

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015
6:30 P.M.**

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

Council Members

Nicole Penrod – Present
Jennifer Romano – Present
William (Bill) Simpson – Present
Daniel Weigold – Present
Jacie Worrick – Present

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

MINUTES Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve an overview of the November 24, 2015 meeting minutes as presented, Nicole Penrod seconded the motion, Penrod, Romano, Weigold and Worrick voted aye, Simpson abstained.

EMPLOYEE POLICY BOOK AMENDMENT – RESOLUTION 2015-35 Motion was made by Dan Weigold to read Resolution 2015-35 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read resolution 2015-35 final approval of revisions to personnel policy manual.

Beth Igney, HR Director, presented a list of the recommended changes to the policy book. She advised they were separating non-public safety and public safety. Mayor Daniel noted the book had been before the department heads multiple times; Beth, Marcia and Rosie have worked on this for the majority of the year.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve Resolution 2015-35 as presented, Jacie Worrick seconded the motion, all voted aye.

Rosie Coyle questioned if they needed to approve the Drug and Alcohol Policy. Mayor Daniel questioned if it was part of the handbook. Beth Igney advised it was. Mayor Daniel felt it would then be considered part of the policy book.

REQUEST FOR TAX ABATEMENT: HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS Jon Myers explained Rajesh Patel and his family own several hotels and have identified Columbia City as a place where they would like to build a new Holiday Inn Express. He advised they were looking at property out in the Armstrong Park along US 30. He stated this would be geared more towards business travelers. He advised they were looking at a total investment of about \$4.5 million and will create an estimated 10 full time jobs and 8 part time jobs. He stated they were asking for a 10 year tax abatement and \$20,000 in utility credits for infrastructure.

Mayor Daniel clarified that the abatement would be for the building construction; they requested equipment but decided to go with the utility credit.

Bill Simpson questioned what would happen if the project is not successful. Jon Myers advised we would still have the building for taxes. Rosie Coyle added that in terms of the abatement they would have to come back every year for approval.

Jennifer Romano expressed a concern for being able to support 3 hotels. Jon Myers advised they have done their work in terms of market studies and research provided to them by the Holiday Inn chain. He stated they were also talking about a different price point; these will be more expensive rooms than what we currently have.

Mayor Daniel reported when they held their meeting with Raj and his group, the binder of information and data was really thick. He shared it was questioned at least 3 different times if they were sure this would work out and they advised it would; the data showed that Columbia City was a growing community and the projected 5-10 year growth was really good. He shared that he and Jeff Walker met with another hotel owner in Columbia City who expressed a concern as well but by the end of the meeting they were in support of the project

Dan Weigold and Jacie Worrick felt our community would definitely benefit from a more upscale hotel.

Rajesh Patel explained the amenities the hotel would offer.

RESOLUTION 2015-34 TAX ABATEMENT APPROVAL Motion was made by Dan Weigold to read Resolution 2015-34 by title only, Nicole Penrod seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Resolution 2015-34 a resolution of the Common Council for the City of Columbia City approving the deduction of assessed valuation for real property improvements located in the Columbia City economic revitalization area.

Mayor Daniel read the findings of the application for a real property tax deduction.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve Resolution 2015-34 for 10-year abatement, Nicole Penrod seconded the motion, Penrod, Simpson, Weigold and Worrick voted aye, Romano abstained.

ASSESSED VALUATION Mayor Daniel reported our assessed valuation was up about \$8.5 million for the coming year but were still lower than 2013-2014.

ORDINANCE 2015-32 – ESTABLISHMENT OF BLANKET/INDIVIDUAL SURETY BONDS – 2ND READING Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Ordinance 2015-32 by title only, Jacie Worrick seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2015-32 an ordinance authorizing the issuance of blanket bond and/or crime insurance policy bond to cover the faithful performance of the duties of the employees and office holders of the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve Ordinance 2015-32 on second reading, Nicole Penrod seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2015-31 – CREATION OF LOIT FUND – 2ND READING Motion was made by Nicole Penrod to read Ordinance 2015-31 by title only, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2015-31 an ordinance establishing a LOIT (Local Option Income Tax) public safety fund for the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Motion was made Dan Weigold to approve Ordinance 2015-31 on second reading, Jacie Worrick seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2015-33 – 2016 ELECTED OFFICIALS SALARY ORDINANCE – 1ST READING Motion was made by Dan Weigold to read Ordinance 2015-33 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2015-33 an ordinance fixing the annual salaries of all elected officials of the City of Columbia City, Indiana effective December 26, 2015 for the year 2016.

Mayor Daniel advised there has been no change to the Mayor, Clerk Treasurer or Common Council salaries.

Jennifer Romano noted Ben Romine's name was still listed in the ordinance.

Motion was made by Nicole Penrod to approve Ordinance 2015-33 as presented on first reading, Jacie Worrick seconded the motion, Penrod, Romano, Weigold and Worrick voted aye, Simpson abstained.

PARKING AT MORSCHES PARK Mark Green gave an update on the parking situation at the Park. He shared before September 25, 2015 they had 184 spaces in the main parking lot located by the main 4 fields; 29 spaces by the T-ball fields and splash pad and 18 spaces by the campground for a total of 231 parking spaces. He explained when they went through phase I and made changes with additional paving and restriping they were able to gain 23 spots; 191 spaces in the main lot and 45 spaces in the T-ball lot. He shared they also widened the road to fields 5 & 6 as well the parking lot by the old campground to gain 14 extra spaces. He advised when it was all done they evaluated the parking spaces and determined they were way too small, they were crammed in like before and it was very difficult to maneuver through the parking lot. He advised they had to make a change so had it relined and ended up with 141 spaces in the main lot, 45 along the T-ball lot and 32 along the campground lot for a total of 218 parking spaces. He stated it was safer and easier to maneuver around now, however, there were less spots.

Mark Green shared for Phase II they would like to add an additional parking lot that would give them 69 additional spaces and would go behind Field 3. This would give them a total of 255 parking spaces down by the main 4 fields. He shared this lot would give them an additional 42 parking spaces by the main 4 fields. He reported the quote they have so far to add the parking lot was \$73,000. He advised he currently had \$30,000 set aside in the Park 2016 Cum Fund for parking improvements and questioned if there would be potential funds available in the 2015

Rainy Day Fund. He presented a picture of where the new lot would be. He noted when the main parking lot was originally put in it was not square and this addition would square it up.

Bill Simpson confirmed we had a net loss in parking spaces. Mark Green advised of the three lots they worked on, we did have a loss, but the spaces were bigger and safer. Bill Simpson had an issue with spending \$50,000 to increase the amount of parking but then have a net loss and now are coming back wanting to spend more money. Dan Weigold explained the problem was the way it was laid out was not a safe environment. Bill Simpson felt that should have been established by the people who wrote out the mapping system that charged us \$50,000. Mayor Daniel explained the actual mapping out of the spaces was done by an engineering company who did it for free for us.

Additional discussion followed. Mayor Daniel clarified the areas were increased but the main parking lot was decreased. He explained for the dollars put into the first phase, those areas were expanded but the main issue as to why spots were lost had to do with the striping of the main lot. He shared that he was very disappointed in how many spots we had to lose to get good parking down there.

Nicole Penrod understood what Bill Simpson was saying in what Council approved was to get more spots but felt the problem was when reality set in and saw what they did; the reality was it could not stay like it was. Bill Simpson advised he was not disputing that we had to change it because it was poorly done the first time. He shared his concern was that we spent the money and did not get what we wanted; what guarantee do we have now if we spend another \$70,000. Mayor Daniel explained the difference was the individuals who plotted this the first time did not plot it out this time. He advised we learned our lesson and went a different route for this next round. Nicole Penrod added that free is not always the best economical decision to make.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve \$30,000 of the 2016 Park Cum Funds towards the new parking lot as well as the remaining \$42,000 of 2015 Rainy Day, Nicole Penrod seconded the motion, Penrod, Romano, Weigold and Worrick voted aye, Simpson was opposed.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Shawn Lickey** – final testing on north substation, finishing up Holden Road project, maintaining Christmas lights, collecting bids for bucket truck replacement. **Mark Green** – thanked Water Dept. for helping fix water leak at the pool, Father/Daughter dance February 5, RecPro software training. **Mike Cook** – meeting with SDI on US 30 project, thanked Sewer Dept. for cleaning and televising, Blower room project update, lift station policy update with Attorney McNagny. **Kelly Cearbaugh** – extra rounds for limb and leaf pickup, street sweeping as much as possible, grated stone alleys and patching potholes as needed. **Tom LaRue** – researching funding options for training program in the high school, wrapping up end of year things, Christmas Eve candy giveaway from 6 – 8 p.m. at the courthouse. **Tony Hively** – toy drive and Patrolling for Presents, new vehicles ordered, equipment inventory, staff transitions. **Mike Shoda** – working on meter pits, exercising valves.

MAYOR REPORT Wings, Etc. ribbon cutting, Mayor's school, meetings regarding downtown, economic development projects, Blue Bell project moving along.

2016 MEETING TIMES Mayor Daniel announced the Board of Works will meet at 5:00 p.m. and Council will meet at 6:00 p.m. for next year.

QUAIL RIDGE DEVELOPMENT Dan Weigold reported the Plan Commission tabled approval of the Quail Ridge apartments. He advised they need to provide additional information for a number of issues.

Having no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle