

## COUNCIL MINUTES

August 24, 2021

Present were council members President Greg Stinson, Vice President David Phillips, Erik Wagner and William Lopez, Attorney Gregg Sobkowski, Police Chief Todd Allen, Fire Chief Jay Craig, Building Commissioner Michael Barry, and Public Works Superintendent James Spanier. Council member Brian Finley and Park Director Brian Bugajski were absent.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Wagner made a motion to adopt the August 10, 2021 minutes as written and Phillips made the second, vote 4-0, motion passed.

### APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Lopez made a motion to approve the claims and sewer adjustments as presented and Wagner made the second, vote 4-0, motion passed.

### COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

None

### CLERK TREASURER REPORT

None

### ATTORNEY REPORT

None

### POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Allen asked council to approve John Lane's request to extend one week vacation beyond his anniversary date. Wagner made a motion to extend John Lane's one week vacation and Lopez made the second, vote 4-0 motion passed.

### FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Craig said that Steven Davis did not retire and is staying on the volunteer fire department.

### PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Public Works Superintendent Spanier said that he is waiting to hear back from our insurance company about how our employee program works and he will send it to Attorney Sobkowski for review. Spanier noted that we are using Working Well random drug test. Spanier sent out to three companies for quotes for a "4 cubic V-box" auger driven spreader and a plow. He sent request to Riggs Outdoor Power Equipment, Lindco Equipment Sales and Valparaiso Trailer. Valparaiso Trailer did not respond and Riggs sent a quote for \$13,750 but could not provide a belt driven spreader and only offered a smaller 3 cubic yard "V" box.

Lindco Equipment sent a quote for \$17,407.39 and quoted the auger drive and the “V” box 4 cubic yard as requested. Wagner made a motion to reject the bid of Riggs Equipment and Phillips made the second, vote 4-0. Wagner made a motion to approve the quote for Lindco Equipment in the amount of \$17,407.39 and Phillips made the second, vote 4-0 motion passed. Spanier noted that this truck may be used for Porter Beach, alleys and smaller streets and does not require a CDL driver.

#### PARK DEPARTMENT REPORT

None

#### BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT

Building Commissioner Barry added that they are doing a final walk thru Lake Pratt ramp on Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am.

Barry asked approval for two contractors, Lopez made a motion to accept the two contractors and Wagner made the second, vote 4-0 motion passed.

Barry said regarding Community Crossing grant he received a contract from Pavement Solutions for \$59,624 for crack sealing, this is below the estimated cost. The town will pay \$14,906 and INDOT will pay \$44,718. Wagner made a motion to approve the contract from Pavement Solutions for crack sealing in the amount of \$59,624 and the town will be responsible for \$14,906 and INDOT for \$44,718 and Lopez made the second, vote 4-0 motion approved.

#### OLD BUSINESS

##### ORDINANCE 2021-14 AMENDING SALARY ORDINANCE

Stinson did second reading of the above ordinance by title only and made a correction of the ordinance title changing from “An Ordinance or the Town of Porter” to “An Ordinance OF the town of Porter”. Stinson asked for a motion to adopt and Lopez made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-14 and Phillips made the second. Stinson noted that this ordinance is because the town is having problems trying to hire employees and we found out our wages are lower than surrounding communities. We are doing a salary study of surrounding areas to make sure our employees are paid accordingly to other communities. He noted that the individuals that are listed besides the changes for new employee. He said the four employees listed are getting raises now because they are under compensated and the council didn’t think that they should wait until 2022 to get a raise. He noted that he wants to meet with department heads and go over the rest of the employees regarding raises for 2022. Stinson said they looked at Chesterton, Burns Harbor, Portage, Valparaiso, INDOT and Porter County salary ordinances. Spanier thanked the council for amending the salary ordinance because up to now they were not receiving any applications for Public Works department and now he has hired two new employees. Stinson asked for a vote on the above motion of adopting the salary ordinance 2021-14, vote 4-0 motion passed.

## NEW BUSINESS

### COVID DISCUSSION

Stinson noted that the numbers are not good. Porter County has had 45 new cases today and 100 since Monday. Hospitalizations are back up to what they were in May. Attorney Sobkowski said that the Governor is leaving everything up to individual governments what they want to do. Stinson said we cannot go back to virtual meetings that is not an option. We don't have the capacity to run meetings that way. Stinson asked the council how they felt about wearing mask at meetings and we could require masks in each building, he noted that it is council's decision. Phillips thinks the town should go by local numbers not necessarily for the whole county. Stinson noted that the CDC has guidelines to follow and their recommendations are to wear masks in red or orange. He said that Porter County is still yellow now. Stinson said that Porter County is no longer reporting numbers but Wagner said that they started today to show numbers. Stinson asked Wagner and he replied on Facebook. Wagner said he likes staying 6 feet apart like before and have people required to make appointments like before. Stinson noted that the numbers coming into Town hall are not high, except when selling beach passes. Pomeroy said that all office employees take their temperature every morning before entering the office and there is a cleaner to use after each person. She thinks anyone coming into the office should take their temperature before entering. Stinson asked council what they thought about masks for meetings at town hall, he gave an example using the Plan Commission, there are 12 to 13 people that attend the meeting before any residents enter. He stated you can't pick and choose that it needs decided before hand so everyone knows before coming to meetings. Council agreed to have everyone wear a mask at all meetings at town hall. The town hall and the police department has plexiglas protecting anyone coming to the offices and no one will need a mask at this time. The council agreed by consensus that everyone attending a meeting at town hall must wear a mask effective immediately and we will follow CDC guidelines and can discuss it at every meeting if things change.

### ORDINANCE 2021-15 - COVID UPDATE


Stinson read Ordinance 2021-15 by title only and asked for a motion to suspend the rules to have second reading. Phillips made a motion to suspend the rules and have second reading and Wagner made the second, vote 4-0 motion passed. Stinson did second reading. Wagner made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-15 and Phillips made the second. Stinson explained we had an ordinance that would give an additional 10 days sick leave but that expired May 31 and was for employees that could not be vaccinated at that time. This ordinance only applies to employees that can provide us with proof that they have been vaccinated. If an employee is not vaccinated then they will use their own personal sick time if they get Covid 19 and if the employee is vaccinated and is responsible and wants to protect themselves and all co-workers then they have done everything and they happen to be a victim of Covid 19 the town wants to commend them for doing everything right. The town is hopeful for the few employees that are not vaccinated may decide to get vaccinated to receive the extra 10 sick days if they get Covid 19. The town does not require employees to get vaccinated but in order to receive this benefit they must be vaccinated. In order to get paid the employee must provide a copy of their vaccination and a letter stating that they have Covid 19 to the office. Stinson said that the employee must be fully vaccinated and Johnson & Johnson is just one shot.

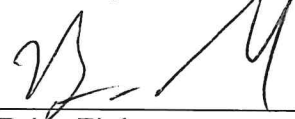
This ordinance is effective August 15, 2021. Stinson asked for a vote of adopting Ordinance 2021-15 vote 4-0 motion passed. Pomeroy said that she would get this ordinance to all department heads in the morning for them to let their employees know about this ordinance.

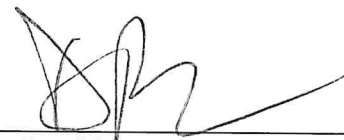
Phillips made a motion to adjourn.

Dated this 14<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021.

  
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President, Greg Stinson

  
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Erik Wagner

  
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Brian Finley

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice President David Phillips

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Lopez

ATTEST:   
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Carol Pomeroy, Clerk Treasure