

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2022
6:00 PM**

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

Council Members

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

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

MINUTES Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve an overview of the October 25, 2022, meeting minutes as presented, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, Walt Crowder, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye, Jennifer Middleton abstained.

REZONE REQUEST - 113 N. 200 E. – ESPICH PRINTING Nathan Bilger, Planning Director, was present to discuss the rezone from R3 to GB on 200 E. He advised it would be an extension of an existing strip of GB that extends south of 205 and is both developable and undevelopable due to the wetland.

Jennifer Middleton questioned Mark Espich if he had an idea how many vehicles would be going in and out since the property is in a residential area. Mr. Espich advised it would be pretty low, the majority of his customers were out of state. He shared he maybe has 10-12 customers per day as well as UPS, Amazon and paper delivery truck.

Mayor Daniel questioned if they had started building yet. Mr. Espich advised they had not; the land was prepped and were waiting on the State to approve the building plans.

Jennifer Romano questioned if there was any protection in place for the wetlands. Mr. Espich advised there was nothing right now but would if it was required. Mayor Daniel suggested John Gotz with Soil and Water Conservation would assist when construction occurs.

Jennifer Romano questioned Mr. Espich if he were to expand, would it be an absolute that he would develop the other 2 parcels. Mr. Espich advised he would not; he may just need a portion of the front parcel to add parking or onto the building.

ORDINANCE 2022-31: REZONE – 1ST READING Motion was made by Dan Weigold to read Ordinance 2022-31 by title only, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2022-31 an ordinance amending the zoning classification of certain property from the R-3 multi-family residential district to the GB general business district.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve Ordinance 2022-31 as read, Walt Crowder seconded the motion, all voted aye.

GARY BIRD: PRESENTATION – CLEAN AND RESTORE VETERAN’S CEMETERY MARKERS

Gary Bird shared for many years he has been putting flags at veteran stones in cemetery’s around the area and has noticed a lot of the older stones have become discolored or are laying on the ground. He expressed, as a fellow veteran, it is upsetting to him. He shared last fall he decided to start a restoration process after talking with the American Legion group in Berne.

Mr. Bird presented a PowerPoint on the restoration project. He shared this program is done through donations. He noted the County has offered gravel as did Kelly Cearbaugh with the City. He shared he has reached out to the Township Trustees to help as well.

Dan Weigold questioned if the City had any funds that could be directed to help with this program. Rosie Coyle shared the cemetery funds are operated off opening & closing costs so there is not a lot available in the cemetery funds. Mayor Daniel mentioned with a new year there is new money so there may be an opportunity elsewhere. He offered to personally donate a gallon of the cleaner. Dan Weigold questioned Mr. Bird if he had an estimate of what it would cost. Mr. Bird shared if he would do all 352 veteran markers, he figured the cost to be about \$24,000. Mayor Daniel suggested if there was a way to break down the cost for just Greenhill Cemetery, since it was within our City limits, that would be a good starting point to have conversations on financing. Jennifer Romano suggested maybe the City’s buying abilities were better than what Mr. Bird is able to get.

ORDINANCE 2022-29: 2023 EMPLOYEE SALARY ORDINANCE – 1ST READING

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Ordinance 2022-29 by title only, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2022-29 an ordinance to be known as the 2023 salary range/benefit ordinance.

Rosie Coyle explained the numbers in red were the categories that needed to be increased.

Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to approve Ordinance 2022-29 as first reading, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2022-30: 2023 ELECTED OFFICIALS SALARY ORDINANCE – 1ST READING

Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to read Ordinance 2022-23 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2022-30 an ordinance fixing the annual salaries of all elected officials of the City of Columbia City, Indiana effective December 31, 2022, for the year 2023.

Dan Weigold questioned if it was basically the same as last year. Mayor Daniel explained the Mayor and Clerk Treasurer received an increase the same as the employees based on Council’s past guidance. He did not think they did anything with Council but could certainly change the ordinance. Dan Weigold felt as long as the Mayor and Clerk Treasurer were matching the same as the employee’s he was ok with that. He shared this would be his 16th year and the only time Council has gotten a raise is when we have 27 pays but noted they were still making more than other City Council’s. Mayor Daniel confirmed last year was a 27 pay year. Rosie Coyle advised

that was correct. Mayor Daniel confirmed we took last year's salary and calculated it on 26 pays. Rosie Coyle advised that was correct. Mayor Daniel noted it was really important that our Council members spend time and effort developing ordinances, working with our citizens, serving on committee's and certainly appreciated the fact that Council has been supportive of the Mayor and Clerk Treasurer being at the same salary level as our department heads. Walt Crowder advised he was ok with where they are at. Mayor Daniel stressed, one thing that sets our City apart from other cities and towns, is how well we all work together, and he appreciated that. Rosie Coyle added that very few cities have all of the utilities that we have. He shared this is always something that is uncomfortable to talk about but felt he was hearing Council was good with the way the ordinance was set forth.

Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve Ordinance 2022-30 as presented, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2022-34: ELECTRONIC TRANSFERS – 1ST READING Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Ordinance 2022-34 by title only, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2022-34 an ordinance establishing a policy for electronic funds transfers and online banking for the City of Columbia City.

Rosie Coyle explained we are able to pay vendors through EFT/ACH rather than by check and wanted to get Council's approval to do so. She felt it was important for Council to be aware of it since it involves our banking information. Mayor Daniel advised this has become very common among businesses.

Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to approve Ordinance 2022-34 as first reading, Walt Crowder seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2022-35: FEDERALLY FUNDED PURCHASING – 1ST READING Motion was made by Dan Weigold to read Ordinance 2022-35 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2022-35 an ordinance establishing a purchasing policy for federally funded goods, materials and services.

Rosie Coyle explained this is an ordinance the State Board of Accounts recommended we pass since we deal with a lot of federal funds and there are guidelines that have to be followed.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to pass Ordinance 2022-35 as first reading, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye.

ARTS COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS Mayor Daniel reminded Council the new Arts Commission needed to be established and Council has 3 appointments to that Commission. Walt Crowder distributed a sheet listing potential candidates to serve on the Commission.

After some discussion, Jennifer Romano, Becky Walters and Doug Egolf were appointed to the Arts Commission.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to appoint Jennifer Romano and Becky Walters to a 4-year term and Doug Egolf for a 3 year term, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, Walt Crowder, Dan Weigold and Jennifer Middleton voted aye, Jennifer Romano abstained.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND BZA APPOINTMENTS Walt Crowder advised Cathy Gardner agreed to renew her term to the BZA and Scott Gates and Tad Varga agreed to renew their terms to the Redevelopment Commission.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to appoint Cathy Gardner to the BZA and Scott Gates and Tad Varga to the Redevelopment Commission for another term, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted aye.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Tom LaRue** – pump 102 repairs, established costs to use training facility, ordering new gas meters, looking at changing paging software and ordering new truck, update on volunteer department. **Mike Shoda** – running water main to new Bowen Center, hooking up new houses on Cottonwood. **Gary Parrett** – Officer Porter and Officer Kelley submitted letters of resignation, update on shifting of Officers in the department, Officer Branecki taking over drone program, working on getting donations for patrolling for presents, dispatchers received new headsets, will be moving forward with hiring process. **Terry Wherry** – rebuilding computers, working on plan to put cameras up in Eagle Park. **Chip Hill** – engineering for 300 E & 100 S sewer line as well as study for water to Northern Heights.

MAYOR REPORT Mayor Daniel advised there has been a lot of action on the US 30 study and will be having a public information meeting on December 5 at Sweetwater. He reported the Bowen Center had their groundbreaking ceremony. He advised insurance meetings have been held with the employees throughout the last couple weeks. He noted there would be a very minor increase and attribute that to lower claims as well as the health clinic. He shared he has spent a lot of time at the schools. He reported we have our exit conference with the State Board of Accounts and were scoring some Downtown Revitalization Request for Qualifications.

WHITLEY COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT Walt Crowder reported they have had a lot of environmental events happening with some pushback but have worked through those. He shared they were waiting for the Superior Judge out of Indianapolis to make the final ruling. He advised they have hired a contractor, and everything was starting to stage.

NAMING OF ROAD IN MORSCHES PARK Dan Weigold inquired about getting the road named since there is a building going up for the Community Foundation. Mayor Daniel advised he would work on that. Dan also suggested naming the road going back into Morsches Park for safety purposes.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTING CONTEST Jennifer Romano reported she would like to start judging the first weekend of December.

Having no further business to discuss, Mayor Daniel called the meeting adjourned.

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle