

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2023
6:00 PM**

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

Council Members

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

The Columbia City Common Council met in regular session with all members present with Jennifer Romano and Tad Varga in attendance virtually. Mayor Daniel called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

MINUTES Mayor Daniel made a correction to the November 14 meeting minutes. He advised it was under the Mayor's report in that Pell is spelled PEL instead of Pell and then it should say planning and environmental linkage study.

Hearing no other changes, Dan Weigold made a motion to approve the November 14 meeting minutes as corrected. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted aye.

2024 EMPLOYEE SALARY ORDINANCE 2023-20: 2ND READING Jennifer Middleton made a motion to read Ordinance 2023-20 by title only, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-20, an ordinance to be known as the 2024 Salary Range Benefit Ordinance.

Mayor Daniel reminded Council this was for the employees and does include the new positions that were approved in the budget.

Dan Weigold made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-20 on second and final reading. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted aye.

2024 ELECTED OFFICIALS SALARY ORDINANCE 2023-21: 1ST READING Jennifer Middleton made a motion to read Ordinance 2023-21 by title only. Walt Crowder seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-21 an ordinance fixing the annual salaries of all elected officials of the City of Columbia City, Indiana effective December 30, 2023, for the year 2024.

Rosie Coyle explained this was for elected officials only and included the 4% increase for the Mayor and Clerk Treasurer.

Discussion followed on potentially increasing the Council's wage. Dan Weigold noted for the past 16 years Council has voted not to have a raise whatsoever, outside of getting 27 pays in a year. Jennifer Romano felt it was time to consider it. She also noted there had not been an increase in the salary for Council in a very long time and as she understood, they were getting paid less than other Councils who meet less frequently and who were potentially less involved.

Mayor Daniel advised he would be supportive of the Council getting a 4% increase.

Tad Varga agreed with considering an increase.

Jennifer Middleton agreed to the 4% but no more.

Dan Weigold made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-21 with the 4% increase for Council included. Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted aye.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Terry Wherry** – building new Spillman server, having fiber terminated at the water department for 2 of their wells, having fiber run to the park sign at the Eagle Park office as well as into the building and hope to get fiber repaired on our network. **Shawn Lickey** - Christmas decorations are up throughout town, the North substation has been officially converted for the 69 kv project and will move on to the West substation. **Chip Hill** – update on the 100 S sewer project, getting ready to advertise for bids for Eagle Park and the trail to the high school, moving forward on Westgate. **Mike Shoda** – changed company they order chlorine from. **Gary Parrett** – lighted Christmas parade went very well, pre-planning meeting is set for our new mass notification system and hope to get that implemented and kicked off in January, training and qualifying on the new pistols, gearing up for the Community Christmas around the courthouse, Officer Thomas preparing for the patrolling for presents event at Paige’s Crossing on December 16th. **Mike Cook** – Board of Works approved a final pay request for the CSO-19 project, UV system is shut down for the winter, purchased needle resistant or puncture resistant gloves for each member of his staff, including himself, as they have been running into more and more needles when they are working at the stations. Mayor Daniel reported for Kelly Cearbaugh.

YOUTH COUNCIL Alivia More was present to report on the activities of the Youth Council.

MAYOR REPORT Mayor Daniel reminded Council that the second meeting in December was moved to December 28. He reported that Chip and he met with the new retail coach. He shared he had glowing reviews about our community, about the market area, about the cleanliness of our community and all the things that retailers really want to see. He reiterated what Chip said in that they are working on a lot of different grants from the trail to Eagle Park to Westgate. He reported they were holding insurance meetings and going through the evaluation process. He shared we were able to hold our insurance rates stable for our employees this year, there was no increase in our insurance other than there was a deductible increase based on the federal change. He reported he would be at Mayor’s school next week.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTING CONTEST Jennifer Romano advised they would be out soon to do the judging. She shared if people have something fantastic and they want the judges to see it right away to contact her at jromano@columbiacity.net or call in.

CHICKENS Melanie Love of 113 E. Market Street wanted to make sure Council was aware that a federal judge in Illinois recently found major egg producers guilty of conspiring to limit egg supply and deliberately inflating prices. She shared people pretty much just believe that all the high prices have been caused by avian flu, which probably is not helping, but now it is known that it is also other things such as price fixing. She also talked on another topic involving a chicken producer. She just felt like these were things Council should be aware of and, once again, the importance of being able to provide your own food.

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

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle