

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023
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 via virtual
Tad Varga – Present
Daniel Weigold – Present

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

MINUTES Mayor Daniel noted he sent some changes to Rosie. Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve an overview of the July 25, 2023, meeting minutes with the noted changes, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye.

SWEARING IN OF POLICE OFFICERS & K9 JAKE Rosie Coyle performed the swearing in ceremony for new Police Officers Tim Clark and K9 Jake, Christopher Anderson and Brandon Young.

SWEARING IN OF FIREFIGHTER JACOB JOHNSON Rosie Coyle performed the swearing in ceremony for new Firefighter Jacob Johnson.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – WATER DEPARTMENT Amy Biggs, Whitely County EMA Director and Ed Scott, Deputy Director, were present to acknowledge two City employees who went above and beyond to assist their agency in managing a hazardous material incident that went on for 4 days. Ms. Biggs recognized Mike Shoda and Braxton Goodman and presented them with a certificate and engraved mug.

ATTORNEY GENERAL: JOHN CANNON John Cannon with the Attorney General's Office was present as part of their Outreach Team to share what their office does and what they can do for Municipalities, Towns, and Counties as well as Hoosiers not part of government. He reported they have funds from unclaimed property, they help with Medicaid fraud, scams to retirees and more. He expressed they are here to help people.

ORDINANCE 2023-12: FOOD AND BEVERAGE TAX – 2ND READING Motion was made by Tad Varga to read Ordinance 2023-12 by title only, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-12 an ordinance of the City of Columbia City, Whitley County, Indiana adopting the City of Columbia City Food and Beverage Tax.

Mayor Daniel stressed that all of the dollars generated from this would go specifically to Eagle Park to purchase equipment, construction costs, etc.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve Ordinance 2023-12 on second and final reading, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2023-14: AMENDMENT TO GOLF CART ORDINANCE – 2ND READING

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to read Ordinance 2023-14 by title only, Tad Varga seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-14 an ordinance amending Chapter 75, bicycles, unicycles, three-wheeled cycles and golf carts, of Title VII of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Mayor Daniel reminded Council this was the provision to add rear-view and side mirrors to golf carts and takes effect when individuals renew or get a new license, it was not retroactive.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Ordinance 2023-14 on second and final reading, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye.

ORDINANCE 2023-15: AMENDMENT TO STREET AND SIDEWALK PERMITS – FEES – 2ND READING

Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to read Ordinance 2023-15 by title only, Tad Varga seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-15 an ordinance amending Chapter 97, Streets and Sidewalks, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Mayor Daniel reminded Council this changes the process for work being done within our easements as well adds a fee structure.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Ordinance 2023-15 on second and final reading, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, by voice vote all voted aye.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Kelly Cearbaugh** – Niblock starting street repairs, assisted Water Department with concrete repairs, finished limb pickup, trimming limbs in streets and alleys, bringing plow downtown for Public Safety Fest. **Tom LaRue** – water pump repairs to Truck 101, update on new firefighters, increase in run volume – all fires have been investigated and are unrelated. **Gary Parrett** – update on new police officers, update on current hiring process, COPS Gear behind in getting new vehicles outfitted, working on get together for department. **Mike Shoda** – working on corrections from IDEM inspection, catch basin repair in Columbia Shores. **Matt Heiden** – concession trailer repaired from vandalism, praises to lifeguards during incident at the pool. **Shawn Lickey** – primary line hit in Columbia Shores area, burying overhead lines on Jefferson Street and Park Terrace area, update on hiring process, letter sent to property owners on Morsches Road regarding upgrades to the area, new pressure washer, discussion on increases in costs and lead times. **Terry Wherry** – met with SOS at the new Park office and ordered equipment, working on getting fiber to the booster station.

MAYOR'S REPORT Mayor Daniel reported the next meeting was bumped back to August 29. He advised Chip Hill received approval for a trail easement from the County to be able to finish

out the planning for the trail extension to the high school. He reported we would be moving forward with the 100 S. sewer project in conjunction with the County Redevelopment Commission. He noted we would be going back out for bid on Eagle Park sometime this winter. He advised they continue to work on Westgate engineering. He shared our Consultants for the downtown plan had a booth at First Friday and were overwhelmed with the amount of support and interaction with our residents. He reported the Youth Council would be starting back up and he was hosting the Mayors and Commissioners Caucus at the Library. He shared CGI would be coming in to refresh the videos on our City.

ARTS COMMISSION Jennifer Romano shared the Arts Commission would be hosting their first studio tour on September 9 from 9 am – 3 pm. She advised they currently have 10 participating artist and 8 stops.

LOCATE FLAGS Walt Crowder noted Columbia Shores has been bombarded with locate flags which has raised questions and inquires. He shared residents do not understand who the flags belong to and think everything belongs to the City. He commended the utility workers for their communication with the public.

Mayor Daniel advised Columbia Shores as well as other areas of the City are experiencing a lot of flags in the easement or right of way. He shared it was Brightspeed putting in fiber; his office continues to give out their information as way to connect our residents to the company. He thought the only areas they would be digging is where they do not already have aerial lines. He advised they have caused some damage in neighborhoods and fully recognize residents are frustrated. He shared they have tried to communicate with Brightspeed about those things.

PLAN COMMISSION Dan Weigold reported the Columbia City Plan Commission met on the extra-territorial jurisdiction but it was not moving along as they would like. He shared there was some movement on the Southern end by the school. He reported they also approved the Mission 25 building as well as approved a storage building for More Farm Store to be located by our solar park.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Tad Varga reported they did the last environmental testing at the Cardinal Grain property on South Line Street, and everything looks good. He shared they were just waiting on final approval so they can move forward with selling the property. He reported they also have a letter of understanding with a possible developer for the property at the corner of Line and Jackson.

CHICKENS Melanie Love of 113 E. Market Street was present to share she has started a petition to support backyard chickens. She invited everyone to consider reading over the petition to get a better understanding of what they were hoping for.

Mayor Daniel advised this was something being discussed around the whole State. He questioned when someone goes to buy a chick was there a way to know the gender of the chick. Melanie Love shared her understanding is you could tell the gender pretty well.

DRIVING CARD PRIVELDGES Russel Reahard of North Manchester was present on behalf of Jesus Escudero who resides at 215 ½ W. Van Buren Street in Columbia City. He understood the Council supported a resolution for driving privileges. He questioned if it would be possible that there could be driving privileges within the City of Columbia City so that he could get back and forth to work to his business he has opened on Hoosier Dr.; as well as to transport his father and children. He questioned if it would be a possibility within City limits to have a driving privileges card. Mayor Daniel advised he was not sure and would need to defer to Legal Counsel to do some checking. He shared as of right now, he did not believe the State allowed driving cards for individuals, which is why, the majority of Council voted in support of a resolution to support a piece of legislation at the State. He shared, if the Council would like, we could have our City Attorney to look into.

Attorney McNagny felt there was a good chance she would not come back with a good result, but it would be because it is out of our hands.

Mr. Reahard advised Mr. Escudero was in the process of citizenship but it was about a 10-year process.

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

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle