

**COMMON COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025  
6:00 P.M.**

Mayor Ryan Daniel – Present  
Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson – Present  
Attorney Marcia McNagy – Present

**Council Members**

Brent Bockelman – Present  
Jennifer Middleton – Present  
Jennifer Romano – Absent  
Tad Varga – Present  
Dan Weigold – Present

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

**MINUTES** Brent Bockelman made a motion to approve the August 12, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. Tad Varga seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

**ORDINANCE 2025-11 JOINT PLANNING FEES AND CHARGES – 1<sup>ST</sup>**

**READING** Nathan Bilger explained this was an ordinance amending the fees for the Joint Planning and Building Department. He advised that they review the fees every few years, and what was being proposed was a fairly moderate increase, changing only a handful of building permits. He pointed out that the base fees for class one and class two buildings, or commercial and residential buildings primarily, were going up by \$40 per square foot which accounts for the increases in salaries and so on. He noted another increase was for fences which were currently \$40 and would go up to \$50, which that extra \$10 reflects the extra administrative costs. He advised there were several fees that were not changing.

Jennifer Middleton made a motion to read Ordinance 2025-11 by title only. Dan Weigold seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson read Ordinance 2025-11 a joint ordinance amending the schedule of fees and charges for the Columbia City Whitley County Joint Planning and Building Department.

Mayor Daniel questioned if the county had already passed this ordinance. Nathan Bilger advised they did it in one reading at their meeting last week. He advised the city does not need to pass it one reading as the effective date is scheduled to be either December 31 or January 1, and under state law, they have to give a 90-day grace period before it becomes effective, so would have time to do two readings.

Tad Varga made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-11 on first reading. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

**PLANNING AND BUILDING UPDATES** Nathan Bilger reported that they expect two plats to be filed in the near future; one is Walmart itself as they have a couple parcels that they are consolidating into one and then more importantly, they expect a primary plat, for at least a portion of the land north of Walmart in the next month or so. He reported that Valvoline was still progressing forward but very slowly and are still planning to move forward with the old Bob Evan's location.

## **ORDINANCE 2025-12 AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 95 – NOISE**

**CONTROL** Dan Weigold made a motion to read Ordinance 2025-12 by title only. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson read Ordinance 2025-12, an ordinance amending Chapter 95, specifically in reference to noise control, of Title IX of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbus City, Indiana.

Gary Parrett reported that for years now, they have had complaints about semis in residential areas using their Jake brakes. He explained those are a compression brake that is modified under a muffler type system that makes it loud if they do not use it correctly. He shared that the fire truck has one but when they use it you cannot hear it. He advised these semis were using them a lot in residential areas and out on US 30. He shared that we cannot do much about 30 but did talk to Chris Judy a few months back about if the city would pass an ordinance, if they could put a sign out on US 30. He said that he would talk to the powers-to-be to help us get that done, because we have had some residents in Eagle Glen complain. He noted that one of the biggest areas was down on Chicago Street, because the trucks come in from the steel mill to go south on 9. He advised they are only supposed to be going 30 mph, but they still hit that break. He felt it was something that needed a hard look at for our residents, especially on the south side of town.

Dan Weigold appreciated this being addressed because he was getting phone calls, with Chicago Street residents being the main ones.

Attorney McNagny reported that she had done a lot of research on how this was handled around the state.

Tad Varga made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-12 on first reading. Jennifer Middleton seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS** **Shawn Lickey** - continue changing out poles that failed inspection, underground utility locate training. **Chip Hill** – for the trail they have a couple cross walk lights that need to be installed in front of the Dairy Barn and then working through the issue with railroad, working on plans for the amphitheater at Eagle Park. **Matt Heiden** – pool is closed and getting it ready for winter, JFL starts after Labor Day on Saturdays, September 13<sup>th</sup> is the LifeWise pickleball tournament, replacing doors on the trailhead. **Mike Shoda** - continuing to flush hydrants, found a problem with Well 9 that was causing the brown water and have started repairs. **Gary Parrett** – update on hiring process, Officer Sturgess graduated from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy this past Friday, significant progress has been made on the home over at 414 Swihart Street, still waiting on the tornado sirens to be installed, gearing up for First Friday and Movie on the Square in September, Detective Campbell and Detective Cook submitted their resignation letters to step down from their current positions and go back to road patrol. **Terry Wherry** – installed grill in the building at Eagle Park so that the air conditioner can be mounted in there, building 4 new computers, repairs to gate controllers at MSF. **Mike Cook** – met with IDEM and continue to work through issues, update on digester project. Mayor Daniel shared department report for Kelly Cearbaugh.

**MAYOR REPORT** Mayor Daniel shared that they continue working through budgets and felt like they were honing in on a number. He reported that they have had a couple different development conversations with people over the last couple of weeks, which has been really positive. He shared that the Youth Council meets for the first time tomorrow and then on Thursday he will be heading down to Indy for an AIM event. He discussed the transition of live streaming meetings on YouTube rather than Facebook. He reported that the third graders will be visiting

City Hall next Friday and City Hall will be closed on Monday for Labor Day. He advised they had a steering committee meeting for the comprehensive plan and talked a little bit about different zoning maps and different thoughts about future planning and future growth.

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 Leslee Robinson