

**COMMON COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2024  
6:00 PM**

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

**Council Members**

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

The Columbia City Common Council met in regular session with all members except Jennifer Middleton present. Mayor Daniel called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. All stood to say the Pledge of Allegiance led by Maverick and Ryker Graves.

**MINUTES** Mayor Daniel noted Mr. Bitler’s name was misspelled. Leslee Robinson pointed out under the first reading of the test kitchen, it should read that Jennifer Romano made the first motion and Jennifer Middleton made the second and under Tom LaRue’s report it should read live instead of light fire instructor class.

Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve the August 13, 2024, meeting minutes as corrected. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

**SWEARING IN OF FIREFIGHTER** Mayor Daniel advised this was going to be postponed until the next meeting.

**REZONE ORDINANCE 2024-15: 2<sup>ND</sup> READING** Dan Weigold made a motion to read Ordinance 2024-15 by title only. Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2024-15 an Ordinance amending the zoning classification of certain property from the R-1 Single Family Residential District to the GB General Business District.

Nathan Bilger was present to answer any questions regarding the rezone. There were no questions presented.

Leslee Robinson made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-15 on 2nd and final reading. Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

**ORDINANCE 2024-16: TEST KITCHEN – 2<sup>ND</sup> READING** Jennifer Romano made a motion to read Ordinance 2024-16 by title only. Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2024-16 an Ordinance establishing a Test Kitchen Fund for the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-16 on 2nd and final reading. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

**ORDINANCE 2024-17: INTINERANT MERCHANT PERMIT – 1<sup>ST</sup> READING** Tad Varga made a motion to read Ordinance 2024-17 by title only. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, all voted unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2024-17 an Ordinance amending Title XI, Business Regulations, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Attorney McNagny explained this came up due to some complaints that came into the city regarding issues of people setting up tents or portable facilities and selling merchandise. She advised we do not have anything for this as it does not fall under our current peddler or mobile vendor ordinances. She advised this would only be for portable, pop-up sales, whether on private or public property, and to establish a permit process for that.

Mayor Daniel felt this was really just a way in which to create a level playing field. He noted we have something for non-food mobile trucks, and mobile food trucks but found that there is a loophole that if someone sets up a tent, they can sell out of the tent, and it does not fall under any of our ordinances.

Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-17 on first reading. Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS** **Chip Hill** – update on Westgate with substantial completion to be around September 30<sup>th</sup>, swing at Eagle Park is about 90% installed, Pickleball courts should be sealed in the next two weeks, the Blue River Trail extension advertisement for bids got pushed back. **Nathan Bilger** – gave an update on permits and the Timber’s Edge development, Plan Commission will be considering a 2-lot plat on Gates Road, reported on the comprehensive plan workshop he is planning for September 30<sup>th</sup>. **Shawn Lickey** - completed about 90% of the pole testing for this year and have about 100 poles so far that need replaced, update on the Rolling Hills project, disconnecting temporary power to the new jail which means they should be close to moving in. **Tom LaRue** - training facility sustained damages from a garbage truck rolling into it, Truck 101 generator is undergoing repairs, Truck 102 electrical issues have returned so the mechanic is trying to figure that out, motor in the plymovent exhaust system went bad and have a company coming in to fix that. **Matt Heiden** – pool closed for the season, roof is finished on the police training building, they had the last Wild Indiana educational session on Saturday and was a really big hit, starting to tear down the wood dugouts on fields 1 and 2 and will be replaced with cinderblock dugouts to match fields 3 and 4, building a bigger shed at the pool to accommodate the swim team equipment, Girl Scout Kinsey Sanderson is putting in a free library box at Every Kid’s Dreamland. **Mike Shoda** - all three filters are back online and will be flushing hydrants through the town. **Gary Parrett** – new officer Chuck Melton decided this was not the job for him and his family and resigned after his first day of field training, he advised the Board of Works gave him approval to fill that position, Austin Sturgess has been recommended so will get his paperwork sent off to the state for approval, extended 2 offers of employment for dispatch and was approved to hire a third dispatcher since Amie LaRue is retiring in 2025, worked with Kelly Cearbaugh to put up a couple more 5-ton weight limit signs on Whitley Street, they have been enforcing and educating truck driver’s that they are too heavy for our side streets and redirecting them to the alternate route established by the state, Shriner’s Association will be doing a parade on September 21<sup>st</sup> taking the same route as the Old Settler’s parade, busy

with multiple investigations. **Kelly Cearbaugh** – update on Timber’s Edge Subdivision off Valley River Drive, concrete crews working on a 50/50 sidewalk at Park and Oak Streets, have a couple trucks coming in from WA Jones by the end of the week, he and Mitch Platt attended the Indiana Street Commissioners Conference last week in Muncie. **Terry Wherry** - working with the SOS Communications and the Electric Department to get equipment ordered and the process started for extending the fiber network to the test kitchen, working with Preferred IT to replace six of our servers that are at end of life, working with Cody and CUES to upgrade the Granite Software that Kelly uses for televising. Mayor Daniel shared a department report from Mike Cook.

**MAYOR REPORT** Mayor Daniel reported he just returned from Indianapolis as he was at the FIRSST Task Force meeting today. He shared they had a lot of really good conversation but the eye-popping number that came out was that there is a local need, when it comes to county, cities and towns, of somewhere over \$2 billion in road infrastructure to get roads up to good condition with about \$1.7 billion needed just to get all roads into fair condition. He advised that does not include the \$1 billion plus that INDOT needs going forward to make up for the potential funding gap when it comes to gas fuel taxes falling off, higher standards, etc. He mentioned the Great Lakes Shrine Association parade that will be starting at noon on September 21<sup>st</sup> and what an honor it is to have it in Columbia City. He reported the Youth Council will be starting on Thursday and he will be attending the “Topping Out” ceremony for the new Mission 25 building. He reported the Redevelopment Commission will be holding a special meeting on Friday to have conversations about the current, and soon to be former, Whitley County Jail. He shared an engineer architect has looked at and toured the building with he, Carl Siler, Gary Parrett and Shawn Lickey. He reported some will be attending the Trust Local golf outing next Wednesday and also has a Rural Communities Roundtable on that Thursday. He shared the city was approached by the Historical Society requesting to put up placards on our welcome signs designating this city as being the home of Thomas Bradley Marshall, Vice President of the United States. He advised the Historical Society designed and paid for the signs but we were responsible for putting them up. He thought placards were put up on each end of US 30.

**ARTS COMMISSION** Jennifer Romano reported the second annual Whitley County Studio Art Tour will be on September 7th from 9:00 to 2:00 p.m. She shared that studios will be open across the county and booths will be set up at different locations in town.

**REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT** Leslee Robinson gave an update from the Regional Sewer District Board meeting last Tuesday. She advised they were down to 29 individuals that still had not communicated anything to the Board.

Having no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Daniel called the meeting adjourned.

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Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

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Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle