

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
VALPARAISO, INDIANA**

September 27, 2021

The Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, met on Monday September 27, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall. Mayor Murphy called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Present were Councilmembers Reed, Cotton, Schmidt, Pupillo, Anderson, Costas and Douglas.

MINUTES

Councilmember Douglas moved to approve minutes of the September 13, 2021 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion to approve passed with a 7-0 vote.

Beth Shrader addressed the Council. Resolution No. 14, 2021 and Ordinance No. 29, 2021 are on the Agenda tonight regarding the Westwind Extended Annexation. She is working with one of the Petitioner's on an Annexation Agreement. They would like to continue Resolution No. 14, 2021 and Ordinance No. 29, 2021 for first reading and Public Hearing to the October 11, 2021 meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 14, 2021

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO,
PORTER COUNTY, INDIANA, ADOPTING A FISCAL PLAN FOR THE
ANNEXATION OF PROPERTY KNOWN AS THE "WESTWIND ANNEXATION"
AND THE VOIDING OF RESOLUTION 12-2021**

AND

ORDINANCE NO. 29, 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 Douglas moved that Resolution No. 14, 2021 and Ordinance No. 29, 2021 be continued to the October 11, 2021 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 23, 2021

**AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS IN THE MUNICIPAL EXCISE SURTAX
FUND AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION OF NOTICE**

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 23, 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 Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 23, 2021.

Clerk-Treasurer Taylor explained this money is being appropriated for matching funds for the Community Crossing Grant. This appropriation is \$734,000.00.

Mayor Murphy announced Ordinance No. 23, 2021 requires a Public Hearing and presented Proof of Publication that at tonight's meeting the Council will hear comments on the appropriation of \$734,000.00 in the Municipal Excise Surtax Fund. Attorney Patrick Lyp advised no electronic requests have been received. Seeing no one wishing to address the Council, Mayor Murphy declared the Public Hearing closed.

Councilmember Douglas thanked staff for doing a great job on the road projects around town.

Councilmember Douglas moved to adopt Ordinance No. 23, 2021. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 24, 2021

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS IN THE MUNICIPL WHEEL TAX FUND AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION OF NOTICE

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 24, 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 Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 24, 2021.

Clerk-Treasurer Taylor explained this money is appropriated for matching funds for the Community Crossing Grant.

Mayor Murphy stated Ordinance No. 24, 2021 requires a Public Hearing and presented Proof of Publication that at tonight's meeting the Council will hear questions and comments on the appropriation of \$208,000 in the Municipal Wheel Tax Fund. Attorney Patrick Lyp advised no electronic requests have been received. Seeing no one wishing to address the Council, the Mayor declared the Public Hearing closed.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 24, 2021 be adopted. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 25, 2021 2022 BUDGET

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 25, 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 Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 25, 2021.

Mike Jessen addressed the Council. This is a measured conservative approach to budgeting. He thanked the Department Heads for their work staying within their budget parameters.

Mayor Murphy stated he is pleased to see the City tax rate decrease slightly from 1.6771% to 1.5954%. They have added five firefighters and tonight hopefully will be hiring three more police officers. They have hired a Police Social Worker. There is a \$4.5 Million Dollar Rainy Day Fund. The Bond Rating is AA. This is a good year. He appreciates the Council's support.

Councilmember Pupillo asked Clerk-Treasurer Taylor about her additional employee. He asked for clarification on the split. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor explained she has hired another person to handle Accounts Payable, so that the other can focus more on grants.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 25, 2021 be adopted. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 26, 2021
2022 SALARY ORDINANCE

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 26, 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 Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 26, 2021.

Mike Jessen reminded the Council there is an across the board raise of 4% for employees. Compensation includes benefits. They have no intention of raising employee premiums for insurance or reducing any benefits. There will be a review of the salary/wage study. Any results from that project will be implemented in 2023.

Councilmember Costas commented he understands things getting behind and using consultants to come in and help figure out the best plan.

Councilmember Cotton noted the Human Resource Director stands out like a glaring point of inconsistency. This is such an important role. That person keeps us out of jail when it comes to mitigating lawsuits and any other number or regulatory matters. They have always been regarded as one of the most important functions in any corporation has worked in. It is still ranked with the Assistant Director of this and that. He thinks the salary should be higher. He is sorry that was not addressed prior to a subsequent study to tell the Council what we should intuitively already know. He wants it on the record that that Department Head is perhaps one of the most vital ones regarding responsibility. At least as much as the Community Relations Director. Mike Jessen replied he will pass this concern on to the consultant doing the wage study.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 26, 2021 be adopted. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 27, 2021

2022 VALPARAISO COMMUNITY SCHOOL BUDGET

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 27, 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 Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 27, 2021.

Sharon Qualkenbush addressed the Council. Councilmember Cotton thanked Sharon for her time answering his questions.

Councilmember Douglas asked about the transfer of funds from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund. Sharon replied the amount being transferred is \$6,336,000. This is the same amount as in past years. A few years ago the General Fund was divided. The classroom accounts became the Education Fund. All the non-classroom accounts were the Operations fund. This includes custodian, utilities, superintendent, business office, payroll, transportation, capital project fund and bus replacement fund. They are having the revenue follow the expenses.

Councilmember Cotton asked if there is a limit to what can be transferred. Sharon Qualkenbush replied if they transfer in excess of 15% it must be explained at the hearing and then schools are put on a special list and must go through many steps.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 27, 2021 be adopted. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 28, 2021

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, INDIANA, AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, INDIANA MULTIFAMILY HOUSING REVENUE BONDS, SERIES 2021 (GREEN OAKS OF VALPARAISO PROJECT) IN ONE OR MORE SERIES, TAXABLE AND/OR TAX-EXEMPT, IN A MAXIMUM AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS (\$25,000,000) AND APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING OTHER ACTIONS IN RESPECT THERETO

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 28, 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 Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 28, 2021.

Attorney Patrick Lyp addressed the Council. This is what is called conduit financing. It relates to the affordable senior housing project on US Highway 30. There is no City obligation on this debt. If passed the organization will need to work with the BZA for a few variances.

Mayor Murphy clarified and attorney Lyp confirmed there is no risk to the taxpayers of the City of Valparaiso with the issuance of these bonds.

Councilmember Cotton discussed the bonds and asked about the rating. Attorney Lyp explained if the bonds go into default it would not negatively impact the City's credit. There was discussion regarding how the bonds are rated. Scott Krapf stated the bonds will not be rated.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 28, 2021 be adopted. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Reports

Attorney Patrick Lyp addressed the Council. The Council adopted Ordinance No. 16, 2021 relating to disorderly conduct. Chief Balon added this has had a positive impact. There have only been two incidents that would have counted towards the Ordinance.

Councilmember Pupillo asked how the numbers have changed over the last few months. Chief Balon said they have gone down.

Councilmember Douglas asked Chief Balon to comment on the communication between the Department and the worst case they had prior to this Ordinance. Chief Balon replied there has been open communication, things have been put into place that addressed the calls for service. He also feels the new social worker has been in communication on regular basis at that location. The response is nothing but positive. Councilmember Douglas thanked those who have worked so hard to improve the situation. Chief Balon introduced the Police Social Worker – Samantha.

Councilmember Cotton stated one of the landlords told him they had loosened their rules due to covid. He knows they are now trying to put those back into effect.

Attorney Lyp stated he met with the Housing Opportunities Board. He introduced Attorney Adam Mindel who is the attorney for Housing Opportunities. The goal of Housing Opportunities is to work together. They had a meeting, and he feels they made headway in mitigating any police calls. He wants to keep an open line of communication.

Council Reports

Councilmember Reed discussed the work on LaPorte Avenue. She would like to see signs posted as vehicles come out of parking lots, so they know which way they are to go.

Councilmember Cotton asked about receiving public input on the American Rescue Act money. Mayor Murphy replied he is working on a plan and will bring it to the Council when it is complete. There will be an opportunity for Council and Public input.

Public Comment

Kevin Wright -2951 Blue River Road. He lives in Pepper Cove. The water pressure in homes should be 45-50 lbs. There are homes that are at 90 lbs. They have been told it has to be this

high to get water from there to Cherry Hill. Residents have had water damage to their homes because of the water pressure. They have talked to the Water Department. Olthoff knows they have to put valves on to regulate the pressure. Olthoff never put anything in. Mayor Murphy stated he will get this to the Utility Director and get answers.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

/s/ Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer