

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Permission to Pay WEX Payments as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Department Head Reports

Code: Code Enforcement Officer Dan Drake reported they are currently working on vacant properties and locating their owners. In addition, Mr. Drake noted that one property on Tipton Street was recently condemned due to living conditions. Mayor Dermody questioned if this was a rental. Mr. Drake confirmed this was a rental property and noted residents not cutting their grass continues to be an issue. Mayor Dermody questioned if there were people living in the home and Mr. Drake confirmed there were people living on the property. Ms. Romine asked if we were able to help the people relocate or get help from the trustee's office relocating. Mr. Drake stated the landlord had another property that he believes at least one of the tenants was able to relocate to.

Park: Parks and Rec Superintendent Mark Schreiber thanked everyone that was involved with Lakefest and recognized the event continues to gain momentum each year. Mr. Schreiber noted due to the storms over Lakefest weekend, some events were cancelled, and others

were postponed, however there was a great turnout for the Jesse McCartney concert. In addition, Mr. Schreiber reminded everyone that although summer is coming to an end there are still some great upcoming events. Friday Night Live: Cheeseburger in Paradise is this Friday from 6:00 P.M. until 10:00 P.M. with the Yacht Rockets from Chicago performing. Saturday night a Jimmy Buffet band, Gone to Paradise, is playing at the Civic starting at 7:00 P.M. There is a summer buy one get one promotion going on and you can get balcony tickets for just \$10 each. Mr. Schreiber reminded everyone that due to school going back in session, this Sunday will be the last day for lifeguards at Stone Lake Beach.

Street: Street Superintendent Mike Frazee reported they will be patching, crack sealing, street sweeping, and repairing sidewalks.

LEAP: Erick Nelson reported they will be having the next installment of an event called Accelerate Small Business. This program is designed to help small businesses on various topics and tonight's topic is search engine optimization and search engine marketing and will be presented by Duneland Media. This event will take place tonight from 5:15 to 6:30 at the library exchange.

Clerk-Treasurer: Clerk-Treasurer Parthun reported the SBOA audit is complete and available on the city's website on the Clerk-Treasurer's page.

Wastewater: Wastewater Superintendent Jerry Jackson reported that Indiana Ave is closed and they will be placing a giant storm sewer down the center, a sanitary sewer on either side off the curb, brand new water, and each house will get a new water and sewer service to their stop box. This project should be done by the end of this year.

Water: Water Superintendent Tim Werner reported the construction crew finished installation of their new main on 11th street. This will be complete once the pressure testing and BAC-T testing are done.

Engineering: Mayor Dermody questioned how long the Tipton Street overpass will take. City Engineer Nick Minich stated it will be approximately a 2-year project that has already started with the majority of the construction happening in 2026 and completion in 2027. Mayor Dermody noted that the Spectrum Recycling property has been closed down, however the previous owner did not move their stuff out, even though they did cash the check that was given to them.

New Business:

Request for Use: Pop Warner Parade

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Request for Use: Pop Warner Parade. This is for their annual orange and black kickoff parade. Ms. Loeffler stated their request is changing slightly from previous years because they are changing the parade route. They will essentially be going around a huge block starting at Kiwanis and going down 10th Street, E Street, and

part of A Street and F Street and then coming back to Kiwanis. The request is for a rolling closure and should last approximately two hours.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request for Use: Pop Warner Parade

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Request for Use: Pop Warner Parade as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Request for Use: LPHS Home Football Games Request

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler presented Request for Use: LPHS Home Football Games Request. This is an annual request from the High School to close a section of C Street, from 8th Street to 10th Street, and a small section of 8th Street, from E Street to F Street. This is to allow for buses to park near Kiwanis and for pedestrians to walk safely from the parking lot to the field.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request for Use: LPHS Home Football Games Request

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request for Use: LPHS Home Football Games Request as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Tunes at Noon

Executive Assistant Annette Loeffler announced that Tunes at Noon will be playing at Plaza 618 at noon on August 22nd. This group puts on free concerts and hopes people will donate to them and any donated funds go to Arts in the Park. Ms. Loeffler encouraged anyone that is not busy on August 22nd to visit Plaza 618 for the free concert and to donate if you can.

Grant Agreement – Unity Foundation

Director of Community Development and Planning Craig Phillips presented Grant Agreement – Unity Foundation. This grant agreement will provide matching funding for the city's Comprehensive and Transportation Plan in the amount of \$50,000. Mr. Phillips stated this is a straight-forward agreement.

Motion/Vote – Approval Grant Agreement – Unity Foundation

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Grant Agreement – Unity Foundation as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Request to Declare Equipment Unusable

Chief Snyder presented Request to Declare Equipment Unusable. Chief Snyder stated this is to declare an old inflatable rescue boat unusable. This boat was replaced last year with a rigid inflatable boat that has a solid bottom. The old one is 20 years old. Chief Snyder stated training equipment is regularly traded with other departments and the Valparaiso Fire Department has used this piece of equipment for training purposes a few times this year. Chief Snyder stated the request is to declare the equipment unusable, per state statute, giving us the authority to get rid of it and ultimately give it to Valparaiso Fire Department for training purposes.

Motion/Vote – Approval of Request to Declare Equipment Unusable

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Request to Declare Equipment Unusable as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Anthem Stop Loss Renewal

Human Resources Director Andrea Smith presented Anthem Stop Loss Renewal. Ms. Smith stated the request today is for approval of the stop-loss in addition to renewal with Anthem. Ms. Smith stated they are very pleased with the rates that came in and this is due to employees working together, the Clerk-Treasurer, and Brown and Brown.

Ms. Smith introduced Nick Napier, from Brown and Brown, and invited him to speak. Mr. Napier presented a packet to the Board of Works and noted on the Rolling 12 Claims Report, in our current 12-month period we are running at approximately \$1.99 million in pharmacy and medical claims and the prior 12 months were approximately \$2.1 million in medical claims. This means we are doing approximately 9.5% better in the current 12 months and therefore we are trending in the right direction with the right systems in place with Anthem and orthopedic and cardiovascular contracts, which have started to help the claims trend back down. Mr. Napier noted the column with percentage of expected in the current 12 months is running at about 86% of expected, and in the prior 12 months we were running at 98%. Mr. Napier stated that if we are funding at 100% expected and running at 100% expected, the reserves are essentially holding flat. Anytime we are below 100%, as long as we are funding well, the reserves should be growing a little bit or holding steady, which puts the city in a good position each year for renewal. Mr. Kosior questioned whether the fact that we are below expected percentage can be attributed to preventative care or choosing lower cost options. Mr. Napier attributed this to a little more plan oversight, and the fact that we now have people that are in the right programs and taking slightly different medications but possibly saving three to four times the amount on a particular medication that we would have been paying for previously.

Mr. Napier stated page three shows the stop-loss reimbursements. The City of La Porte ensures the first \$125,000 and the stop-loss pays anything beyond that amount. Mr. Napier noted that the City of La Porte has multiple members that are considered high-cost claimants and that have multiple hundreds of thousands of dollars in claims and this is why he is happy with where our renewal ended with Anthem. Mr. Kosior asked for confirmation that there was no limitation on care, and the members would continue to receive correct and appropriate care even though they exceeded the stop-loss amount. Mr. Napier confirmed this and stated they continue to receive the same exact continuity of care and are never asked to see a different provider or do anything different and any amount paid above the stop-loss threshold will be reimbursed to the city dollar for dollar.

Mr. Napier stated October 1, 2025 will begin the new plan year and we have an expected \$2.74 million in expected costs for the current plan year, and we are funding a little over that amount. The expected costs to fund the next plan year are \$2.78 million, or a 1.4% increase, which is less than \$40,000. Mr. Napier noted for having several members in the stop-loss

reimbursement threshold, this is a fantastic offer that is on the table. Mr. Napier stated the Franciscan Health Clinics are up and running and this has helped significantly get a hold onto the financial situation and put us in a good spot to move forward.

Mr. Napier discussed funding and noted the funding currently looks fantastic and if we wanted to fund our expenses for next year, we could technically do a 1% reduction in our funding if we absolutely needed money and to move things around. However, it would not be financially responsible for him to recommend that but rather he recommends a 1-2% max increase on our funding level. Mr. Napier stated he believes we could feel comfortable taking a rate hold and having what we need to fund our costs without having to dip into the reserves. Ideally, if we do well again, our reserves should continue to grow slightly. Mayor Dermody questioned whether this takes the employees' contributions into consideration. Mr. Napier stated it does not, this is the overall total funding of the plan, and the employee piece would be determined internally but he is happy to make recommendations based on what he sees in their public entity book of business. Mr. Napier stated if we make a 1% increase for funding and run at 100% of expected, we would still grow the reserve by \$60,000 for the year, which is a fantastic spot to be in. Mr. Napier stated that we could hold the rates where they are currently and run at 100% and still be fine but that is not financially responsible for him to recommend as we want to continue to grow our reserve because there is always the chance of having a bad year that could diminish those funds. Mr. Napier stated his recommendation is for an increase of at least 1% in funding to continue to put ourselves in a better position. Ms. Romine stated it may be better to try and do a 1% increase each year rather than a 2% next year because we have to. Mayor Dermody reminded everyone that the budget will continue to be reduced until 2028 based on the legislature. Mr. Napier stated if we continue to see members take advantage of the orthopedic or cardiovascular we will continue to see hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings and helping to drive down the cost of the healthcare plan. Mr. Kosior questioned if the investment account is in an interest-bearing account. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun stated we have an employee benefits account at Centier Bank with approximately \$900,000 and this is an interest-bearing account and the rest of the funds to make up the \$1.6 million are in the states Hoosier Fund, which is an investment.

Mayor Dermody questioned what we can do proactively for a healthier employee team. Mr. Napier stated the best way to lay a foundation for a wellness program starts around biometric screening events and simply allowing members to have their blood drawn either at a specific facility or at their departments at the cost of the city and then directing those that need it in the right direction to right care with the most efficiency and highest quality. Mr. Napier suggested keeping a rate hold for the first year and in year two, increasing the bi-weekly premium for those that do not participate by \$5 and a rate hold for those that do participate. Mayor Dermody asked if we currently struggle getting participation in the screening. Ms. Smith stated we do not have a struggle with participation; participation is high, and we have caught some cancer during these screenings. Ms. Smith stated the screenings are done in January of each year. Ms. Smith noted that we do also offer a premium discount for employees and their spouses that participate. Mr. Napier stated they do offer wellness

platforms, but he is hesitant to offer those options as the results typically are offering incentives to the top 5% of already healthy employees.

Mr. Napier stated we have made three major changes to get back on track, including switching to Anthem, changing clinics, and the direct contracts for orthopedic and cardiovascular services. One thing we have not rolled out is cancer care by Medzone, with Dr. Jennifer Carter in Boston who runs Medzone. Medzone is a cancer and rare and unique disease state program. Essentially this is something that the city can pay \$6,700 a year for the entire city and members that have rare or unique diseases or cancer can get hooked up with clinical trials where all their care is free and it is all done outside of the group health plan. Trials are done by places like Mayo Clinic, Lily, Rush and large well-known facilities like this. Mr. Napier stated it is not unlikely to see several hundred thousand dollars in savings by moving some of these more expensive members from the group health plan to these programs and giving them some of the most cutting edge technologies that are on the market. Mr. Napier noted that there are six carriers that recognize Medzone as an effective cost containment tool and our stop-loss carriers are willing to give a 5% to 8% reduction on our stop-loss costs because they see an immediate reduction of their risk at the end of the day. This not only helps stop-loss renewal in the future, but there are a number of stop-loss markets that will cut a better deal if we are able to prove to them that having Medzone in place reduces their risk. Mr. Kosior emphasized his understanding that members do not necessarily need Medzone because these clinical trials already exist, they act as the facilitator between the clinical trial and the members. Mr. Napier agreed and stated Dr. Carter in Boston created a database that connects all the trials and Medzone essentially holds the hands of the members through the entire application process, some of which can be upwards of 20 pages. Ms. Smith stated there are some employees that want to participate in clinical trials but there are so many hoops to jump through that they need help, and this would be a great partner. Ms. Romine stated it would be beneficial to hear from other clients that use Medzone and how their employees and members benefit. Mr. Napier stated that is something he can provide. Mr. Napier noted that members do not have to opt for using this and are always welcome to still go through the health care plan if they choose to do so.

Motion/Vote – Approval Anthem Stop Loss Renewal

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Anthem Stop Loss Renewal with a 1% increase; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business

Mayor Dermody requested patience from everyone as the construction on Indiana Ave continues and proclaimed that it will get better.

Water Superintendent Tim Werner made a request to remove truck quotes from the table and permission to add two more quotes and a proposal from NIES Engineering.

Motion/Vote - Remove from the Table Truck Lease Quotes

Ms. Romine made a motion to remove from the table Truck Lease Quotes; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Truck Lease Quotes: 188338 – Chevy 2500,

Water Superintendent Tim Werner presented three (3) truck quotes from Enterprise Fleet Management. Mr. Werner stated quote number 188338 is the actual quote that was tabled during the last meeting. This specific quote is for a truck that was already on the department's capital plan to purchase and is not a replacement vehicle. This is for a Chevy 2500 for the maintenance crew. Mayor Dermody questioned if there is a trade-in with this vehicle. Mr. Werner clarified this is being purchased outright and is part of his capital plan to purchase two new pickups this year.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Truck Lease Quote 9188425: Chevy 2500

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Truck Lease Quote: Chevy 2500 as presented; motion second by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

Mr. Werner presented quote 9188425 for a Chevy 3500. This vehicle will be replacing a 2006 van and will be for the maintenance facility team. Mr. Werner stated the quote is for a truck with a utility bed, which will be more beneficial than another van from a maintenance perspective. Ms. Romine questioned if this would be purchased outright or leased. Mr. Werner confirmed this is for a lease through Enterprise Fleet Management and the first quote is the only one intended for outright purchase.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Truck Lease Quote 9188425: Chevy 3500

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve Truck Lease Quote 9188425: Chevy 3500 as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Mr. Werner presented quote for a Chevy 1500 four-wheel drive basic truck. This will be replacing the meter van. Mr. Werner stated he worked with Enterprise, and they determined it was not cost effective to make the repairs to the current maintenance van because it is only valued at \$3,500 and needs \$6,000 worth of repairs. The truck is a basic set up and will be used for crews doing meter installs and shut offs. Mr. Kosior questioned what would happen to the van. Mr. Werner stated it is part of the lease program and will be sold and put back into the cost of this new vehicle. Clerk-Treasurer Parthun noted because it is part of the Enterprise program, it can be sold at retail.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Truck Lease Quote: Chevy 1500

Mr. Kosior made a motion to approve Truck Lease Quote: Chevy 1500 as presented; motion seconded by Ms. Romine and unanimously carried.

NIES Engineering Proposal

Water Superintendent Tim Werner presented NIES Engineering Proposal. Mr. Werner stated this is for shop drawings and engineering services for Soldier's Memorial Well Field Contract

2 and is not to exceed \$32,500. Mayor Dermody questioned exactly what NIES would be doing. Mr. Werner stated they would be doing shop drawings, submittal review and acceptance, taking care of pay applications and sight visits as needed, punch list items, and project close-out. Mr. Kosior questioned if these types of contracts tend to run close to estimated max. Mr. Werner confirmed that they do.

Motion/Vote - Approval of NIES Engineering Proposal

Ms. Romine made a motion to approve NIES Engineering Proposal as presented; motion seconded by Mr. Kosior and unanimously carried.

Other Business:

Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday August 19, 2025 at 9 A.M.

Adjourn

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

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

-Engagement Letter for Accounting Services: Cornerstone Accounting

Tabled 04-22-2025: -Maintenance Agreement with Villas of Briar Leaf

Tabled 05-20-25: Truesdell Construction Project Close-out/Change Order

HRP Contract #1

Approve: _____

Thomas P. Dermody, Mayor

Attest: _____

Courtney Parthun, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: August 19, 2025