

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

March 12, 2018

The Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, met on Monday March 12, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall. Mayor Costas called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Present were Councilmembers Murphy, Douglas, Hoffman, Reed, Hudson, Cotton and Porter.

**MINUTES**

Councilmember Hudson moved to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2018 meeting. Councilmember Cotton seconded the motion. Councilmember Hudson moved to amend her motion and included to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2018 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the amended motion.

Upon voice vote the motion to approve passed with a 7-0 vote.

**Presentation – State of the Valparaiso Community Schools and Public Input**

Acting Superintendent Julie Lauck addressed the Council. Enrollment is currently 6,235. Reduced lunch is 29%. Minority students is 21.7% and limited English students is 2%. Dr. Lauck explained they have been paying their bills but will not get their tax draw until this summer. At that point the balances of the funds will be right where they should be. They are going to be able to do the 50 meter pool. Construction on the schools is planned to be done this summer. Valparaiso has eight elementary schools. Five earned the grade of A on the State's A-F Accountability System and three schools earned the grade of B. School and teacher accomplishments were stated. Dr. Lauck discussed the many things they are doing to implement safety and security in the schools. They are working closely with the Police and Fire Departments.

Councilmember Hoffman asked who gets the message on the "Tip Button". Dr. Lauck replied it can go many places. They are still working on it so no determination has been made.

Councilmember Porter asked what is the biggest challenge they are facing and was told security is the biggest. Communication is also something to improve on.

Councilmember Douglas discussed how nice it is that with all the construction going on the education has not suffered. He also discussed how sad it is that security is a major concern in schools today. Dr. Lauck explained how they are working to make sure the police are very informed about how the schools operate and know what is going on in them.

Councilmember Hudson asked why the "active shooter" training is done in the summer and is done when the students are not present. The drills are to teach teachers and not to put stress on the students.

Councilmember Cotton discussed that students are saying they are stressed going to school. He also asked about the declining number of students. And, he asked about the Title 1 award and comparisons. In regard to enrollment the administration is looking at where the students are going and why so they can adjust if possible. In regard to Title 1, an A school is one that out performs what the State requires. There are four Title 1 elementaries. There was discussion regarding the differences of a Title 1 school versus others.

Councilmember Reed asked how many social workers are in the schools. Dr. Lauck replied there is one social worker per school.

**Public Input:**

Sue Brown -202 Franklin. She is surprised it is not mandatory for all teachers to have safety apps on their phones.

Donna Perdue – 56 Lincolnway. She asked how it is being assessed and dealt with in regard to the trauma of the students. Counselors and social workers are continually talking with students and staff.

Councilmember Cotton – Is this the acceptable new norm? It is not acceptable. Parents have to be involved.

Walt Breitinger – Indiana has a stigma of being a low education state. Our Science Olympiad team is Nationally known. Sports are important but don't help get a job in the future. Science can help. Need to emphasize education awards.

Candace Shaw – 31 Lockerbie Drive. One County One Protocol does not have reunification in its process. This is on the agenda to be worked on this year. Metal detectors will not be installed.

Sheilla Sweeny – 1606 Carriage Drive. There has to be an open line of communication.

Tony – 56 Lincolnway. In regard to the tip button on the web page there should be an app on phones. This would be used more by students. It is still being discussed how responses will be given.

Clint – Asked how often police patrol the grounds. Chief Balon discussed the various programs and apps they have for the schools and gave a general idea of patrolling the schools.

Greg Johnson – 301 Elmhurst. Congratulations on Title 1 Award. He asked if there is a place where it lists the procedures for active shooter. Dr. Lauck replied they will be working on a brochure for safety in general. They don't give out specifics for safety reasons.

Councilmember Hudson asked for definition of lock down versus lock out. Dr. Lauck explained lock down is when there is a threat inside the building. Lock out is when there is something outside the school.

Kevin Cornett – he discussed the national debate on arming teachers. Dr. Lauck replied training, community values all come in to play. It is a big discussion before any decision should be made.

Kathy Hensley – she discussed the walk out. The school is not supporting the walk out but will keep them secure and safe.

Councilmember Hudson asked if the art and music programs have funding. She was told they do.

Councilmember Hoffman advised school board applications will be available on line beginning tomorrow.

### **Introduction**

Mayor Costas introduced Maggie Clifton. Maggie is the new Director of Community Engagement.

### **AMENDED RESOLUTION NO. 3, 2018**

#### **A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, INDIANA ENCOURAGING CERTAIN ACTIONS BE TAKEN TO PROMOTE AWARENESS TO PREVENT ACTS OF COMMUNITY VIOLENCE**

Councilmember Hudson moved that Amended Resolution No. 3, 2018 be read a first time and considered for passage. Councilmember Cotton seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Swihart read Amended Resolution No. 3, 2018. Councilmember Hudson moved to adopt Amended Resolution No. 3, 2018. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion.

Councilmember Hudson went through the "Whereas" sections of the Resolution. These sections explain the reason why the Resolution was created. Four items have been added to the Actions section since the first version of the Resolution. Councilmember Hudson also discussed the legal ways for Councilmembers to meet. She assured this Resolution was done in the proper way. Councilmember Hudson discussed the items that have been added. She also encouraged citizens to use their pens and voices to communicate their opinions.

Councilmember Cotton addressed the Council. He acknowledged the Council's inability to make a law in this instance because of State statute. He appreciates the Council working in a non-partisian way on a non-partisian issue.

Councilmember Porter read a prepared statement stating that she will vote for the Resolution because she feels it is better than staying quiet. However, she feels this Resolution is lacking in substance. She feels it is unacceptable that the Council cannot pass laws to protect the citizens.

Upon voice vote the motion to adopt Amended Resolution No. 3, 2018 passed with a 7-0 vote.

### **COUNCIL REPORTS**

None.

### **AUDIENCE**

Kevin Cornett – He discussed if a church or a business can ban guns in their establishment.

Mayor Costas – discussed the police protection in our City and the important role parents have in our children's safety.

Susan Martin – she discussed item “j” in the Resoltuion.

Candace Shaw –guns are allowed in school parking lots if they are locked in the trunk of cars. She is proud of the community and how they helped when Hilltop was flooded.

Citizen – as a firearms owner he would like to know how anyone proposes to keep guns away from public places. Councilmember Porter clarified she was saying it makes her uneasy to have guns in the public. If a situation were to occur, police might mistake a legally carrying gun owner for the person causing the trouble.

Councilmember Hoffman – asked if the issue is fixed with the Coach USA bus to the airports. Tyler Kent advised the problem has been resolved.

Citizen – encouraged people to be happy.

Donna Perdue – as a retired Marine she has guns. She does not feel guns belong in the hands of civilians. They can be used for hunting but then returned to the home in a safe location.

Clint Wiggins – he is surprised the Resolution did not compel a background check to look at prior records. Councilmember Hudson stated section “d” covers that issue.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

/s/ Sharon Swihart, Clerk-Treasurer