

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013
7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Ryan Daniel – Present
Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle – Present
Attorney Marcia McNagny – Present

Council Members

Nicole Penrod – Absent
Ben Romine – Present
William (Bill) Simpson – Present
Daniel Weigold – Present
Jacie Worrick – Present

The Columbia City Common Council met in regular session with all members except Penrod present, Mayor Daniel presiding.

MINUTES Motion was made to approve an overview of the September 10, 2013 meeting minutes with the noted spelling corrections, Bill Simpson seconded the motion, all voted aye.

PUBLIC HEARING – 2014 BUDGET Mayor Daniel recessed the meeting to hold a public hearing on the 2014 budget.

Mayor Daniel reported they have budgeted for an additional firefighter, a new fire engine which a large portion will be able to be paid out of the Fire Cum Fund. For the police department they have added the School Resource Officer and have done some changes in regards to moving from 2 to 4 trainers for the department. Chief Longenbaugh pointed out they added \$3000 for the possibility of appointing another sergeant's position on day shift, but were waiting on budget approval before moving forward with that. He added there was a slight increase to the cell phone, gas and oil line items.

Mayor Daniel advised with the reestablishment of the Fire Cum, Street Cum and Park Cum Funds they have done some shifting of the budget. He stated they have also added a line item for H.R. training and travel so it was not all on the utilities.

Mayor Daniel noted that he has been working hard on each of the budgets to try to do a better distribution of dollars between tax dollars and utility dollars.

Mayor Daniel advised for CIP they have put money in for the aquatics facility and have added additional dollars for economic development use. He stated for CCI and CCD they have put in dollars for City Hall improvements, \$15,000 for the 2nd phase of the trail expansion and a line item for the aquatics facility.

Mayor Daniel noted typically each year the police department replaces 2 cars with dollars from the Riverboat Fund which is casino dollars not tax dollars; this year they would be buying 3 cars. He advised the replacement cycle was not even.

Mayor Daniel advised they did include a raise for the employees as well as the performance evaluation dollars.

Rosie Coyle explained final approval of the budget was scheduled for the October 22 meeting. She advised changes could be made before December to decrease; they could not increase the budget.

Hearing no further comments or questions the public hearing was closed.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS Department reports were given by Terry Wherry, Mark Green, Mike Dear, Shawn Lickey, Tim Longenbaugh, Tom LaRue, Kelly Cearbaugh and Mike Cook.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS Mayor Daniel explained Nicole, Shawn and he met to look at different Christmas lights as they have gotten many comments about some of the lights we currently have. Shawn advised they would also be changing out the lights on the north water tower to LED.

YOUTH COUNCIL Mayor Daniel introduced Hunter LaRue, member of the Youth Council.

ORDINANCE 2013-26: AMENDMENT OF CONSUMER FIREWORKS – 2ND READING Motion was made by Ben Romine to read Ordinance 2013-26 by title only, Jacie Worrick seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2013-26 an ordinance amending Chapter 101, Consumer Fireworks, of Title IX of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Mayor Daniel reported this tweaks the current ordinance to allow fireworks on the Friday and Saturday of the Labor Day and Memorial Day holiday weekends.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve Ordinance 2013-26 on second reading, Ben Romine seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ERA DISCUSSION – ALAN TIO Alan Tio was present to further discuss the process and the role of the City Council. He also provided a map to show the complexity of our current situation. He explained the suggestion was to establish a Citywide overlay rather than having a specific area for each company. He advised City Council would still maintain oversight of how many years for which investments and approval or not. He explained if an abatement was approved the company would still have to show each year that they have spent money they said they would and have hired or retained jobs they said they would. He stated this was really focusing on streamlining the application process but does nothing to take away Council's involvement on the approval process nor is this proposal taking away, shifting existing tax revenues or increasing tax bills at all. He stated abatement is a phase in of new taxes; very rarely would there be discussions of taking away existing taxes already generated.

Mayor Daniel questioned if Council approved a City wide ERA would it do anything specifically to the districts already listed. Mr. Tio did not believe this process would do anything to change the current ERA's, they would maybe be grandfathered in. As far as the EDTA and TIF areas those were separate and would be a question for the City Attorney.

Mr. Tio stated the companies who are going to go through the process for abatement there is a requirement to have eligible investments.

Rosie Coyle confirmed there was no limit on how many we could have percentage wise. Mr. Tio advised that was correct; for EDTA's those were limited to a certain percentage of your geography within the municipality.

Council agreed to have Mr. Tio and the City Attorney work together to start putting the paperwork together to proceed.

UTILITY BILLING Rosie Coyle reported she has been working with a company on taking over our utility bill printing and mailing, newsletters and other reports. She advised there would be about \$5,000 per month savings to do this. She added that she was also working on a deadline to implement split billing.

Having no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle