

COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026
6:00 P.M.

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

Council Members

Ryan Adamson – Present
Brent Bockelman – 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 Jennifer Romano made a motion to approve the May 12, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. Tad Varga seconded the motion. Jennifer Romano, Tad Varga, and Dan Weigold approved, Ryan Adamson and Brent Bockelman abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT There were no public comments.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS Dale Buuck was present to discuss the CF-1 Statement of Benefits for Rinly Properties, Vidhi 2 LLC, and Kyocera.

Dale Buuck reminded the Council that Rinly, also known as Quality Inspection Gauge, in looking at their employment versus their CF-1, had lost a couple of customers during COVID. He advised that they have continued with 11 employees, which is the same number they had last year and noted that in looking at their wages, they were pretty high for Columbia City. He shared that they continue to be pretty steady, they just have not recovered from losing those customers.

Dale Buuck reminded Council that Vidhi 2 is the Holiday Inn. He reported that Deep Patel, the new Manager, wanted to be here tonight but had a family emergency. He advised that in the past this particular compliance form has been missing but Mr. Patel has been to his office several times and is working diligently with Scott Wagner and the Board of Health. He advised that they have cleaned up quite a few issues out there, especially the pool and some other things, and just recently passed a Board of Health review that has given them a 100% new rating. He reported that although not filled out, their CF-1 is for 2026 pay 2027. He shared that they were not asking to pick up the missed years and noted that they were getting into the last couple of years of the abatement so is pretty small in what they would be getting. Mayor Daniel advised this would be their last year, which means they would only be at 10% abatement.

Mayor Daniel shared that when Holiday Inn Express came in, it was a big deal for our community; partially because of the additional assessed valuation for the city but also would give another hotel option for our residents. He noted that their AV looks to be at 2.8 million, which is

over from previous years.

Dale Buuck went on to discuss Kyocera. He advised there were three abatements with one of them thought to be in the last year. He reported that he and Drew Johnson have talked briefly and felt things were going fairly well. He shared that their parent company is in the Cleveland area, and they were pleased with Kyocera, especially since the move off of Swihart Street.

Tad Varga pointed out with Kyocera they were only at about 2/3 of their projected estimates in terms of their salaries for when they purchased the CNC grinder. Dale Buuck advised that was correct and noted that they were planning to hire 10 more employees so should be at 39. He could not answer why they have not increased but advised that Drew was trying to get some folks hired.

Ryan Adamson questioned if any of these were in compliance compared to their paperwork. Dale Buuck explained that the SB-1 paperwork is filled out when first applying for abatement and, using Rinly as an example, they were way below what the SB-1 was. Ryan Adamson confirmed that none of these were compliant from when they were first filled out. Dale Buuck stated as far as employment, they did make an investment.

Ryan Adamson felt it disheartening that individuals cannot take time out of their day to come to a meeting themselves for Council to be able to ask questions of them. He did not think it was too much to ask for people to take 1/2 hour of their time, or at least send a business representative, to a meeting so they can ask questions.

Dan Weigold questioned the Business Tangible Personal Property Assessment Return forms for Kyocera. He noted that it states the taxpayer sold all their assets in Indiana effective August 14, 2025. He questioned if there was a bankruptcy or something of that sort. Dale Buuck was not familiar with the forms and was unsure. He advised he could look into it. Mayor Daniel noted it was the Council's prerogative on how to go forward. Dan Weigold advised he would like to have an explanation of what those meant. Dale Buuck advised he was happy to ask the question and if something was up, have them come to the next meeting. Leslee Robinson noted that ownership had changed and wondered if that could be the reasoning behind it. Mayor Daniel stressed that clarity was important.

Jennifer Romano made a motion to table Kyocera and invite them to come in person. Ryan Adamson seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Romona made a motion to approve Rinly Properties and Vidhi 2 abatements. Dan Weigold seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Romano questioned if there were any other abatements that were out of compliance for being late. Dale Buuck was not aware of any.

ORDINANCE 2026-14 AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 52, TITLE V Tad Varga made a motion to read Ordinance 2026-14 by title only. Ryan Adamson seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson read Ordinance 2026-14 an ordinance

receiving and amending Chapter 52, Title V, of the Code and Ordinances of the City of Columbia City, Indiana.

Mayor Daniel explained this was to codifying what the state and federal government has mandated regarding the lead water lines. He advised it gives us the ability to go onto people's property in order to take care of the water lines that we are mandated to do.

Dan Weigold confirmed that the property owner still maintains the line from the meter to the house. Mayor Daniel advised that was correct; the challenge was that the state and feds are mandating that we make sure those lines are not lead.

Ryan Adamson made a motion to approve Ordinance 2026-14. Tad Varga seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

AMPHITHEATER PROJECT Mayor Daniel reported that Chip Hill has been working really hard with our BOT contractor to get the amphitheater to a place that is fundable and buildable. He shared that the majority of the funding for this component will come out of the food and beverage tax, with a little bit of property tax backup in there. He reported that the state allows a certain constitutional cap on our debt but in order to go past that constitutional debt limit we have to create a Building Corporation. He advised we saw this when the library built their facility and when the high school built their facility. He explained that this effectively creates a body that manages the actual building of the facility, paying of the bonds, things like that but still have all the checks and balances. He advised that we have to circulate a petition and get at least 50 signatures, we are saying 60, from residents who support building the amphitheater. He noted that this piece is what Resolution 2026-16 focuses on.

Mayor Daniel explained that Resolution 2026-17 focuses on the reimbursing of expenses. He advised that we have engineering work that has to be a part of the BOT process and in order to get it reimbursed from the bond proceeds, we have to pass an intent to reimburse expenditure resolution.

Mayor Daniel shared that these resolutions just give us the ability to start moving forward on the project, but the council will still have to approve the guaranteed maximum price. He advised council will see the whole project before moving forward.

Dan Weigold noted wording on page 19, where it states City of Whitley. Attorney McNagny advised it should say County of Whitley and we could make that modification.

Ryan Adamson questioned if this would be equivalent to 'I'm building a house and I'm hiring somebody to general contract it.' Mayor Daniel advised somewhat. He explained that it is saying we have individuals in the city who want the project, which is the petition. But then the second part is that we are creating a building corporation that effectively is a mechanism the state allows for us to be outside of our constitutional debt limit. Ryan Adamson confirmed there would be no more risk to the city by doing this. Mayor Daniel advised it is no more or no less, it is a procedural mechanism to be able to fund it. Ryan Adamson confirmed that if council would not approve this there would be no way for these kinds of projects to move forward. Mayor Daniel

advised that was correct.

RESOLUTION 2026-16 CIRCULATION OF PETITION AND TWO APPRAISALS

Jennifer Romano made a motion to read Resolution 2026-16 by title only. Ryan Adamson seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson read Resolution 2026-16, a resolution of the Common Council of the City of Columbia City authorizing circulation of petition of taxpayers and two appraisals of certain real property.

Ryan Adamson made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-16 with the correction. Brent Bockelman seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2026-17 INTENT TO REIMBURSE EXPENDITURES

Ryan Adamson made a motion to read Resolution 2026-17 by title only. Tad Varga seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson read Resolution 2026-17, a resolution of the Common Council of the City of Columbia City making its declaration of official intent to reimburse expenditures.

Ryan Adamson made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-17. Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Terry Wherry** - work completed at MSF on the door controllers.

working on the bright sign software at the pool, working on the cellular connection for the electric department so they can get their data from the meters. **Chip Hill** - spending a lot of time on the amphitheater, update on the jail, new GIS Coordinator Casey Boggs started today, had a request to improve the north end of Ohki Alley and hope to have that done within the next two months. **Matt Heiden** – new hire started today, update on dog park, pool opened Monday and pickleball courts are finished and open for use. **Kelly Cearbaugh** - concrete guys finished up a 50/50 sidewalk in Columbia Shores and have three more on the books to do, removing and leveling bricks on North Chauncey Steet in their down time, Kash Uher working on getting his CDL, started televising sewer lines in Section G which is the Deer Path and Hawthorne area. **Tom LaRue** - new breathing air compressor is finally in operation, final inspection for the new engine will be the week of the 22nd, truck 107 is in service but awaiting repairs, made some changes to some of our hose lays. **Mike Cook** – maintenance on compressors and blowers, setting flow meters, sent memorandum to IDEM on our pneumonia. **Gary Parrett** – officer updates, Memorial Day run went well, dispatch is running good.

MAYOR REPORT

Mayor Daniel reported they had their final Youth Council meeting and worked a lot at the aquatics center as well as on the signs at both ends of the city. He shared that he hosted the mayor's and commissioner's caucus last Wednesday at our aquatic center and this Friday he will be having a special Lunch with the Mayor with our County Assessor, Kim Erdly. He reported that on Thursday he will be giving out mailboxes to the Troy School graduates and the Veterans Treatment Court is that afternoon as well. He advised that budget meetings are set up for next week and will be working through the budgets with the department heads. He reported that the Board of Works approved the Westgate Phase 3 contract today and will call a neighborhood meeting when things get closer. He shared that for the second month in a row the governor has suspended the gas tax which is direct money that goes into our MVH and LRS

accounts to fund road repairs. He advised that AIM is asking the governor's office and the legislature to consider backfilling that account with the surplus they keep boasting about so that we can continue to maintain the roads, not just for Columbia City, but for all cities and towns and counties across the state. He reported that he and Leslee have a meeting with Baker Tilly to make sure there is a good understanding of what they say our income tax capacity is and then will share that with the council.

NOISE COMPLAINTS Jennifer Romano reported that there has been a lot of discussion in the community about the sound annoyances and irritation coming from vehicles. She shared that a lot of people were feeling a little frustrated about it and have talked with Chief Parrett about it. She requested people call into dispatch with vehicle information.

Chief Parrett reported that he sent an e-mail out a couple weeks ago to his guys because he was receiving calls himself. He was not sure if someone is just driving around, going through all the neighborhoods, but they are trying to get it figured out.

Having nothing further to discuss Mayor Daniel called the meeting adjourned.

Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

Clerk Treasurer Leslee Robinson