

**COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 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 p.m. All stood to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES Mayor Daniel noted a couple grammatical errors under the budget discussion.

Hearing no other corrections, Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve the September 24, 2024, meeting minutes with the noted changes. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

GREAT LAKES SHRINE ASSOCIATION PARADE UPDATE – JERRY FREEWALT

Jerry Freewalt was present to thank Mayor Daniel, the department heads and others who assisted him with the parade.

Mayor Daniel thanked Mr. Freewalt for his hard work and for bringing people to Columbia City from different parts of the state, Illinois, Canada and other locations. He felt it was a great event.

ORDINANCE 2024-19: REZONE – EAST RADIO ROAD Brad Minear was present on behalf of the school system and shared that they were asking for a rezone of the East Radio Road property from light industrial to commercial. He explained their plan is to make this location a trade school; they hope to have welding classes, construction classes, nursing classes and much more. He advised they were currently running these types of programs through the school, but size wise they are just at absolute capacity and are hoping this will be a great opportunity to get more kids involved. He reported he met with Nathan Bilger, and he felt the best option would be to try and downgrade the property to commercial so it fits more with what the school will be doing there. He added that they like the idea that the walkway may potentially come right through there and the kids could walk back and forth from the main campus. He shared that the building is in relatively rough shape but felt this would help revitalize the area.

Dan Weigold felt this was a wonderful opportunity to dress up that area plus make it extremely usable for our young people to learn the trades, as college is not for everybody. Mr. Minear agreed it was a good fit.

Jennifer Romano mentioned they continually discuss the entrance to the city there and that building currently does not look good. She felt if the school is able to go in there and fix it up that would help improve that entrance.

Leslee Robinson questioned how long it would take before they were actually in the building. Mr. Minear was unsure and advised there was a lot of remodeling that had to be done. He explained the idea is to have some of the work done by contractors, but also to bring school kids in so that they can help revitalize the building. He thought they might be opening wings or sections but the idea of getting it open for the next school year is really pushing it. He had a notion from conversations that it might be the following year before it is physically up and running at 100%.

Mayor Daniel thought they were still doing some general testing of the property as well. Mr. Minear confirmed they were and were currently waiting for the phase 1 results to come back. He shared this was all hinging on that. He advised that he did have one request, and talked to Nathan about it, and that was if it would be possible to push the second reading back until after their closing. He explained the seller did not want the property taken out of light industrial until the school took ownership. He noted that closing was scheduled for November 1st and wondered if they could maybe move it back at the November 12th meeting. Mayor Daniel did not think there would be a problem with that.

Jennifer Romano made a motion to read Ordinance 2024-19 by title only. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, all voted unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2024-19 an ordinance amending the zoning classification of certain property from the I-1 Light Industrial District to the GB General Business District.

Dan Weigold made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-19 on first reading. Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

Mayor Daniel advised they would move second reading to the November 12th meeting, unless for some reason it needs to be pushed back.

2025 BUDGET ADOPTION: ORDINANCE 2024-14 Tad Varga made a motion to read Ordinance 2024-14 by title only. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, all voted unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2024-14 an ordinance or resolution for appropriations and tax rates.

Mayor Daniel shared, as mentioned at previous meetings, it was anticipated that the actual tax rate will either stay the same or go down based on what they are hearing about the AV.

Tad Varga made a motion to approve Ordinance-14 on final reading. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, all voted unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Chip Hill** - opened bids for the Blue River Trail extension, Westgate was finally opened up, expecting to start the skate park in a couple weeks. **Mike Shoda** – update on lead replacement project. **Matt Heiden** - measured wrong for the pool pad replacements so they are trying to figure out that problem, attended AIM Ideas Summit last week, talked with the middle school A.D. about working together concerning the DeVol tennis

courts since the middle school also plays down there, started looking into dog park information and reaching out to communities that are similar to our size. **Terry Wherry** - SOS started installation of equipment in the test kitchen, working at City Hall to consolidate and move some of our internet lines.

YOUTH COUNCIL Olivia Moore was present representing the Youth Council and gave a report on their activities.

MAYOR REPORT Mayor Daniel shared department reports for Kelly Cearbaugh, Mike Cook and Shawn Lickey.

Mayor Daniel reported Rosie, Beth and he were working on insurance for next year. He advised we have had a very heavy health insurance year so are looking at different ways to minimize costs. He shared he has a meeting with some of our staff, Joann Bird, and the County regarding the Veterans Marathon and working through conflicts with election things at the courthouse. He reported more third graders will be touring City Hall on Thursday and Friday and we have our employee health and benefit fair in the fire training room on Thursday. He advised he would be touring 5 Lakes Coffee with Nathan Miller on Thursday as well. He reminded Council that he would be out of the office from the 19th through the 30th.

ARTS COMMISSION Jennifer Romano reported the Arts Commission has their retreat coming up on the 26th to plan for what they are going to do next year, and to some extent in the years ahead.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Tad Varga reported they have to do a boring test at the adjacent property to where the Cardinal Grain building was and if that comes through then, supposedly, once again it should be good to offer up.

SOUTH ENTRANCE BEAUTIFICATION Tad Varga advised the landscaping along the corridor coming into town from the South side has been delayed again.

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

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle