

ORDINANCE #26, 2024

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE VALPARAISO ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD TO ADVISE AND ASSIST THE CITY COUNCIL, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS

WHEREAS, the City of Valparaiso ("City") has committed itself to creating a vibrant, prosperous, and economically balanced community;

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that conservation of natural resources, and maintenance of a healthy environment, together with social and economic wellbeing, are vital to the public interest;

WHEREAS, managing our natural resources in a sustainable manner is essential for the health and well-being of all people and future generations;

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that sustainable and livable communities benefit the City by attracting jobs, new residents, and new economic development opportunities, while increasing civic pride and community engagement;

WHEREAS, local businesses, community leaders, and neighbors can partner with the City to improve the environmental quality of our community as well as, create a clean, safe, and equitable place to live and work;

WHEREAS, successful sustainability efforts involve collaboration with multiple agencies, City departments, commissions, and boards and thus, an Environmental Advisory Board would serve to coordinate initiatives, educate the public, and promote citizen engagement;

WHEREAS, by taking a proactive and coordinated approach, the City declares its commitment to the safety and sustainability of our environment and this community for both current residents and future generations.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Common Council of the City that an Environmental Advisory Board shall be established, and Chapter 39 in the Valparaiso City Municipal Code is created to read as follows:

Section 1. TITLE AND ESTABLISHMENT. This ordinance shall be known as and may be cited as the "Valparaiso Environmental Advisory Board Ordinance." This Board shall be established consistent with Municipal Code 31.04 (C).

Section 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. The purpose of the Valparaiso Environmental Advisory Board is to provide guidance and recommendations to the City, staff, boards, commissions, and community members, on environmental sustainability policies and practices. The Board will promote sustainability, enhance environmental quality, and ensure the responsible stewardship of natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Section 3. DEFINITIONS. For the purpose of the provisions of this Chapter, the following words and phrases shall be construed to have the meanings herein set forth, unless it is apparent from the context that a different meaning is intended:

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: Any policies, programs, projects, initiatives, or events related to the energy waste reduction, climate, air quality, water, waste, resilience, and/or other sustainability issues that improve quality of life and protect the environment.

Section 4. CREATION. In order to encourage and support Environmental Sustainability Efforts in the City, there is hereby created the Environmental Advisory Board.

Section 5. MEMBERSHIP. The Board shall consist of seven members appointed by the City Council. Five voting members who shall have experience or interest in Environmental Sustainability Efforts. One of the five voting members shall be a current member of the City Council. All board members shall be residents of the City. There shall also be two non-voting members. These members shall be current middle schools or high school students that reside in Valparaiso. The Council shall establish a process for soliciting applications and appointing members.

Section 6. TERMS OF APPOINTMENT. Except as provided below, Board members shall be appointed by the City Council for terms of three years, ending on December 31. Student appointments shall serve for terms of one academic year. All vacancies shall be filled by the City Council. Initial appointments shall be staggered to provide better Board continuity. Of the five voting members, two shall have terms that expire on **December 31, 2025**, two shall have terms that expire on **December 31, 2026**; and one shall have a term that expires on **December 31, 2027**.

Section 7. POWERS AND DUTIES.

The Board shall observe, advise and assist on environmental policies, programs, projects, initiatives, and events that help fulfill the City's Environmental Sustainability Efforts. The Board shall assist City staff in developing and implementing the City's Environmental Sustainability Efforts. It shall be the duty of the Board to assist staff in preparing an annual report that includes updates and reports on the progress of the City's Environmental Sustainability Efforts. In December of each year, the report shall be presented to the City Council.

The Board shall have the authority to raise funds for Environmental Sustainability Efforts through the application of grants, private sponsorships, donations, and other fund-raising strategies; including the authority to interact with potential donors. All funds received by the Board shall be deposited with the Clerk-Treasurer and shall be reserved for the purposes of this chapter.

The Board shall promote the public awareness of environmental sustainability policies, programs, projects, initiatives, and events in Valparaiso and surrounding communities.

The Board shall work with local, state, and national organizations, nonprofits, and businesses to encourage and support Environmental Sustainability Efforts in Valparaiso.

Section 8. ORGANIZATION; MEETINGS; RECORDS.

The Board shall elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and any other officers deemed necessary at the beginning of the first meeting of each year. The Chair shall preside over meetings. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence. Minutes shall be kept by the Secretary of all Board meetings, including the vote of each member upon each action by the Board. The minutes of all Board meetings shall be sent to the City Clerk and the Mayor upon approval by the Board. Minutes and relevant Board material shall be posted on the City's webpage.

At least three voting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the approval of motions and transaction of its business. An affirmative vote of three members is required for approval of any action. The Board shall adopt rules for the transaction of its business which shall provide for the time and place of meetings.

The Board shall convene no less frequently than once per month. Upon the determination of the Chairperson that there is no business for the Board to consider, the Chairperson may cancel a meeting upon providing notice to the members. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chairperson, as necessary.

The Board shall be subject to the Indiana Open Door Law and Access to Public Records Act.

Section 9. ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND. There shall be established a Restricted Gift Fund for the deposit of all funds received by the Board. The Chairperson, with the approval of the Board, is empowered to spend such funds deposited on expenses related to the Board's activities.

Section 10. SEVERABILITY. If any portion of this Ordinance is for any reason declared to be unconstitutional or invalid, such division shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance so long as enforcement of the same can be given the same effect.

Section 11. REPEALER. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed only to the extent necessary to give this ordinance full force and effect.

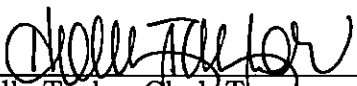
Section 12. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and signing by the Mayor.

PASSED by the Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, by a 5-2 vote of all members present and voting, this 28th day of October, 2024.



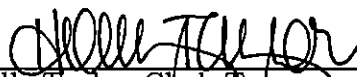
Jon Costas, Mayor

ATTEST:



Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer

Presented by me to the Mayor of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, this 28th day of October, 2024 at the hour of 6:45 o'clock P.M.



Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer

This Ordinance approved and signed by me this 28th day of October, 2024 at the hour of 6:45 o'clock P. M.



Jon Costas, Mayor