

PORTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

NOVEMBER 28, 2006

President Paul Childress called the meeting to order by leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Present were Council members Vice President Jennifer Granat, Lorri Wickberg, William F. Sexton and Sandi Snyder. Also present were Clerk Treasurer Carol Pomeroy, Attorney Patrick Lyp, Police Chief James Spanier, Fire Chief Lewis Craig, Building Commissioner Brenda Brueckheimer, Public Works Director Karl Bauer Town Engineer Shem Khalil and Parks Director James Miller.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Sexton made the motion to approve the minutes as written, Wickberg made the second. Vote 5-0

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

Sexton made the motion to approve \$160,412.10 and \$24,600.12 as presented, Wickberg made the second. Vote 5-0. Childress said that he is concerned with the Sewer Fund since the Town had to pay approximately \$800,000 to Chesterton for buying additional sewer capacity, and to watch spending out of this account. He feels that the Town has a few lean years ahead because of the statewide trending for property taxes. Wickberg suggested that the Council develop a budget for sewer.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

Linda Hodges, 470 E. Oak Hill Road, as Police Commission President, asked the Councils permission to place petitions about the having a turn signal placed at the dangerous corner of Waverly Road and U.S. Hwy 20 at the Town Hall and numerous locations throughout the Town. The Police Commission has been working on this for over a year and has been turned down by IDOT. Shem said it is his opinion that they are looking at the signal not the road. The Council supported the petition.

Karen Pisowicz, 85 McDashowicz, asked why all Council members had not attended a retirement party for Weldon Coslet, who had 36 years of service for the Fire Department?

Earl Graves, 1230 Sunset St. gave thanks to Karl for helping with the problems on Sunset. Also introduced his son Jerry who has 21 years in the service.

CLERK TREASURER REPORT:

Pomeroy announced that the Town had received \$142,948 in CREDIT monies from the County.

She also stated that the Town Hall was receiving the forwarded calls from the Street Dept. After much discussion Bauer was advised to answer all calls if he is in his office.

Pomeroy also asked Department Heads to prepare their transfers for each department and give to her as soon as possible.

Pomeroy also asked the Council if she could reimburse Sarah Olsen a \$100 that she spent on her CDL license. The Council agreed by consensus.

The Town Hall has been receiving calls on what days the Decorating Contest is. Pomeroy asked if they could narrow it down. The Council agreed to the 26th and 27th with payment of \$75 for 1st place, \$50 for 2nd place and \$25 for 3rd place with the announcement of winners on 1st Council meeting in January.

ATTORNEY REPORT:

Nothing to report

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Nothing to report

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Craig said the Fire Dept. was having an open house on December 2nd and also was collecting Toys for Tots from 12:00 to 4:00. Craig also noted that the Public Works Dept. was having an auction starting at 10:00 but did not think they would interfere with each other.

Zathoe Sexton, 351 Waverly Road, asked Craig if he could change the date because the Park Dept. was having a Christmas party also on that day from 1:00 to 3:00. Craig said no because he has already advertised for it. Zathoe asked if a calendar of events could be placed at the Town Hall so that this does not happen again. The Council instructed all Department Heads to call the Town Hall when they are scheduling an event to prevent this happening at a future date.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

Bauer reported on the following items:

- Auction is scheduled for December 2nd at 10:00am. He instructed all department heads to call him if they need things to be transported to the Public Works building.
- **STORMWATER (MS4) BILLING.** The Stormwater Board had met earlier in the evening and instructed Bauer to ask the Council to start billing the \$4.00 fee effective immediately. Granat made the motion to have the Clerk Treasurer instruct Indiana American Water Company to start billing the \$4.00 fee effectively immediately for each account that is receiving a bill for water, sewer and/or trash, Wickberg made the second. Vote 5-0 The Stormwater Board will amend this fee later for commercial and industrial uses at a later date.
- Bauer is meeting with IAWC Friday at 10:00 at the Town Hall
- Bauer is working on a master list for all paving and replacing sidewalks for next year.
- Bauer wants to encumber monies from the 2006 MVH budget for 2007 budget. Lyp will check and see if

Bauer needs to get an estimate for paving of roads and replacing sidewalks to be able to encumber.

Childress asked Bauer why Street Dept. workers were working on Friday, a holiday. Bauer said they were working the weekend to pick up leaves, that he had money in overtime to pay for this. Childress felt that this money should be used for snowplowing. Wickberg also stated that the residents wanted more leaf pickups. Sexton said that the Council should put their trust in the person running the department if not then we have the wrong person in that position.

Linda Hodges asked why the stripping had not been done at Babcock Road and Verplank Drive. Burns Harbor and Porter were to split the cost of having this done. Bauer will check on this.

Shem of Haas & Associates said they are prepared to start Phase 1 of the upgrade to the Oakhill lift station. Granat made a motion to start Phase 1 of the upgrade of the Oakhill lift station not to exceed \$20,000 with the monies coming from the Sewer Department, Sexton made the second. Vote 5-0

PARK DEPARTMENT:

- ✓ Miller said that he had check into the complaints about ATV's driving around Lake Charles and said that they are entering on the north side from the gas station and there is nothing he can do to control entering from there.
- ✓ Miller announced that the Park Board was sponsoring a Christmas Party for the children of Porter at 10:00 December 2nd.
- ✓ He also announced that the Park Board asked him to go full time and he accepted at the rate of \$47,000 a year. Childress stated that he was not opposed to making Miller full time but was bothered that the Park Dept was taking money from improvements to the parks to pay his salary and benefits. Miller said that he has ordered park equipment for the Dunes Meadows Park. Miller said that the Council can not slight the Park forever. The Community Building is rented almost every weekend and has generated \$20,000 in rental fees and that they have saved \$13,000 using PACT workers. Zathoe Sexton, Park Board President, said that Miller has worked 17 years as Park Superintendent and the Board values his experience and wanted to make sure he remains as an employee. Snyder, Park liaison, said she fully backs the Park Board and feels that they are doing an excellent job. Snyder said sometimes you have to spend money to make money. Childress again predicted a few more lean years are ahead for Porter because of the statewide trending of property taxes. Granat stated that the Council does not set wages for Park employees, the Park Board does.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Brueckheimer said there are no new contractors. She gave an update of Lot 55 in Woodlake Springs, that she contacted the Army Corp of Engineers and there are no violations.

OLD BUSINESS

- **SMOKE DETECTOR ORDINANCE 2006-19.** Will adopt at next meeting.
- **2007 SALARY ORDINANCE 2006-20.** Granat stated that in August the Council agreed to a 3% raise across the board for employees. At last meeting all Department liaisons were instructed to recommend salaries for each department head. Pomeroy was advised to add Park Board members to the town's salary ordinance at the cost of \$50 per meeting per member and raise Boards/Commissions by 3% and do not raise the Town Councils salary. Pomeroy asked the Council if all Boards and Commission could be paid once a year. The Police Commission is paid every month. Attorney Lyp will check.
 - ❖ **Police Chief James Spanier.** Granat, Police liaison, is very impressed with Spanier's performance and commended him. Granat recommends a 3% raise.
 - ❖ **Public Works Director Karl Bauer.** Wickberg, Public Works liaison, recommends raising his salary to \$50,000 (\$25,000 from MVH and \$25,000 from Sewer) because of his additional duties. Childress cannot justify a raise in excess of 15%. He feels that Bauer deserves a raise but to \$48,000. Granat said Bauer has improved and also agrees to \$48,000.
 - ❖ **Firefighter Lewis Craig.** Sexton, Fire liaison, recommends a 3% raise.

Sexton makes a motion to approve the 2007 Salary Ordinance as currently amended, Wickberg made the second. The following discussion took place. Granat asked Attorney Lyp if she could vote against Bauer's salary alone and Lyp advised her that its all or nothing. Sexton stated that these raises represent about \$800 a month. Wickberg said that Bauer came into the Town at an exceptional low level and is doing numerous reports for MS4. Snyder said she supports Miller's full time position and his compensation. Childress calls for a vote, Snyder yes, Sexton yes, Wickberg yes, Granat no and Childress no. Ordinance passes 3-2.

REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMPLIANTS

Sexton states that residents are complaining about cans not being emptied, drivers driving off when residents are bringing out cans, leaving debris on the ground and not consistent on time of pick-up. Lance Hodge of Regional Industries asks if he can approach the Council. He states that he is very upset with the Council not notifying him about complaints before going to the paper. He states that they have never been fined as stated in the paper. Regional did have a hydraulic line break and it cost them \$10,000 to clean it up and was not given a ticket. He agreed that some sections of Town it does vary on pickup times but that does not violate the contract. He was very upset about the lack of communication about complaints. He stated that the contract stipulates that all complaints be forwarded to them and he has received none. Granat asked if the Town could fax complaints to them. Hodge said he is a driver on one of the routes. Sexton apologized for not calling him. Wickberg asked her neighbors about their service and they are happy with it. Hodge said that they bought a new truck for Porter.

NEW BUSINESS: All ordinances presented were given to audience members to read before hand.

NON-PAYMENT SERVICE FEE ORDINANCE 2006-21.

Sexton made a motion to number and have 1st reading by title only, Granat made the second. Vote 5-0
Childress stated that he wanted an actual fee listed on the ordinance instead of the IC code. It was tabled until next meeting.

ABANDON VEHICLE ORDINANCE 2006-22.

The Police Commission recommended the Town Council to adopt this ordinance. Granat made a motion to number and read by title only, Snyder made the second. Vote 5-0. Granat made a motion to suspend the rules and have 2nd and final reading by title only and adopt, Sexton made the second. Vote 5-0

AMEND VIOLATIONS ORDINANCE 2006-23.

Sexton made a motion to number and read by title only, Snyder made the second. Vote 5-0. Sexton made a motion to suspend the rules and have 2nd and final reading by title only and adopt, Granat made the second. Vote 5-0.

COUNCIL COMMENTS.

Granat reminded the Council that the new Visitors Center was having their Open House on November 29th at 3:00pm. Sexton said he will go.

Granat made a motion to adjourn, Wickberg made the second. Vote 5-0.

Dated this _____day of December, 2006.

Paul Childress, President

Jennifer Granat, Vice President

Lorri Wickberg

William F. Sexton

Sandi Snyder

ATTEST: _____
Carol Pomeroy, Clerk Treasurer