

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HOBART  
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA  
September 16, 2020**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Snedecor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. The meeting was held with the building open to the public and a call-in number for remote public participation.

**Roll Call:** The following members were present: Mr. Kopil, Mr. Huddlestun, Mr. Maggio, Mr. Vinzant, Mr. Wells, Mr. Claussen and Mr. Waldrop. Also present: Mr. Snedecor, City Attorney McCarthy, and Clerk-Treasurer Longer.

**Reading of the Minutes:** Motion by Mr. Claussen, seconded by Mr. Waldrop, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 2, 2020 as presented. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Correspondence:** Mr. Snedecor announced the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street bridge is now open for traffic. Finishing work including the final railing, lighting and landscaping will be completed over the next month. A ribbon cutting is tentatively planned for October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Longer stated she, the Mayor and the City Attorney had a 2-hour Standard & Poor's Bond Rating call last week and S&P issued the rating this afternoon, affirming the current rating of BBB+ for the pending bond issue. She noted that given the challenges the City has with the Mall appeal, the deficits and the pandemic, holding the rating steady is good news. The final rating report will be distributed to the Council when published.

**Recognition:** Evin Eakiwsjk, New Chicago Fire Chief, presented plaques to three firefighters for going above and beyond in their efforts to save people from the August 20<sup>th</sup> fire at Pine Village Trailer Court, New Chicago. The three officers honored were George Malamatos, Charlie Sawyer and Steve Gouwens.

**Committee Reports:** There were no committee reports.

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Waldrop, to approve the agenda. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Unfinished Business:**

Motion by Mr. Maggio, seconded by Mr. Vinzant, to remove Ordinances 2020-14, 2020-15, 2020-16, 2020-17 and 2020-18 from the table. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Ordinance 2020-14 (2<sup>nd</sup> reading): An Ordinance Replacing Ordinance 2019-20, Fixing the Salaries of Officers and Employees of the City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana for the Fiscal Year Commencing January 1, 2021, and Ending December 31, 2021:** The second reading of the Ordinance was held. Mrs. Longer stated there was is a correction needed to move the Director of Development salary from the General Fund to the CEDIT Fund and to correct the line item numbers under the Redevelopment Commission for the Director of Development. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Kopil, to Amend Ordinance 2020-14 to reflect the corrections as presented. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Waldrop, to adopt Ordinance 2020-14 as amended. Roll Call Vote taken. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Ordinance 2020-15 (2<sup>nd</sup> reading): An Ordinance Repealing the Fiscal Year 2021 Items in Ordinance 2018-18 and Fixing the Salaries of Police Department Sworn Personnel of the City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana for the Fiscal Year Commencing January 1, 2021, and ending December 31, 2021:** The second reading of the Ordinance was held. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Waldrop, to adopt Ordinance 2020-15 as presented.

Discussion was held regarding the budget constraints and the prior commitment made regarding the raise. Mr. Snedecor stated when the previous ordinance was adopted in 2018, it was with the understanding that the raise would only be given if there were sufficient funds as each year's budget was considered. He added that the Council may consider a one-time stipend during the next year should revenues increase and it is determined that budget is able to withstand it. Mr. Wells stated he was not comfortable to vote against a raise previously anticipated and wondered if a reorganization or shutting down some areas of service or departments or layoffs would be considered. Mr. Huddleston noted the Council had tabled action on this earlier to allow time to consider alternatives and actions to off-set the budget constraints and come up with alternatives. Mr. Waldrop stated that it is difficult when an ordinance is passed based on the hope of future revenues and Mr. Vinzant noted that allowing this raise would make us fall further behind. Mr. Claussen noted the constitutional tax caps have hurt us over the years in addition to the frozen levy (imposed for 5 years until the Income Tax was adopted by Lake County, resulting in a loss of over \$1M each year) and an important way to overcome the constraints is for the City to grow out of it by Assessed Value growth that the City is working on but this is not an overnight fix. He also stated that had the tax caps not been in place, taxes would have gone up over the years and the City would not be having to consider new fees and charges if the property taxes increased to off-set the increases of doing business. He also noted the prior ordinance the Council just adopted did not give the Teamsters the raise they had anticipated. Mr. Vinzant agreed, saying the sewer moratorium of the 1980's also contributed to stunting the growth of the City during a time when growth was all around us. Mr. Maggio stated no one wants to pay more taxes or additional fees but the State has put us into a position to have to consider both. Mr. Wells stated he has been part of a 3-year deal which did not work in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year due to losses over multiple years. Mr. Snedecor stated the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year are always considered a goal depending on property values and revenues. Mr. Maggio stated the Mall appeal has also contributed to the concerns for the budget as in 2018 the Council did not believe the appeal would be upheld to the extent that it was and the effect on the City overall will be across all departments.

There being no additional discussion offered, Mr. Claussen called for the question. Roll Call Vote taken. 5 Aye: Kopil, Maggio, Vinzant, Claussen, Waldrop / 2 Nay: Huddlestun, Wells. Motion carried. (5-2)

**Ordinance 2020-16 (2<sup>nd</sup> reading): An Ordinance Fixing the Salaries of Firefighter Sworn Personnel of the City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana for the Fiscal Year Commencing January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021:** The second reading of the Ordinance was held. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Maggio, to adopt Ordinance 2020-16 as presented. Mr. Wells noted the same discussion points as previously held regarding Ord. 2020-15 should be considered. Roll Call Vote taken. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Ordinance 2020-17 (2<sup>nd</sup> reading): An Ordinance Fixing the Salaries of Elected Officials of the City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana for the Fiscal Year Commencing January 1, 2021, and ending December 31, 2021:** The second reading of the Ordinance was held. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Maggio, to adopt Ordinance 2020-17 as presented. Mr. Wells questioned the additional longevity compensation based on number of years of service that is included for the Council and Elected Officials, especially for the Council, while realizing the value of the historical perspective available to the Council brought on by years of service. Mr. Huddlestun and Mr. Vinzant commented that this encourages compensation for some to continue their public service after leaving the public sector and allows the Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer, as "full-time" elected officials to be better compensated based on the number

of years of service. Mr. Vinzant noted this also provides for full-time wages for the Mayor and the Clerk-Treasurer to provide more opportunities for someone younger to get involved at a more competitive wage. Mr. Vinzant stated it is unclear whether the longevity is included in the salaries which cannot be reduced as this has been considered part of the elected official's compensation for many years. Attorney McCarthy stated she would have to look into the longevity issue. Mrs. Longer stated the Elected Officials salary ordinance is the only one that is not required to be adopted until the end of December. There being no additional discussion offered, Mr. Vinzant called for the question. Roll Call Vote taken. 6 Aye: Kopil, Huddlestun, Maggio, Vinzant, Claussen, Waldrop / 1 Nay: Wells. Motion carried. (6-1)

**Ordinance 2020-18 (2<sup>nd</sup> reading):** An Ordinance Repealing Ordinance 2019-23 and Establishing the Amount of Additional Compensation of Certain Officers of the Municipal Utilities of the City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana and Designating the Fund from which said Additional Compensation is to be paid Commencing January 1, 2021, and ending December 31, 2021: The second reading of the Ordinance was held. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Maggio, to adopt Ordinance 2020-18 as presented. Roll Call Vote taken. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Tabled: Ordinance 2020-13 (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading):** An Ordinance to Amend the City of Hobart Municipal Code concerning Trailers: Motion by Mr. Huddlestun, seconded by Mr. Vinzant, to remove this item from the table. All aye, motion carried. (7-0) The second reading of the Ordinance (Draft #1) was held. Mr. Vinzant stated he had distributed Draft #3 for consideration by the Council which includes a new definition provided by Attorney McCarthy. Discussion followed as to the enforcement issues and consideration of the COVID trends to allow trailers to park in only specific zoning classifications. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Huddlestun, to remove this item from the agenda and send it to the Ordinance Committee for further consideration. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Public Hearing: Ordinance 2020-20: Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates: Budget 2021:**

**New Business:** The Ordinance was read. Mr. Snedecor opened the public hearing and called three times for any public comments regarding Ordinance 2020-20. Robin Gomez, County Line Rd., questioned what this Ordinance was about. Mrs. Longer explained this is the public hearing on the 2021 budget for the City that will be submitted to the State to determine the tax rates for 2021. Sara Wells, 38<sup>th</sup> Place, questioned where this information was made available and Mrs. Longer stated it has been posted on the agendas and in the State transparency portal found at [www.in.gov/dlgf](http://www.in.gov/dlgf) under "Gateway" as required by law with a link provided on the Clerk-Treasurer's webpage under the City website at [www.cityofhobart.org](http://www.cityofhobart.org). There being no additional public comments, the public hearing was closed. Mrs. Longer stated the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading/adoption of the Ordinance will be scheduled for Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Council meeting.

**Request for Use Variance: to Allow a Kennel at 3745 Barnes St. Located approx. ½ mile south from the SE corner of Barnes St. and Ridge Rd., Sed. 154.042, zoned R-2, 0.09 acre: Roxanne Gutierrez:** Ms. Gutierrez was present. Mr. Snedecor noted the BZA forwarded an unfavorable recommendation but with the condition that the owners be allowed 6 months to rehome 5 of the dogs. Ms. Gutierrez stated the eight dogs range from 8 – 20+ years old and are all chihuahuas. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Huddlestun, to deny the Use Variance requested and to allow the owner until August 1, 2021 to reduce the number of dogs to no more than 3. Discussion followed regarding the comments of the neighbors submitted to the BZA and whether a 6-month review of the progress of re-homing the dogs should be included in the motion. The motion was not amended and Mr. Snedecor called for the question on the motion to deny. 5 Aye: Huddlestun, Maggio, Vinzant, Claussen, Waldrop / 2 Nay: Kopil, Wells. Motion carried. (5 Aye / 2 Nay) The use variance is **denied** with the owner given until August 1, 2021 to reduce the number of dogs to no more than 3.

**Ordinance 2020-21: An Ordinance Transferring Appropriations within the 2020 Budget of the General Fund: Police, City Buildings and City Garage Departments and the Law Enforcement Training Fund and the Police Pension Fund in the City of Hobart:** The Ordinance was read. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Waldrop, to pass Ordinance 2020-21 on first reading. Roll Call Vote taken. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

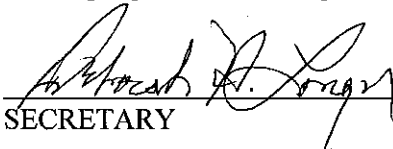
Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Claussen, to suspend the rules, declare an emergency and proceed with 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of Ordinance 2020-21. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Ordinance 2020-21: An Ordinance Transferring Appropriations within the 2020 Budget of the General Fund: Police, City Buildings and City Garage Departments and the Law Enforcement Training Fund and the Police Pension Fund in the City of Hobart:** The second reading of the Ordinance was held. Mr. Maggio noted there is a typographical correction needed under Section 2(b): Amount Reduced should be \$100. not \$5100. Motion by Mr. Vinzant, seconded by Mr. Maggio to adopt Ordinance 2020-21 as amended. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Ordinance 2020-22: An Ordinance of the City of Hobart, Indiana Providing that the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana be Amended by Re-Instating a Previously Approved PUD Zone Classification: Lake Park Townhomes Phase III, Robert Hennessey:** The Ordinance was read. Mr. Snedecor stated the Plan Commission recommended approval with the contingencies of: the developer working with staff to include fencing along Lake Park Avenue and Fleming St.; a swale/drainage feature lower than Fleming St. and Debie Lane to allow drainage to flow to the north; to extend the storm sewer on the SW corner of Debie Lane & Paula Court east to a catch basin; to install a sidewalk along Lake Park Avenue; and to install 2 additional catch basins in the existing sewer line along Lake Park Avenue. Motion by Mr. Huddlestun, seconded by Mr. Waldrop, to pass Ordinance 2020-22 on first reading with the contingencies as stated. Roll Call Vote taken. All aye, motion carried. (7-0)

**Announcements:** Mr. Snedecor asked if there was anyone on the phone or in person who wished to address the Council and there was no response.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Mr. Claussen to adjourn the meeting. All aye, motion carried. (7-0) The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

  
SECRETARY

  
PRESIDING OFFICER