

**PORTER TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2004
PORTER TOWN HALL**

President Jenny Granat called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. following the lengthy Redevelopment Commission meeting. After leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, roll call showed those present were: Vice President William Sexton, Sandi Snyder, Paul Childress, Sandy Boothe, Attorney Dave Hollenbeck, Police Chief John Lane, Public Works Dir. Scott Guy, Fire Chief Lewie Craig, Bldg Commissioner Dave Babcock.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 10, 2004 Town Council minutes needed approval due to the fact Granat and Childress were not at the August 24th meeting. Boothe made a motion to accept; Sexton seconded. Minutes approved 3-0 with Childress and Granat voting present.

August 24, 2004 Town Council meeting Boothe made said motion with Snyder making the second. Passed 4-0 with Sexton voting present.

September 8, 2004 Budget Workshop –Childress made a motion to approve, Boothe seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS

Claims: August 21 through August 31, 2004 totaled \$50,341.31. Sexton made a motion to approve said claims. Boothe seconded. Under discussion, Childress questioned the claim for \$450.00 from the Porter Police Department. Pomeroy said that Booth (as liaison) had approved the expenditure for police training. Motion then passed 5-0.

Payroll: ending August 31, 2004 totaled \$49,491.61 Boothe made motion to approve said payroll. Sexton seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Fund Report - Granat said they had been placed in Council's boxes. The General Fund total is \$54,599.84. Granat said the tax draw is needed. The bottom line total is \$426,554.39.

PETITIONS & COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

None

REPORTS FROM TOWN OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS

CLERK-TREASURER

Pomeroy reported that in June she had received a letter from the State Health Department concerning monies available for the West Nile Virus. She called and was told the money was to be divided between towns wishing to receive a portion of the \$3000.00 available. Only five towns called, so Porter received a check for \$600.00.

She had also called County to ask about tax money and was told we should be receiving our part by September 30. Attorney Hollenbeck concurred that this time frame seemed correct but also said that the next resident tax bills are about to be mailed and will be due by November 10, 2004. He also said that CEDIT money had been returned and Porter should have received their portion.

Pomeroy also asked if her and the assistant clerk-treasurer (Karen Spanier) could attend a workshop

scheduled on October 20, 2004 in Middlebury. The cost is \$45.00 each. By consensus, the Council agreed.

ATTORNEY

Hollenbeck said he had just received a copy of the policy manual that the Council has been working on. He also now has three versions of Municipal Fire Contracts that he is in the process of putting together. He would like to meet with Chief Craig to work on a finalization. The letter dealing with National Lakeshore being handled by Atty. Lyp and Hollenbeck had not had a chance to confer with him as of yet. He also said that the Storm Water Management board couldn't be increased as the statute says it will be a three-member board. Granat said she would inform the Board of the legality of this issue.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Lane addressed the request of Bob Poparad from Burns Harbor to place a Stop sign on Babcock & Verplank. He said he had met with Chief Price of Burns Harbor to monitor traffic at that location. Their recommendation is that the State criteria for a stop sign has not been met so they are going to paint white lines down middle of road to keep traffic on the correct side.

Lane also said that he had forwarded a copy of the contract from Ballard Software for record management. He said he had approximately \$54,000.00 from the CEDIT money and the company would accept \$50,000.00 with the rest to be paid by the last of the year. Boothe asked that the matter be tabled until the next meeting so that all could look at the contract.

FIRE

Chief Craig had nothing but his written report. He said he hoped to have a written report for the next meeting on the long-range plans for the Fire Department. Resident Lowell Black is assisting Lewie in developing the plan. He also said he had asked Chesterton not to respond to calls in Porter until being asked because he can evaluate the situation to see if extra help is needed.

In the absence of the Animal Warden, Craig said that currently there is one canine available for adoption. Kittens from Baillytown are also available.

PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING DEPT.

Guy reported that \$600.00 was received to abate mosquitoes thanking Pomeroy and the Council. The department is quite busy working on the sewer problems and several dead trees. Snyder thanked Guy for his work in Dune Meadows. She also inquired about putting in signs at Hunter's Glen (Beware of Children, etc.). Guy said that he is waiting to place an order so all signs can be shipped together. Posts are needed for the signs. By consensus, 4-0 the Council agreed for Guy to order signs.

BUILDING

Babcock has seven new contractors bringing the total to 292. Childress was told that the town had 300 contractors last year. Childress made the motion to accept the contractors. Booth seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

2005 Budget Adoption - Under Hollenbeck's direction, Childress made a motion to adopt the 2004-13 for the Appropriations and Tax rates for the calendar year 2005. Sexton seconded this motion. It was carried 5-0. Granat suggested that due the importance of this matter, the council should sign immediately.

Granat then asked for a motion to number and adopt ordinance 2004-14 for the appropriations reduction for the year 2004. Boothe made said motion and Childress seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. Granat asked if the reading was formally published for 10 days prior to first reading. She was informed that it had been published. Hollenbeck advised that Granat should ask for a motion to suspend the rules. Childress

made the motion and Boothe seconded. Passed 5-0. She was then advised to ask for a motion to approve on the second reading 2004-14 by title only. Childress again made this motion. Boothe made the second. Hollenbeck read the title. Motion was carried 5-0.

Flood Plain Ordinance - Granat asked for a motion to pass the ordinance. Boothe made a motion to pass ordinance #2004-12 by second and third reading by title only and to adopt. Childress seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Granat asked that a copy of the ordinance be forwarded downstate to show we are in compliance. It was read!

Discussion policy for delinquent sewer accounts – an outline of Chesterton’s policy has been obtained. Snyder asked Hollingbeck if the Council vote could be the final say on liens on a property that are in arrears. She asked if names should be published. Liens are a matter of public record and Hollingbeck said that information could be obtained. Sexton stressed that if a person is making payments on an account, they should not be punished in the same manner as someone who has just ignored their account. The Council wishes to start procedures when accounts are 90 days in arrears. Childress said Chesterton has a contract with the Water Company that they will turn off the water until the bill is paid. Hollenbeck said his knowledge is that Indiana Water does have such an arrangement with neighboring towns. He will get a complete copy of Chesterton’s policy and will contact Indiana Water for their procedure.

NEW BUSINESS

Able Disposal Contract Sales Manager Jim Smith spoke on the current contract with Porter, which is up for renewal next month. He offered several options, one was to forego the \$9,000.00 annual increase by cutting recycling to every two weeks (instead of weekly). Several issues were discussed when Childress asked why is Chesterton’s rate better than Porter if Able is trying to help Porter. He was told that Chesterton does not use the Carts. Sexton reminded the Council that they agreed to eliminate the Fire Hydrant fee and that if we begin to charge each resident \$1.00 – that cost cut to the residents would be reinstated. Smith assured a questioner that Able does not resell the recycling and that it actually costs them money to recycle. Smith was asked to put all proposals on paper and the matter was tabled until the next meeting from a motion by Sexton and seconded to Boothe. Motion to table was 5-0.

TOWN WEBSITE

Granat asked about the town website. She said residents are complaining that they are going to the website for minutes, commissions, etc. and there is nothing available. Sexton asked about hosting a website. Childress said that for some reason the site previously used is inactive. Childress said the computer system now in place is not adequate to host the site. Oak Hill Partners previously hosted the site. A cost of approximately \$100-300 is needed per month to maintain the site. Granat asked if Childress would bring in any information he has on the site. The Council would then review this information. Childress said a complete proposal had been done. He had made copies for the Council. He said he had brought up the matter in January and was told that the Council did not know what should be done with the site. Hollenbeck said that Valparaiso has now moved into the computer age and their site is very accessible to the public (whether they are knowledgeable or not). People constantly go to the website and it is beneficial to Valparaiso. He said there are many people there that would probably be able to offer some assistance.

After strong discussion, Childress asked Granat to check the minutes of the January/February Council meetings to see that he had asked for but not receive any direction from the President or council to proceed with the Website.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

A workshop for the employee handbook was scheduled for September 20, 2004 at 6:00 p.m. Boothe urged department heads and employees to attend with their input.

Granat said she had talked Karl Cender about the Sewer Rate Study. Sexton said he and Childress had not heard anything so he contacted Steve Yageleski of Chesterton who has not received needed information. Chesterton will not even discussed the issued of when the money is needed until they complete their rate study.

**Snyder said she would be ready for a presentation on Liability Insurance at the next meeting.
An executive session on department head's evaluations will be held September 22, 2004 at 5:00 p.m.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

President Jennifer Granat

Vice President William Sexton

Sandy Boothe

Sandi Snyder

Paul Childress

ATTESTED: _____
Carol Pomeroy, Clerk-Treasurer

This _____ day of _____ 2004