

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024
6:00 PM**

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

Council Members

Jennifer Middleton – Present
Leslee Robinson - Present
Jennifer Romano – Present
Tad Varga – Present
Daniel Weigold – Present

The Columbia City Common Council met in regular session with all members present, Mayor Daniel called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. All stood to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve the December 28, 2023, meeting minutes as presented, Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted aye.

2023 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING AWARD Jennifer Romano presented awards to the 2023 Christmas lighting winners. Kegan Perala was the overall winner, Julie Miller Northeast District winner, Richard & Christie Elsten Southwest District winners, Rick Crump Southeast District winner and Don & Andrea Pequignot Northwest District winners.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT Jennifer Middleton nominated Tad Varga as Council President.

Leslee Robinson nominated Dan Weigold as Council President. Jennifer Romano seconded the nomination.

Hearing no second to the nomination for Tad Varga, Mayor Daniel called for a vote of all in favor of Dan Weigold becoming Council President. Leslee Robinson, Jennifer Middleton, Tad Varga and Jennifer Romano voted aye, Dan Weigold abstained.

SWEARING IN OF DEPARTMENT HEADS Rosie Coyle performed the swearing in ceremony for all appointed Department Heads, the Deputy Police Chief and Deputy Clerk Treasurer.

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEE'S, BOARD'S AND COMMISSIONS

Redevelopment Commission – Dan Weigold nominated Tad Varga and Scott Gates to continue their appointments to the Redevelopment Commission. Jennifer Romano seconded the nomination. Leslee Robinson, Jennifer Middleton, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye, Tad Varga abstained.

Planning Commission – Mayor Daniel advised appointments have historically been the

Community Development Director and 2 Council members.

Dan Weigold nominated Chip Hill to remain on the Plan Commission as he has been very informative as to what is going on within the City. Tad Varga seconded the nomination, all voted in favor of appointing Chip Hill to the Plan Commission.

Jennifer Middleton nominated Dan Weigold and Jennifer Romano to fill the other 2 positions. Tad Varga seconded the nomination. Leslee Robinson, Jennifer Middleton, and Tad Varga voted aye, Dan Weigold and Jennifer Romano abstained.

Joint Advisory Board – Mayor Daniel advised this Board was made up of County Commissioners, County Council members, himself and handful of other individuals. He explained the Joint Board oversees the Planning and Building Department since it is a joint planning and building department. He advised the City pays approximately 1/4 of the expenses in the Planning and Building Departments budget and other things.

Dan Weigold nominated Jennifer Middleton.

Jennifer Middleton nominated Leslee Robinson.

Dan Weigold rescinded his nomination for Jennifer Middleton.

Tad Varga seconded the nomination for Leslee Robinson. Jennifer Middleton, Tad Varga, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye, Leslee Robinson abstained.

Solid Waste Board – Mayor Daniel advised there was one position for a City Council member, which Jennifer Middleton has served on, historically. He explained the Solid Waste Board oversees the recycling program here in Whitley County.

Tad Varga nominated Jennifer Middleton to remain on the Solid Waste Board. Dan Weigold seconded the nomination. Leslee Robinson, Tad Varga, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye. Jennifer Middleton abstained.

Wellness Committee – Mayor Daniel advised one Council member is appointed to the Wellness Committee. He explained it was kind of the Wellness and Insurance Committee as they help with our Wellness Program in setting the guidelines for that but also when it comes to insurance time, working through some of the deductible and other things.

Dan Weigold nominated Leslee Robinson for the Wellness Committee. Jennifer Romano seconded the nomination. Jennifer Middleton, Tad Varga, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye, Leslee Robinson abstained.

Ordinance Review Committee - Mayor Daniel advised we needed one chair and one member. He noted previously, the one chair was Jennifer Romano and the member was Dan Weigold; however, Jennifer Romano was not interested in continuing to serve on the Committee. Jennifer Romano explained they basically review City ordinances.

Dan Weigold nominated Tad Varga and Leslee Robinson for the Ordinance Review Committee. Jennifer Romano seconded the nomination. Jennifer Middleton, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye, Leslee Robinson and Tad Varga abstained.

Trash Committee – Mayor Daniel explained the Trash Committee meets once every couple of years to review the trash contracts, things like that.

Tad Varga nominated Jennifer Middleton to remain on the Trash Committee. Jennifer Romano seconded the nomination. Leslee Robinson, Tad Varga, Jennifer Romano and Dan Weigold voted aye, Jennifer Middleton abstained.

Parking Committee – Mayor Daniel advised there were two positions to fill.

Jennifer Romano nominated Dan Weigold and Tad Varga to remain on the Parking Committee. Leslee Robinson seconded the nomination. Leslee Robinson, Jennifer Middleton and Jennifer Romano voted aye, Dan Weigold and Tad Varga abstained.

Tree Board – Mayor Daniel shared we sadly had a member pass away and her term ends on October 12 of this year. He advised between now and October 12 of this year someone does need to be appointed by the Council for Tree Board.

Tad Varga nominated Jennifer Romano to serve on the Tree Board. Dan Weigold seconded the motion. Leslee Robinson, Jennifer Middleton, Tad Varga and Dan Weigold voted aye, Jennifer Romano abstained.

ADOPT DOWNTOWN PLAN: RESOLUTION 2024-1 Jennifer Romano made a motion to read Resolution 2024-1 by title only, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Resolution 2024-1 a Resolution approving and adopting a Downtown Revitalization Plan for the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Mayor Daniel reminded Council that Catherine Puckett was here to give a presentation. He advised last night it went through the Planning Commission and they gave the approval for the downtown plan to be incorporated as a part of the comprehensive plan.

Tad Varga made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-1. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, all voted aye.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS Chip Hill – update on 100 South project, bids will be opened on the 22nd for Eagle Park, bid opening for Westgate is January 23rd. **Terry Wherry** - received fiber to repair network out at Morsches Park, terminating fiber running into the park office at Eagle Park and also at the Water Department. **Shawn Lickey** - about 95% done with Morsches Road project, Christmas decorations taken down and put away, starting tree removal for Tree Board. **Matt Heiden** - finished painting the pavilion, moved old ticket booth down by the splash pad to store chemicals, started selling Father/Daughter dance tickets, took Tom Rentschler around to different parks to get an idea of what maintenance needs done. **Kelly Cearbaugh** – plowing and equipment issues. **Gary Parrett** - Patrolling for Presents was a huge success, County-wide joint training at the high school on Sunday, several dispatchers signed up for training in house and off

site. **Mike Shoda** - replacing meters. **Mike Cook** - Board of Works gave approval for our bathroom remodel, update on sludge hauling, coating parts for secondary. **Tom LaRue** – update on hiring process, preparing for cold temperatures next week, State air pack confidence course, candy giveaway went well.

YOUTH COUNCIL Karmen Brown was present representing the Youth Council and shared the activities they have been doing and their future plans.

ARTS COMMISSION Jennifer Romano reported the Arts Commission met and would like to make a presentation to the Council at the first meeting in February.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Tad Varga reported the Redevelopment Commission met today. He advised the LML building project that has been ongoing for 10 years looks like it is finally going to move forward. He shared they were just waiting for the test results to come back.

MEETING RULES Leslee Robinson shared at some point would like to have some discussion about setting rules for the public. She advised she has been watching other Government entities who have rules setting a 3 minute timeline for individuals to speak as well as also have an official sign in sheet so they know who all was in attendance. Jennifer Romano advised she would be happy to help and has actually done some research on it as well.

Mayor Daniel agreed having a basic set of guidelines was a positive thing. He suggested if Leslee and Jennifer would be willing to work together to draft up something, they could have conversation at a future meeting.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mayor Daniel advised he wanted to make sure Council was ok with it but shared he has reached out to Mary Raber Elementary about potentially having elementary school kids come in and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. He advised it could be all the elementary schools but felt it would be great to have students to lead us in that.

Hearing no other comments or questions, Mayor Daniel adjourned the meeting.

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle

