

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2021
6:00 PM**

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

Council Members

Walter Crowder – Present
Jennifer Reffitt – Present
Jennifer Romano – Present
Tad Varga – Present
Daniel Weigold – Absent

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

MINUTES Mayor Daniel pointed out a few minor changes. Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve an overview of the May 11, 2021, meeting minutes as presented, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE: ORDINANCE 2021-10 2ND READING

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Ordinance 2021-10 by title only, Jennifer Reffitt seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2021-10 an ordinance amending the zoning classifications of certain property from the “R-3” Multi-Family Residential District to the “GB” General Business District.

Mayor Daniel reminded Council this was for the Schrader property for the growth of their building.

Jennifer Romano questioned if there had been any follow up on the possible annexation. Mayor Daniel advised he had not heard anything but would follow up with RD on it.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Ordinance 2021-10 on second and final reading, Walt Crowder seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: BURNHAM-KERR Dale Buuck with the Whitley County EDC was present to discuss the Compliance with statement of benefits regarding Burnham-Kerr. He shared he received notification that Jeff Kerr had sold his property where Dollar Tree and Dunham’s is located. He advised a resolution was before Council that would transfer the remaining couple of years of abatements on the two properties.

Summer Smith, with JV Investments, LLC, was present to request the continuation of the abatement as they do have some upgrades to the property they would like to do.

Mayor Daniel noted the Dollar Tree abatement would expire in 2025 and the Dunham's, Label Shopper and Wings, etc. would expire in 2023.

RESOLUTION 2021-11 TRANSFER OF ABATEMENT DOLLAR TREE Motion was made by Jennifer Reffitt to read Ordinance Resolution 2021-11 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Resolution 2021-11 a resolution of the Common Council of Columbia City approving the transfer of an existing deduction of assessed valuation for real property.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Resolution 2021-11 as presented, Jennifer Reffitt seconded the motion, all voted aye.

RESOLUTION 2021-12 TRANSFER OF ABATEMENT DUNHAMS/LABEL SHOPPER/WINGS, ETC. Motion was made by Jennifer Reffitt to read Resolution 2021-12 by title only, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Resolution 2021-12 a resolution of the Common Council of Columbia City approving the transfer of an existing deduction of assessed valuation for real property.

Motion was made by Walt Crowder to approve Resolution 2021-12 as presented, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: BR REAL ESTATE – REAL PROPERTY Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to find BR Real Estate in compliance and grant another year of abatement, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: IMPACT C & C – PERSONAL PROPERTY Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to find Impact C & C in compliance and grant another year of abatement for personal property, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: IMPACT C & C – PERSONAL PROPERTY Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to find Impact C & C in compliance and grant another year of abatement, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: IMPACT C & C – PERSONAL PROPERTY Motion was made by Tad Varga to find Impact C & C in compliance and grant another year of abatement for personal property, Jennifer Reffitt seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: KC JONES – PERSONAL PROPERTY Mayor Daniel shared he did not have a good reason why the numbers were different. He advised he went back to last year's minutes, both audio and written, and at that time COVID had hit them fairly hard. He noted as a reminder when they put the abatement together initially, it was before they built their building and subsequently saw it burn down.

Jennifer Romano noted they had an opportunity to come to Council to talk about it. Mayor Daniel recalled approval was tabled twice last year in order to get a representative to attend a meeting. Dale Buuck advised he had not reached out to them and did not have an explanation either.

Mayor Daniel pointed out there was a \$300,000.00+ difference in payroll salaries in what was estimated compared to actual.

Walt Crowder felt as a Council they try to be open minded and give opportunities but shared they could only do so much; if a line is not drawn somewhere it would just be domino effect.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to find KC Jones out of compliance and not grant another year of abatement, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: RINLEY PROPERTIES, LLC – REAL ESTATE PROPERTY Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to find Rinley Properties, LLC in compliance and grant another year of real estate abatement, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

KYOCERA SGS – RESOLUTION 2020-18 – CORRECTION Dale Buuck advised there was an error with the Resolution initially passed in that it referred to personal property rather than real estate property. Attorney McNagny explained in the Resolution being presented, the ‘NUNC PRO TUNC’ following the resolution number meant it refers back to the original passing, which was in 2020, and was why the resolution number was the same as before. She was hopeful this would resolve the problem.

Motion was made by Jennifer Reffitt to read corrected Resolution 2020-18 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read corrected Resolution 2020-18 NUNC PRO TUNC a resolution of the Common Council of Columbia City, Indiana approving the deduction of assessed valuation for personal property.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Corrected Resolution 2020-18 as presented, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: KYOCERA Motion was made by Jennifer Reffitt to find Kyocera in compliance and grant another year of personal property abatement, Walt Crowder seconded the motion, all voted aye.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: OAKVIEW TOOL – PERSONAL PROPERTY Rosie Coyle advised this was the one that needed to be switched to Kyocera. Dale Buuck noted Oakview Tool was the prior company and suggested tabling the passage of this one.

Mayor Daniel pointed out that it references DBA as Kyocera. He advised he did not foresee a problem with it.

Rosie Coyle advised Oakview Tool no longer exists and has been merged with Kyocera. She shared instructions given to her from the Assessor on how this needs to proceed.

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to table the Oakview Tool compliance with statement of benefits for personal property, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2021-13; TRASH COLLECTION RATES – 1ST READING Motion was made by Jennifer Reffitt to read Ordinance 2021-13 by title only, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2021-13 an ordinance amending Chapter 53 regarding the user fees to pay the costs of trash collection for residential customers within the City of Columbia City.

Mayor Daniel shared that after doing some extensive research with different companies and getting an extension proposal from our current trash contractor, it made sense to move forward with a 3-year extension with Waste Management. He advised the Trash Committee was proposing to raise the household trash fees to \$11 per month. He distributed a list of communities of similar size, or in the area, as a comparison. He noted our households were paying \$8.50 per month now. He reminded Council that in 2013 it was at \$9.50 but because we received such a good contract with Advanced Disposal we were able to roll the cost back \$1.00 but now the trash market is very different than it was back then.

Attorney McNagny noted a public hearing would be held at the next meeting.

Mayor Daniel felt collectively it was a bargain; if our residents were to go out and contract on their own, they would be paying double.

Tad Varga questioned if it would be economical for us to go out for bids since we have someone locally doing this process but also questioned why we have such a favorable rate. Mayor Daniel explained when we originally went out for bid, Advanced Disposal was really trying to break into this market so was giving out very good rates. He shared Advanced Disposal was bought out by Waste Management and even in talking with 2-3 other trash companies, who provided a cost range, Waste Management was there or less every time. He did not feel we would be in a good position to go out for bid based on what he was directly hearing from the other contractors.

Mayor Daniel noted the \$11 not only covers the weekly pickup but also the junk pickup days.

Jennifer Romano questioned if notification would go out to the citizens. Mayor Daniel advised we typically try to do that through the newsletter and social media. He shared if there was going to be an actual change in pickup days the contractor would send out postcards but we would integrate that into our communications platform as well.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Ordinance 2021-13 on first reading, Jennifer Reffitt seconded the motion, all voted aye.

RESOLUTION 2021-14: MEETING PARTICIPATION BY ELECTRONIC MEANS

Mayor Daniel explained the State made some changes during the previous legislative session

regarding when and how electronic participation can take place among members of different bodies.

Attorney McNagny advised the Resolution was based upon what AIM provided to Cities and Towns to use. She shared she was not sure whether Board of Works would fall under this Resolution and would look into if a separate Resolution was needed for the Board.

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Resolution 2021-14 by title only, Jennifer Reffitt seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Resolution 2021-14 a resolution establishing the policy by which members of the Common Council may participate by electronic means of Communication.

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve Resolution 2021-14 as presented, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Mike Shoda** – running new line to the feed mill on 600 E, repaired another leak. **Mark Green** – baseball & softball going on, Aquatics Center & Splash Pad opening, finishing up DNR grant, barn project started.

Tom LaRue – received permission years ago to take equipment off of the old 1958 fire truck that is stored at the museum. He advised they did not act upon it at the time and clarified with Council that they still have the blessing to do so and dispose of the vehicle. Mayor Daniel confirmed it had no historical value. Chief LaRue advised it had no historical value to our department. He shared that Smith's towing would take it to Fort Wayne for the cost of the tow. Jennifer Romano questioned if the truck had any historical value to anyone else. Chief LaRue was not sure who the truck belonged to prior to us getting it from a bank in Fort Wayne. He advised the truck was sitting where they need to put the training facility. Motion was made by Tad Varga to allow for the truck to be towed away at the value of the truck, Jennifer Reffitt seconded the motion, all voted aye.

Mike Cook – finishing up with LTCP with liquidated damages currently at \$69,000 plus an additional \$1,000 per day, set flow meters, cleaned force main from 300 S. to the plant, hoping to have high school intern for the summer, working on Jefferson Street control panel.

MAYOR REPORT Mayor Daniel discussed a pilot project grant program that focuses on the downtown that Columbia City Connect was looking into. He shared US 30 has heightened as the State has American Rescue Plan money they believe could be used towards transportation. He advised the US 30 Coalition was moving forward pretty quickly; Whitley and Allen County were at the top of the tier as we have done a lot of planning and obviously Allen County was getting Amazon. He discussed the Readi Grant, which in the State budget there was \$500 million set aside for regional economic/community development. He shared this was a reimbursement type program and advised the Northeast Indiana region was going to try for some of the money available.

REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT Walt Crowder reported the Whitley County Regional Sewer District was making a lot of headway and were looking to get final grant approval in the next 60 days. He shared based upon that they would then decide where to start.

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE Jennifer Romano shared the Ordinance Committee met and discussed parking issues around the community regarding driving over curbs, parking in yards, etc. She noted Columbia Shores was a big area of discussion regarding parking issues and would be talking with Kelly Cearbaugh on a possible solution.

Having no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle