

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
VALPARAISO, INDIANA
January 10, 2022**

1.

The Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, met on Monday January 10, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall. Mayor Murphy called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Present were Councilmembers Cotton, Schmidt, Pupillo, Anderson, Costas, and Douglas. Councilmember Reed was absent.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Mayor Murphy presented the Strategic Plan. This Plan is a roadmap to move the city forward. The plan was created with input and guidance from many sources including the Valparaiso community at large, the Valparaiso City Council, City Leadership and City of Valparaiso Staff. There was a review of previous plans and studies. This included various editions of the Valparaiso Strategic Plan, the Valparaiso Residential Market Analysis, Hyatt Palma Downtown Action Plan and the two updates, the Porter County Airport Zone Development Plan, The City's Comprehensive Plan known as Envision Valparaiso, and the Valpo Next Citywide Vision Plan. The City worked with Organizational Development Solutions, a consulting firm. There were seven community sessions and an online organizational survey. From this input, seven priorities emerged, including Public Safety, Infrastructure, Quality of Life, Recreation, Fiscal Health, Operational Improvements, and Business. The plan includes action steps to address these priorities.

Mayor Murphy advised that Governor Holcomb has invited him to be a part of the State of the State and he will attend on behalf of the City of Valparaiso.

Mayor Murphy turned the meeting over to Councilmember Douglas.

2022 City Council Appointments and Liaisons

Councilmember Schmidt nominated George Douglas as Council President. Councilmember Pupillo seconded the motion. There were no other nominations.

Councilmember Cotton asked if it is necessary that the President of the Council be from the majority party of the Council. Councilmember Douglas replied any Councilmember can nominate any Councilmember through the nomination process.

Upon voice vote the motion for George Douglas to be Council President passed with a 6-0 vote.

Councilmember Schmidt nominated Diana Reed as Council Vice-President. Councilmember Pupillo seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. Upon voice vote the motion for Diana Reed to be Council Vice-President passed with a 6-0 vote.

Appointments

Redevelopment Commission (annual)	Evan Costas
Redevelopment Commission (annual)	Casey Schmidt
Traffic and Safety Commission (annual)	Jack Pupillo
Shared Ethics Commission Joint Bd Delegate (annual)	Peter Anderson
Investigation & Reconciliation Committee (annual)	Mike Baird
Plan Commission (annual)	Peter Anderson
Valparaiso Economic Development Commission (2yr)	Chris Campbell

Liaisons (annual)

Valparaiso Community Schools
Valparaiso Community Schools
Parks Department
Utilities
Engineering & Code Enforcement
Public Safety
Public Works

Diana Reed
Jack Pupillo
George Douglas
Robert Cotton
Robert Cotton
Jack Pupillo
George Douglas

Councilmember Cotton stated in 2016 the Valparaiso Community Schools Liaison was changed to having two Councilmembers. He wonders if there was an official action taken that made this a permanent two-member appointment. Councilmember Douglas replied this is a decision that is up to the Board. Councilmember Pupillo stated he has talked with Councilmember Reed and she expressed an interest in having it remain a two person appointment.

Councilmember Cotton asked about the Redevelopment Commission appointments. He feels the Board is always made up of people with the same opinions. He feels there should be more diversity of opinion on the Redevelopment Commission. Councilmember Douglas replied there are a lot of discussions and thought that goes into the actions taken by the Redevelopment Commission.

Councilmember Costas moved to approve the slate of Appointments and Liaisons as presented. Councilmember Schmidt seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

MINUTES

Councilmember Schmidt moved to approve minutes of the December 13, 2021 meeting. Councilmember Costas seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion to approve passed with a 6-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 32, 2021

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, PORTER COUNTY, INDIANA, ANNEXING CERTAIN REAL ESTATE TO THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, INDIANA

Councilmember Schmidt moved that Ordinance No. 32, 2021 be read a second time by title and a third time in full and be considered for adoption and the opportunity be given for the offering of amendments. Councilmember Costas seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read the Ordinance.

Beth Shrader addressed the Council. The Public Hearing was held at the last meeting. The Plan Commission's recommendation to the Council is to approve the annexation.

Councilmember Schmidt moved to adopt Ordinance No. 32, 2021. Councilmember Cotton seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Councilmember Costas recused himself from voting.

ORDINANCE NO. 1, 2022

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS IN THE ST. PAUL PROJECT EID FUND AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION OF NOTICE

Councilmember Schmidt moved that Ordinance No. 1, 2022 be read a first time and considered on first reading. Councilmember Costas seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 1, 2022.

Attorney Patrick Lyp addressed the Council. The St. Paul Project has three buildings occupied. Over the next ten years economic development fees that the property owners pay go back to offset public improvement expenses incurred by the Developer. The City has collected \$21,782.81. This will be paid to the Developer. The Public Hearing on this appropriation will be held at the next Council meeting. This is the second disbursement.

Councilmember Schmidt moved to carry Ordinance No. 1, 2022 to the January 24, 2022 meeting. Councilmember Cotton seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

REPORTS

Councilmember Cotton discussed the ARP Funds. He referred to a document that states the decisions do not have to be in the hands of executives exclusively. This document was prepared by OCRA and approved by the Lt. Governor. He wants to know the process that is being used to develop a plan to spend the money. He feels there are too few people making this decision. This money is designed to help those that were most affected by COVID. In the fall of 2021, it was suggested that a core team be established. That would be a bi-partisan team. This would bring in every different constituent group to have their help in figuring out how to serve the overarching objective which is to serve the most adversely impacted populations in the City. In the spring of 2022 the second round of money will be coming in. This is a pandemic relief plan. If the City does not plan to do this right they will end up in a situation where they are making allocations that are going to miss some of the most intended entities or people for the funds. He asked the Councilmembers to read the document and form a strategic committee that takes this out of the hands of the executives exclusively.

Mike Jessen replied that the City continues to solicit feedback from citizens. Any suggestions will be appreciated. Citizens should contact his office. Councilmember Cotton replied to sit and wait for community input will lead to the same stuff that is happening at the county. He feels this is not affective and is dysfunctional.

Public Comment

Jessica Jepsen – 1259 Sherwood. Something that drives her crazy is when people don't put the work in and start speaking out. Last Council meeting Councilmember Cotton spoke about this money and how it had to go to organizations and so forth. He approached her after the meeting. She asked if there are organizations out there that need help – who are they? What can be done right now? She said she would rally community members together. Councilmember Cotton deflected. He did not know the names of the organizations he is speaking about.

Dawn Miller - Michigan Avenue – She asked about the \$5.5 Million Dollars that was given to the Memorial Opera House. Councilmember Douglas explained that was being issued by the County.

Ellen Kapitan – Received Electronically. She would like updates on the ARP procedure. She feels there should be a calendar outlining the project. She wants to know when she can expect a draft of the spending. When will there be public comment? When will spending begin?

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

/s/ Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer