

**COMMON COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024  
6:00 PM**

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

**Council Members**

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

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

**MINUTES** Mayor Daniel noted that under his report PEL was spelled incorrectly.

Tad Varga made a motion to approve the November 26, 2024, meeting minutes as corrected. Leslee Robinson seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted unanimously.

**REZONE – KILGORE MANUFACTURING – ORDINANCE 2024-28 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

Dan Weigold made a motion to read Ordinance 2024-28 by title only. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted unanimously. Deputy Clerk Treasurer Sally Wherry read Ordinance 2024-28 an ordinance amending the zoning classification of certain property from the R-2 Two-Family Residential District and the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District to the I-1 Light Industrial District.

Chip Hill reported that Kilgore was expanding. He noted they possibly may not need this rezone because they may be purchasing property off of Diamond Avenue but in case they do not acquire that property, they would like to expand off of South Chauncey Street. He shared, as he told the Planning Commission, there was a vision for South Chauncey Street, but at this point it was just a vision. He advised Kilgore went from 35 employees over the last five years to 67 employees and that was with no tax abatements or assistance. He stated they were a thriving company and did not want to stymie their progress. He felt like this was a good thing for our community and was well deserved.

Dan Weigold added it was pretty much a mutual agreement across the board for the Planning Commission. He stated that they talked about the future of that area and what it could look like, but at the same time to reiterate what Chip said, it was an opportunity for Kilgore to grow and expand.

Jennifer Romano agreed with Dan and Chip in their comments. She advised the Plan Commission did request that the area look nice and gave their vote of confidence to invest in that area.

Tad Varga confirmed that right now the property is zoned residential. Mayor Daniel noted that there were three parcels all zoned residential and thought there was a parking lot on at least two, if not three of the sites so it was sort of being used in that context anyway as there were no homes that would be bulldozed. He advised it was just a matter of rezoning the property as it currently sits.

Mayor Daniel questioned if there was discussion on potential future development there. Chip Hill advised they may possibly expand with another building. He advised they were having issues with unloading their trucks and how they kind of block the sidewalk on Line Street. He noted they do have a loading dock, but it is not conducive because the trucks have to sit on Line Street so they are hoping to make the congestion go down in that area.

Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-28 on first reading. Tad Varga seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted unanimously.

**RESOLUTION 2024-26: EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES** Leslee Robinson made a motion to read Resolution 2024-26 by title only. Tad Varga seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted unanimously. Deputy Clerk Treasurer Sally Wherry read Resolution 2024-26 Common Council of Columbia City, Indiana a resolution regarding Emergency Medical Services in Columbia City, Indiana.

Attorney McNagny explained the County has entered into an agreement with Parkview for emergency services within the county and obviously Columbia City as well. She added that by law the City has to consent to that and is in the form of this resolution.

Mayor Daniel explained we were not really entering into contract, if you will, for Parkview EMS, but we do have to consent to it. He thought this was a three-year contract.

Jennifer Middleton made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-26. Tad Varga seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted unanimously.

**UTILITY WRITE-OFFS 2024** Sally Wherry explained that every year we have bankruptcy and deceased accounts that we cannot collect on and request to write those off. She advised we needed Council's approval to do so.

Leslee Robinson made a motion to approve the bankruptcy and deceased list and write those utilities off for 2024. Tad Varga seconded the motion, on the voice vote all voted unanimously.

**PROPEL US 30 LEVEL 3 ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION** Rusty Holt, Study Manager for the Propel US 30 East study, was present to report where they currently were in the study process. He shared that they started the process two years ago and reported that in November of this year, they published Level 3, the third level of alternatives analysis screening which was the most detailed report that have had to date. He advised they were looking to wrap up the study process early next year. He went on to review the assessment and the improvement packages they looked at including safety, mobility, environmental impacts and the costs associated with those packages. He advised after getting through all of the Level 3 study, they rated each improvement package based on three classifications; First classification was elimination - Those are improvement packages that do not really provide as many benefits and tend to cost more or

have more impacts, so have been eliminated from any future in the project; Second is carried forward - Those are packages that have marginal benefits, so some things are good, but they might have more costs than other packages, or more impacts than other packages. Those are ones they may want to continue to consider but need a little bit more analysis before deciding if they are reasonable for that planning segment; And then the final is recommended – Those are the best of the improvement packages compared to the others they have. There are high benefits with lower impacts without extraordinarily high costs.

Mr. Holt advised inside the report there were figures that show the entire planning segment with all of the intersections inside of them as well as an executive summary which provides all the improvement and planning segments. He shared the entire report can be viewed on their website at [propelus30.com](http://propelus30.com). He advised they also have some videos attached to each of the planning segments that provides a fly through of what the improvements might look like in the future. He shared they had two public meetings: one in Columbia City and one in Warsaw. He advised the first meeting was recorded and is available live on their website also.

Mayor Daniel felt that ultimately for the City of Columbia City much of what was in our concept document that was created by the Whitley County Planning Group, for the Columbia City portion, a lot of the ideas were already incorporated into this. He felt the big issue in the plan as he sees it is really twofold; SR 205 does not have a connection currently, and that is a dramatic need for the Hospital, the park, our residents as well as Churubusco residents. He felt we needed to have some kind of connector at 205. Secondly, is something that he really appreciated, which came out of the concept document, and that is the recommendation of a brand-new interchange to the West of Columbia City as kind of the new gateway connector, if you will. He felt that was critical as we think about where the new jail is and where growth is kind of moving. By having at least one more connector on the West side, but then opening up 205, he felt gives us the three connectors that were really important for our city and for the future of our Economic Community Development.

Mayor Daniel encouraged Council to review the report and submit any comments or thoughts to him within the next couple days.

Dan Weigold questioned what kind of timeframe they were looking at. Mr. Holt explained how the process would work and felt it would be no sooner than 5 years. Mayor Daniel advised there were still a lot of steps between here and breaking ground. He felt the nice thing about this process has been that they actually are communicating with us and taking our comments and thoughts into consideration which in past situations have not been taken into account.

**RDC APPOINTMENTS – VARGA, GATES** Tad Varga advised he talked with Scott Gates and he was interested in being reappointed to the RDC. Tad advised he would be more than happy to continue as well.

Dan Weigold made a motion to reappoint Tad Varga and Scott Gates to the Redevelopment Commission for an additional year. Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, on the voice vote Dan Weigold, Jennifer Romano, Jennifer Middleton and Leslee Robinson voted unanimously, Tad Varga abstained.

**YOUTH COUNCIL** Ariel Hernandez was present representing the Youth Council and gave an update on their activities.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS** **Matt Heiden** - finishing up with winterization and looking at new software as their other one stops next September. **Chip Hill** - Working on getting the lease worked out for the Test Kitchen, update on Skate Park. **Shawn Lickey** - Christmas decorations were installed, working on SCADA updates, updating our Terms and Conditions with Attorney McNagny, meeting with a high school senior that is interested in doing an internship, took delivery of a new service vehicle from Enterprise, continue changing out poles that did not pass inspection, getting quotes to replace one of their trailers. **Mike Shoda**- remodeling front office. **Mike Cook** - Employee evaluations and goal setting are complete, started pigging the SDI force main, still waiting on a quote for the Dystor, meeting tomorrow morning at Jackson Street on the force main project. **Terry Wherry** - server migration has continued to move forward, got the fiber moved out of the old phone room over into the server room, waiting on fiber connections to be installed at the Test Kitchen so the network can be installed there.

**MAYOR REPORT** Mayor Daniel reported he continues to work on employee evaluations as well as continue to have conversations about the Amphitheatre and what that looks like. He advised he will be having a windshield tour with our State Senator on Friday to take him around the City and make sure he knows of all the great things the state has helped us fund here. He shared that Wreaths Across America was coming up on Saturday at Greenhill Cemetery at noon. He advised they have another Mayors and Legislators for Northern Indiana meeting on Tuesday in Warsaw and on Wednesday he has a FIRSST task force meeting in Indianapolis, then Youth Council on Thursday.

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING** Mayor Daniel advised the next meeting for City Council will be December 26th at 6:00 PM.

**REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION** Tad Varga reported they had a good RDC meeting today where they were able to check off a couple things that they have been working on for a while. He reported the LML building was submitted for final release and shared that they were also working with Columbia City Connect to help fund some of the projects they are working on for next year.

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

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Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

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Deputy Clerk Treasurer Sally Wherry

